

## United Kingdom



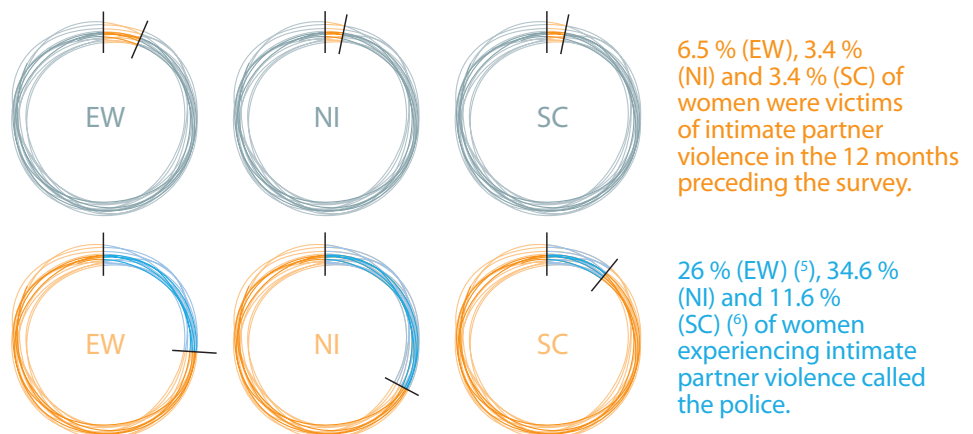
### Why do we need administrative data on intimate partner violence?

Many women victims of intimate partner violence in the 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 <sup>(1)</sup>. 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. 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 2012/29/EU (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.

*EIGE's definition of intimate partner violence is in line with the definition of domestic violence of the Istanbul Convention.*

According to the latest national victimisation surveys in England and Wales (EW) <sup>(2)</sup>, Northern Ireland (NI) <sup>(3)</sup> and Scotland (SC) <sup>(4)</sup>.



<sup>(2)</sup> Office for National Statistics, *Intimate personal violence and partner abuse*, 2016, Section 4, Appendix Table 4.01.

<sup>(3)</sup> Department of Justice, *Experience of domestic violence: findings from the 2008/09 to 2010/11 Northern Ireland crime surveys*, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, 2013.

<sup>(4)</sup> Scottish government, *Scottish crime and justice survey 2014/15: partner abuse*, 2016.

<sup>(5)</sup> Office for National Statistics, *Intimate personal violence and partner abuse*, 2016, Section 4, Appendix Table 4.28.

<sup>(6)</sup> 11.6 % of respondents reported the incident to the police. However, the Scottish government survey found no statistically significant differences (p. 54). Therefore, the figure of 11.6 % can only be used as a rough estimate.

<sup>(1)</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences*, 2017.

## What does the law say?

Intimate partner violence is covered under the devolved administrations' legislation on serious crime, sexual offences and domestic violence. At present, intimate partner violence is not a distinct criminal offence. In England and Wales and Northern Ireland, the definition of domestic violence refers to 'psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional' abuse. In Scotland a specific offence of 'partner abuse' is foreseen by the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Bill, which passed stage 3 in Parliament on 1 February 2018. The United Kingdom is in the process of ratifying the Istanbul Convention.

## Process of administrative data collection by police and justice sectors



### POLICE



- For offences related to intimate partner violence, the following variables are collected: EW — victim's age, nationality, name and sometimes sex (collected by the 43 police forces); NI — victim's age and sex, in cases of violence with/without injury, homicide, sexual offences, theft, robbery, burglary, and criminal damage; SC — victim's age and sex in cases of homicide.
- In EW, the Home Office Data Hub collects data on the victim–perpetrator relationship. However, data is not collected from all police forces.
- The quality of data recorded on the victim–perpetrator relationship relies on the police official involved.
- In 2015, police recorded 45 694 cases of intimate partner violence in SC <sup>(7)</sup> and 7 822 domestic abuse crimes in NI <sup>(8)</sup>. Data for domestic abuse in England and Wales does not provide information on the sex of the victim. The total number of domestic abuse offences in EW in 2015 was 421 185 <sup>(9)</sup>.



- In EW and NI, crime figures are collected according to the Home Office Counting Rules and data is quality assured by Home Office statisticians.
- In SC, domestic violence offences are recorded according to the Scottish Crime Recording Standard.
- In NI, police data is produced by Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency statisticians who are seconded to the Police Service of Northern Ireland and whose role it is to ensure the statistics comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.
- The system of devolved administrations can lead to inconsistencies in data collection.



- In EW, data is published by the Office for National Statistics and the Home Office.
- In NI, data is published on the police website.
- In SC, data is published on the Scottish government website.



### JUSTICE

- For offences related to intimate partner violence, the following variables are collected by the justice sector: EW — sex of victim and perpetrator; SC — sex of perpetrator. The NI justice system does not record data on the sex of the victim or the perpetrator.
- Due to a lack of breakdowns in justice sector data, there is a substantial gap in official intimate partner violence data.
- In EW, judicial data is considered accurate. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) monitors the relationship between the victim and perpetrator, but this data is not robust enough to be used statistically.

- In SC, the *Joint protocol between Police Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service* outlines procedures to identify best practice and form a consistent approach to domestic abuse investigation, reporting and prosecution.
- In EW, a Violence against Women and Girls assurance system was set up in 2011 to provide assessment of domestic violence, rape and sexual offence prosecutions to the Director of Public Prosecutions every 6 months.

- In EW, data is published on the CPS website.
- In NI, data is published by the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service.
- In SC, data is published in the *Criminal proceedings in Scotland* publication.

