



# ATTITUDES TOWARDS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THE EU

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*“...violence against women and girls continues unabated in every continent, country and culture. It takes a devastating toll on women’s lives, on their families, and on society as a whole. Most societies prohibit such violence -yet the reality is that too often, it is covered up or tacitly condoned... Changing this requires all of us -women and men- to work for enduring change in values and attitudes.”*

**Ban Ki-moon,  
Secretary-General of the United Nations  
New York, 6 March 2007**

# Index

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>1. BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH APPROACH</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Background</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Research approach and procedure</b>	<b>18</b>
<i>Questionnaire and instructions for experts</i>	18
<i>Experts reports and feedback</i>	18
<b>Key areas related to public attitudes towards violence against women in EU surveys and studies</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>Abbreviations</i>	21
<b>2. PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AS A SOCIAL PROBLEM: AWARENESS, DEFINITIONS, ACCEPTABILITY AND PERCEIVED SEVERITY</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Surveys and studies addressing public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem</b>	<b>23</b>
<i>Surveys</i>	23
<i>Studies</i>	25
<b>Public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem. Results of surveys and studies</b>	<b>26</b>
<i>Public awareness of violence against women as a social problem</i>	26
<i>Public definitions of violence against women</i>	28
<i>Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women</i>	31
<i>Results of the 2010 Eurobarometer and the 2014 FRA Survey</i>	41
<b>Summary and highlights</b>	<b>42</b>
<i>Highlights</i>	43
<b>3. PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE CAUSES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: ATTRIBUTIONS, EXPLANATIONS AND JUSTIFICATIONS</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Surveys and studies addressing public attributions, explanations and justifications</b>	<b>45</b>
<i>Surveys</i>	45
<i>Studies</i>	46
<b>Public attributions, explanations, and justifications of violence against women. Results of surveys and studies</b>	<b>47</b>
<i>Individual factors</i>	47
<i>Relational/situational factors</i>	51
<b>Social/cultural factors</b>	<b>53</b>
<i>Cultural and social norms</i>	53
<i>Gender roles and stereotypes</i>	54
<i>Socioeconomic explanations</i>	58
<i>Results of the 2010 Eurobarometer</i>	60
<b>Summary and highlights</b>	<b>60</b>
<i>Highlights</i>	61

<b>4. ARE WOMEN HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VIOLENCE THEY SUFFER? VICTIM-BLAMING ATTITUDES IN EU SURVEYS AND STUDIES</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Surveys and studies addressing victim-blaming attitudes</b>	<b>63</b>
<i>Surveys</i>	63
<i>Studies</i>	64
<b>Victim-blaming attitudes. Results of surveys and studies</b>	<b>65</b>
<i>Intimate partner violence/domestic violence</i>	65
<i>Sexual violence</i>	72
<b>Victim-blaming attitudes, results of the 2010 Eurobarometer</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Summary and highlights</b>	<b>78</b>
<i>Highlights</i>	78
<b>5. PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES TOWARDS INTERVENTION, AND RESPONSES IN CASES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Surveys and studies addressing public knowledge, attitudes towards intervention and responses in cases of violence against women</b>	<b>80</b>
<i>Surveys</i>	80
<i>Studies</i>	81
<b>Public knowledge, attitudes towards intervention and responses in cases of violence against women. Results of surveys and studies</b>	<b>82</b>
<i>Public knowledge of resources and services for women victims of violence</i>	82
<i>Public attitudes towards intervention in cases of violence against women</i>	89
<i>Public responses in cases of violence against women</i>	98
<i>Professionals' knowledge and attitudes towards intervention in cases of violence against women</i>	101
<b>Summary and highlights</b>	<b>102</b>
<i>Highlights</i>	102
<b>6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>EU surveys including information on attitudes towards violence against women</b>	<b>104</b>
<i>Conclusions</i>	104
<i>Recommendations</i>	105
<b>Methodological issues in surveys including information on attitudes towards violence against women</b>	<b>105</b>
<i>Conclusions</i>	105
<i>Recommendations</i>	106
<b>Availability of studies published in academic journals addressing attitudes towards violence against women in the EU</b>	<b>107</b>
<i>Conclusions</i>	107
<i>Recommendations</i>	107
<b>Public attitudes towards violence against women in EU surveys and studies</b>	<b>108</b>
<i>Conclusions</i>	108
<i>Recommendations</i>	109
<b>Factors influencing attitudes towards violence against women in the EU: future directions for research</b>	<b>109</b>
<i>Conclusions</i>	109
<i>Recommendations</i>	110

<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>118</b>
Appendix I. Instructions to experts	119
Appendix II. Survey questionnaires and study summaries selection	121
Appendix III. Descriptive Analysis of surveys and studies	125
Appendix IV. Surveys	135
Appendix V. Studies	139
Appendix VI. Survey questions	145

## List of Figures

Figure 2.1. Countries with surveys addressing public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem	24
Figure 2.2. Public awareness of violence against women as a social problem: Domestic violence (RO-Survey 1. General population)	27
Figure 2.3. Public definitions of violence against women: Violence in intimate relationships (EE-Survey 2. General population)	28
Figure 2.4. Public definitions of violence against women: Sexual violence (BG-Survey 5. General population)	29
Figure 2.5. Public definitions of violence against women: Prostitution (EE-Survey 2. General population)	30
Figure 2.6. Public definitions of violence against women: Sexual violence (EE-Survey 2. General population)	30
Figure 2.7. Public definitions of violence against women: Sexual violence (PL-Survey 4. General population)	31
Figure 2.8. Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Domestic violence (PL-Survey 2a. General population and subsamples of perpetrators)	32
Figure 2.9. Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Domestic violence (PL-Survey 4. General population)	33
Figure 2.10. Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Intimate partner violence (CZ-Survey 4. Women, subsample of victims)	34
Figure 2.11. Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Intimate partner violence (CZ-Survey 4. Women, subsample of victims)	34
Figure 2.12. Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Violence against women (IT-Survey 1. Women general population)	35
Figure 2.13. Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Gender-based violence (ES-Survey 2 and 3. General population and adolescents-young people)	36
Figure 2.14. Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Rape (SE-Survey 2. General population)	41
Figure 3.1. Countries with surveys addressing public attributions, explanations and justifications	45
Figure 3.2. Individual factors: Alcohol as a circumstance explaining violence against women (PL-Survey 1a. General population)	47
Figure 3.3. Individual factors: Interpersonal violence (CY-Survey 2. Young adults)	48
Figure 3.4. Individual factors: Gender-based violence (ES-Survey 2 and 3. General population and adolescents-young people)	50
Figure 3.5. Individual factors: Gender-based violence (ES-Survey 2 and 3. General population and adolescents-young people)	50
Figure 3.6. Perpetrator characteristics: Sexual violence (CZ-Survey 3. General population)	51
Figure 3.7. Relational factors: Intimate partner violence (NL-Survey 1. General population)	52
Figure 3.8. Perpetrators circumstances: Domestic violence (PL-Survey 4. General population; victims and perpetrators subsamples)	52
Figure 3.9. Social/cultural factors: Intimate partner violence (CY-Survey 2. Young people)	53
Figure 3.10. Social/cultural factors: Intimate partner violence (CY-Survey 2. Young people)	54
Figure 3.11. Social/cultural factors: Sexual violence (NL-Survey 1. General population)	56
Figure 3.12. Cultural/social factors: Domestic violence (RO-Survey 1. General population)	57
Figure 3.13. Social/cultural factors: Interpersonal violence (CY-Survey 2. Young people)	58
Figure 3.14. Poverty and education level: Domestic violence (RO-Survey 1. General population)	58



Figure 3.15. <i>Reasons to explain gender-based violence (ES-Survey 2 and 3. General population and adolescents-young people)</i>	59
Figure 4.1. <i>Countries with surveys addressing victim-blaming attitudes</i>	63
Figure 4.2. <i>Victim-blaming attitudes: Domestic violence (EE-Survey 2. General population)</i>	65
Figure 4.3. <i>Victim-blaming attitudes: Domestic violence (RO-Survey 1. General population)</i>	66
Figure 4.4. <i>Victim-blaming attitudes: Interpersonal violence (CY-Survey 2. Young people)</i>	67
Figure 4.5. <i>Victim-blaming attitudes: Wife beating (EE-Survey 1. General population, men)</i>	69
Figure 4.6. <i>Victim-blaming attitudes: Domestic violence (PL-Survey 2a. General population and perpetrators sub-sample)</i>	70
Figure 4.7. <i>Victim-blaming attitudes: Rape (EE-Survey 2. General population)</i>	72
Figure 4.8. <i>Victim-blaming attitudes: Rape (SE-Survey 1. Students)</i>	73
Figure 4.9. <i>Victim-blaming attitudes: Rape (SE-Survey 2. General population)</i>	74
Figure 4.10. <i>Victim-blaming attitudes: Rape (EE-Survey 6. Young people)</i>	75
Figure 4.11. <i>Victim-blaming attitudes in Europe (Eurobarometer, 2010)</i>	77
Figure 5.1. <i>Countries with surveys addressing public knowledge, attitudes towards intervention and responses in cases of violence against women</i>	80
Figure 5.2. <i>Public knowledge of resources and services: Violence against women (AT-Survey 2. General population)</i>	83
Figure 5.3. <i>Public knowledge of resources and services: Gender-based violence (EE-Survey 2. General population)</i>	84
Figure 5.4. <i>Public knowledge of resources and services: Gender based violence (EE-Survey 2. General population)</i>	85
Figure 5.5. <i>Have you heard about women's shelters in Estonia?: Gender-based and domestic violence (EE-Survey 5. General population)</i>	86
Figure 5.6. <i>Have you heard about the nationwide hotline 1492 for women victims?: Gender based and domestic violence (EE-Survey 5. General population)</i>	87
Figure 5.7. <i>What kind of support services for victims of sexual violence have you heard of?: Sexual violence (EE-Survey 6. General population)</i>	88
Figure 5.8. <i>Public knowledge of resources and services: Domestic violence (PL-Survey 8. General population)</i>	88
Figure 5.9. <i>If a person from your circle of acquaintances shares with you she has been a victim of domestic violence, whom would you advise her to go to?: Domestic violence (BG-Survey 1. General population)</i>	89
Figure 5.10. <i>Public attitudes towards intervention: Domestic violence (EE-Survey 1. General population)</i>	91
Figure 5.11. <i>Public attitudes towards intervention: Domestic violence (EE-Survey 3. Students/Teachers)</i>	91
Figure 5.12. <i>Should witnesses intervene: Domestic violence (EE-Survey 4. General population)</i>	92
Figure 5.13. <i>Public attitudes towards intervention: Gender based and domestic violence (EE-Survey 5. General population)</i>	92
Figure 5.14. <i>If you know of or witness aggression or mistreatment of a woman by a man, what do you think you would do?: Gender-based violence (ES-Survey 2 and 3. General population and adolescents-young people)</i>	95
Figure 5.15. <i>Public attitudes towards intervention: Domestic violence (LT-Survey 1. Victims)</i>	96
Figure 5.16. <i>Public attitudes towards intervention: Domestic violence (LT-Survey 1. Victims)</i>	96
Figure 5.17. <i>Public attitudes towards intervention: Domestic violence (PL-Survey 2a. General population)</i>	97
Figure 5.18. <i>Public attitudes towards intervention: Domestic violence (PL-Survey 2a. General population)</i>	97

Figure 5.19. <i>Public attitudes towards intervention: Domestic violence (RO-Survey 1. General population)</i>	98
Figure 5.20. <i>What did you do, how did you respond?: Domestic violence (EE-Survey 2. General population)</i>	99
Figure 5.21. <i>What is the main reason why you did not do anything?: Domestic violence (EE-Survey 2. General population)</i>	99
Figure 5.22. <i>Whom/where did you report it to?: Domestic violence (PL-Survey 8. General population)</i>	100
Figure 5.23. <i>Public responses in cases of violence against women: Domestic violence (PL-Survey 8. General population)</i>	100
Figure II.1. <i>Survey questionnaires selected for inclusion in the review</i>	122
Figure II.2. <i>Study summaries selected for inclusion in the review</i>	123
Figure III.1. <i>Number of surveys selected and samples</i>	126
Figure III.2. <i>Number of studies selected by sample composition</i>	133

## List of Tables

Table 1.1. <i>Country name abbreviations</i>	21
Table 2.1. <i>Surveys, samples and type of violence</i>	25
Table 2.2. <i>Studies, samples and type of violence</i>	26
Table 2.3. <i>“Domestic violence is a public interest issue”: disaggregated information (RO-Survey 1. General population)</i>	27
Table 2.4. <i>Public definitions of violence against women: Intimate partner violence (CY-Survey 1. Women general population)</i>	29
Table 2.5. <i>Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Intimate partner violence (ES-Survey 2. General population)</i>	32
Table 2.6. <i>Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Dating violence (CY-Survey 3. Young people)</i>	37
Table 2.7. <i>Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Gender based violence (ES-Survey 3. Students)</i>	38
Table 2.8. <i>“Mistreatment of a girl by a boy?” Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Dating violence (ES-Survey 4. Students)</i>	39
Table 2.9. <i>Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Dating violence (SI-Survey 3. Professionals: High school advisors)</i>	40
Table 3.1. <i>Surveys, samples and type of violence</i>	46
Table 3.2. <i>Studies, samples and type of violence</i>	46
Table 3.3. <i>“Some men are violent toward women because...”: Disaggregated information (CY-Survey 3. Young people)</i>	49
Table 3.4. <i>“Some men are violent toward women because...”: Disaggregated information (CY-Survey 3. Young people)</i>	54
Table 3.5. <i>“If a woman has children, even if she is beaten she cannot leave the relationship”: Disaggregated information (RO-Survey 1. General population)</i>	55
Table 3.6. <i>“Women are the property of men”: Disaggregated information (RO-Survey 1. General population)</i>	57
Table 3.7. <i>“Domestic violence only happens among uneducated people”: Disaggregated information (RO-Survey 1. General population)</i>	59
Table 4.1. <i>Surveys, samples and type of violence</i>	64

Table 4.2. <i>Studies, samples and type of violence</i>	65
Table 4.3. <i>"Women are sometimes to blame for being beaten": Disaggregated information (RO-Survey 1. General population)</i>	66
Table 4.4. <i>"Some men are violent toward women because....": Gender-based violence (CY-Survey 3. Young people)</i>	67
Table 4.5. <i>"It is OK for a boy....": Gender-based violence (CY-Survey 3. Young people)</i>	68
Table 4.6. <i>Wife beating attitudes by native language (EE-Survey 1. General population, men)</i>	69
Table 4.7. <i>Victim-blaming attitudes: Gender-based violence (ES-Survey 4. Young people)</i>	70
Table 4.8. <i>"It is OK for a man....": Domestic abuse (UK-Survey 4. Students)</i>	71
Table 4.9. <i>"Women cause their victimisation or rape by their clothing": Disaggregated information (EE-Survey 2. General population)</i>	73
Table 4.10. <i>"Many women have an unconscious wish to be raped": Disaggregated information (EE-Survey 6. Young people)</i>	76
Table 5.1. <i>Surveys, samples and type of violence</i>	81
Table 5.2. <i>Studies, samples and type of violence</i>	82
Table 5.3. <i>Preferred sources of information: Intimate partner violence and sexual violence (DE-Survey 4)</i>	84
Table 5.4. <i>Awareness of Estonian Women's Shelters Union and their hotline 1492: Disaggregated information (EE-Survey 2. General population)</i>	85
Table 5.5. <i>Have you heard about women's shelters in Estonia?: Disaggregated information (EE-Survey 5. General population)</i>	87
Table 5.6. <i>Recommendations to victims: IPV and Sexual violence (DE-Survey 4)</i>	90
Table 5.7. <i>Recommendations in cases of domestic violence by level of education (DE-Survey 4)</i>	90
Table 5.8. <i>Would you recommend your friend or colleague who has experienced violence to contact a women's shelter for advice and assistance?: Disaggregated information (EE-Survey 5. General population)</i>	93
Table 5.9. <i>Would you know where to go to file a complaint in a case of mistreatment? And specifically, where would you go? (ES-Survey 1. Women general population)</i>	94
Table 5.10. <i>Public attitudes towards intervention: Gender-based violence (ES-Survey 4. Adolescents)</i>	95
Table II.1. <i>Number of surveys and studies received by country</i>	121
Table II.2. <i>Number of surveys and studies selected by country</i>	124
Table III.1. <i>Type of violence addressed in surveys</i>	127
Table III.2. <i>Methodological characteristics of surveys</i>	129
Table IV.1. <i>Surveys selected by country: title, year (conducted/published), organisation, scope and sample</i>	135
Table V.1. <i>Study summaries selected by country: Reference, sample, method and type of violence</i>	139
Table V.2. <i>Content of studies: selection of main results</i>	141

## List of Boxes

Box 1.1. <i>Experts' views about the availability of surveys on attitudes towards violence against women</i>	19
Box 1.2. <i>Experts' views about the availability of studies on attitudes towards violence against women</i>	20
Box 4.1. <i>Victim-blaming attitudes examples</i>	71
Box I.1. <i>Instructions to experts: Survey questionnaire</i>	119
Box I.2. <i>Instructions to experts: Qualitative and quantitative studies</i>	120
Box III.1. <i>Examples of the definition of violence using specific indicators</i>	130
Box III.2. <i>Examples of legal definitions of violence</i>	131
Box III.3. <i>Examples of confidential self-completion methodology used in surveys</i>	131
Box III.4. <i>Does the survey provide information about who conducted the survey or whether the interviewers were specifically trained? (MT-Survey 1)</i>	132
Box VI.1. <i>Survey items on public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem (Chapter 2)</i>	145
Box VI.2. <i>Survey items on public attributions, explanations and justifications (Chapter 3)</i>	151
Box VI.3. <i>Survey items on victim-blaming attitudes (Chapter 4)</i>	155
Box VI.4. <i>Survey items on public knowledge, attitudes towards intervention and responses in cases of violence against women (Chapter 5)</i>	158

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Violence against women remains a major social, public health, and human rights problem in the EU. Violence against women is a complex phenomenon that needs to be understood within the wider social context and within the social and cultural norms that permeate it. Public attitudes and responses regarding violence against women reflect these norms and play an important role in shaping the social climate in which the violence occurs. Comprehending attitudes towards violence against women is key to better understanding its root causes and, therefore, developing more effective intervention measures.

To achieve this, the report aimed to (1) review all surveys published in the last 5 years in EU countries that included questions addressing attitudes towards violence against women, and (2) review quantitative and qualitative studies of high scientific quality on attitudes towards violence against women in EU countries published in academic journals in the last 5 years. This information was identified and provided by the *European Network of Experts on Gender Equality* (ENEGE).

After a selection process, the information used for this report was based on 40 surveys from 19 countries, reflecting the responses of around 85,000 European citizens. For this report, 16 quantitative and qualitative studies published in academic journals were also considered (see Chapter 1). The analysis of this material allowed us to identify four key areas related to public attitudes towards violence against women: (1) Public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem; (2) Public understanding of the causes of violence against women; (3) Victim-blaming attitudes; and (4) Public knowledge, attitudes towards intervention, and responses in cases of violence against women. These areas corresponded to the four thematic chapters that describe the main results of this report (see Chapters 2 to 5).

Although there are limitations in the comparability of data across countries, the picture that emerges regarding attitudes towards violence against women in EU countries, where this information was available, can be summarised as follows:

- Results of the available surveys and studies addressing the acceptability and perceived severity of different types of violence against women (mainly partner violence) revealed that small but relevant percentages of respondents (including young people, adults, and also victims) tended to “accept” – in some circumstances – some violent behaviours against women, perceived as “not very serious” or considered “inevitable”, including insulting, hitting, controlling, or even forced sex. This suggests that attitudes of acceptability and tolerance are still prevalent. Particularly worrisome is that the acceptability of certain behaviours remained high in some circumstances (e.g. dating violence). Data for gender tended to show that these types of attitudes are more common among men and boys.
- Among the individual factors believed to be associated with violence against women, alcohol or drug use was one of the most commonly mentioned by survey respondents from the general population (and also professionals). Interestingly, percentages among victims and perpetrators were much lower. Ha-

ving experienced violence in childhood was also one of the most frequently mentioned causes of violence against women by respondents (including sexual violence). For sexual violence against women, respondents tended to believe that offenders suffered from some forms of deviance (which was also seen as resistant to treatment).

- Relational or situational factors considered by survey respondents as possible causes of violence against women were fights and quarrels among intimate partners, family problems, and sources of stress, like the loss of a job or financial problems.
- Social and cultural factors that were considered by respondents as an explanation or justification of violence against women included: cultural and social norms, gender stereotypes, and socioeconomic explanations. Results suggest that gender stereotypes and sexist attitudes are still prevalent in some sectors of the society. Where available, disaggregated information suggests that these types of attitudes are more common among males, the older, the less educated, and those living in rural areas.
- Victim-blaming attitudes were widespread in countries where this information was available. Some results of this review revealed alarming percentages of this type of attitudes. Where available, results regarding victim-blaming in cases of sexual violence or rape were particularly worrisome. The picture that emerged from the available information is that victim-blaming attitudes are more common among men, the older, the less educated, and minority groups. Victim-blaming attitudes were also highly prevalent in other socio-demographic groups and among women.
- Questions regarding public knowledge of resources for victims suggested that only some services were quite well-known to the public (e.g. women's shelters), while the public in general knew little about other services or resources for victims. Where available, differences among specific socio-demographic groups emerged regarding the knowledge of resources and support services for victims (e.g. minority groups and the less educated had less knowledge). Also, socio-demographic differences emerged regarding what to do or what to recommend to victims. The results suggested that the police was the main resource to which the public would turn if discovering a case of violence against women.
- Finally, some results suggested that attitudes favouring non-intervention were still prevalent. Where information was available, a significant number of respondents preferred not to get involved even if they were aware of a case of violence against women ("not my business", or "it is a private matter" were among the reasons for not intervening).

The final goal of this review was not only to provide an overview of the available information on attitudes towards violence against women in the EU, but also to identify gaps in our knowledge in order to point to new directions to better understand public attitudes that contribute to perpetuating violence against women in the EU, and to respond to this major challenge in a more effective way. In this regard, the main conclusions and recommendations contained in this report can be summarised as follows (see Chapter 6):

- Information regarding attitudes towards violence against women is still limited in European surveys, as most available surveys were not designed specifically to

address these issues. There is a need to develop surveys and additional sources of data collection in order to specifically investigate attitudes towards violence against women. To avoid the large variations between countries in terms of information availability and data collection, these surveys should provide comparable data across EU countries by being implemented at the EU-level.

- There was a large variation across surveys regarding their scope, the samples, type and definitions of violence against women. Most surveys addressed intimate partner violence against women, while only a few addressed other types of violence against women. Moreover, information on attitudes among minorities or other risk groups was very limited. Future data collection should establish a set of shared indicators and definitions of different types of violence against women, and address not only attitudes among the general population, but also target specific groups (e.g. professionals, victims, perpetrators, risk groups).
- To improve the comparability of information on relevant aspects regarding attitudes towards violence against women across the EU and better assess its evolution over time, a more standardised and methodologically sound approach to the measurement of attitudes is needed in future EU-level surveys and studies. More accurate and comparable data at the EU-level would help to inform better-targeted education and intervention initiatives.
- There are very few studies addressing attitudes towards violence against women in EU countries published in academic journals of high scientific quality in the last five years. This reveals that research on attitudes towards violence against women is an underdeveloped area. Clearly an EU-level framework for research on attitudes to violence against women should be established and promoted, identifying key research priorities.
- The worrisome prevalence of acceptance, victim-blaming, and non-intervention attitudes in countries where this information was available should be appropriately targeted and monitored across the EU. No reliable data, however, was available in the surveys analysed on the impact of policies, education, and awareness-raising campaigns or other initiatives on attitudes towards violence against women among the general public or other specific groups (e.g. men, risk groups, minorities). There is a need to monitor the effectiveness of policies, education, and prevention efforts to change public attitudes across the EU. Identifying and targeting sectors or specific groups in society that are more resistant to change should also be a priority.
- Only a few surveys provided information on differences in attitudes towards violence against women across different social groups. When this information was available, the attitudes found were not evenly distributed across different socio-economic defined groups. Future studies and surveys should provide a more detailed analysis of socio-demographic and other factors influencing these attitudes. This information would help us to understand variations in attitudes and prevalence both between and within EU countries, and to better target awareness-raising, public education, and intervention strategies.
- Factors explaining violence against women are multiple and can be identified at multiple levels, including individual, relational, group, community, and macro (country) levels. An appropriate understanding of variations both between and within countries, not only in attitudes but also in prevalence, will need a multinational and multilevel type of approach that will require a new generation of studies and an EU-level research effort.

