

Data collection on intimate partner violence by the police and justice sectors: United Kingdom



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Why do we need administrative data on intimate partner violence?

Many women victims of intimate partner violence in EU Member States remain unprotected. Perpetrators often go unpunished due to inadequate law enforcement approaches, which do not align with international human rights treaties. A gender-neutral approach to the law, coupled with the unavailability of data and existing stereotypes result in the denial of violence against women and its tolerance or normalisation.¹⁾ States must ensure that they carry out the due diligence principle to investigate and punish acts of violence and provide compensation to victims.

Improving data collection and understanding comprehensive and reliable administrative data is crucial to monitor the police and justice sectors' response to violence against women. It also shows a state's willingness to monitor the effectiveness of its law. High quality administrative data is in line with the international commitments of Member States to combat violence against women as defined in Directive 2011/36/EU of the Victims Rights Directive and the Istanbul Convention.

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) defines intimate partner violence as all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim. It constitutes a form of violence which affects women disproportionately and which is therefore distinctly gendered.

2021 definition of intimate partner violence is in line with the definitions of domestic violence of the Istanbul Convention.

According to the latest national administrative surveys in England and Wales (EW) (2), Northern Ireland (NI) (3) and Scotland (SC) (4):

- 26% (2017), 34% (2018) and 33% (2019) of women in the UK reported intimate partner violence in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- 26% (2017), 34% (2018) and 33% (2019) of women in the UK reported intimate partner violence in the past 12 months.

1) EIGE (2019) 'Violence against women: A European perspective'. 2) Home Office (2019) 'Domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking in England and Wales: Annual Survey of Marriages, Divorces, Annulments, Separations and Deaths'. 3) Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (2019) 'Domestic Violence in Northern Ireland: Annual Survey of Marriages, Divorces, Annulments, Separations and Deaths'. 4) Office for National Statistics (2019) 'Domestic violence in Scotland: Annual Survey of Marriages, Divorces, Annulments, Separations and Deaths'.

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States must ensure that they carry out the due diligence principle to investigate and punish acts of violence and provide compensation to victims. Improving data collection and providing comprehensive and reliable administrative data is crucial to monitor the police and justice sectors' response to violence against women.

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