<sup>(7)</sup> Scottish government, *Domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland, 2016-17, 2017* (<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00526358.pdf>).

<sup>(8)</sup> Police Service of Northern Ireland, *Domestic abuse statistics — financial year trends summary tables, 2016, Table 5.1* (<https://www.psnri.police.uk/inside-psnri/Statistics/domestic-abuse-statistics/>).

<sup>(9)</sup> Office for National Statistics, *Domestic abuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2017, 2017* (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2017>).

## Indicators on intimate partner violence

To support Member States in reporting on intimate partner violence under the Victims' Rights Directive and the Istanbul Convention, EIGE has developed 13 indicators based on uniform statistical definitions. These relate to administrative data from the police and justice sectors. By populating the indicators Member States will be able to meet the minimum requirements for data provision outlined in the Victims' Rights Directive and the Istanbul Convention.

### What data is available?



#### POLICE

EW NI SC

- |   |                       |                       |                       |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of intimate partner violence committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police.                                     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Annual number of reported offences related to intimate partner violence against women committed by men (aged 18 and over).   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Annual number of men (aged 18 and over) perpetrators of intimate partner violence against women (and percentage of male population that are perpetrators).                     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of physical intimate partner violence committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police.                            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of psychological intimate partner violence committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police.                       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of sexual intimate partner violence committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police.                              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of economic intimate partner violence committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police.                            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims reporting rape committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police.   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. Women victims of intimate femicide (aged 18 and over) committed by a male intimate partner (aged 18 and over), as a share of the women victims of homicide (aged 18 and over). | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



#### JUSTICE

EW NI SC

- |   |                       |                       |                       |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 10. Annual number of protection orders applied for and granted in cases of intimate partner violence against women by type of court.  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. Annual number of men (aged 18 and over) prosecuted for intimate partner violence against women.   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. Annual number of men (aged 18 and over) sentenced for intimate partner violence against women.  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 13. Annual number of men (aged 18 and over) sentenced for intimate partner violence against women and held in prison or with a sanction involving a form of deprivation of liberty. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**Low availability.** No data is available or existing data is not sufficient to populate the indicator due to considerable lack of detail and necessary breakdowns, such as no information on the sex of the victim.



**Medium availability.** Some data is available but it lacks important breakdowns, such as the exact relationship between the victim and the perpetrator.



**High availability.** Data is available with necessary breakdowns.





## Key recommendations for improving data collection on intimate partner violence



LEGISLATIVE

### Introduce a legal definition of intimate partner violence

At present, intimate partner violence can be partly covered by criminal offences related to serious crime, sexual assault and domestic violence, which are criminalised in England and Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland, respectively. However, current definitions on domestic violence do not accommodate all aspects of intimate partner violence as is outlined in the Istanbul Convention, for not including economic violence (Scotland) or for not solely referring to current and former partners (England and Wales and Northern Ireland). It is recommended that intimate partner violence be recognised as a stand-alone criminal offence in each of the devolved administrations' legislations.

### Introduce a legal framework

A distinct legal definition of intimate partner violence will form the basis for a regulatory framework to standardise data collection on intimate partner violence across the devolved administrations. This would overcome inconsistencies in reporting and create a more streamlined and harmonised process, leading to more robust data and efficiency gains. It is recommended that a legal regulatory framework be developed and made compatible across the devolved administrations to improve administrative data collection on intimate partner violence.



TECHNICAL

### Systematically record relationship information

Information on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator is necessary to gather accurate data. Currently, police and justice sectors across the devolved administrations do not consistently record the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator. The Home Office's new Data Hub exemplifies how changes to recording systems can be implemented to incorporate a relationship variable. It is recommended to make the necessary changes to the recording systems used by the police and justice sectors in England and Wales and Northern Ireland to ensure a systematic recording of the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator.

### Systematically record the sex of the perpetrator in England and Wales

Northern Ireland and Scotland currently collect data on the sex of the perpetrator; England and Wales should follow their example by making it mandatory for all police forces. It is recommended that the Home Office make recording information on the sex of the perpetrator mandatory for all police forces in England and Wales.

### Improve quality assurance procedures in the judiciary

Administrative data on intimate partner violence is limited across the justice sectors across administrations. For offences related to intimate partner violence and rape, there are few breakdowns. It is recommended that a set of guidelines be created and enforced by the Ministry of Justice, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service and the Scottish government to provide a minimum set of criteria which all justice services should employ. This must necessarily include recording the sex of the victim and the perpetrator and their relationship in order to identify intimate partners.



COOPERATION

### Maintain Data Hub development and police force transition in England and Wales

The Home Office has introduced the Data Hub to collect data from police forces digitally. Ultimately, the Data Hub should enable improvements to the data collection process in the police sector. It is recommended that the Home Office continue to transfer all police forces in England and Wales to using the Data Hub. The Police Service of Northern Ireland records all crimes electronically in a single system.

### Harmonise data collection by police forces across the devolved administrations

Owing to the United Kingdom's devolved administrative structure and differences in legal frameworks, inconsistencies in data collection can arise. It is recommended that efforts be made to harmonise data collection across local police forces. This can be achieved by transitioning to electronic data collection processes (in the case of Northern Ireland), and by strengthening and promoting police forces training to ensure all local authorities follow the same processes.

#### European Institute for Gender Equality

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is the EU knowledge centre on gender equality. EIGE supports policymakers and all relevant institutions in their efforts to make equality between women and men a reality for all Europeans by providing them with specific expertise and comparable and reliable data on gender equality in Europe.



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