# 1. BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH APPROACH

## Background

Violence against women is a widespread phenomenon with important consequences for the physical, psychological, and social wellbeing of women. It is a major social and public health problem as well as a human rights violation that also has profound consequences for society as a whole (Campbell, 2002; Ellsberg, Jansen, Heise, Watts, & Garcia-Moreno, 2008; WHO, 2013). Intimate partner violence is considered the most common form of violence suffered by women (Devries et al., 2013; Stöckl et al., 2013; WHO, 2013), mainly committed by their male partners (Hamby, 2014). Based on data from 81 countries, Devries et al. (2013) estimated that the global prevalence of intimate partner violence is 30% (23.2% in high-income regions). Also, according to Stöckl et al. (2013), the main risk of homicide for a woman is from an intimate partner, with the proportion of women killed by their partners being six times higher than the proportion of men killed by women. Stöckl et al. (2013) estimated that 38.6% of all female homicides are committed by their intimate partners (41.2% in Western countries).

The recent survey conducted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights among the 28 European Union (EU) Member States estimated that 33% of women had experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15, and that 5% of women had been raped since the age of 15. This survey also showed the high prevalence of intimate partner violence against women, with an average of 22% of European women having been victims of physical and/or sexual violence by their partners since the age of 15, with prevalence across countries ranging from 13% to 32% (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014).

Understanding attitudes toward violence against women is of paramount importance in order to better understand its root causes and, therefore, develop more effective intervention measures. Clearly, EU prevention policies would benefit from data monitoring attitudes toward violence against women as well as the factors that influence it.

Violence against women is a complex phenomenon that needs to be understood within the wider social context and within the social and cultural norms that permeate it (Flood & Pease, 2009; Gracia, 2014; Jewkes, 2002; Jewkes, Flood, & Lang, 2015; Taylor & Sorenson, 2005). For example, in its “World report on violence and health” (2002), the World Health Organization included factors creating an acceptable climate for violence and those that reduce inhibitions against violence as larger societal factors that influence rates of violence. Research shows that these attitudes condoning violence against women are still widespread (Gracia & Herrero, 2006a; Gracia & Tomás, 2014; Jewkes 2002; Jewkes et al., 2015; WHO, 2013). The importance of addressing public attitudes towards violence against women is illustrated by an increasing body of research showing the influence that these attitudes



may have in aspects such as incidence and reporting rates, public and professional responses and the victims' own responses (e.g. Carlson & Worden, 2005; Flood & Pease, 2009; Frye, 2007; Gracia, García, & Lila, 2008, 2011, 2014; Lila, Gracia, & García, 2013; West & Wandrei, 2002). If we take into account that violence against women remains not only a major social and public health problem, but is also a largely unreported crime (Gracia, 2004), the importance of addressing attitudes towards violence against women becomes even more apparent.

A better understanding of public attitudes toward violence against women and its correlates may add relevant knowledge to the social conditions that contribute to its prevalence, as well as the social sources of deterrence and control of this type of violence (Gracia, 2014). In this regard, attitudes towards violence against women can be considered not only a central issue for understanding those factors that contribute to its maintenance in our societies, but also as a main target for intervention and public education (Capezza & Arriaga, 2008; Flood & Pease, 2009; García-Moreno et al., 2015; Gracia, Rodríguez, & Lila, 2015; Jewkes, Flood, & Lang, 2015; West & Wandrei, 2002; WHO, 2002; Worden & Carlson, 2005).

A growing number of scholars and international bodies have recognised the important role that public attitudes and responses regarding violence against women play in shaping the social climate in which the violence occurs, a social climate that can contribute either to perpetuating, or to reducing levels of violence against women in our societies (e.g. European Commission, 2010; Flood & Pease, 2009; Frye, 2007; Gracia, 2004; Gracia, García, & Lila 2009; WHO, 2002). As Webster et al. (2014) put it, "as a reflection of social norms, attitudes are also an important barometer of our progress in preventing and responding to violence against women" (p. 186). From this viewpoint, in order to achieve a significant reduction of the prevalence of violence against women, social and cultural attitudes that tolerate or justify this violence need to be addressed by analysing its prevalence, monitoring its changes and understanding its determinants (Campbell & Manganello, 2006; Flood & Pease, 2009; Gracia & Herrero, 2006; Gracia & Tomás, 2014; Heise & Kotsadam, 2015; Uthman, Moradi, & Lawoko, 2009; Waltermaurer, 2012; West & Wandrei, 2002; Worden & Carlson, 2005). As summarised in the 2013 National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey conducted in Australia by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation:

There is growing international consensus that the causes of violence against women can be eliminated. Communities and governments can prevent violence against women before it occurs, and attitudes have an important role to play...Attitudes that condone or tolerate violence are recognized as playing a central role in shaping the way individuals, organizations and communities respond to violence (VicHealth, 2010). Measuring community attitudes tells us how well we are progressing towards a violence-free society for all women. It also reveals the extent of the work that lies ahead, where to focus our efforts, and the messages and approaches likely to be effective (VicHealth, 2014, p.1).

## Research approach and procedure

Drawing from the above ideas, this research review aimed to address both attitudes towards violence against women as well as the factors that may influence them across all EU Member States. This research also aimed to be theoretically driven and conducted taking into account two main axes:

*Approach to studying attitudes.* Drawing from a social psychology framework, this review takes into account the three classical components of attitudes: cognitive, affective, and behavioural (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998, 2005, 2007; Maio, Olson, Bernard, & Luke, 2003). Within this framework, this review addressed issues such as perceptions and knowledge; attributions (e.g. victim-blaming), justifications and explanations; stereotypes and prejudices; intentions (whether or how to intervene) and responses.

*Approach to exploring potential factors influencing attitudes.* This review also considered factors that may influence attitudes. To do so, a multifactorial approach was used (e.g. Flood & Pease, 2009; Gracia, 2014; Heise, 1998; Taylor & Sorenson, 2005; Uthman et al., 2009; Waltermaurer, 2012). According to this approach, knowledge about correlates and determinants of public attitudes toward violence against women must take into account a number of factors working at different level of analysis, including cultural/societal, community, organisational, group, situational or individual levels. This kind of approach can help to better understand variations in attitudes both between and within countries by exploring whether these types of attitude are more common among certain socio-demographic defined groups and contexts (Gracia, 2014).

### Questionnaire and instructions for experts

In order to gather relevant information for this review, a specific tool was designed to be completed by the ENEGE expert network. The experts were asked to perform two tasks:

1. To thoroughly review all relevant surveys published in the last 5 years in their countries related to the aim of this study and provide the information requested in the questionnaire (the specific instructions to experts can be seen in Appendix I, Box I.1).
2. To identify quantitative and qualitative studies of high scientific quality conducted in their countries on attitudes towards violence against women published in relevant academic journals over the last 5 years (the specific instructions to experts can be seen in Appendix I, Box I.2).

### Experts reports and feedback

It is important to note the great difficulty we encountered in finding specific information on attitudes towards violence against women (both surveys and studies) reported by a number of experts (see Boxes 1.1 and 1.2). In fact, experts from three countries (Ireland, Greece and Hungary) found no surveys that had been conducted in the last five years. In Ireland, the last survey conducted with some information about attitudes towards violence against women was published in 2008. In Greece, only two national large-scale epidemiological surveys had been conducted on violence against women, in 2003 and 2004. The Hungarian expert explicitly points

out that in their country “it is impossible to find comparable and reliable data on domestic violence and also on attitudes on this issue”.

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**Box 1.1.** *Experts’ views about the availability of surveys on attitudes towards violence against women*

- ✓ **Denmark expert:** “...Sadly, we do lack information about the trends in attitudes towards violence against women, as it would help to clarify the reasons for the reported high prevalence of gender-based violence in Denmark (and the other Nordic countries)”.
- ✓ **Estonia expert:** “...only some (surveys) focus on attitudes towards violence. In some... the questions and the results do not (directly) reflect attitudes towards violence against women”.
- ✓ **France expert:** “Very few surveys and publications are relevant for this research review focusing on the past five years ...since French surveys tend to focus on the description and classification of violent situations, attitudes towards violence against women are barely explored. ...the French approach to violence against women tends to focus on the description and typology of violent events, disregarding attitudes towards violence”.
- ✓ **Greece expert:** “Despite the large body of research literature on intimate partner violence (IPV), which has grown over the last two decades, Greece still has very little empirical data on a national scale... Furthermore, there are no ad hoc attitudes surveys and studies regarding violence against women that could provide a better understanding of the independent variables associated with various attitudes. The only one available is not nationwide and regards attitudes on gender stereotypes and gender-based violence among young people”.
- ✓ **Hungary expert:** “...it is impossible to find comparable and reliable data on domestic violence and also on attitudes on this issue”.
- ✓ **Italy expert:** “...we have had considerable difficulty finding studies and surveys on attitudes towards violence against women in Italy”.

In relation to the studies published in high quality academic journals (indexed in the Web of Science Journal Citation Reports), six experts (from Cyprus, Estonia, Italy, Luxemburg, Poland and Sweden) again reported that they had found no studies with samples addressing attitudes towards violence against women in their countries.

**Box 1.2.** *Experts' views about the availability of studies on attitudes towards violence against women*

- ✓ **Denmark expert:** *"In the 1990's, some minor qualitative studies were conducted on attitudes, but none within the given timeframe of 5 years prior to the research review".*
- ✓ **Estonia expert:** *"I also checked the availability of scientific publications on VAW in the academic journals. I found no high quality publications".*
- ✓ **France expert:** *"In France there are very few publications in academic journals relying on quantitative or qualitative studies on the topic".*
- ✓ **Italy expert:** *"...concerning specific studies we haven't found anything worth describing: we haven't found any relevant study published in academic journals in the last 5 years".*
- ✓ **Poland expert:** *"We did not find any studies in journals indexed in the Journal Citation Reports".*

The Sweden expert provided an excellent summary of the general lack of specialised information on attitudes towards violence against women:

"...the result of my search for surveys addressing attitudes towards violence against women or any quantitative and qualitative studies addressing this issue in high quality academic journals is very meagre... this is an interesting result in itself, but it might also be seen as surprising and a mystery ...Given that male violence against women is a top political priority with considerable resources being allocated to this area, quite a lot has also been written about it and there is a lot of data about violence against women, **but not about attitudes towards violence against women.** When attitudes are mentioned, they are mentioned as something that has to be changed, but not what these attitudes are".

## Key areas related to public attitudes towards violence against women in EU surveys and studies

After a selection process (see Appendix II), 40 surveys in 19 countries were eventually included in this review, as they met the criteria established for inclusion. The data analysed for this report reflects the responses of around 85,000 European citizens. There were wide variations across countries regarding the availability of surveys. In some countries, no surveys were available in the requested period, whereas in others several were provided (see Appendix III and Appendix IV).

Very few studies addressing attitudes towards violence against women in EU countries were published in academic journals of high scientific quality in the last five years. In the end, 16 studies in 8 countries met the inclusion criteria for this review (see Appendix III and Appendix V).

In summary, this review was based on data from survey questionnaires and study summaries provided by ENEGE experts from all EU countries. After reviewing all the information provided by these experts, four key areas or topics related to public attitudes towards violence against women were identified across the survey questionnaires. Accordingly, the following four chapters in this review correspond to these key areas:

1. Public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem: awareness, definitions, acceptability and perceived severity;
2. Public understanding of the causes of violence against women: attributions, explanations and justifications;
3. Are women held responsible for the violence they suffer? Victim-blaming attitudes in EU surveys and studies;
4. Public knowledge, attitudes towards intervention, and responses in cases of violence against women.

### Abbreviations

In this report, the countries are referred to by their official abbreviation:

**Table 1.1.** *Country name abbreviations*

European Union (EU)			
AT	Austria	IE	Ireland
BE	Belgium	IT	Italy
BG	Bulgaria	LT	Lithuania
CZ	Czech Republic	LU	Luxembourg
CY	Republic of Cyprus	LV	Latvia
DK	Denmark	MT	Malta
DE	Germany	NL	The Netherlands
EE	Estonia	PL	Poland
EL	Greece	PT	Portugal
ES	Spain	RO	Romania
FI	Finland	SI	Slovenia
FR	France	SK	Slovakia
HR	Croatia	SE	Sweden
HU	Hungary	UK	United Kingdom

## 2. PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AS A SOCIAL PROBLEM: AWARENESS, DEFINITIONS, ACCEPTABILITY AND PERCEIVED SEVERITY

### Introduction

Public awareness of the prevalence of domestic violence against women in society is a first step in mobilizing public responses to tackle this problem. As Klein, Campbell, Soler and Ghez (1997) put it, “public recognition of the pervasiveness of domestic abuse reflects the level of violence that people acknowledge in their own lives” (p. 21). For Klein et al. (1997), social and personal accountability for taking action against violence against women comes from believing that the problem is widespread and poses a sufficient threat to the fabric of the community as to affect one’s own life. The perceived importance among the public of violence against women as a social problem, and the beliefs regarding how widespread the problem is, are important factors that shape the social environment in which the victims and perpetrators are embedded and influences how this social environment responds (Capezza & Arriaga, 2008; Flood & Pease, 2009; Gracia, 2014; WHO, 2002). According to Staub (2003), “when there is limited public discussion of an issue, a condition of pluralistic ignorance exists. If no one is concerned, the issue seems unimportant and action unnecessary...given inaction, individuals shift awareness away from these issues to lessen their feelings of danger, personal responsibility, and guilt” (p. 491).

In the context of how violence against women is perceived as a social problem, the way this violence is defined by the public is of particular importance. How this violence is defined will also influence what is or is not acceptable regarding the use of violence against women (Gracia, 2014). Violence against women in intimate relationships can be accepted and tolerated or considered as intolerable depending on the circumstances. For example, if violence against women by their partners is defined as such only when it becomes extreme, severe or repeated, it is more likely that some violence towards women in intimate relationships (e.g. verbal, psychological, physical violence without injuries) may be seen as acceptable or tolerated under

some circumstances (Gracia & Herrero, 2006; Loseke, 1989; Loseke & Gelles, 1993; Muehlenhard & Kimes, 1999). Loseke (1989) argued in this respect that victims of more extreme partner violence against women may be worthy of sympathy, whereas other women do not deserve sympathy because some violence is “tolerable”. As Heise (2011) put it:

“The acceptability of violence appears strongly linked to both the nature of the perceived transgression and the severity of abuse. Violence that is viewed as “without just cause” or is perceived as excessive is more likely to be condemned by women themselves and by others... it is important thus to understand the underlying beliefs that define the range of acceptable male and female behaviour” (p. 13).

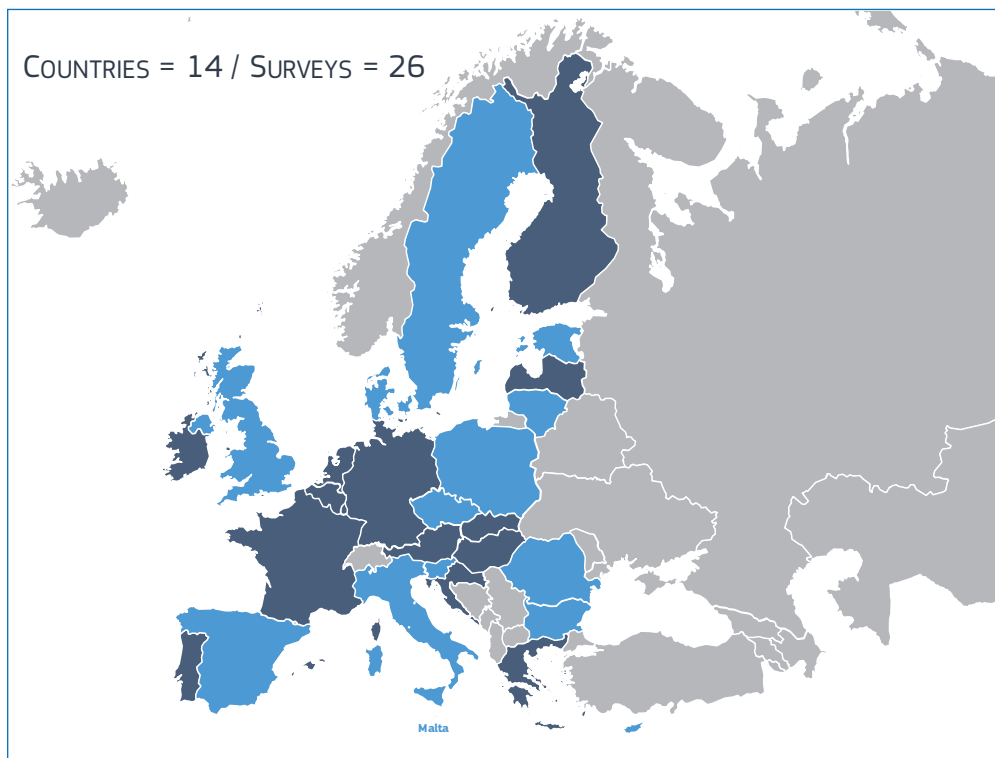
Public perceptions of violence against women as social problem were a main topic that emerged after reviewing all the survey questionnaires and study summaries provided for this review. These surveys included items addressing three different but related issues: public awareness of violence against women as a social problem, public definitions, and public acceptability and perceived severity of different types of violence against women (by both partners and non-partners). This section is organised into these three areas.

## Surveys and studies addressing public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem

### Surveys

Information on public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem was available in 26 surveys conducted in 14 countries; Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom (see Figure 2.1).

**Figure 2.1.** Countries with surveys addressing public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem



Surveys in each country (BG = 2; CY = 3; CZ = 2; DK = 1; EE = 2; ES = 4; IT = 1; LT = 2; MT = 1; PL = 4; RO = 1; SE = 1; SI = 1; UK = 1)

The samples used and types of violence addressed in these surveys are described in Table 2.1 (see Appendix IV for further information).



**Table 2.1.** Surveys, samples and type of violence

Code	Sample	n	Type of Violence*
BG-Survey 1	General population (men & women)	-	Domestic violence
BG-Survey 5	General population (men & women)	2000	Domestic & sexual violence
CY-Survey 1	General population (women)	1107	Domestic violence
CY-Survey 2	Young adults	1000	Violent behaviours in interpersonal (partner) relationships
CY-Survey 3	Young people	453	Gender-based violence
CZ-Survey 1	General population (women)	3000	Domestic violence
CZ-Survey 4	General population (women)	1500	Intimate partner violence
DK-Survey 2	General population (men & women)	2780	Dating violence
EE-Survey 2	General population (men & women)	1111	Gender-based violence
EE-Survey 4	General population (men & women)	1500	Intimate partner violence
ES-Survey 1	General population (women)	7898	Violence against women
ES-Survey 2	General population (men & women)	2580	Gender-based violence
ES-Survey 3	Adolescents and young people	2457	Gender-based Violence
ES-Survey 4	Students of secondary education and professionals	14001	Gender-based violence
IT-Survey 1	General population (women)	21000	Violence against women (partner and non-partner)
LT-Survey 1	Victims	89	Domestic violence
LT-Survey 2	Victims	515	Violence against women
MT-Survey 1	General population (women)	1200	Domestic violence
PL-Survey 1a	General population (men & women)	3000	Domestic violence
PL-Survey 2a	General population (men & women)	1500	Domestic violence
PL-Survey 3	Victims and professionals	545	Domestic violence
PL-Survey 4	General population (men & women)	3000	Domestic violence
RO-Survey 1	General population (men & women)	1050	Domestic violence
SE-Survey 2	General population (men & women)	2626	Rape
SI-Survey 3	Professionals	-	Dating violence
UK-Survey 4	Students of primary and secondary education	2395	Domestic abuse

\* As defined in the title of the survey (see Appendix IV)

The 26 surveys analysed used a wide variety of questions and formats to tap public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem (see Appendix VI, Box VI.1). These questions addressed three main related areas relevant to understanding public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem: public awareness of violence against women as a social problem, public definitions of violence against women, and public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women (both by partners and non-partners).

### Studies

Three studies with EU samples published in high quality academic journals in the last five years addressed issues related to public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem. Two of them, conducted in the Czech Republic, used university student samples to analyse the perception and definition of sexual ha-

harassment (*CZ-Study 2*; *CZ-Study 3*), and one conducted in Portugal used a large sample of young adults to analyse approval attitudes towards dating violence and its socio-demographic correlates (*PT-Study 1*) (see Table 2.2; see Appendix V for further information).

**Table 2.2.** *Studies, samples and type of violence*

Code	Sample	n	Type of Violence
CZ-Study 2	University students	700	Sexual harassment
CZ-Study 3	University students	832	Sexual harassment
PT-Study 1	Young people (aged 13 to 29)	4667	Intimate partner violence

## Public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem. Results of surveys and studies

As mentioned above, the information available for this study can be divided into three relevant issues: public awareness of violence against women as a social problem, public definitions of violence against women, and public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women. Below, we analysed results of surveys and studies regarding these three issues.

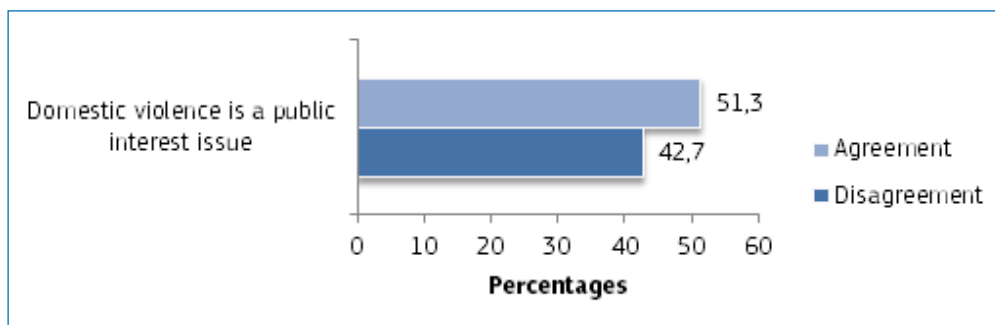
### Public awareness of violence against women as a social problem

Only four surveys addressed public awareness of how widespread is violence against women, and whether it is perceived as a social problem.

For example, regarding [partner violence against women](#), 55.8% of the young people surveyed from Cyprus believed that violence among couples was less pervasive in their country as compared to others (*CY-Survey 2*). Also, regarding perceptions of domestic violence, a survey among the general population conducted in Bulgaria (*BG-Survey 1*), asked “how do you treat domestic violence as a social phenomenon in the Bulgarian society?” Nearly half of respondents (49.2%) considered that this was a personal problem that happens sporadically; whereas the other half (50.8%) believed that this was a social problem (i.e. widespread and of concern for the whole society). In this survey, men tended to view domestic violence as a private matter that should not come out of the family, and the majority of women believed that violence was primarily a social problem (also blaming society for its passivity and indifference).

Also, with regard to domestic violence, a survey conducted in Romania (*RO-Survey 1*) asked “Why do you think that Romania is among the EU countries with high rates of violence against women?” Only 23.2% of respondents agreed with the statement “domestic violence has always been present in Romania”. The same survey asked whether “domestic violence is an issue of public interest” and, interestingly, just over half of the population agreed with that statement. 42.7% of the general population did not consider domestic violence as an issue of public interest, which suggests that this is a problem that has not yet reached a prominent place among the public concerns (see Figure 2.2).

**Figure 2.2.** Public awareness of violence against women as a social problem: Domestic violence (RO-Survey 1. General population)



It is also interesting to note that in this Romanian survey, perceptions of domestic violence as a public interest issue vary across groups of the population with different socio-demographic characteristics. For example, this view is more common among women, young people and urban areas (with differences ranging between 4% and 12%). Quite surprising are the particularly large differences in perceptions of domestic violence as a public interest issue between different education and income groups (with differences of 37 and 17 percentage points for education and income respectively). For example, 62% of those with higher education agreed with the statement as compared to 25% among the less educated (see Table 2.3).

**Table 2.3.** “Domestic violence is a public interest issue”: disaggregated information (RO-Survey 1. General population)

	Agreement %	Disagreement %	DK/CA %
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	49.0	45.9	5.1
Female	53.5	39.7	6.8
<i>Age</i>			
18-35	53.8	39.2	6.9
36-50	52.1	43.8	4.1
51-65	47.5	46.2	6.3
Over 65	47.7	44.9	7.5
<i>Education</i>			
Primary	25.4	63.5	11.1
Secondary	50.7	44.4	4.9
Tertiary	62.9	31.0	6.1
<i>Income type</i>			
Low income/no income	43.5	47.0	9.5
Medium income	53.2	41.8	5.0
High income	61.1	33.3	5.6
<i>Area</i>			
Urban	58.9	35.3	5.9
Rural	42.0	51.8	6.2
<i>Total</i>	51.3	42.7	6.0

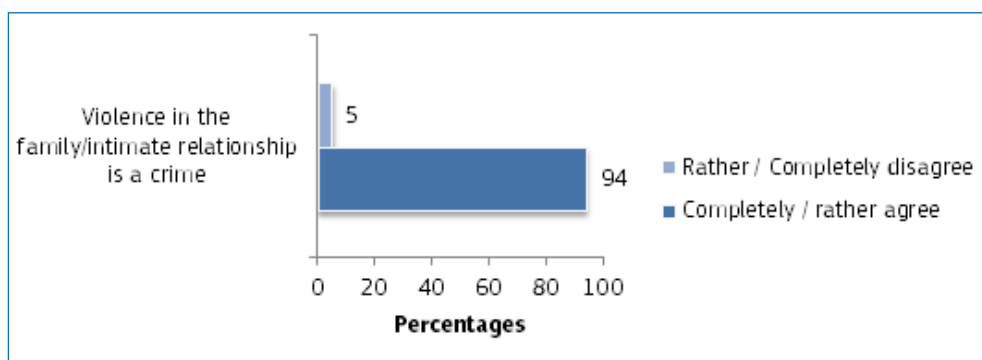
Finally, regarding **sexual violence** against women, only one survey addressed public awareness as a social problem of this type of violence. This survey was conducted in the Czech Republic (*CZ-Survey 1*) and asked respondents to estimate the extent of violent sexual criminality and rape. 72% of respondents stated that these crimes have become more frequent in recent years. The survey found that the perceived scope of the problem was much higher than numbers of violent sexual crimes reported in the official statistics, as respondents usually overestimated the number of registered sexual crimes and rape.

### Public definitions of violence against women

With respect to how violence against women is defined by surveys' respondents, again only a small number of surveys and studies addressed this issue.

For example, this issue was indirectly addressed in a survey conducted in Estonia (*EE-Survey 2*), by asking respondents to assess the extent to which they agreed with the following statement: "Violence in the family/intimate relationship is a crime". Only 5% of the general population disagreed with this statement (however, no reference to the victim's gender was made in this question) (see Figure 2.3).

**Figure 2.3.** Public definitions of violence against women: Violence in intimate relationships (*EE-Survey 2. General population*)



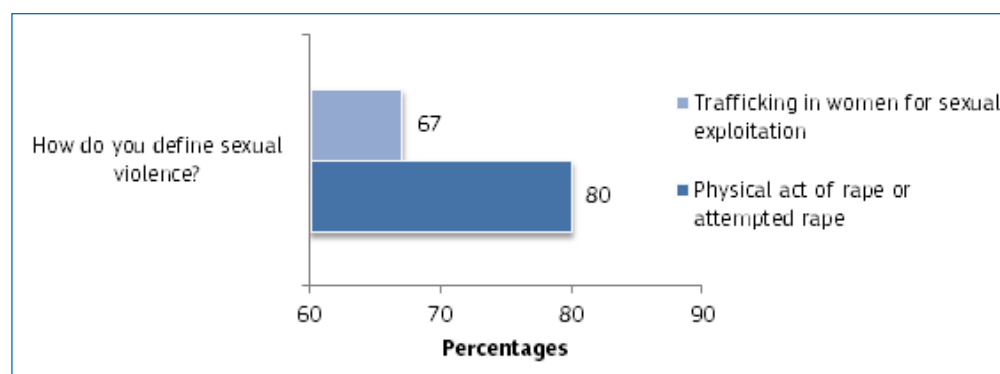
The public definition of **violence against women** was addressed in a survey conducted in Cyprus (*CY-Survey 1*) with a sample of women from the general population, asking whether respondents considered a wide list of behaviours as acts of violence by their spouse/partner. As Table 2.4 shows, there was a high level of agreement around most of the behaviours. Only 6 behaviours in the list have a level of agreement below 80%.

**Table 2.4.** Public definitions of violence against women: Intimate partner violence (CY-Survey 1. Women general population)

Behaviour	%	Behaviour	%
Punching/kicking	97	Shaking	86
Knife cutting	97	Swearing	85
Hot water burning	97	Using of bad language	85
Cigarette burning	96	Banning me from contacting friends	84
Hitting on body and face	96	Bullying by shouting	84
Threatening to kill someone else	96	Preventing me from working	83
Threatening to kill me	95	Pushing	82
Hair pulling	95	Threatening self-harm	82
Threatening physical integrity	95	Insulting me in the presence of third persons	81
Threatening to injure children	95	Banning me from talking to third persons	81
Slapping	94	Financial deprivation and control	80
Object throwing	94	Controlling correspondence, mobile phone and purse	78
Forced sexual relations	93	Neglecting emotional needs	77
Isolation in enclosed space	93	Banning me from going out with friends	77
Threatening to hit me	92	Threatening looks	71
Threatening to leave me	88		
Preventing me from meeting my needs (sleep, medical care and medication)	87	Avoiding communication (not talking to me)	68

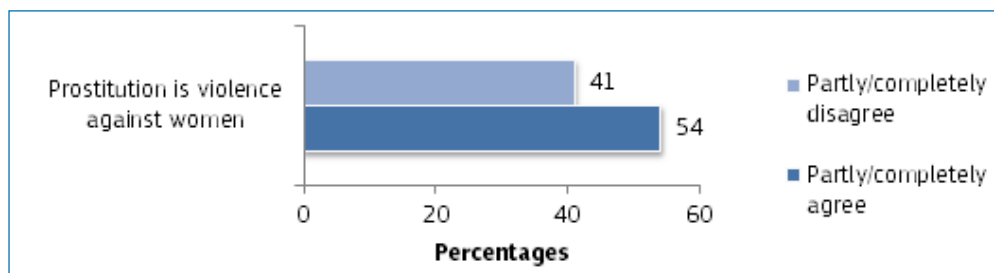
Three surveys specifically addressed public definitions of **sexual violence**. In a Bulgarian survey (*BG-Survey 5*) with a general population sample, 80% of respondents defined sexual violence as a “physical act of rape or attempted rape”, and 65% considered trafficking in women for sexual exploitation as sexual violence (Figure 2.4).

**Figure 2.4.** Public definitions of violence against women: Sexual violence (*BG-Survey 5. General population*)



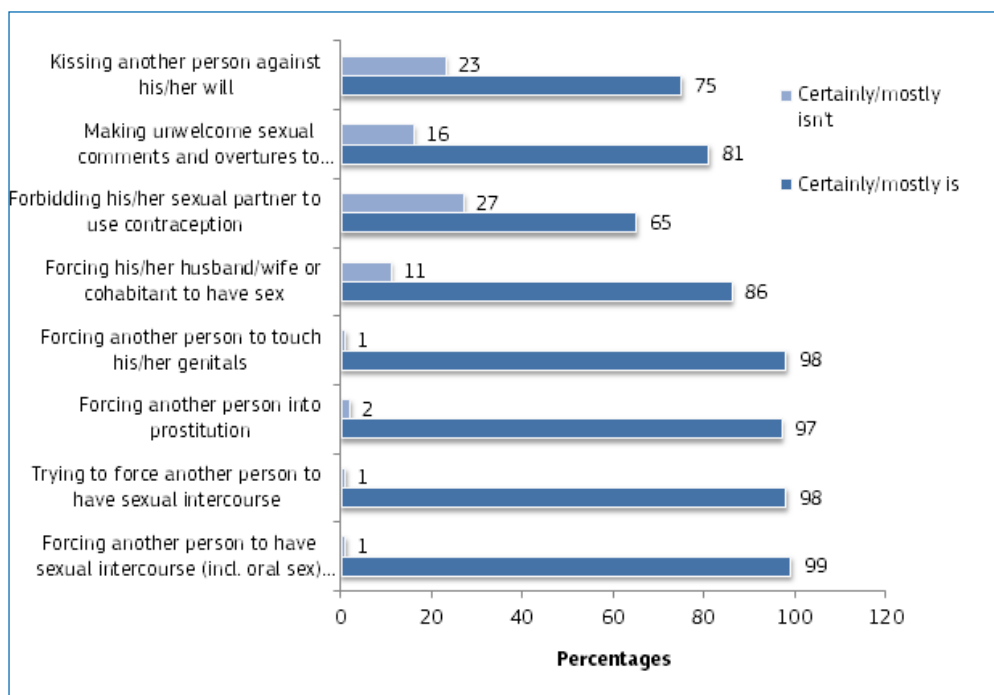
An Estonian survey (*EE-Survey 2*), also with the general population, included some statements about prostitution. One of them referred to whether respondents considered prostitution as violence against women. 54% of respondents agreed (completely or partly) with that statement (41% either completely or partly disagreed) (see Figure 2.5).

**Figure 2.5.** Public definitions of violence against women: Prostitution (EE-Survey 2. General population)



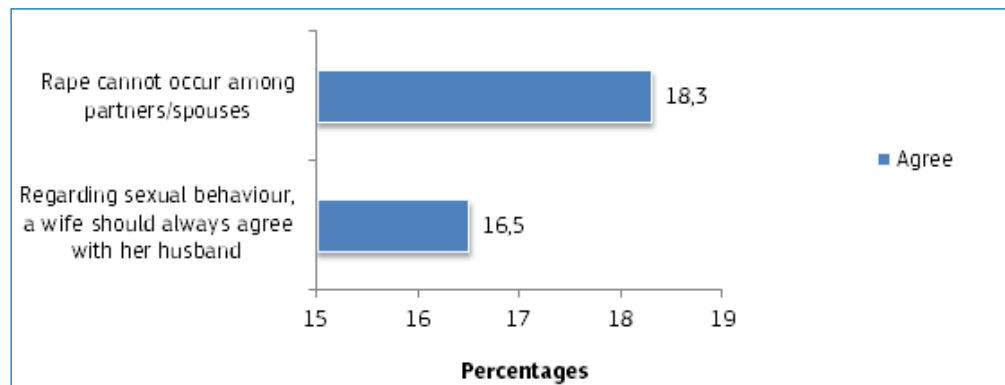
In the same survey respondents were also asked “Do you think it is sexual violence when someone does the following...?” (the victims’ gender was not specified). As Figure 2.6 shows, there was almost complete agreement on four of the listed behaviours. Levels of disagreement were higher in other behaviours. For example, 16% did not consider unwelcomed sexual comments and overtures as sexual violence. Furthermore, 27% did not consider forbidding contraception to be sexual violence.

**Figure 2.6.** Public definitions of violence against women: Sexual violence (EE-Survey 2. General population)



Also, in a survey conducted in Poland (PL-Survey 4) on the general population, 18.3% of respondents considered that rape was something that cannot occur among partners or spouses, while 16.5% of respondents agreed that a wife should always agree with her husband regarding sexual behaviour (see Figure 2.7).

**Figure 2.7.** Public definitions of violence against women: Sexual violence (PL-Survey 4. General population)



Finally, two studies conducted in the Czech Republic with university students' samples addressed the definition of sexual harassment. The first study (*The perception and definition of sexual harassment by Czech university students; CZ-Study 2*) showed that despite the high occurrence of sexual harassment (67% of students had encountered some form of sexual harassment during their studies, 22% had encountered more serious forms, like unwanted sexual attention or sexual coercion, and over 65% of students had experienced gender harassment), the students rarely discussed their experience in terms of sexual harassment. Only 2.8% of women and 2.5% of men responded positively to a direct question about whether they had been sexually harassed by a teacher or another faculty employee. Students perceived sexual harassment as a remote problem that did not relate to them. The second study (*Sexual harassment at universities: theoretical definition, methodological approach, research results; CZ-Study 3*), also showed that students held a narrow definition of sexual harassment, as 78% of students had personally experienced teacher behaviours that could be characterised as sexual harassment, but only 3% of them said explicitly that they had been sexually harassed. Sexual harassment was considered to be primarily a behaviour of sexual nature, such as sexual violence or extortion.

### Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women

The acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women, mainly in intimate partner relationships, was the issue regarding public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem that had the most information available in the surveys reviewed, and was also the issue with the greater variety of samples, including adults from the general population, adolescents and young people, as well as victims, and perpetrators. This issue was, however, addressed only in one study.

With regard to [partner violence against women](#), a number of surveys addressed how serious or acceptable different incidents or behaviours were considered. For example, in a survey conducted in Spain (*ES-Survey 2*) on a sample from the general population, respondents were asked about the acceptability (inevitable, acceptable in some circumstances, or totally unacceptable) of a list of behaviours that can occur between partners (no gender distinction was made regarding who was the partner at the receiving end). As shown in Table 2.5, between 60.5% and 98.6% of interviewees found the list of behaviours totally unacceptable. Interestingly, some

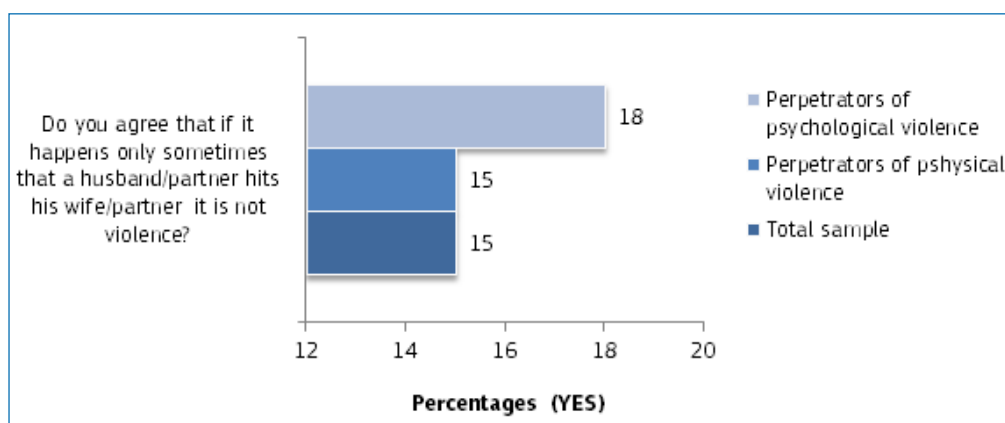
behaviours (telling the partner what to do, or controlling them) were considered as acceptable in some circumstances. Constant quarrelling was considered as inevitable by 9.1% of respondents.

**Table 2.5.** Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Intimate partner violence (ES-Survey 2. General population)

	Inevitable %	Acceptable in some circumstances %	Totally Unacceptable %
Constant quarrelling	9.1	29.5	60.5
Insulting and despising the partner	0.6	2.4	96.4
Controlling the partner's comings and goings	2.3	18.9	77.6
Preventing the partner from meeting family and friends	0.6	3	95.8
Verbal threats	1	5	93.5
Pushing and beating when angry	0.3	0.6	98.6
Refusing to allow the partner to work or study	0.6	3.8	94.7
Telling the partner what they can or cannot do	1	13.1	84.7
Denigrating the partner in front of the children	1	5	93.1
Forced sexual relationships	0.2	1.5	97.2

In Poland, a set of surveys also addressed the acceptability of different types of violent behaviours by partners. For example, 9% of men from the general population agreed that “insulting a wife/partner by a husband/partner during a quarrel is normal (acceptable)”. 6% of women also agreed with that statement (*PL-Survey 1a*). In another survey, 15% of respondents agreed that if a husband only hits his wife occasionally, then it is not violence. This question was also put to a subsample of perpetrators (*PL-Survey 2a*) and, interestingly, the results were quite similar (see Figure 2.8). A similar question was asked in an Estonian survey (*EE-Survey 4*), where 12% of men and 9% of women from the general population partly or completely agreed with the statement that “physical punishment of a spouse (cohabitant) is sometimes inevitable”.

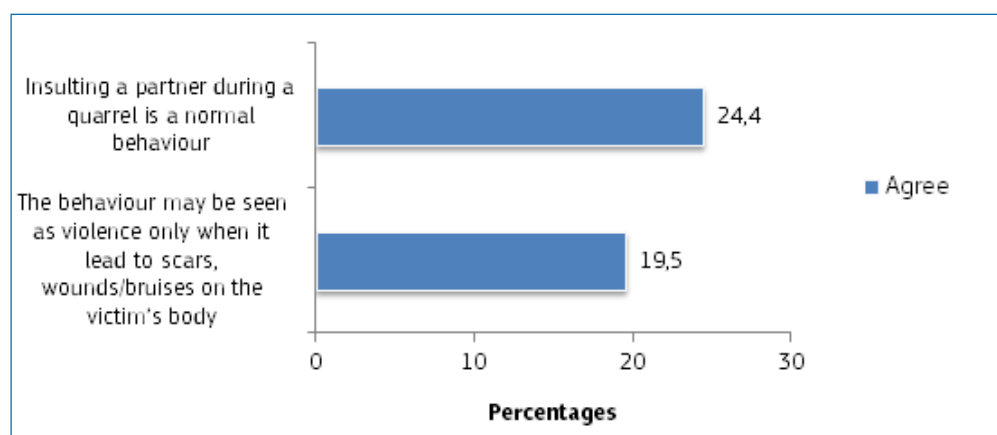
**Figure 2.8.** Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Domestic violence (*PL-Survey 2a. General population and subsamples of perpetrators*)





Another Polish survey (*PL-Survey 4*) showed that for a sizable percentage of the population (24.4%), insulting a partner during a quarrel was considered a normal behaviour, and also surprisingly, that nearly 20% of the population considered that violence only occurs when there is physical damage (see Figure 2.9).

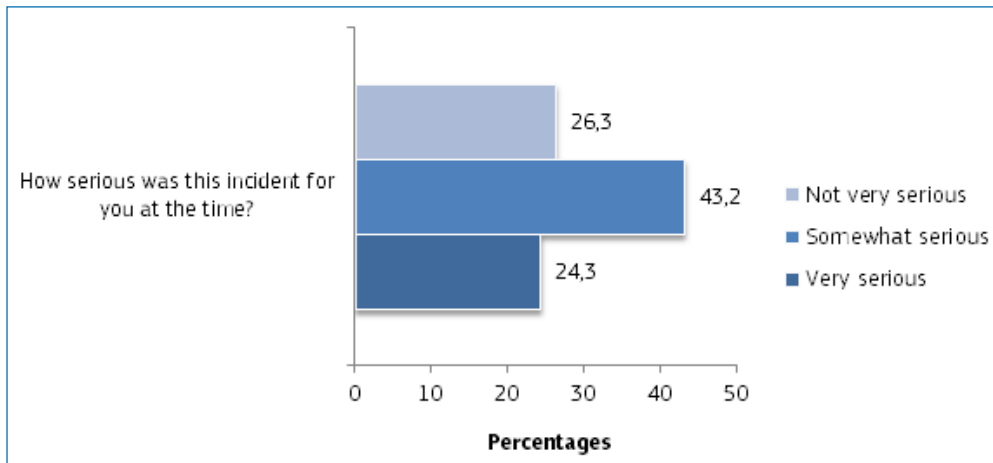
**Figure 2.9.** Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Domestic violence (*PL-Survey 4. General population*)



With regard to the perceptions of victims of intimate partner violence against women, in a survey conducted in the Czech Republic (*CZ-Survey 1*), a subsample of women victims were asked whether they defined their experiences as intimate partner violence. Respondents were asked to state *what particular forms of behaviour they had encountered from their intimate partner*. 16 items were used including various forms of violent behaviour ranging from economic and psychological violence (such as preventing access to shared money and limiting contact with friends or relatives) to a very severe physical or sexual assault using a weapon or threatening the victim with the use of guns or killing. Aside from physical, psychological and sexual violence, domestic violence included damaging or destroying property (particularly belongings cherished by the victim), as well as any harassment or pressure from the aggressor against the victim's will. Surprisingly, only 55% of women who experienced at least one attack labelled the behaviour of their intimate partners (including physical, psychological aggression, as well as a verbal aggression and many other forms of violent behaviour) as domestic violence/intimate partner violence. However, 39% of victims did not label the behaviour as partner violence, and 5% did not know.

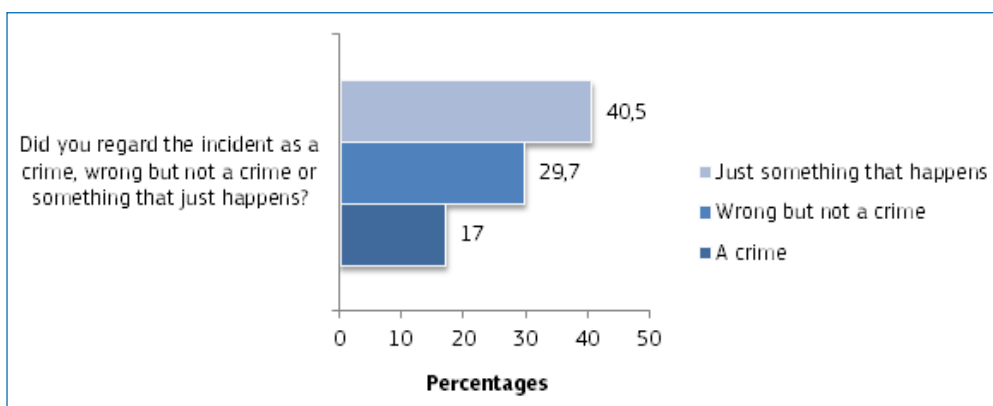
In another survey conducted in the same country (*CZ-Survey 4*), a subsample of female victims was asked about how serious the incident of partner violence they had suffered was. As can be seen in Figure 2.10, 26.3% of respondents saw the incident as "not very serious", 43% as "somewhat serious", and 24.3% as "very serious" (the rest of the respondents did not know or did not answer).

**Figure 2.10.** Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Intimate partner violence (CZ-Survey 4. Women, subsample of victims)



In the same survey (CZ-Survey 4), some noteworthy results emerged, when victims were asked about whether or not they considered the incident of partner violence as a crime. Interestingly, only 17% of women victims considered the incident as a crime, whereas 29.7% considered that it was something wrong but not a crime, and a substantial percentage of respondents (40.5%) regarded the incident as “just something that happens” (see Figure 2.11). These results suggest that in the Czech Republic, attitudes of acceptability of partner violence are still widespread even among women victims.

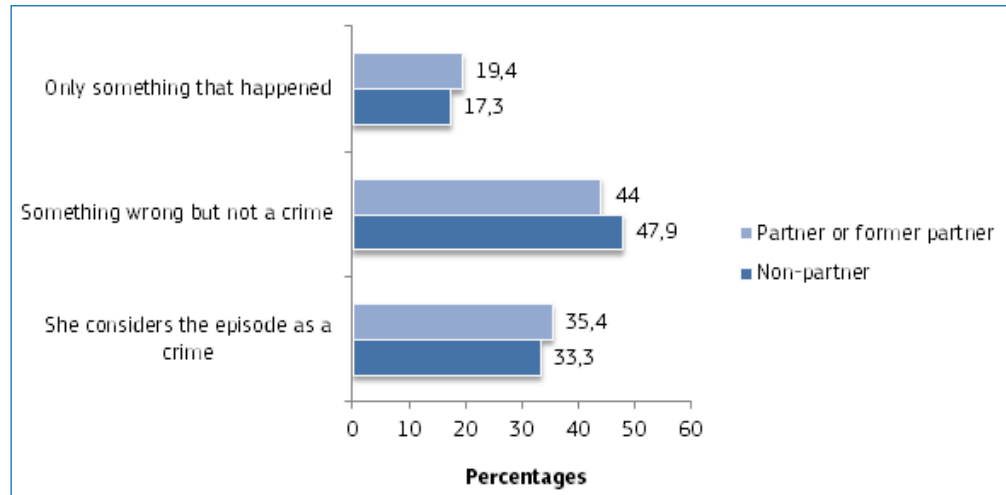
**Figure 2.11.** Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Intimate partner violence (CZ-Survey 4. Women, subsample of victims)



A survey conducted in Italy (IT-Survey 1) with a sample of the general population also asked victims who had suffered violence at some point in their lives by either a partner, ex-partner or non-partner whether they considered the violence as a crime. Regarding partner violence against women, 35.4% of women victims considered the violence as a crime, however 44% considered that the episode of violence was something wrong but not a crime and 19.4% considered the violence as “only something that happened”. Interestingly, regarding violence by non-partners, women victims responded to the same questions in a similar way. These results suggest

that in Italy, levels of acceptability of violence by partners and non-partners are both high and similar (see Figure 2.12).

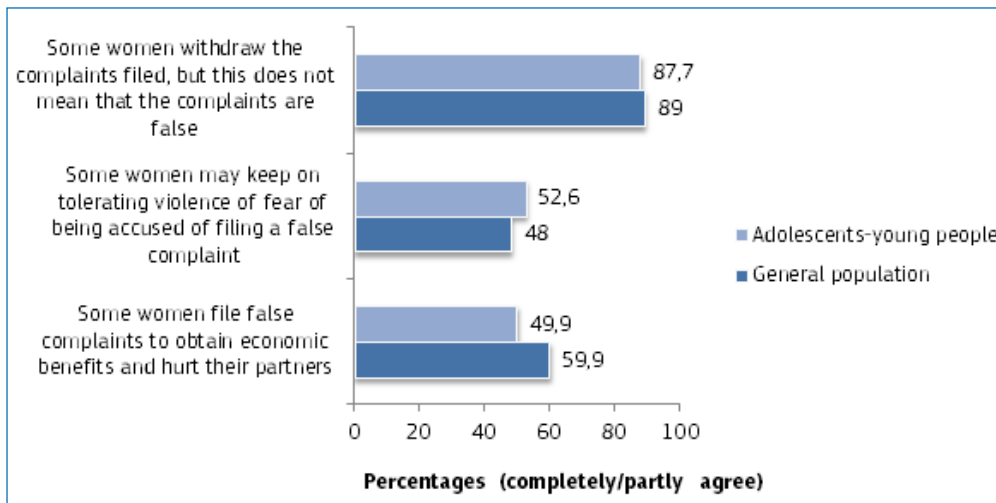
**Figure 2.12.** Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Violence against women (IT-Survey 1. Women general population)



Information about the acceptability of violence against women can also be drawn from surveys by examining whether the perceived severity was a reason for not leaving the relationship or for not reporting it to the authorities. For example, in a survey conducted in Spain (*ES-Survey 1*) 14.1% of women victims of partner violence did not report the violence because “I didn’t take it that seriously”. Two other Spanish surveys (*ES-Survey 2* and *3*) asked respondents whether one reason why women do not file a complaint against the perpetrators is that “They do not consider aggressions as something serious”: 7.1% of adolescents and young people, and 5% of the general population agreed with this statement.

An indirect approach to tap public perceptions of the seriousness of violence against women is to ask about beliefs regarding false accusation. Of all the surveys analysed for this review, only one country included questions regarding false complaints. Two surveys conducted in Spain among the general population (*ES-Survey 2*), and among adolescents and young people (*ES-Survey 3*), asked respondents to what extent they agreed with a set of questions addressing false complaints. As Figure 2.13 shows, around 50% of respondents completely or partly agreed with the following statement “Some women file false complaints to obtain economic benefits and hurt their partners”. Interestingly, the results also showed that around 50% of respondents also agreed that “Some women may keep on tolerating violence for fear of being accused of filing a false complaint”. It is also surprising that over 90% of respondents agreed (completely or partly) that “Some women withdraw the complaints filed, but this does not mean that the complaints are false”.

**Figure 2.13.** Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Gender-based violence (ES-Survey 2 and 3. General population and adolescents-young people)



A survey in Lithuania (*LT-Survey 1*) indirectly assessed the acceptability of partner violence by asking victims why they did not leave the violent relationship: 60% of respondents selected as a possible response that “my intimate partner promised to change”. In another Lithuanian survey among elderly women victims of violence (*LT-Survey 2*), 68.4% of respondents did not want to talk about it or report the most serious incident of abuse because they “thought the incident was too trivial”. Also in Malta (*MT-Survey 1*), 21% of victims considered the experienced violence as normal or not serious. Finally, in Poland (*PL-Survey 3*), among the reasons for not reporting the violence to the police, 11% of the victims thought that “it is not important enough”.

A number of surveys specifically addressed young people’s perceptions of partner violence, including [dating violence](#). For example, a survey conducted in Cyprus among young people (*CY-Survey 3*) asked whether a list of behaviours with the partner were acceptable. As Table 2.6 shows, as compared to girls, boys clearly thought that some of those behaviours with the girlfriend were “always OK”. For example, between 15% and 17% of boys considered that it was always OK to “set limits on how his girlfriend dresses”, “set limits on where his girlfriend goes” or “push a girl into having sex if she has been flirting with him all night”. 8% of boys considered that it was “always OK” to “shout at his girlfriend”, “to push a girl into having sex if they have been dating” or even “to hit his girlfriend if she has been unfaithful”.

**Table 2.6.** Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Dating violence (CY-Survey 3. Young people)

Statement/Explanation	Overall	Boys	Girls
	Always OK %	Always OK %	Always OK %
It is OK for a boy to shout at his girlfriend if she is constantly nagging/arguing	7	8	6
It is OK for a boy to shout at his girlfriend if she is not treating him with respect	6	8	4
It is OK for a boy to set limits on how his girlfriend dresses	6	15	1
It is OK for a boy to set limits on where his girlfriend goes	6	10	4
It is OK for a boy to push a girl into having sex if she has been flirting with him all night	9	17	3
It is OK for a boy to spy on his partner's mobile phone	4	8	2
It is OK for a boy to push a girl into having sex if they have been dating	4	8	1
It is OK to threaten to leave a partner in order to achieve something you want	2	2	2
It is OK for a boy to hit his girlfriend if she has been unfaithful	4	8	1
Threatening to hit a partner is OK as long as you don't actually hit him/her	3	2	2
It is OK for a boy to hit his girlfriend if she is constantly nagging/arguing	3	3	2
It is OK for a boy to push a girl into having sex if he has spent a lot of money on her	4	2	2
It is OK for a boy to hit his girlfriend if she is not treating him with respect	2	3	1

With regard to the acceptability of partner violence among adolescents and young people, a survey conducted in Spain (*ES-Survey 3*) asked how acceptable (Inevitable, Acceptable in some circumstances, Totally unacceptable) a list of behaviours that can occur between partners were (no gender distinction was made regarding the partner at the receiving end). As shown in Table 2.7, between 54.5% and 98.1% of young respondents (60.5% and 98.6% of respondents over 18) found the proposed list of behaviours totally unacceptable. Some behaviours (telling the partner what to do, or to control them), however, were considered as acceptable in some circumstances. Interestingly, constant quarrelling was considered as inevitable by 9.8% of respondents.

**Table 2.7.** Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Gender based violence (ES-Survey 3. Students)

	<b>Inevitable %</b>	<b>Acceptable in some circumstances %</b>	<b>Totally unacceptable %</b>	<b>Don't know %</b>
Constant quarrelling	9.8	35	54.5	0.7
Insulting and despising the partner	0.7	3.3	95.3	0.4
Controlling the partner's comings and goings	3	23.2	73.1	0.4
Preventing the partner from meeting family and friends	0.8	2.9	95.7	0.4
Verbal threats	0.4	4.2	94.9	0.3
Pushing and beating when angry	0.2	1	98.1	0.3
Not allowing the partner to work or study	0.8	2.7	95.8	0.3
Telling the partner what they can or cannot do	1.1	12.7	85.3	0.5
Denigrating the partner in front of the children	1.1	3.7	94.1	0.7
Forced sexual relationships	0.4	1.4	97.1	0.7

Perceptions of the severity of violence against women in dating relationships were also addressed in another survey conducted in Spain with a sample of students (*ES-Survey 4*). Respondents were asked whether a list of 15 behaviours, which included physical, sexual, psychological (control), and psychological (emotional) violence could be considered “mistreatment of a girl by a boy” (see Table 2.8). It is noteworthy that some behaviours, such as “Breaking something of hers”, “Telling her whom she can or cannot talk to, or where she can go”, “Controlling everything she does”, “Recording her with a mobile phone or video camera”, “Taking pictures of her when she does not know” or “Telling her that he will hurt her if she leaves him” were considered as “a bit” mistreatment by a percentage of students ranging from 25% to 9.40%. It was also quite surprising to see the percentage of students (between 8% and 10%) that saw some behaviours as “not at all” mistreatment (e.g. “Making her feel scared”, “Insulting her”, “Telling her whom she can or cannot talk to, or where to go”, “Trying to stop her seeing her friends”, “Controlling everything she does”, “Recording her with a mobile phone or video camera”, “Taking pictures of her when she does not know”, or “Telling her that he will hurt her if she leaves him”). 6.3% even thought that beating a girl is “not at all” mistreatment. These results suggest that in Spain, acceptance of violence against women in intimate relationships among young people is to some extent still quite prevalent.

**Table 2.8.** “Mistreatment of a girl by a boy?” Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Dating violence (ES-Survey 4. Students)

	Not at all %	A bit %	Quite %	A lot %
Telling her that she is not worth anything	9.0	15.5	34.9	40.7
Contradicting her	53.4	36.8	6.4	3.5
Making her feel scared	8.9	9.5	30.2	51.5
Insulting her	8.6	6.0	28.8	56.6
Breaking something of hers	15.3	25.3	27.3	32.2
Telling her whom she can or cannot talk to, where to go	9.4	12.6	32.4	45.6
Trying to stop her seeing her friends	9.2	9.8	31.7	49.3
Controlling everything she does	9.5	21.2	38.9	30.4
Insisting on having a sexual relationship when she does not want to	6.6	8.6	27.8	57.0
Telling her that he will hurt her if she leaves him	9.9	9.4	17.0	63.7
Beating her	6.3	1.6	5.6	86.6
Forcing her to do things she does not want to through threats	6.5	2.7	19.2	71.6
Recording her with a mobile phone or video camera, or take pictures of her when she does not know	8.0	14.0	35.1	42.9
Sending her internet or text messages, scaring, offending or threatening her	6.4	3.2	19.0	71.4
Disseminating messages, insults or images of her without her permission	6.7	4.2	21.8	67.3

Another study on dating violence conducted in Portugal on a large sample of young people aged 13 to 29 (4667 respondents; *Violence in juvenile dating relationships self-reported prevalence and attitudes in a Portuguese sample; PT-Study 1*) showed that support for violence was higher among males, participants with lower educational and social status and those who had never been involved in a dating relationship. The best predictors of violence were educational status and attitudes toward the partner.

How young people perceived the severity of different behaviours between dating partners was approached in Slovenia by asking high school advisors how male and female pupils classified behaviours which included psychological and physical violence (*SI-Survey 3*). These behaviours were classified into 5 groups (Not violence, Mild violence, Violence, Strong violence, Very strong violence). From the school advisors' point of view, there were some differences between boys and girls regarding how serious the different types of violence were (see Table 2.9).

**Table 2.9.** Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Dating violence (SI-Survey 3. Professionals: High school advisors)

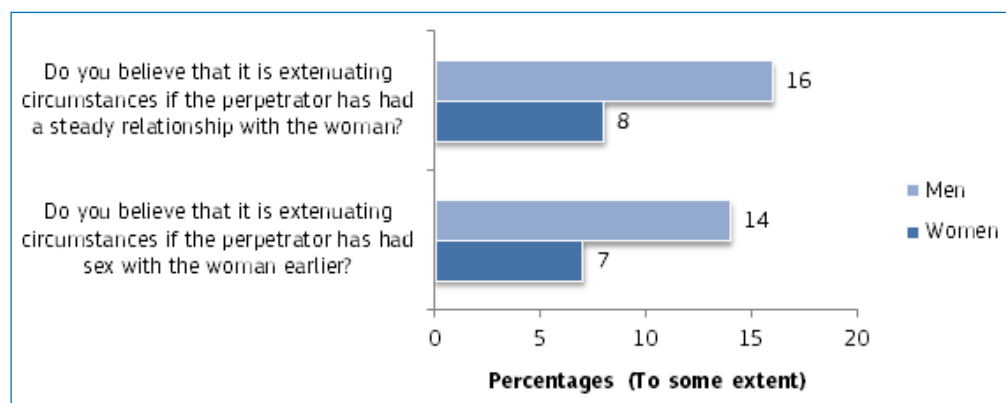
	<b>FEMALE pupils</b>
Not violence	- Being jealous of friends
Mild violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If a girlfriend/boyfriend has to continuously report what she/he is doing, where she/he is going when they are not together</li> <li>- Blaming a girlfriend/boyfriend for their own problems</li> <li>- Persuading a girlfriend/boyfriend to do things they don't want to by saying "if you loved me, you'd do this"</li> <li>- Making decisions for a girlfriend/boyfriend, such as what she/he will wear, where she/he will go</li> <li>- Telling a girlfriend/boyfriend that they are too fat and telling her/him to go on a diet</li> <li>- Insisting that a girlfriend/boyfriend arrive at a date exactly on time</li> <li>- Checking calls and text messages or reading the e-mails of the girlfriend/boyfriend without her/his permission</li> </ul>
Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Insulting, humiliating or offending in public</li> <li>- Restricting or prohibiting gatherings with friends</li> <li>- Frequently getting angry or furious with a girlfriend/boyfriend</li> <li>- Stalking</li> <li>- Apologizing for violence frequently by saying "I'm sorry, I'll never do this again"</li> <li>- Forced kissing or sexual intercourse</li> <li>- Touching in a sexual way if a girlfriend/boyfriend does not want to</li> <li>- Calling a girlfriend/boyfriend stupid</li> </ul>
Strong violence	- Restricting or forbidding contact with family
Very strong violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Breaking or throwing things around during an argument</li> <li>- Beating, kicking, pinching, pulling hair, choking, twisting hands</li> <li>- Forcing to use alcohol or drugs</li> <li>- Threatening a girlfriend/boyfriend to harm their boyfriend/girlfriend or family, if she/he leaves them</li> </ul>
<b>Classification of violence</b>	<b>MALE pupils</b>
Not violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Being jealous of friends</li> <li>- Making decisions for a girlfriend/boyfriend, such as what she/he will wear, where she/he will go</li> <li>- Calling a girlfriend/boyfriend stupid</li> <li>- Insisting that a girlfriend/boyfriend arrive at a date exactly on time</li> </ul>
Mild violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If a girlfriend/boyfriend has to continuously report what she/he is doing, where she/he is going when they are not together</li> <li>- Blaming a girlfriend/boyfriend for their own problems</li> <li>- Telling a girlfriend/boyfriend that they are too fat and telling her/him to go on a diet</li> </ul>
Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Insulting, humiliating or offending in public</li> <li>- Restricting or prohibiting gatherings with friends</li> <li>- Frequently getting angry or furious with a girlfriend/boyfriend</li> <li>- Stalking</li> <li>- Breaking or throwing things around during an argument</li> <li>- Forcing to use alcohol or drugs</li> <li>- Apologizing for violence frequently by saying "I'm sorry, I'll never do this again"</li> <li>- Persuading a girlfriend/boyfriend to do things they don't want to by saying "if you loved me, you'd do this"</li> <li>- Checking calls and text messages or reading the e-mails of the girlfriend/boyfriend without her/his permission</li> </ul>
Strong violence	/
Very strong violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Beating, kicking, pinching, pulling hair, choking, twisting hands</li> <li>- Threatening a girlfriend/boyfriend to harm their boyfriend/girlfriend or family, if she/he leaves them</li> <li>- Forced kissing or sexual intercourse</li> <li>- Touching in a sexual way if a girlfriend/boyfriend does not want to</li> <li>- Restricting or forbidding contact with the family</li> </ul>



The acceptability of cases of dating violence can also be analysed by examining whether the perceived severity is a reason for not leaving the relationship or for not reporting it to the authorities. For example, in a survey conducted in Denmark addressing dating violence (*DK-Survey 2*), 24% of young people interviewed agreed that one reason for not reporting the violence was that it was “not serious enough”. In another Spanish survey among adolescents (*ES-Survey 4*), 26.4% of female respondents would not leave the relationship with a boyfriend after an incident of dating violence; instead, they would “Ask him not to do it again and give him a second chance”. In another survey conducted in Slovenia (*SI-Survey 3*), 10% of school teachers and advisors thought that in a situation of dating violence, young people “Generally don’t define events as violence”, and 6% that the partners would consider these situations as mistakes and apologise.

Finally, some surveys specifically addressed the acceptability or perceived severity of violence against women in certain situations that may be considered as extenuating circumstances. For example, in a UK survey of students (*UK-Survey 4*), 6.3% of boys considered that it is OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if he is drunk (only 1.5% of girls agreed with this statement). Regarding rape, a survey conducted in Sweden among the general population (*SE-Survey 2*) asked respondents whether they believed that it was an extenuating circumstance if the perpetrator was under the influence of alcohol or drugs. 11% of men believed that this was the case to some extent. It is also surprising that some women (8%) agreed to some extent with this statement. On the other hand, the same survey asked if having a steady relationship with the woman or having had sex before with a woman were also extenuating circumstance. Noticeably, 16% and 14% of men agreed respectively with these statements, while the percentages were halved for women (see Figure 2.14).

**Figure 2.14.** Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women: Rape (*SE-Survey 2. General population*)



### Results of the 2010 Eurobarometer and the 2014 FRA Survey

Two European-level surveys allowed us to compare some of the information provided by the surveys analysed for this review regarding the public perception of violence against women as a social problem. For example, regarding public awareness of this social problem, in the 2010 Eurobarometer an average of 78% of Europeans recognised that domestic violence was either a fairly or very common problem. This survey also showed that this view varied widely across countries with percentages ranging from 91% (Italy) to 50% (Czech Republic). Regarding the same question,

the 2014 FRA survey on violence against women in the EU produced similar percentages with a women-only sample. The average for the EU was the same as the Eurobarometer, and the variation across countries was also similar (i.e. from 93% in Portugal to 54% in the Czech Republic). In the surveys analysed in this review, little information was available on public awareness of how widespread violence against women is. However, what information was available suggested the importance of taking socio-demographic information into account to better understand not only variations across countries but also variations within country across different socio-demographic groups, as the results of Romania showed.

Regarding the acceptability of violence against women, the 2010 Eurobarometer showed that in the European Union an average of 84% considered that domestic violence was unacceptable and should always be punishable by law. Again there was a substantial variation across countries (i.e. from 93% in Greece to 66% in Latvia). Interestingly, 12% of respondents believed that domestic violence against women was unacceptable but should not always be punishable by law, ranging from a low of 5% in Greece to a high of a 32% in Finland. On the other hand, the issue of the acceptability of violence was not addressed with more specific questions, for example, including a range of behaviours that could be considered more or less acceptable in different circumstances. The surveys analysed for this report, however, provided numerous examples of this approach and how it provides a more refined and wider view of these important attitudes. This illustrates that when a wider range of questions tapping similar issues (i.e. the acceptability of violence against women) are used, a different picture can emerge as compared to the question used in the Eurobarometer. For example, in the 2010 Eurobarometer, 87% of respondents in Italy considered that domestic violence against women was unacceptable and should always be punishable by law, and 7% as unacceptable but should not always be punishable by law. However in an Italian survey, when victims were asked about particular episodes, only 35.4% of women victims considered the violence as a crime, 44% considered that the episode of violence was something wrong but not a crime, 19.4% considered the violence as “only something that happened”, which somehow conflicts with the 2010 Eurobarometer. Unfortunately, this type of question was only asked in a few countries, so we cannot have a wider picture. Different questions regarding the same issue, with different samples and considering different behaviours and circumstances would probably give us a quite different picture of the levels of acceptability across and within countries.

## Summary and highlights

Public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem was the first topic regarding attitudes towards violence against women that emerged from the analysis of the surveys provided for this review. Information on public perception of violence against women as a social problem was available in 26 surveys conducted in 14 countries and in 3 studies conducted in 2 countries. The analysis of these surveys and studies allowed us to identify three different but related issues regarding the public perception of violence against women as a social problem, around which this section was organised: public awareness of violence against women as a social problem, public definitions, and public acceptability, and perceived severity of different types of violence against women. Below, we summarise the main findings in this section of the report.

## Highlights

1. Only a small number of surveys addressed public awareness of how widespread is violence against women in the respondents' countries, and there is limited information for comparisons across countries. When information was available, the results suggested that in some countries violence against women has not yet reached a prominent place among public concerns.
2. The little information available on public awareness of how widespread violence against women is suggested the importance of taking socio-demographic information into account to better understand not only variations across countries but also variations within countries across different socio-demographic groups (e.g. greater awareness among the higher education and income groups).
3. Information was mostly available for public acceptability and perceived severity of different types of violence against women. Results of the available surveys and studies addressing the acceptability and perceived severity of different types of violence against women (mainly partner violence) suggest that the acceptability of certain behaviours remains high in some circumstances (e.g. dating violence).
4. Small but relevant percentages of respondents from different countries (including young people, adults, and also victims) tended to "accept", perceived as "not very serious" or considered "inevitable" some violent behaviours against women in some circumstances, including insulting, hitting, controlling, or even forced sex. This suggests that in different countries among some sectors of society attitudes of acceptability and tolerance are still prevalent.
5. When available, disaggregated data for gender tended to show clearly that these types of attitudes are more common among men and boys.
6. When compared to information available in the 2010 Eurobarometer and the 2014 FRA survey, the results suggest that when a wider range of questions tapping similar issues (i.e. the acceptability of violence against women) are used, with different samples and considering different behaviours and circumstances, a quite different picture of the levels of acceptability across and within countries would probably emerge.
7. Only three studies published in academic journals were identified addressing public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem. Two of them used university student samples to analyse the perception and definition of sexual harassment; another used a large sample of young adults to analyse approval of dating violence and its socio-demographic correlates.

# 3. PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE CAUSES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: ATTRIBUTIONS, EXPLANATIONS AND JUSTIFICATIONS

## Introduction

The collective understanding of the nature or causes of a social phenomenon is of particular importance, as it may influence perceptions, cognitions and behaviour towards those affected or involved in the phenomenon – in our case, violence against women by partners and non-partners. The public understanding or explanation of violence against women can, for example, determine attributions (e.g. fault or responsibility), attitudes (e.g. sympathy, derogation, and disdain), or behaviour (e.g. helping, prevention and passivity) towards victims and perpetrators of violence. How violence against women is understood, explained or justified can also influence perceptions and attitudes towards social and institutional responses to violence against women, such as the role of professionals, the law or other public policies and initiatives such as public awareness campaigns.

Public attributions, explanations and justifications were identified as one of the four main topics regarding attitudes towards violence against women by both partners and non-partners that emerged from the survey questionnaires and study summaries analysed for this review. In this section, we analyse those surveys that included items addressing public understanding of violence against women, and two studies addressing this topic. After analysing the surveys, three sets of explanatory factors emerged, around which this section is organised: individual, relational/situational, and socio-cultural factors.

Interestingly, these factors correspond to an ecological model of understanding violence against women as a multiple determined phenomenon (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Heise, 1998, 2011). This ecological framework to understand violence against women was described by Lori Heise (2011) in the following terms:

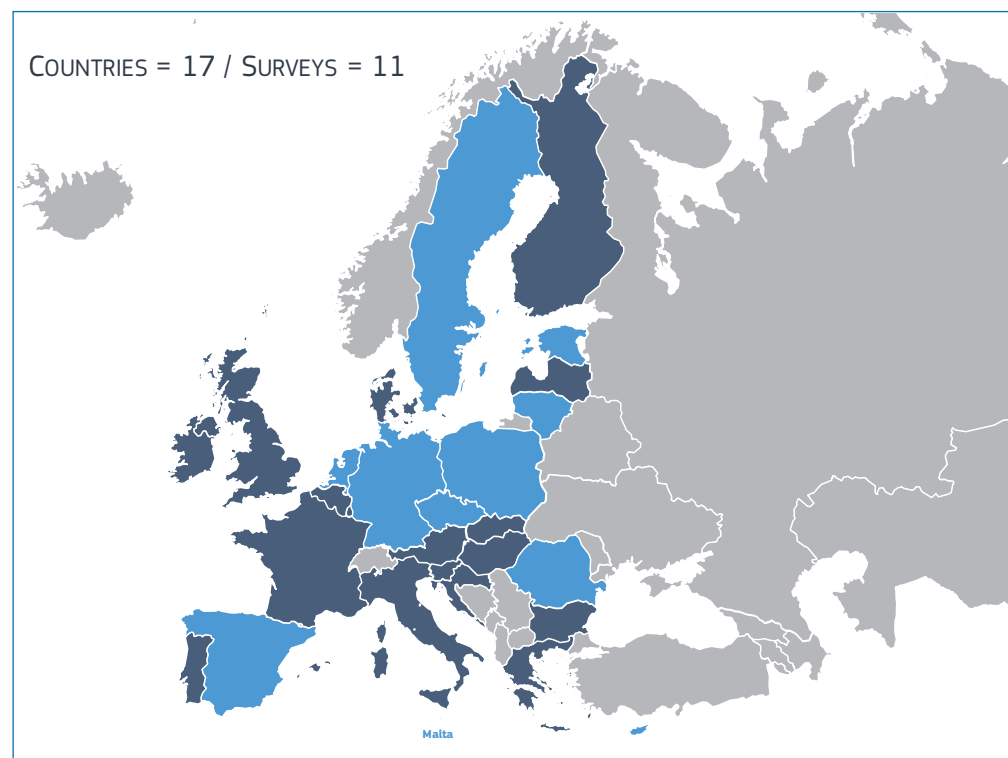
“The ecological model posits that there is no single factor that “causes” partner violence; rather, the likelihood that a specific man will become abusive or that one community will have a higher rate of violence than another, is a function of many factors that interact at different levels of the “social ecology”. The social ecology includes the life histories, traumatic scars, and personality factors that men and women bring to their relationships, as well as the context and situational factors that impinge on their day-to-day lives. The ecology also includes messages and norms that friends, family members and social institutions reinforce as appropriate behaviour for men and women, including the acceptability of violence within different contexts. These norms and expectations are in turn shaped by structural factors — such as religious institutions and ideology, and the distribution of economic power between men and women — that work to define beliefs and norms about violence and structure women’s options for escaping violent relationships” (Heise, 2011, p. vi).

## Surveys and studies addressing public attributions, explanations and justifications

### Surveys

After analysing all the survey questionnaires provided for this review, we found that information on public attributions, explanations and justifications of violence against women was available in 17 surveys conducted in 11 countries; Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Lithuania, Malta, Netherland, Poland, Romania, Spain, and Sweden (see Figure 3.1).

**Figure 3.1.** Countries with surveys addressing public attributions, explanations and justifications



Surveys in each country (CY = 2; CZ = 1; DE = 1; EE = 1; ES = 2; LT = 2; MT = 1; NL = 1; PL = 4; RO = 1; SI = 1)

The samples used and types of violence addressed in these surveys are described in Table 3.1 (see Appendix IV for further information).

**Table 3.1.** *Surveys, samples and type of violence*

Code	Sample	n	Type of Violence*
CY-Survey 2	Young adults	1000	Violent behaviour in interpersonal (partner) relationships
CY-Survey 3	Young people	453	Gender-based violence
CZ-Survey 3	General population (men & women)	978	Sexual violence
DE-Survey 4	General population (women) + Professionals	1138	Violence against women
EE-Survey 2	General population (men & women)	1111	Gender-based violence and human trafficking
ES-Survey 2	General population (men & women)	2580	Gender-based violence
ES-Survey 3	Adolescents and young people	2457	Gender-based violence
LT-Survey 1	Victims	89	Domestic violence
LT-Survey 2	Victims	515	Violence against women
MT-Survey 1	General population (women)	1200	Domestic violence
NL-Survey 1	General population (men & women)	2155	Intimate partner violence / Sexual violence
PL-Survey 1a	General population (men & women)	3000	Domestic violence
PL-Survey 2b	Professionals	119	Domestic violence
PL-Survey 3	Victims and professionals	545	Domestic violence
PL-Survey 4	General population (men & women)	3000	Domestic violence
RO-Survey 1	General population (men & women)	1050	Domestic violence
SI-Survey 1	General population (men & women)	1886	Intimate partner violence

\* As defined in the title of the survey (see Appendix IV)

In the surveys analysed, questions regarding public attributions, explanations and justifications of violence are presented in different formats, and tend to include a different range of factors that are considered as possible causes of violence against women (see Appendix VI, Box VI.2).

## Studies

Two of the selected studies with EU samples published in high quality journals in the last five years addressed issues related to public attributions, explanations and justifications of violence against women. One qualitative study was conducted in the United Kingdom on a sample of young people (*UK-Study 2*), analysing gender stereotypes and their relation with interpersonal violence in heterosexual relationships. The second was conducted in Slovenia (*SI-Study 3*), and reviewed criminal files to determine perpetrators characteristics (see Table 3.2; see Appendix V for further information).

**Table 3.2.** *Studies, samples and type of violence*

Code	Sample	n	Type of Violence
UK-Study 2	Young people (aged 15 to 18)	77	Gender-based violence
SI-Study 3	Closed criminal cases	30	Intimate partner violence

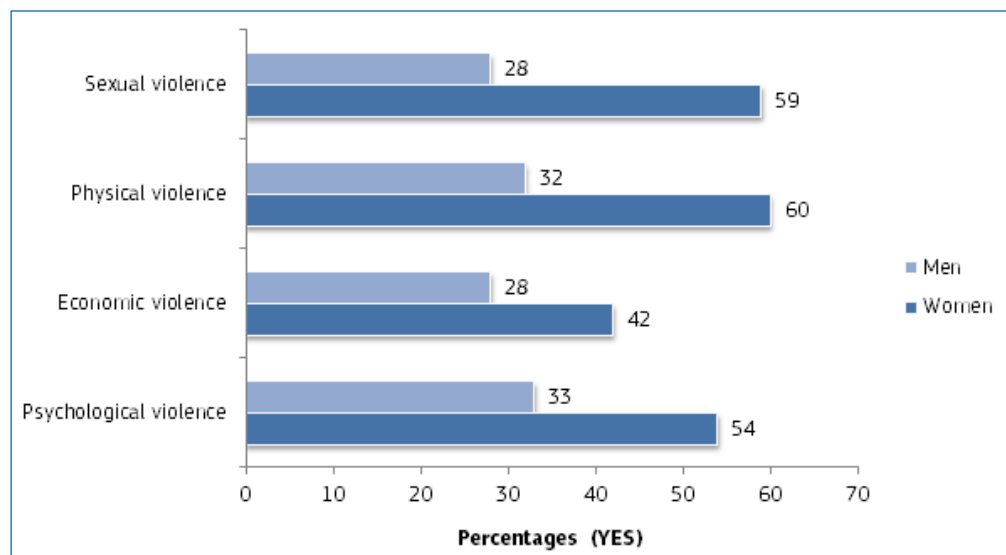
## Public attributions, explanations, and justifications of violence against women. Results of surveys and studies

The questions regarding public attributions, explanations and justifications of violence against women in surveys and studies included different types of factors that can be considered as possible causes of violence. As mentioned above, these factors can be organised in different explanatory levels: *individual* (e.g. alcohol abuse, anger, violence in childhood), *relational/situational* (e.g. marital problems, job loss, stress), and *social/cultural* (e.g. poverty, gender roles and behaviours). We analysed the results of the surveys according to these sets of factors as follows.

### Individual factors

One factor that repeatedly came up in cases of [violence against women](#) was [alcohol](#). For example, in a number of surveys conducted in Poland, alcohol was the most frequently mentioned circumstance accompanying the occurrence of violence against women. Between 28% and 60% of the general public considered this to be the case, with variations depending on the type of violence and whether the respondents were male or female (see Figure 3.2, *PL-Survey 1a*). In a different survey, a particularly high number of Polish professionals (96%) also considered that alcohol was a circumstance that accompanied the occurrence of violence (*PL-Survey 2b*). In contrast, it is interesting to note that in another Polish survey, only 28.8% of a subsample of victims considered alcohol as a main factor involved in domestic violence cases. Somewhat surprisingly, alcohol was considered as a main factor by only 17.8% of a subsample of perpetrators (*PL-Survey 4*).

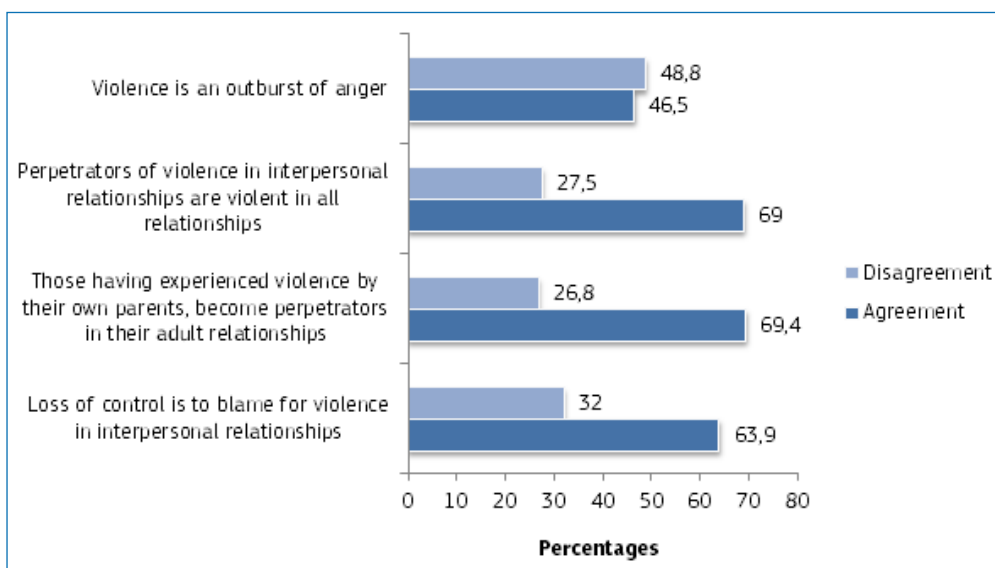
**Figure 3.2.** Individual factors: Alcohol as a circumstance explaining violence against women (*PL-Survey 1a. General population*)





In a survey conducted in Cyprus (*CY-Survey 2*) among young adults (18-25 years old), four individual factors were included as possible causes of violence against women (see Figure 3.3). 69.4 % of respondents agreed (i.e. completely agree, agree, or somewhat agree) in that “those who experience violence by their own parents become perpetrators in their adult relationships”. In the above-mentioned Polish survey (*PL-Survey 2b*), 92% of professionals also considered that **experiencing violence in childhood** was a circumstance explaining domestic violence against women. In the Cyprus survey, respondents also agreed in that perpetrators are violent in all relationships (69%), and that **loss of control** is to blame for violence in interpersonal relationships (63.9%). Only 4.9% of respondents considered that “violence is an outburst of anger”.

**Figure 3.3.** Individual factors: Interpersonal violence (*CY-Survey 2. Young adults*)



In another survey in Cyprus (*CY-Survey 3*) among young people (15-18 years old), a wide variety of individual factors were considered as possible explanations of why some men are violent toward women. The highest overall mean scores (1 = Never, 4 = Always) were obtained for factors such as **jealousy**, lack of **anger control**, **drug use**, **control of women**, or **sexual urges** (see Table 3.3). The importance of these factors was somewhat different for girls than for boys. For example, for girls, the most important reason why men are violent toward women was jealousy, while boys saw the most important reason as alcohol or drug use. Both boys and girls agreed that the three main reasons why men are violent towards women are that they cannot control their anger, and that they want to control women.



**Table 3.3.** “Some men are violent toward women because...”: Disaggregated information (CY-Survey 3. Young people)

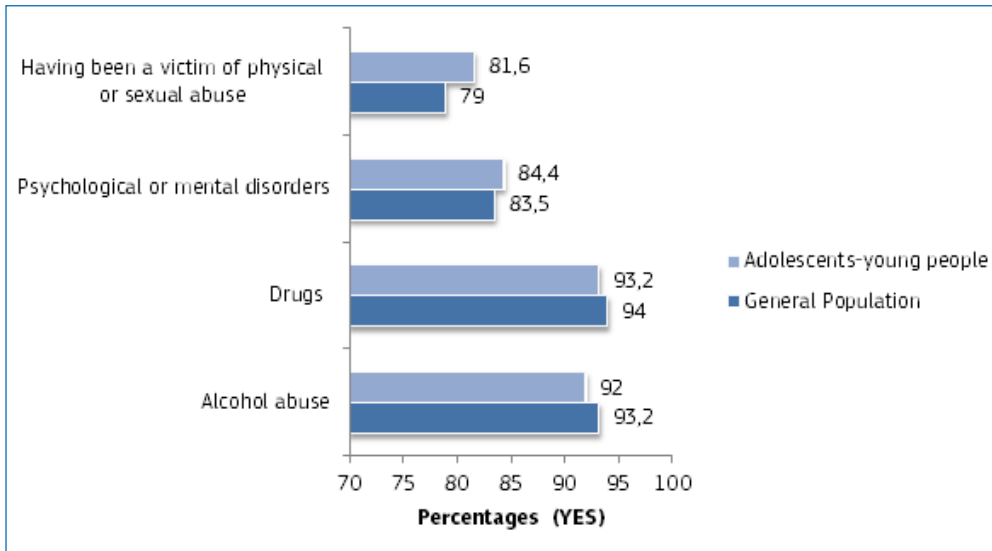
Statement/Explanation	Overall	Boys	Girls
	M (S.D.)	M (S.D.)	M (S.D.)
...they are jealous	2.71 (0.82)	2.56 (0.87)	2.80 (0.77)
...they cannot control their anger	2.68 (0.80)	2.60 (0.91)	2.73 (0.73)
...alcohol or drug use	2.64 (0.78)	2.63 (0.83)	2.65 (0.75)
...they want to control women	2.63 (0.85)	2.51 (0.84)	2.71 (0.85)
...they can't control their sexual urges	2.51 (0.77)	2.43 (0.75)	2.56 (0.78)
...they are physically stronger than women	2.48 (1.02)	2.38 (1.11)	2.55 (0.96)
...they misunderstand women	2.34 (0.73)	2.29 (0.74)	2.38 (0.73)
...they have mental problems	2.30 (0.81)	2.29 (0.84)	2.31 (0.79)
...they were abused as children	2.28 (0.80)	2.25 (0.85)	2.30 (0.76)
...they are naturally aggressive	2.24 (0.84)	2.25 (0.84)	2.23 (0.85)
...they can't take no for an answer	2.23 (0.88)	2.21 (0.91)	2.24 (0.87)
...they are under stress	2.17 (0.72)	2.17 (0.77)	2.17 (0.69)

Jealousy also appears to be an important factor explaining intimate partner murders in a study conducted in Slovenia (*Intimate partner homicides in Slovenia and their gender-specific differences; SI-Study 3*). In this study, 30 closed criminal files were reviewed in order to identify the characteristics of perpetrators. In 67% of cases (16 out of 24) of intimate partner murders and attempted murders of women, the court concluded that the explanation for the perpetrator's behaviour was connected to “arrogance and jealousy”.

In a focus group conducted in Estonia as part of a survey of a general population sample (*EE-Survey 2*), participants were asked to describe a typical perpetrator of domestic violence (the gender of the perpetrator and the victim was not specified in the question). This provided some information about factors that were considered by respondents as possible causes of domestic violence against women. Among possible individual factors, interviewees mentioned that a perpetrator might be *dissatisfied with his/her life, work, career opportunities or sexual life*, as well as that he/she may have *(mental) health problems* (e.g. depression), *tendency to aggression*, and been exposed to abuse in childhood. He/she was described as having a domineering personality and could even be an intelligent and educated person.

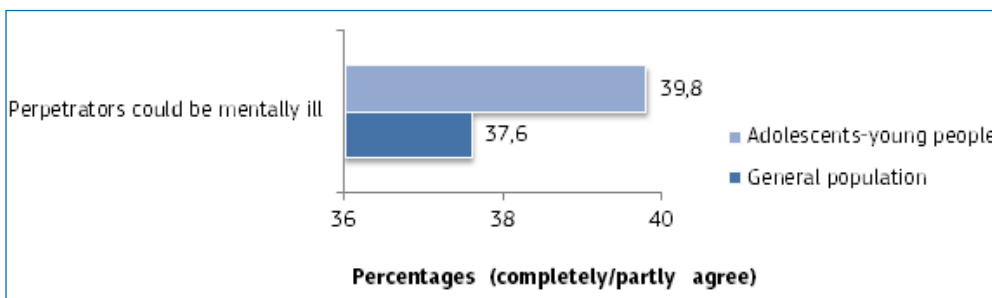
Two surveys conducted in Spain among the general population (*ES-Survey 2*) and among adolescents and young people (*ES-Survey 3*) also addressed a number of individual factors that can be considered as possible explanations of partner violence against women. As Figure 3.4 shows, a large percentage of respondents (ranging from 79% to 95%), thought that alcohol, drugs, mental disorders and having been victims of abuse are reasons for the violence women suffer from their partners or ex-partners (response options were: “yes”, “no” and “don't know”).

**Figure 3.4.** Individual factors: Gender-based violence (ES-Survey 2 and 3. General population and adolescents-young people)



Interestingly, when the same survey asked about whether “Perpetrators could be mentally ill” using a different format of response (i.e. “Do you agree completely, partly agree, partly disagree or completely disagree with the following statements?”), the results were quite different. Instead of over 80% answering “yes” to the question of whether “psychological or mental disorders” were a reason for violence (options “yes”, “no” or “don’t know”), with a Likert-type scale percentages were substantially lower: 37.6% among the general population and 39.8% among adolescents and young people completely or partly agreed with the statement “Perpetrators could be mentally ill”. This is a good example of how different response options can provide different results (see Figure 3.5).

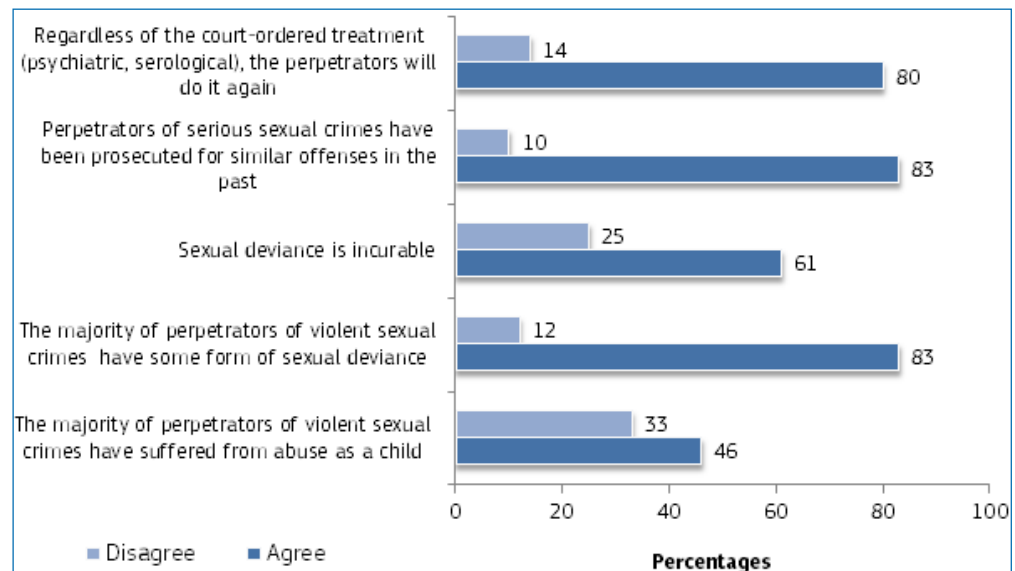
**Figure 3.5.** Individual factors: Gender-based violence (ES-Survey 2 and 3. General population and adolescents-young people)



Finally, with specific reference to [sexual violence](#), a general population survey conducted in the Czech Republic (*CZ-Survey 3*), showed a high level of agreement among respondents regarding the individual characteristics of perpetrators of violent sexual crimes (see Figure 3.6). For example, around 80% of respondents agreed that the majority of perpetrators of violent sexual crimes have some form of sexual

deviance, that they had committed this type of crime in the past, and that they would do it again. Furthermore, 61% think that sexual deviance is incurable. As in other forms of violence, 46% of respondents also believed that the majority of perpetrators of violent sexual crimes had suffered from abuse as a child.

**Figure 3.6.** Perpetrator characteristics: Sexual violence (CZ-Survey 3. General population)



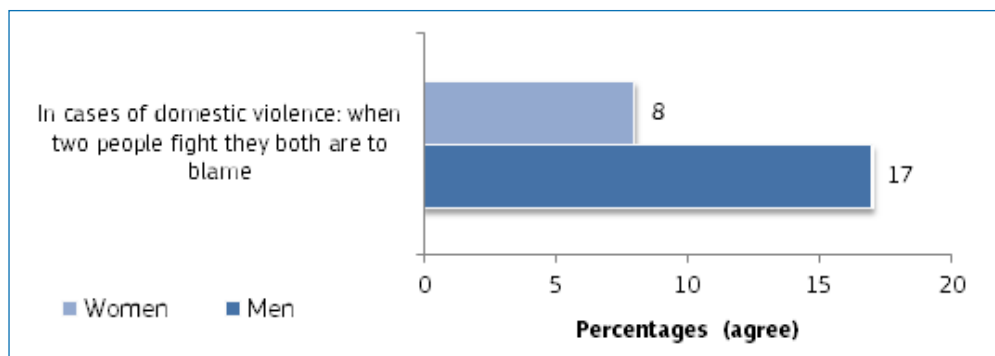
### Relational/situational factors

Relational and situational factors can frequently be used as possible attributions, explanations or justifications of cases of violence against women. A common relational factor mentioned in a substantial number of surveys reviewed in this report was how women behave in their relationships, which was often used to explain or justify violence against them. Provocative behaviour, lack of patience or obedience, constant nagging or arguing and unfaithfulness were just some examples of women’s behaviour that some respondents saw as a cause or a reason that could explain or justify violence against women. In fact, the large number of examples we found in this review revealed the importance and prevalence of victim-blaming attitudes among EU citizens and, consequently, this important issue is analysed in a section of its own in this report (see Chapter 5, *Are women held responsible for the violence they suffer? Victim-blaming attitudes in EU surveys and studies*).

Regarding other relational or situational factors considered as possible causes of violence against women, **fight**s and **quarrels** between intimate partners, **family problems** and other sources of stress, like the **loss of a job** or **financial problems**, appear in the surveys reviewed as relational/situational factors that can be considered by respondents as possible explanations or triggers of incidents of violence against women. For example, in a survey conducted in Spain (*ES-Survey 2*) among the general population, 80% of respondents believed that conflicts and problems in the relationship following separation or divorce were among the reasons for gender-based violence. A similar percentage (79%) was obtained in another Spanish survey

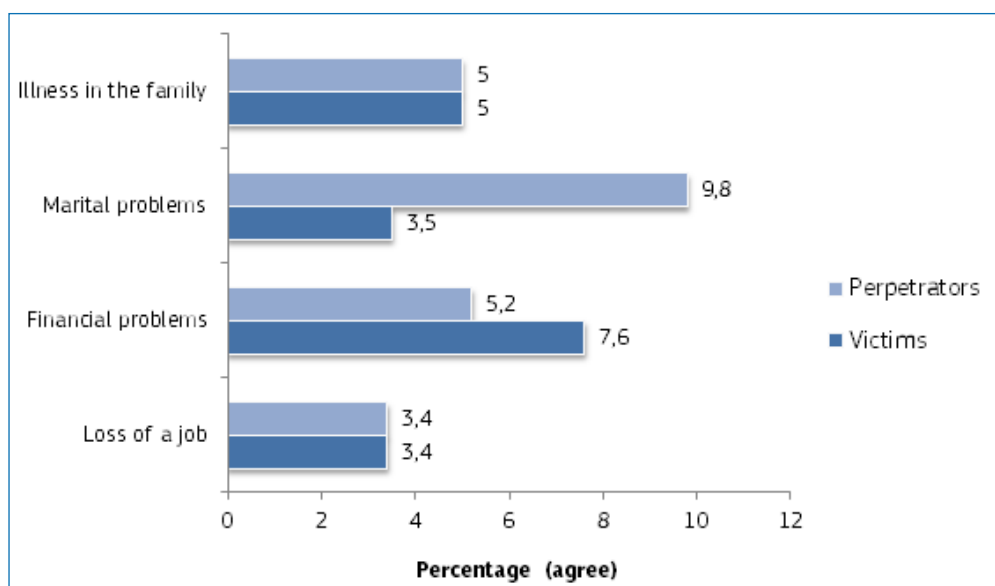
with a representative sample of adolescents and young people (*ES-Survey 3*). In another survey conducted in the Netherlands (*NL-Survey 1*), 17% of men and 8% of women (interestingly, less than half of men) believed that both partners are to blame in incidents of domestic violence (see Figure 3.7). Interestingly, 88% of Polish professionals agreed that **marital problems** are among the factors that accompany the occurrence of violence.

**Figure 3.7.** Relational factors: Intimate partner violence (*NL-Survey 1. General population*)



However, in another Polish survey with subsamples of victims and perpetrators (*PL-Survey 4*), only 3.5% of victims and 9.8% of perpetrators (again, fewer women than men) considered marital problems as a factor explaining domestic violence. In the same survey, small percentages of victims and perpetrators considered other situational stressors as explaining circumstances of domestic violence (see Figure 3.8).

**Figure 3.8.** Perpetrators circumstances: Domestic violence (*PL-Survey 4. General population; victims and perpetrators subsamples*)



## Social/cultural factors

The surveys and studies reviewed included a range of possible social and cultural factors that can be considered by respondents as an explanation or justification of violence against women. These factors can be divided into three categories: cultural and social norms, gender stereotypes, and socioeconomic explanations.

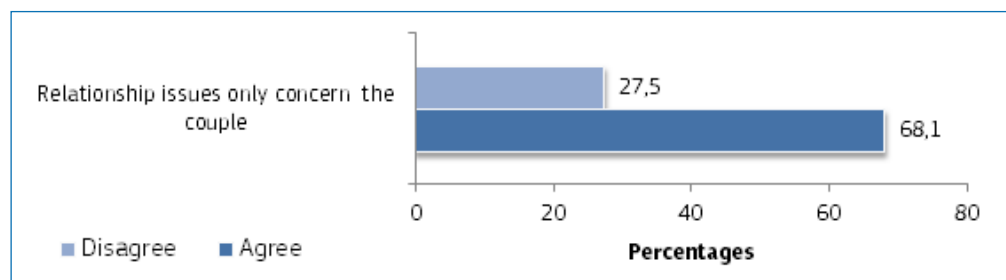
### Cultural and social norms

In Spain two surveys among the general population and young people (*ES-Surveys 2 and 3*), addressed a number of cultural beliefs as possible factors used to explain violence against women. For example, regarding cultural factors, 35% of respondents from the general population and 39% of adolescents and young people considered that religious beliefs and practices were reasons for the violence that women suffer from partners or ex-partners. In another question in the same surveys, a substantial percentage of respondents (43.2% general population and 37.8% adolescents and young people) partly or completely agreed with the following statement “There are more perpetrators among immigrants”.

Regarding the norm of the privacy of intimate relationships and the family, only 35% of respondents in a survey conducted in Malta (*MT-Survey 1*) agreed with the statement “If a man mistreats his wife, others outside of the family should intervene”, and 73% agreed that “Family problems should only be discussed with people in the family”. Interestingly, the 48% disagreed with the statement that “A woman should be able to choose her own friends even if her husband disapproves”. Similarly, in a survey conducted in Slovenia (*SI-Survey 1*), 21.2% of women who had been victims of violence by their partner or ex-partners mentioned as a reason for not reporting it that they considered it a family matter. A survey in Germany (*DE-Survey 4*) also found that 27.5% of respondents agreed that a reason why victims do not use women’s shelters and counselling services after they have experienced violence was “It is a private matter”.

In a Cyprus survey (*CY-Survey 2*) regarding the “privacy” norm, a high percentage of respondents (68.1%) agreed in that “Relationship issues only concern the couple” (see Figure 3.9).

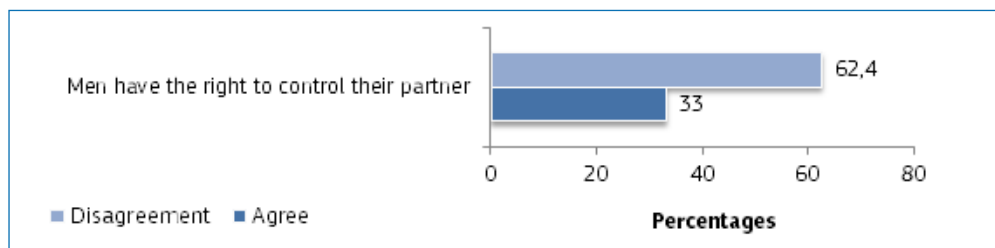
**Figure 3.9.** Social/cultural factors: Intimate partner violence (*CY-Survey 2. Young people*)



### Gender roles and stereotypes

In a survey conducted among young adults in Cyprus (*CY-Survey 2*) regarding men's stereotypes, a substantial percentage of respondents (46.5%) agreed in that "Men have the right to control their partners" (see Figure 3.10).

**Figure 3.10.** Social/cultural factors: Intimate partner violence (*CY-Survey 2. Young people*)



Another survey conducted in Cyprus among young people (*CY-Survey 3*) asked a set of questions addressing social norms and cultural stereotypes regarding men's behaviour with women that may explain why men are violent. As Table 3.4 shows, the higher overall mean score (1 = Never, 4 = Always) was obtained for the statement that men "consider themselves superior to women". Although this score was the most important among this set of factors for both boys and girls, scores were higher for girls.

**Table 3.4.** "Some men are violent toward women because....": Disaggregated information (*CY-Survey 3. Young people*)

Statement/Explanation	Overall M (S.D.)	Boys M (S.D.)	Girls M (S.D.)
...they consider themselves superior to women	2.64 (0.86)	2.55 (0.90)	2.70 (0.83)
...no one stops them	2.20 (0.90)	2.16 (0.95)	2.23 (0.86)
...society expects them to be	1.57 (0.77)	1.55 (0.71)	1.59 (0.81)
...it makes them attractive to women	1.56 (0.74)	1.83 (0.83)	1.40 (0.62)
... women like it	1.56 (0.80)	1.82 (0.93)	1.40 (0.66)
... it is necessary	1.36 (0.68)	1.57 (0.82)	1.24 (0.54)

A study conducted among young people in the United Kingdom also addressed men's behaviour with women and male role stereotypes (*Becoming a "proper man": young people's attitudes about interpersonal violence and perceptions of gender; UK-Study 2*). Focus groups were held with 77 young people (43 female and 34 male) aged between 15 and 18. There was agreement that violence was something that men did and was a normal aspect of young, adolescent and adult masculinity. All of the groups explained that they believed that men are "violent", "aggressive" and "angry". The study concluded that the young people who participated continue to be strongly influenced by a sexual division of labour based on ideological/theoretical understandings of the place that women and men occupy.

Regarding cultural stereotypes about men’s and women’s roles as possible factors explaining partner violence, in the Spanish surveys mentioned above (*ES-Surveys 2 and 3*), 44.4% (general population) and 48.1% (adolescents and young people) of respondents partly or completely agreed that “Changes in responsibilities assumed now by women and men within the relationship” was a reason for partner violence. Also tapping beliefs about women’s role in the family, these surveys showed that a large percentage of respondents (89% general population and 88.4% adolescents and young people), either agreed or completely agreed with the statement “Victims hold on because of their children”. Likewise a sizable percentage of respondents (32% for the general population and 40.4% of adolescents and young people) believed that “their daughters and sons” was a reason for women not report the violence.

A similar question was put to victims of partner violence in a Polish survey (*PL-Survey 3*), who mentioned as a reason for not reporting the violence to the police that they did not want to put their children under stress (19% of respondents). In Lithuania (*LT-Survey 2*), 56% of women victims also mentioned that they did not leave the violent relationship “because of the children”. Lastly, in a survey conducted among the general population in Romania (*RO-Survey 1*), 15.8% of respondents agreed with the following statement: “If a woman has children, even if she is beaten she cannot leave the relationship” (5.1% answered “don’t know”). Disaggregated information showed that this belief was more commonly held by men, the older, the less educated and those living in rural areas (See Table 3.5).

**Table 3.5.** “If a woman has children, even if she is beaten she cannot leave the relationship”: Disaggregated information (*RO-Survey 1. General population*)

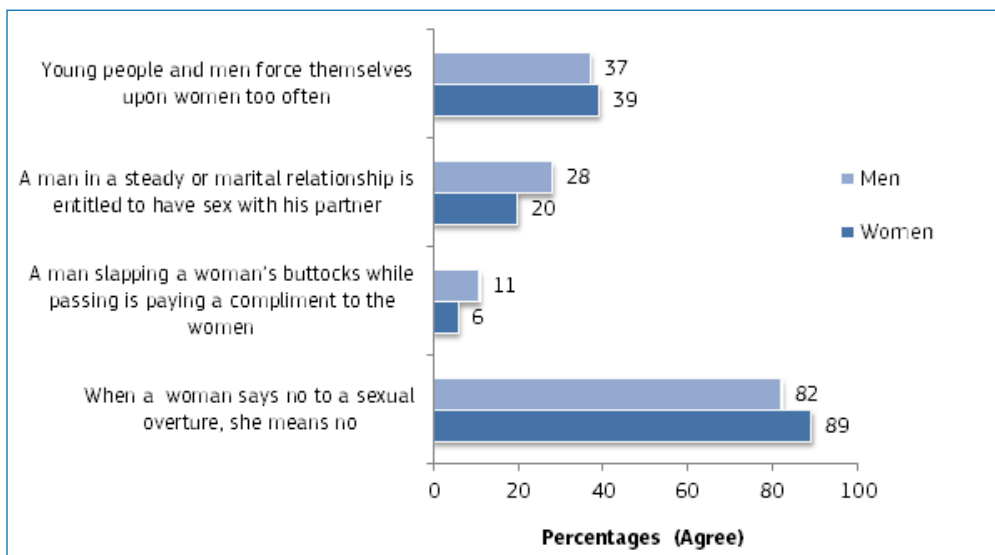
	Agree	Disagree	DK/CA
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	17.5	78.0	4.5
Female	14.2	80.1	5.7
<i>Age</i>			
18-35	14.9	80.6	4.5
36-50	12.9	81.4	5.7
51-65	15.7	80.3	4.0
Over 65	28.0	63.6	8.4
<i>Education</i>			
Primary	20.6	70.6	8.7
Secondary	18.0	78.0	3.9
Tertiary	9.6	84.3	6.1
<i>Area</i>			
Urban	14.1	80.9	5.0
Rural	17.9	76.8	5.3
<i>Total</i>	15.8	79.0	5.1

A survey conducted in Malta (*MT-Survey 1*) also addressing cultural stereotypes as possible explanations of violence against women, with a sample of women from the general population, asked about men and women’s role in relationships and the family. Although most respondents disagree with statements such as “It is important

for a man to show his wife/partner who is the boss” (92%), a small but noticeable percentage (11%) of respondents agreed that “It’s a wife’s obligation to have sex with her husband even if she doesn’t feel like it”, and 13% agreed that “A good wife obeys her husband even if she disagrees”.

Again tapping cultural stereotypes regarding male and female behaviour, a survey conducted in the Netherlands (*NL-Survey 1*, see Figure 3.11) showed that over a third of men and women tended to perceive to some extent that men often force themselves upon women (women 39%, men 37%). Only 6% of women agreed that slapping a woman’s buttocks while passing is a compliment, whereas 11% of men agreed with the same statement. Regarding sexual behaviour, percentages of women agreeing with the statement that a woman means no when saying no to a sexual overture were higher (89%) than those of men (82%), which leaves a noteworthy percentage of men disagreeing with that statement, suggesting that these sexist attitudes are still prevalent in some sectors of society. Furthermore, a sizable percentage of respondents (20% of women, and 28% of men) agreed that “A man in a steady or marital relationship is entitled to have sex with his partner”.

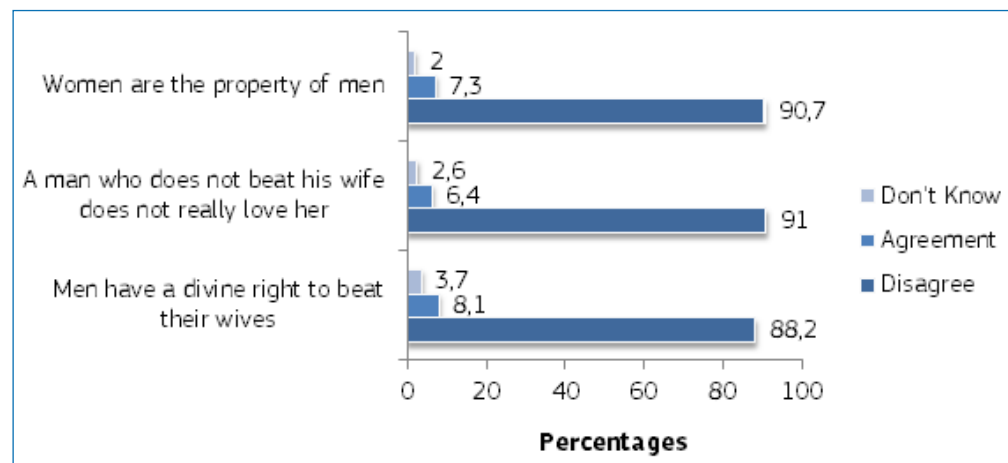
**Figure 3.11.** Social/cultural factors: Sexual violence (*NL-Survey 1. General population*)



Addressing similar topics, in a Polish survey of the general population (*PL-Survey 4*) 16.5% of respondents agreed that “Regarding to sexual behaviour, a wife should always agree with her husband”. A survey conducted in Romania among the general population (*RO-Survey 1*) also showed that some stereotyped and sexist views of the role of men and women in intimate relationships, such as “Women are the property of men” (7.3%) or “A man that does not beat his wife does not really love her” (6.4%), are still present among some small sectors of the population (see Figure 3.12). 8.1% even agreed that men have some kind of divine right to beat women.



**Figure 3.12.** Cultural/social factors: Domestic violence (RO-Survey 1. General population)



Disaggregated information available for this survey showed that among those who agree with a statement such as “Women are the property of men”, these attitudes tend to be more common among males, the older, the less educated, and those living in rural areas. It is also worth noting some important geographical variations among those agreeing with this type of statement, with some areas having three times higher the proportion of respondents agreeing than others (see Table 3.6).

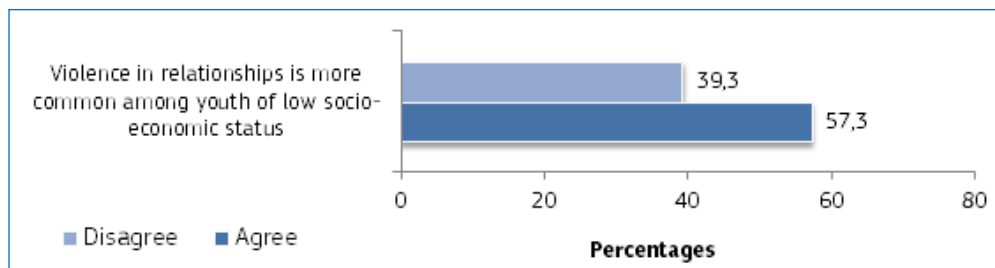
**Table 3.6.** “Women are the property of men”: Disaggregated information (RO-Survey 1. General population)

	Agree %	Disagree %	DK/CA %
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	9.1	88.2	2.8
Female	5.7	93.0	1.3
<i>Age</i>			
18-35	6.5	91.6	2.0
36-50	7.9	90.5	1.6
51-65	5.8	91.9	2.2
Over 65	12.1	85.0	2.8
<i>Education</i>			
Primary	17.5	80.2	2.4
Secondary	6.6	91.5	2.0
Tertiary	4.8	93.3	1.9
<i>Area</i>			
Urban	5.2	92.8	2.1
Rural	10.0	88.1	1.9
<i>Historical region</i>			
Moldova, Bucovina	7.8	92.2	-
Muntenia, Oltenia, Dobrogea	6.6	92.6	0.8
Banat, Crisana, Maramures	13.4	83.1	3.5
Transilvania	4.3	89.9	5.8
<i>Total</i>	7.3	90.7	2.0

### Socioeconomic explanations

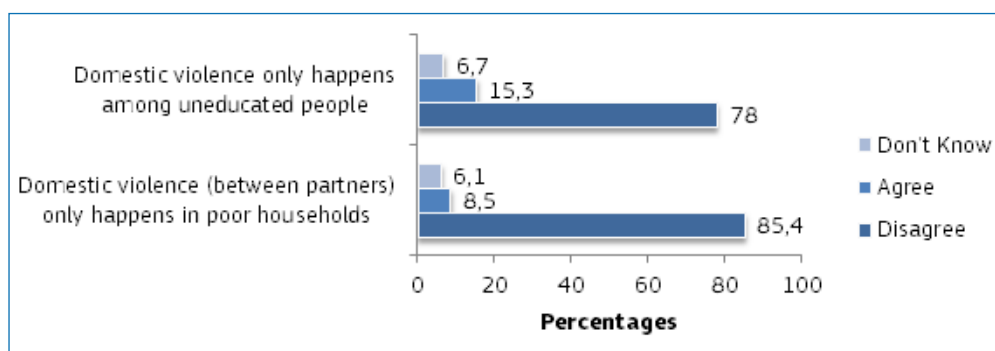
In a survey conducted among young adults in Cyprus (*CY-Survey 2*), in relation to socioeconomic factors, a sizable percentage of respondents (57%) agreed that “violence in relationships is more common among young people of low socio-economic status” (see Figure 3.13).

**Figure 3.13.** Social/cultural factors: Interpersonal violence (*CY-Survey 2. Young people*)



A Romanian survey (*RO-Survey 1*) also specifically addressed poverty and education as possible factors explaining domestic violence. The results of this survey showed that for a sizable percentage of respondents (15.3%), “Domestic violence (between partners) only happens in poor households”, and that a smaller percentage (8.5%) agreed that “Domestic violence only happens among uneducated people” (see Figure 3.14). It is also interesting to note that for both questions a substantial percentage (over 6%) of respondents did not know what their position was.

**Figure 3.14.** Poverty and education level: Domestic violence (*RO-Survey 1. General population*)



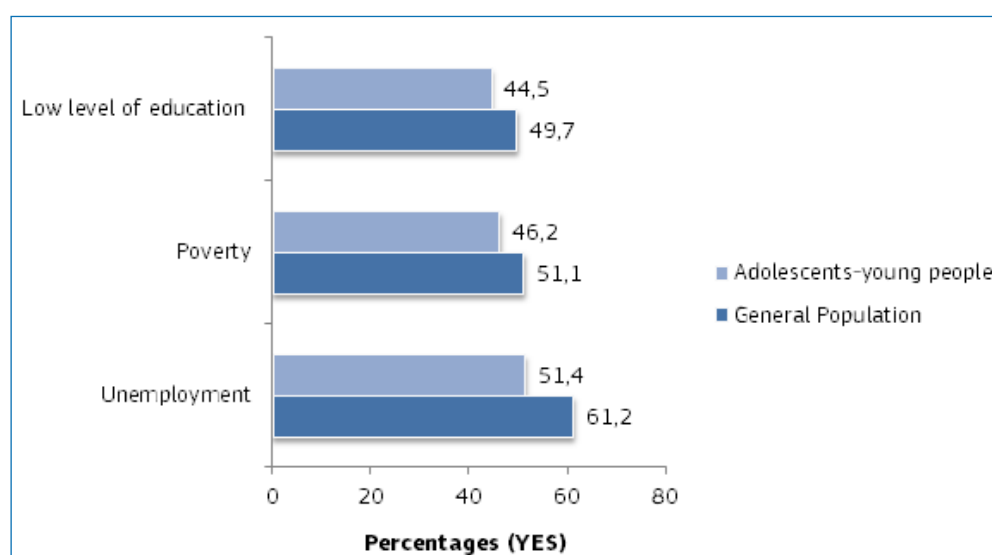
Interestingly, these views were notably more common for males and among groups with higher levels of education and income (see Table 3.7).

**Table 3.7.** “Domestic violence only happens among uneducated people”: Disaggregated information (RO-Survey 1. General population)

	Agree %	Disagree %	DK/CA %
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	17.3	77.2	5.5
Female	13.5	78.8	7.7
<i>Education</i>			
Primary	8.7	82.5	8.7
Secondary	15.2	79.7	5.1
Tertiary	18.2	72.8	8.9
<i>Income</i>			
Low income/no income	14.2	76.7	9.1
Medium income	14.5	79.8	5.7
High income	17.8	72.2	10.0
<i>Total</i>	15.3	78.0	6.7

In Spain, two surveys among the general population and young people (*ES-Surveys 2 and 3*), also specifically addressed socio-economic factors as possible reasons explaining partner violence against women. As Figure 3.15 shows, a large percentage of respondents believed that unemployment, poverty, and low education levels were reasons to explain violence against women by partners or ex-partners. The same surveys addressed the role of economic factors as barriers preventing women from escaping violence. For example, 20.2% of the general population and 40.5% of adolescents and young people believed that a reason why women do not file a complaint against the perpetrators is because “They are economically dependent on the perpetrator”. A substantial percentage of respondents (67% and 54.5% respectively) also partly or completely agreed with the following statement: “Women victims of partner violence consent because they are economically dependent”. In Lithuania (*LT-Survey 1*), 40% of women victims also mentioned that they did not leave the violent relationship “Because I do not have the financial possibility to leave this household”.

**Figure 3.15.** Reasons to explain gender-based violence (*ES-Survey 2 and 3. General population and adolescents-young people*)



## Results of the 2010 Eurobarometer

To compare the information provided by the surveys analysed for this review, we explored whether recent European-level surveys also provided some information regarding public attributions, explanations, or justifications of violence against women. The 2010 Eurobarometer survey included a set of 12 questions as possible causes of domestic violence against women.

To some extent, the Eurobarometer results were quite similar to those found in this review regarding individual factors such as alcohol and substance abuse as causes of violence. In the Eurobarometer, an average of 95% of respondents considered alcoholism as a cause of domestic violence, and 92% considered drug addiction as a cause. In both cases this view was widely shared among EU citizens, with country-specific percentages of agreement ranging between 80% and 100%. Another individual factor like “Having oneself been a victim of some form of domestic violence” was considered in the 2010 Eurobarometer as a cause of domestic violence by 69% of respondents, which was also widely considered as an individual factor by respondents in the surveys available for this review. Three social/cultural factors were also widely shared among EU countries as causes of domestic violence: poverty or social exclusion (77%), unemployment (75%), and “The way women are viewed by men” (65%). In the same way, these or similar factors were also considered as possible causes of violence against women among respondents in the surveys reviewed.

Other factors perceived as causes of violence in the 2010 Eurobarometer were also mentioned in the surveys reviewed for this section: “A genetic predisposition to violence” (62%), “Religious beliefs” (60%), “A low level of education” (58%), “The way power is shared between the sexes” (58%), “The provocative behaviour of women” (52%), and “The media” (44%).

It is interesting to note that one of the factors perceived as a cause of violence (“The provocative behaviour of women”), tapping “victim-blaming attitudes”, which did not receive much attention in the 2010 Eurobarometer, emerged as a major topic in the surveys reviewed in this report, deserving in fact a whole section analysing “victim-blaming attitudes” (see Chapter 5: “Are women held responsible for the violence they suffer? Victim-blaming attitudes in EU surveys and studies”).

## Summary and highlights

Public attributions, explanations, and justifications were identified as one of the five main topics regarding attitudes towards violence against women, by both partners and non-partners, emerging from the surveys analysed for this review. This section analysed the information available on this topic in 17 surveys conducted in 11 countries and two studies. Three sets of explanatory factors emerged, reflecting how the public understands violence against women: individual, relational/situational, and social/cultural. Below, we summarise the main findings in this section of the report.

## Highlights

1. Questions addressing public attributions, explanations and justifications of violence refer mainly to partner violence against women, sexual violence and rape.
2. Questions regarding public attributions, explanations and justifications of violence included a wide range of factors that can be considered as possible causes of violence against women. These factors corresponded to an ecological model of understanding of violence against women and can, accordingly, be organised into different explanatory levels: individual, relational/situational, social/cultural.
3. Among the individual factors believed to be associated with violence against women, alcohol or drug use was one of the most commonly mentioned by survey respondents from the general population (and also professionals). Interestingly, percentages among victims and perpetrators were much lower.
4. Having experienced violence in childhood was also one of the most frequently mentioned causes of violence against women by respondents (including sexual violence).
5. For sexual violence against women, respondents tended to believe that offenders suffered from some form of deviance (which was also seen as resistant to treatment).
6. Relational or situational factors considered as possible causes of violence against women were fights and quarrels among intimate partners, family problems and sources of stress, like the loss of a job or financial problems.
7. Possible social and cultural factors that were considered by respondents as an explanation or justification of violence against women included: cultural and social norms, gender stereotypes, and socioeconomic explanations. Results suggest that gender stereotypes and sexist attitudes are still prevalent in some sectors of the society. Where available, disaggregated information suggests that these types of attitudes are more common among males, the older, the less educated, and those living in rural areas.
8. When the factors identified in the surveys available for this review illustrating the public understanding of violence against women are compared to those provided by the 2010 Eurobarometer, similar results emerged regarding individual factors such as alcohol, violence in childhood, and social/cultural factors like low income or gender stereotypes.
9. Only five studies published in academic journals were identified as addressing public attributions, explanations and justifications of violence against women. One of them examined gender stereotypes and their relation to interpersonal violence in heterosexual relationships in a sample of young people. Another reviewed criminal files to determine perpetrators' characteristics. The other three examined victim-blaming attitudes, which are analysed in Chapter 5 ("Are women held responsible for the violence they suffer? Victim-blaming attitudes in EU surveys and studies").

# 4. ARE WOMEN HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VIOLENCE THEY SUFFER? VICTIM-BLAMING ATTITUDES IN EU SURVEYS AND STUDIES

## Introduction

As pointed out in the previous chapter, a common factor mentioned in a substantial number of surveys as an explanation or justification of violence against women is the way women behave. Given the numerous examples and the importance of this issue, victim-blaming attitudes will be specifically addressed in the present chapter.

Victim-blaming attitudes are among the social and cultural factors that influence rates of violence against women, by creating a climate of tolerance and acceptability of this type of violence (Gracia, 2004; Gracia & Herrero, 2006; West & Wandrei, 2002; WHO, 2002). For example, victim-blaming attitudes regarding violence against women may influence the public, professionals, victims or perpetrators. Victim-blaming attitudes have been linked to the perceived severity and personal involvement among those surrounding the victim, to victims' disclosure of their victimisation and their chances of receiving help or to perpetrators' justifications and the perceived social cost of their actions (Barnett, 2001; Browning, 2002; Capezza, & Arriaga, 2008; Finn, & Stalans, 1995; Gracia et al., 2008, 2009, 2011; Saunders & Size, 1986; Valor-Segura, Expósito, & Moya, 2011; West & Wandrei, 2002; Whatley, 2005; Worden & Carlson, 2005).

The importance of addressing victim-blaming attitudes has been described as follows:

“Public attitudes that place the responsibility for violence on the victims' shoulders often conceal a lack of sympathy or insensitivity towards victims that creates a psychological distance between victims and their observers. When the cause of the violence is attributed to the victims, incidents are more likely to be trivialized and seen as understandable or deserved, and hence as less unjust and more admissible. Such attitudes serve to excuse and partly absolve the perpetrators of violence and to the notion in the public's mind that sometimes women are justifiably the victims of intimate partner violence. Implicit in victim-blaming attitudes is the idea that, under certain circumstances (e.g. when a woman behaves provocatively), violence is justified and therefore legitimate, as

long as no red line is crossed. Also, those who blame victims for their own misfortunes are less willing to help them... people's perception of who is responsible for the violence is extremely important. If people blame the woman who is the victim of the violence, they are likely to place the responsibility for solving the problem – at least partly – on her shoulders as well” (Gracia, 2014, pp. 380-381).

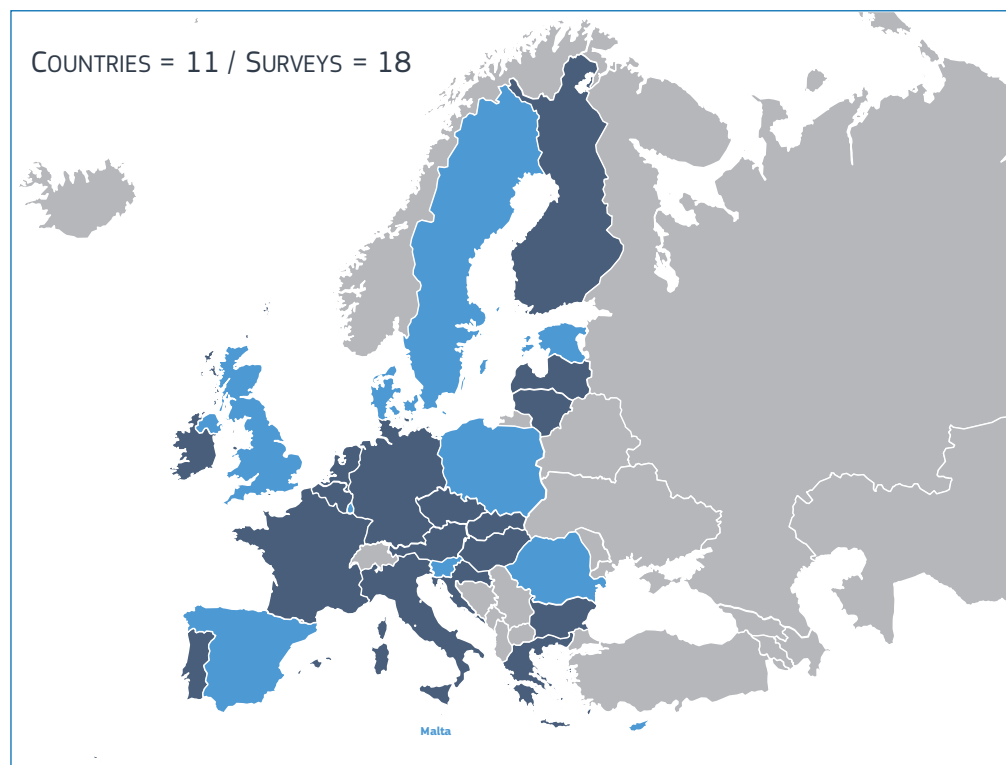
Victim-blaming attitudes regarding violence against women emerged as one of the main topics addressed in the surveys and studies analysed for this review. In this section, we analyse in detail the information provided by those surveys that included items addressing these attitudes. We will also examine how victim-blaming attitudes regarding violence against women among EU citizens are addressed in papers published in academic journals in the last 5 years.

## Surveys and studies addressing victim-blaming attitudes

### Surveys

After analysing all the surveys provided for this review, information on victim-blaming attitudes regarding violence against women was available only in 18 surveys conducted in 11 countries; Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom (see Figure 4.1).

**Figure 4.1.** Countries with surveys addressing victim-blaming attitudes



Surveys in each country (CY = 3; DK = 1; EE = 3; ES = 2; LU = 1; MT = 1; PL = 2; RO = 1; SE = 2; SI = 1; UK = 1)

The samples used and types of violence addressed in these surveys are described in Table 4.1 (see Appendix IV for further information).

**Table 4.1.** Surveys, samples and type of violence

Code	Sample	n	Type of Violence*
CY-Survey 1	General population (Women)	1107	Domestic violence
CY-Survey 2	Young adults	1000	Violent behaviour in interpersonal (partner) relationships
CY-Survey 3	Young people	453	Gender-based violence
DK-Survey 2	Young people	2780	Dating violence
EE-Survey 1	General population (men)	2056	Wife beating
EE-Survey 2	General population (men & women)	1111	Gender-based violence and human trafficking
EE-Survey 6	General population (men & women)	1076	Sexual violence
ES-Survey 2	General population (men & women)	2580	Gender-based violence
ES-Survey 4	Students of secondary education and professionals	14001	Gender-based violence
LU-Survey 1	Victims & Perpetrators	182	Domestic violence
MT-Survey 1	General population (Women)	1200	Domestic violence
PL-Survey 2a	General population (men & women)	1500	Domestic violence
PL-Survey 4	General population (men & women)	3000	Domestic violence
RO-Survey 1	General population (men & women)	1050	Domestic violence
SE-Survey 1	Students	-	Sexual violence
SE-Survey 2	General population (men & women)	2626	Rape
SI-Survey 3	Professionals	-	Dating violence
UK-Survey 4	Students of primary and secondary education	2395	Domestic abuse

\* As defined in the title of the survey (see Appendix IV)

A wide variety of questions tapping victim-blaming attitudes regarding violence against women were used in the 18 surveys analysed, and are presented in different formats (see Appendix VI, Box VI.3). In this section, we found the only case in which a survey used a previously designed self-reporting instrument. In one of the surveys (*EE-Survey 1*), a shortened and modified *Inventory of Beliefs about Wife Beating* (Saunders, Lynch, Grayson, & Linz, 1987) was used to examine respondents' attitudes towards partner violence against women. Nevertheless, the modified version of this questionnaire was not used as a scale, including only item-by-item information.

## Studies

In relation to studies published in academic journals in the last five years, only four address victim-blaming attitudes regarding partner violence against women among EU samples. One of them, conducted in the Czech Republic, used a university student sample (*CZ-Study 2*). The other three were conducted in Spain. One of them was based on a representative sample of the general population (*ES-Study 1*); one based on a sample of adult male intimate partner violence (IPV) perpetrators (*ES-Study 3*); and the last was based on a community sample (*ES-Study 4*) (see Table 4.2; see Appendix V for further information).



**Table 4.2.** Studies, samples and type of violence

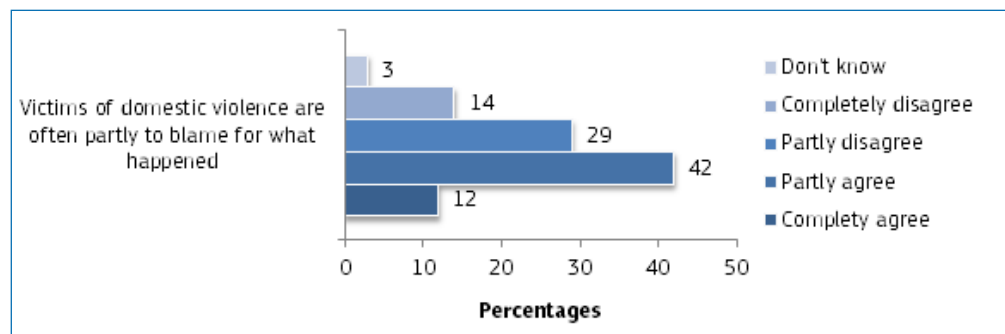
Code	Sample	n	Type of violence
CZ-Study 2	University students	700	Sexual harassment
ES-Study 1	General population	1006	Intimate partner violence
ES-Study 3	Male partner violence offenders	423	Intimate partner violence
ES-Study 4	Community sample	485	Intimate partner violence

## Victim-blaming attitudes. Results of surveys and studies

### Intimate partner violence/domestic violence

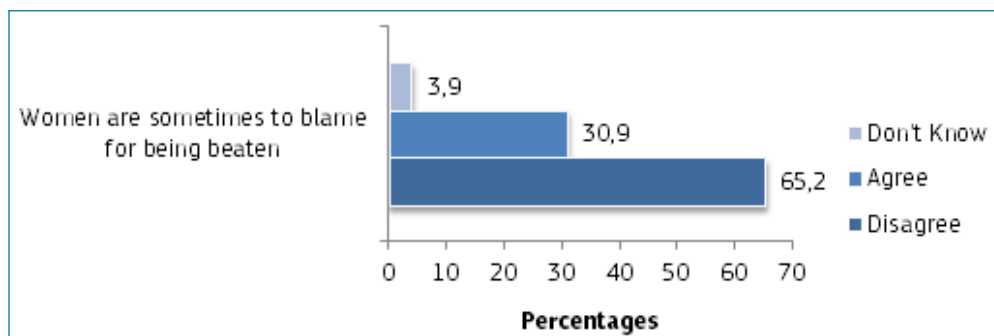
A number of surveys and studies examined in this review addressed victim-blaming attitudes in cases of intimate partner violence against women. The responses to items in these surveys tapping these attitudes suggest that they have a high prevalence in the countries where this information was available. For example, in a survey of the general population conducted in Estonia (*EE-Survey 2*), 54% of the respondents completely or partly agreed with the following statement: “Victims of domestic violence are often partly to blame for what happened” (see Figure 4.2).

**Figure 4.2.** Victim-blaming attitudes: Domestic violence (*EE-Survey 2. General population*)



In another general population survey conducted in Romania (*RO-Survey 1*), 30.9% of respondents agreed with the statement “Women are sometimes to blame for being beaten” (see Figure 4.3). Disaggregated information for this survey also showed that men were more in agreement with this statement than women (see Table 4.3). Although there was no significant pattern regarding age, it is interesting to note differences according to level of education, with a difference of 9 percentage points between higher and lower educational levels, as well as income (a difference of 14 percentage units). Comparatively, results showed that low education and low income groups were those which held this view more strongly (although percentages for high education and income groups can also be considered as high). The results also showed differences between urban and rural areas.

**Figure 4.3.** Victim-blaming attitudes: Domestic violence (RO-Survey 1. General population)



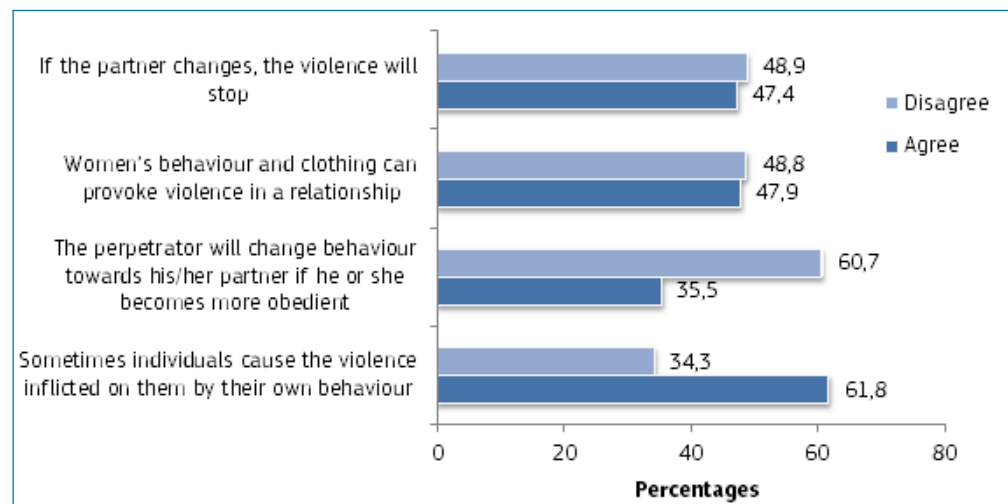
**Table 4.3.** “Women are sometimes to blame for being beaten”: Disaggregated information (RO-Survey 1. General population)

	Agree	Disagree	DK/CA
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	34.1%	62.0%	3.9%
Female	27.9%	68.3%	3.9%
<i>Age</i>			
18-35	32.5%	64.3%	3.2%
36-50	28.4%	66.6%	5.0%
51-65	33.2%	62.8%	4.0%
Over 65	27.1%	70.1%	2.8%
<i>Education</i>			
Primary	37.3%	60.3%	2.4%
Secondary	31.0%	65.4%	3.6%
Tertiary	28.1%	67.1%	4.8%
<i>Income</i>			
Low income/no income	35.3%	62.1%	2.6%
Medium income	30.4%	65.3%	4.3%
High income	21.1%	73.3%	5.6%
<i>Occupation</i>			
Active person	30.5%	65.4%	4.1%
Inactive person	31.5%	65.0%	3.6%
<i>Area</i>			
Urban	27.7%	67.3%	5.0%
Rural	34.8%	62.7%	2.6%
<i>Historical region</i>			
Moldova, Bucovina	28.3%	67.8%	3.9%
Muntenia, Oltenia, Dobrogea	27.4%	70.6%	1.9%
Banat, Crisana, Maramures	59.2%	36.6%	4.2%
Transilvania	22.1%	69.7%	8.2%
<i>Type of household</i>			
Single person	28.0%	64.5%	7.5%
Family with several members, no kids	26.3%	70.8%	2.9%
Family with children	34.8%	61.1%	4.1%
<i>Total</i>	30.9%	65.2%	3.9%

In relation to this, a study conducted in Spain on a representative sample of the general population (*Correlates of victim-blaming attitudes regarding partner violence against women among the Spanish general population; ES-Study 1*) showed that attitudes towards intimate partner violence against women such as victim-blaming did not affect all socio-demographic groups equally, and were more prevalent among respondents who were older, less educated and who saw themselves as being at the bottom of the social scale. It is also worth noting that no significant gender differences were found in victim-blaming attitudes. Furthermore, victim-blaming attitudes were more common among those who reported knowing more victims in their close circle of relationships (i.e. family and friends), perceived IPV against women as more frequent, and tended to perceive that IPV against woman was more acceptable.

A survey with a sample of young people conducted in Cyprus (*CY-Survey 2*) also showed a high level of agreement with statements such as “If the partner changes, the violence will stop” (47.4%) or “Women’s behaviour and clothing can provoke violence in a relationship” (47.9%) (see Figure 4.4).

**Figure 4.4.** *Victim-blaming attitudes: Interpersonal violence (CY-Survey 2. Young people)*



In the same country, in a survey conducted with young people (*CY-Survey 3*), boys consistently showed a higher level of agreement with explanations of male violence towards women such as “women provoke them”, “women are not patient enough with them” or “women are not sensitive/tender enough with them” (see Table 4.4).

**Table 4.4.** *“Some men are violent toward women because...”: Gender-based violence (CY-Survey 3. Young people)*

	Overall M (SD)	Boys M (SD)	Girls M (SD)
...women provoke them	2.35 (0.72)	2.44 (0.78)	2.29 (0.68)
...women are not patient enough with them	2.08 (0.74)	2.23 (0.77)	1.99 (0.69)
...women are not sensitive/tender enough with them	1.91 (0.72)	2.10 (0.78)	1.79 (0.66)

Min. = 1 (never OK); max. = 4 (always OK)

In this survey, a higher percentage of boys than girls selected “always OK” in response to statements such as “It is OK for a boy to push a girl into having sex if she has been flirting with him all night” (17% vs. 3%), or “It is OK for a boy to hit his girlfriend if she has been unfaithful” (8% vs. 1%) (see Table 4.5).

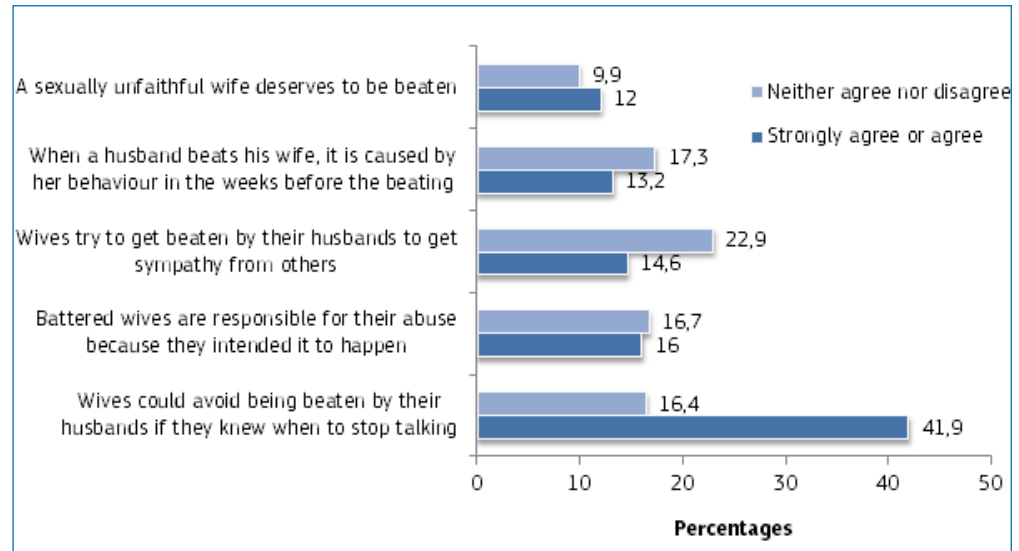
**Table 4.5.** “It is OK for a boy...”: Gender-based violence (CY-Survey 3. Young people)

	<b>Overall</b> <i>Always OK %</i>	<b>Boys</b> <i>Always OK %</i>	<b>Girls</b> <i>Always OK %</i>
...to shout at his girlfriend if she is constantly nagging/arguing	7	8	6
...to shout at his girlfriend if she is not treating him with respect	6	8	4
...to push a girl into having sex if she has been flirting with him all night	9	17	3
...to hit his girlfriend if she has been unfaithful	4	8	1
...to hit his girlfriend if she is constantly nagging/arguing	3	3	2
...to hit his girlfriend if she is not treating him with respect	2	3	1

In another survey conducted in Denmark (*DK-Survey 2*), also addressing dating violence, it is interesting to note that one reason for not reporting an incident of this type of violence given by 9% of respondents was that the victim was “afraid of being seen as guilty”. Moreover, in a survey of school teachers and advisors in Slovenia (*SI-Survey 3*), respondents considered that 7.3% victims of dating violence “accept the blame themselves”.

One of the surveys conducted in Estonia with men from the general population (*EE-Survey 1*) showed a high percentage of respondents (41.9%) who strongly agreed or agreed with the following statement: “Wives could avoid being beaten by their husbands if they knew when to stop talking”. Percentages of agreement with other statements regarding victim-blaming attitudes were also high. It is also worth noting that a high percentage of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with these statements, suggesting ambiguous or weak attitudes against victim-blaming (see Figure 4.5).

**Figure 4.5.** Victim-blaming attitudes: Wife beating (EE-Survey 1. General population, men)



Disaggregated data available for this survey showed significant differences between those speaking Estonian and those speaking Russian or another native language (see Table 4.6).

**Table 4.6.** Wife beating attitudes by native language (EE-Survey 1. General population, men)

% of those who strongly agree or agree with the statements	Native language	
	Estonian	Russian or other
Wives could avoid being beating by their husbands if they knew when to stop talking	36.7	59.5
Battered wives are responsible for their abuse because they intended it to happen	11.5	30.5
Wives try to get beaten by their husbands to get sympathy from others	12.9	20.1
When a husband beats his wife, it is caused by her behaviour in the weeks before the beating	12.1	16.5
A sexually unfaithful wife deserves to be beaten	11.2	14.5

Note: All the differences are statistically significant

Only one survey provided information from victims regarding their own attitudes towards victim-blaming. A survey conducted in Malta (*MT-Survey 1*) addressing the reasons why domestic violence victims did not report their experience, 8% were afraid of being blamed.

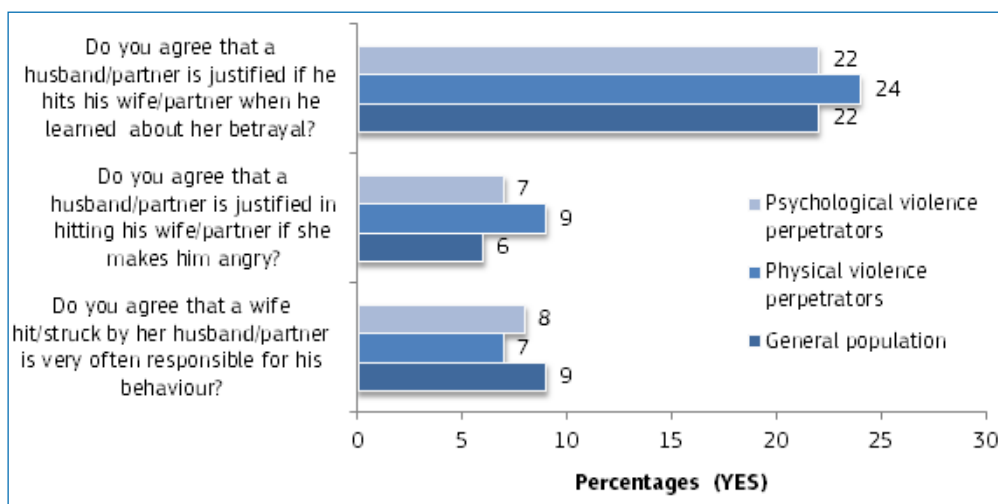
A survey conducted in Spain among adolescents and young people (*ES-Survey 4*) also asked a set of questions tapping victim-blaming attitudes. As Table 4.7 shows, only a small percentage of respondents agreed (partly or completely) with these statements.

**Table 4.7.** Victim-blaming attitudes: Gender-based violence (ES-Survey 4. Young people)

	Completely disagree %	Partly disagree %	Partly agree %	Completely agree %
If a women is mistreated by her partner and does not leave him, that means that she does not dislike the situation	76.80	15.10	5.10	3.10
When a women is beaten by her husband, she must have done something to provoke him	76.20	19.70	2.90	1.20
It is justified for a man to beat his wife or girlfriend if she decides to leave him	93.80	3.90	1.40	0.90

Only one survey (*PL-Survey 2a*) provided, in addition to general sample information, information about a sub-sample of perpetrators of both physical and psychological violence. Interestingly, there appear to be no large differences between perpetrators and general population samples (although no disaggregated data by gender was available). It is particularly noteworthy that “betrayal” was considered as a justification of physical violence against women by 22% of the general population (see Figure 4.6).

**Figure 4.6.** Victim-blaming attitudes: Domestic violence (*PL-Survey 2a. General population and perpetrators sub-sample*)



Another study conducted in Spain on male intimate partner perpetrators partly addresses this issue (*The Intimate Partner Violence Responsibility Attribution Scale (IPVRAS); ES-Study 3*). The main aim of this study was to develop and test a tool designed to assess IPVAW offenders’ responsibility attributions, including responsibility attribution to the victim. The results of this study showed a large proportion of perpetrators blamed the victim for their conviction. Moreover, responsibility attribution to the victim was linked to hostile sexism and victim blaming attitudes.

The results of another Spanish study conducted on a community sample (*Victim blaming and exoneration of the perpetrator in domestic violence: the role of be-*

*liefs in a just world and ambivalent sexism; ES-Study 4*), showed that sexist beliefs contributed to blaming victims of domestic violence and exonerating perpetrators. This study also showed that male participants blamed the victim and exonerated the perpetrator more than female participants. Males were also found to have more traditional ideologies.

Box 4.1 shows other examples of victim-blaming attitudes results, such as those provided by a survey conducted in Denmark on a sample of young people (*DK-Survey 2*), and one from Poland with a general population sample (*PL-Survey 4*). Box 4.1 also shows further information available on the views of victims in relation to attitudes that blame them for their own victimisation (see *CY-Survey 1* and *LU-Survey 1*).

**Box 4.1.** *Victim-blaming attitudes examples*

- ✓ Among the respondents who reported abuse, 98.9% reported that they might be responsible for their own abuse (*CY-Survey 1, Victims*).
- ✓ *It is OK for a man to beat his partner in case of infidelity* (*DK-Survey 2, Young people*). 92.5% of girls and 90.4% of boys disagree with this statement.
- ✓ *If women suffer violence it is because they allow it* (*ES-Survey 2*). 34.6% of respondents partly or completely agree with this statement.
- ✓ *According to you, what triggered the violence?* (*LU-Survey 1, Victims*). A possible answer was: “*your own behaviour?*” 8% responded “yes”.
- ✓ *Do you agree that a perpetrator would stop being violent if he found a partner who did not provoke him?* (*PL-Survey 4, General population*). 23.8% of the respondents agree with this statement.

Finally, a survey conducted among young people in the UK (*UK-Survey 4*) asked respondents whether it was OK for a man to hit his partner in different circumstances. As Table 4.8 shows, although the percentages are small, boys tended to agree with the statements more than girls.

**Table 4.8.** *“It is OK for a man...”: Domestic abuse (UK-Survey 4. Students)*

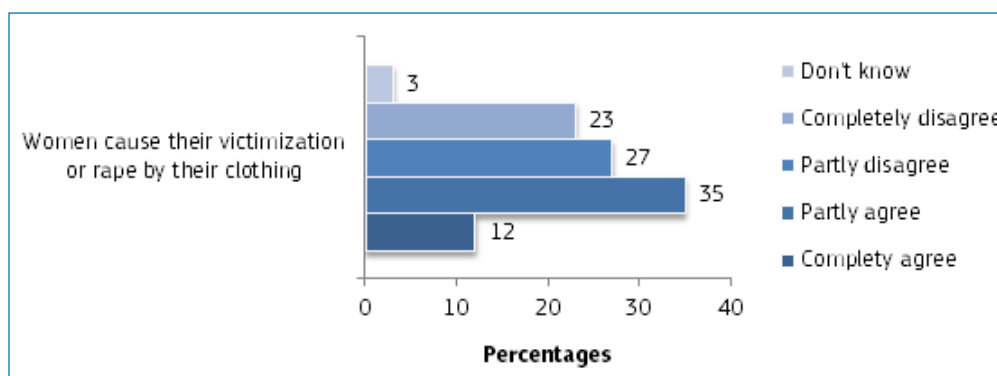
	<b>Overall</b> <i>Always OK %</i>	<b>Boys</b> <i>Always OK %</i>	<b>Girls</b> <i>Always OK %</i>
...to hit his wife/partner if she cheats on him with another man	5.8	6.8	4.6
...to hit his wife/partner if he thinks she deserves it	4.7	6.8	2.3
... to hit his wife/partner if she really embarrasses him	2.7	4.3	0.8

## Sexual violence

Sexual harassment was the focus of a study conducted in the Czech Republic (*The perception and definition of sexual harassment by Czech university students; CZ-Study 2*) with a sample of university students. The participants had a tendency to see victims of harassment as having provoked such behaviour or being unable to defend themselves. Women, younger students, girls from rural areas, and weak and naive women were seen as victims of sexual harassment. Responsibility for sexual harassment was thus transferred to the victims of harassment.

Rape and sexual violence are forms of violence against women that received a special attention in a number of surveys, and are the main focus of some of them. The high percentage of victim-blaming attitudes in such serious types of violence was particularly worrisome. For example, in Estonia (*EE-Survey 2*), 47% of the general population completely or partly agreed with the statement that “Women cause their victimisation or rape by their clothing” (see Figure 4.7).

**Figure 4.7.** Victim-blaming attitudes: Rape (EE-Survey 2. General population)



The disaggregated information for this survey (see Table 4.9) provided some surprising results, as both men and women showed a very high percentage of agreement (completely or partly agree) with this statement (48% of men and 46% of women). As Table 4.9 shows, the percentage of respondents sharing this view is higher in the oldest age groups and among ethnic minorities. There are also differences according to level of education (although the percentage of those who completely or partly agreed reached 35% even for those in the higher education bracket, which is clearly a high percentage).

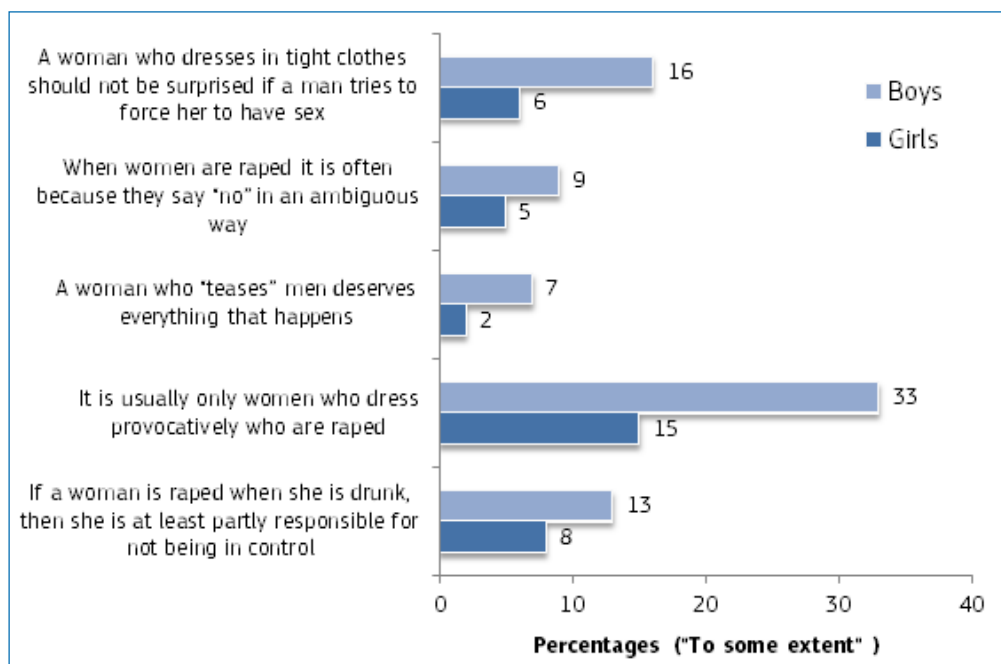


**Table 4.9.** “Women cause their victimisation or rape by their clothing”: Disaggregated information (EE-Survey 2. General population)

Characteristics	Completely agree	Partly agree	Partly disagree	Completely disagree	Don't know
<i>Gender</i>					
Males	15	33	26	24	3
Females	9	37	27	23	3
<i>Age groups</i>					
15 – 24	6	26	28	33	7
25 – 34	3	22	34	41	-
35 – 49	9	35	30	25	1
50 – 64	16	41	27	15	2
65 – 74	23	44	18	11	3
75+	19	48	17	8	8
<i>Ethnicity</i>					
Estonians	8	35	25	28	3
Other nations	19	35	31	12	2
<i>Education</i>					
Primary education	13	43	21	17	6
Secondary education	14	35	27	22	2
Higher education	5	30	33	31	1

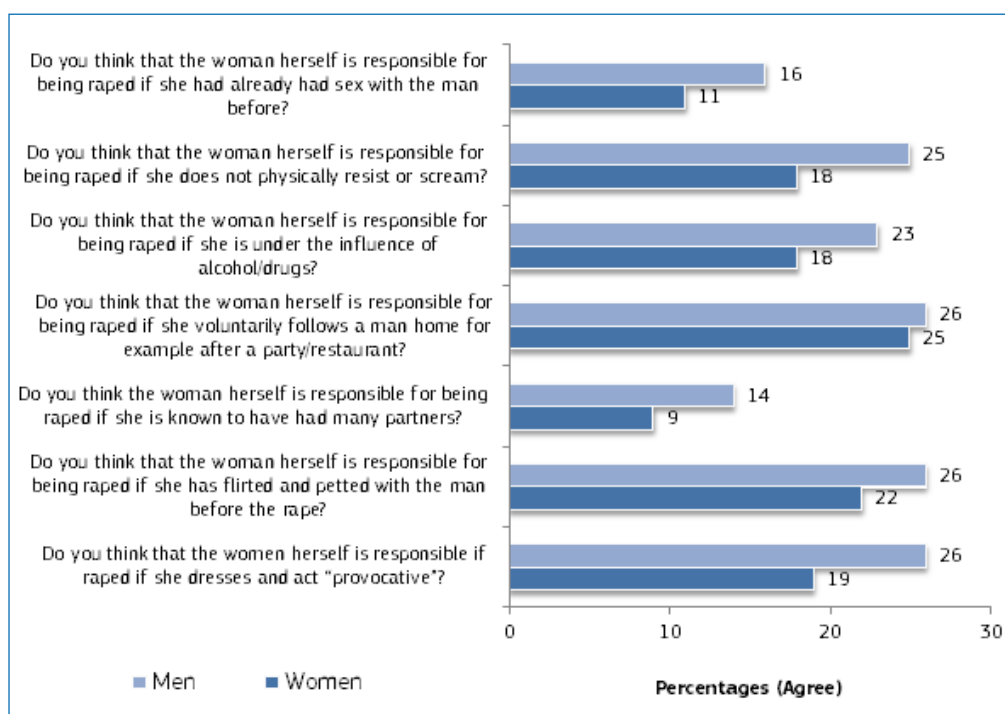
It was also worrisome to find results such as those obtained in a survey conducted in Sweden on rape (SE-Survey 1; see Figure 4.8). In this survey 30% of boys, but also 15% of girls, did agree to some extent with the statement that “It is usually only women who dress provocatively who are raped”.

**Figure 4.8.** Victim-blaming attitudes: Rape (SE-Survey 1. Students)



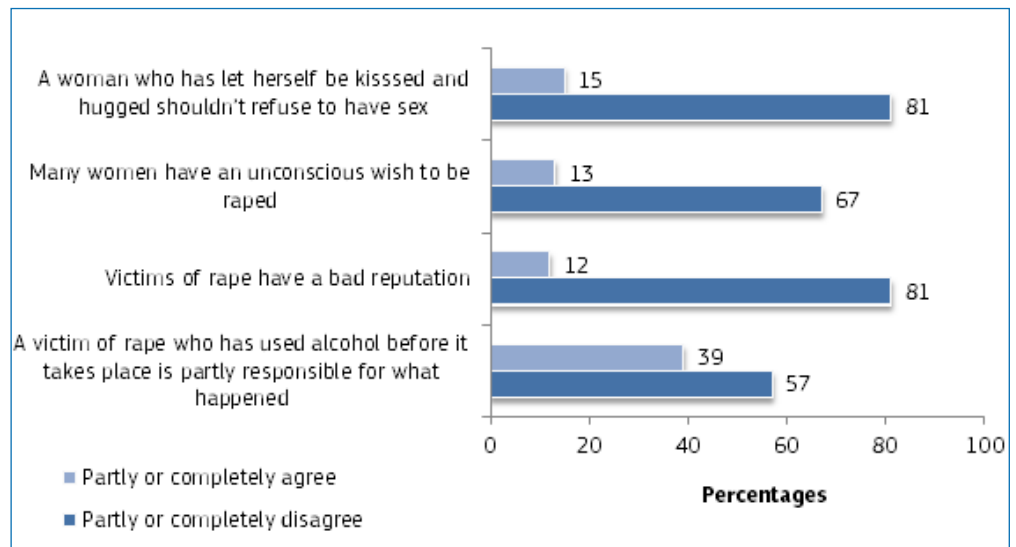
Alcohol consumption by victims is included in some surveys as a possible justification of rape. For example, in the same Swedish survey (*SE-Survey 1*; see Figure 4.8), 13% of boys and 8% of girls agreed with the following statement: “If a woman is raped when she is drunk, then she is at least partly responsible for not being in control”. Interestingly, this percentage is even higher for a Swedish general population sample (*SE-Survey 2*; see Figure 4.9), with 23% of men and 18% of women agreeing that “The women herself is responsible for being raped if she is under the influence of alcohol/drugs”. The same survey also showed high percentages of agreement (in some cases over 25%) with a number of statements that included different circumstances or behaviours justifying rape: “she does not physically resist or scream” (25% men; 18% women), “she voluntarily follows a man home, for example after a party/restaurant” (26% men; 25% women), “she has flirted and petted with the man before the rape” (26% men; 22% women) or “she dresses and act *provocatively*” (26% men; 19% women).

**Figure 4.9.** Victim-blaming attitudes: Rape (*SE-Survey 2. General population*)



Alcohol consumption by a victim of rape is also considered in an Estonian survey as a potential circumstance that makes the woman responsible for her own victimisation (*EE-Survey 6*, see Figure 4.10). In this survey, with a sample of young people, 39% of respondents completely or partly agreed with the following statement: “A victim of rape who has used alcohol before it takes place is partly responsible for what happened”.

**Figure 4.10.** Victim-blaming attitudes: Rape (EE-Survey 6. Young people)



Looking at the disaggregated information provided in relation to the statement “Many women have an unconscious wish to be raped”, Table 4.10 shows percentages are twice as high among boys as among of girls. Percentages were also higher for minorities, the less educated and lower income groups.

**Table 4.10.** “Many women have an unconscious wish to be raped”: Disaggregated information (EE-Survey 6. Young people)

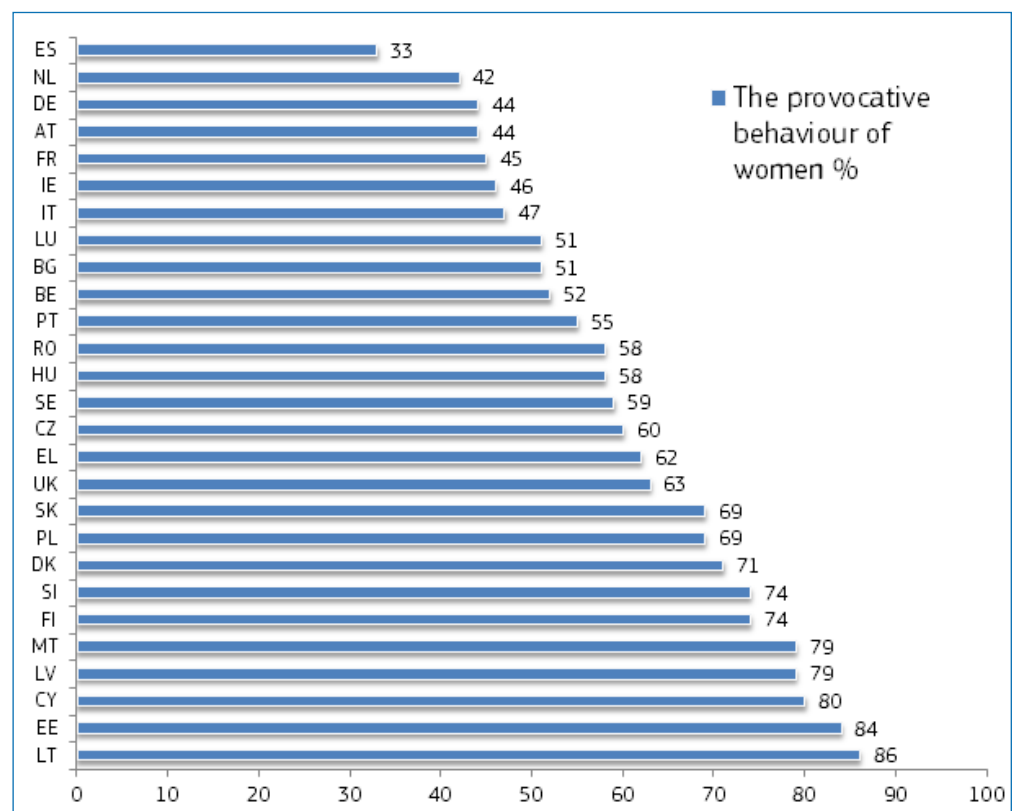
	Completely/partly agree (%)	Don't know (%)	Completely/partly disagree (%)
<i>Gender</i>			
Men	19	25	57
Women	8	14	77
<i>Age groups</i>			
15 – 24	15	16	69
25 – 34	13	19	69
35 – 49	9	19	72
50 – 64	18	17	72
65 – 74	13	30	57
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
Estonians	11	20	69
Minorities	19	17	64
<i>Education</i>			
Primary education or lower	13	32	55
Secondary education	18	16	66
Secondary special education or vocational education	17	22	61
Higher education	8	17	74
<i>Personal monthly income (EUR)</i>			
Up to 300	15	17	68
301 – 400	13	23	64
401 – 500	18	15	66
501 – 650	13	19	68
651 – 800	11	23	66
801 – 1000	18	16	66
More than 1000	9	16	75
No income	17	37	46

## Victim-blaming attitudes, results of the 2010 Eurobarometer

In order to compare the information provided by the surveys analysed for this review, we also explored whether recent European-level surveys included some information regarding victim-blaming attitudes. The 2010 Eurobarometer survey actually included a question tapping victim-blaming attitudes, asking whether the provocative behaviour of women was a cause of domestic violence. As Figure 4.11 shows, percentages of those respondents agreeing with this statement ranged from 33% to 86% across countries, with an EU average of 52%. These percentages are surprisingly high and suggest that there is a widespread prevalence of victim-blaming attitudes among European citizens. Percentages were particularly high in countries such as Lithuania (86%), Estonia (84%), Cyprus (80%) and Latvia (79%). However, it is also surprising that some of the highest percentages were found in highly developed EU countries (both in economic and in gender equality terms) such as Sweden (59%), United Kingdom (63%), Denmark (71%), and Finland (74%). In

any case, even the lowest percentage found in this survey (33% in Spain) can be considered a high prevalence of victim-blaming attitudes. As Gracia (2014) noted in a paper regarding victim-blaming attitudes among Europeans, what is also puzzling is that, despite of years of public awareness and education efforts, victim-blaming attitudes appear to be quite resistant to change over the years. For example, members of the EU were asked the same question regarding provocative behaviour in 1999 and, interestingly, except for three countries where percentages had fallen, victim-blaming attitudes remained the same or even increased in a decade. That such a high percentage of citizens continued to agree with this causal explanation of domestic violence is certainly worrisome, as these attitudes may contribute to a social climate of tolerance and legitimization of violence against women.

**Figure 4.11.** *Victim-blaming attitudes in Europe (Eurobarometer, 2010)*



## Summary and highlights

Victim-blaming attitudes are one of the main topics regarding attitudes towards violence against women that emerged from the analysis of the surveys and studies provided for this review. Information on victim-blaming attitudes was available in 18 surveys conducted in 11 countries and in four studies. Despite the limited number of surveys and countries addressing these attitudes, in those cases where information regarding these attitudes was available, some remarkable and worrisome results emerged, clearly indicating a high prevalence of victim-blaming attitudes in those countries with available data. Below, we summarise the main findings in this section of the report.

### Highlights

1. Analysis of these surveys showed a wide variety of questions addressing these attitudes.
2. Questions addressing victim-blaming attitudes mainly regarded physical intimate partner violence against women, sexual violence and rape.
3. Regardless of the type of questions asked, the results of the surveys analysed in this review suggest that victim-blaming attitudes were widespread in countries where this information was available.
4. This view is reinforced if we include the information available on these attitudes in the 2010 Eurobarometer, suggesting that victim-blaming attitudes are also widespread among EU citizens.
5. Some of the results of this review reveal alarming percentages of this type of attitude, and some of the results on victim-blaming in cases of sexual violence or rape are particularly worrisome.
6. In the surveys where disaggregated data was provided, mainly age, gender, education, and income were available.
7. The picture that emerges from the available disaggregated information is that victim-blaming attitudes are more common among men, the older, the less educated, and minority groups. Nevertheless, it is also to some extent surprising that victim-blaming attitudes are also highly prevalent in other socio-demographic groups and among women.
8. We found few studies on victim-blaming attitudes among EU samples (4) published in academic journals during the last 5 years.

# 5. PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES TOWARDS INTERVENTION, AND RESPONSES IN CASES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

## Introduction

Public awareness and knowledge about violence against women has significantly increased in recent years. But does this awareness and knowledge translate into a sense of personal responsibility and involvement in known cases of violence against women? (Gracia & Herrero, 2006; Gracia et al., 2009; Klein et al., 1997) Are those who are aware of instances of violence against women prepared to get personally involved? This issue is particularly important, as violence against women still remains a largely unreported crime, and at the same time a significant percentage of the public are aware or know of cases of violence against women in their circle of family or friends, at work or in their community (European Commission, 2010; Gracia, 2004; Taylor & Sorenson, 2005).

Public responses and attitudes towards intervention in cases of violence against women play an important role in shaping the social environment in which the victims are embedded, which in turn can contribute to either the perpetuation or the reduction of levels of violence against women in our societies (Gracia & Herrero, 2006). If those who know about the violence choose to be silent and passive, this can contribute to creating a climate of social tolerance that reduces inhibitions for perpetrators and makes it more difficult for women to make domestic violence visible, choosing not to report or abandon the relationship (Biden, 1993; Gracia, 2004; Jenkins, 1996; Lackney & Williams, 1995). On the other hand, a responsive social environment to known incidents of violence may act as an inhibiting force for perpetrators, as well as reducing inhibitions towards reporting both for witnesses and victims (Fagan, 1993; Gelles, 1983; Gracia et al., 2009; Kelly, 1996; Klein et al., 1997). As Klein et al. (1997) argued, a social environment (including neighbours, friends, co-workers or acquaintances) that does not implicitly approve or tolerate violence against women by remaining silent can be important in order to encourage people to challenge violence against women. From this viewpoint, responses to cases of violence against women should not be restricted only to institutional initiatives. The public has also an active role to play. In the words of Kelly (1996):

“...nor is it solely the responses of agencies within communities that express regard and affect women’s dignity and safety but also those of individuals within women’s kinship and friendship networks, their neighbourhoods and workplaces” (p. 67).

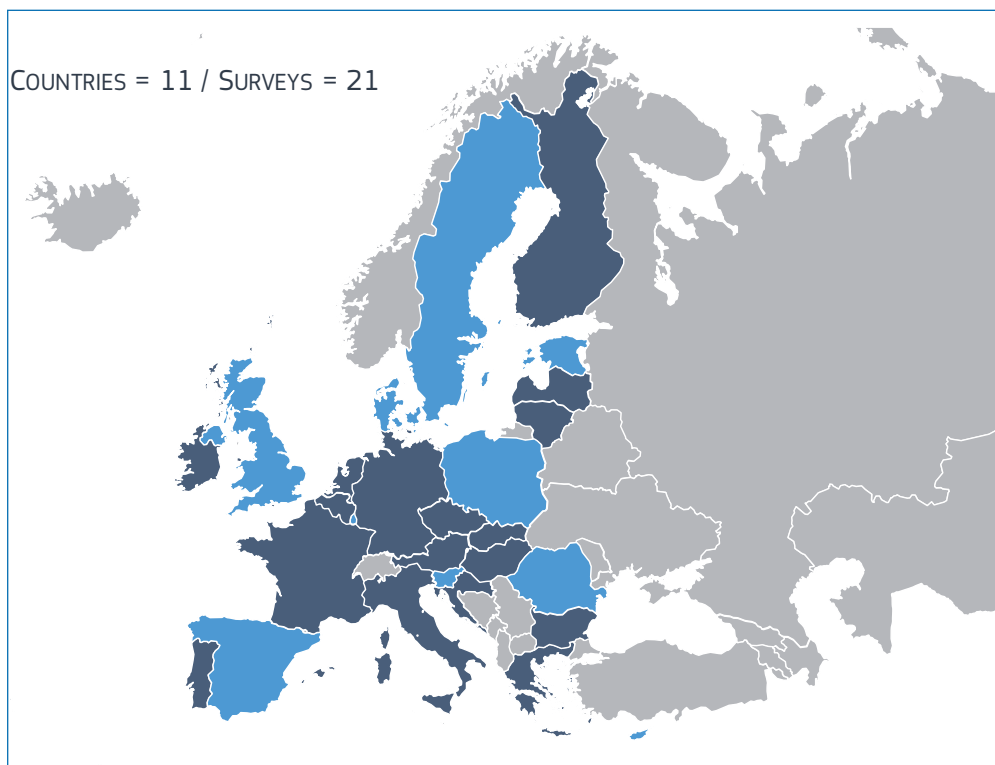
This section of the review will analyse those surveys and studies addressing public knowledge of resources and services for women victims of violence, their attitudes towards intervention and their responses to known cases of violence against women.

## Surveys and studies addressing public knowledge, attitudes towards intervention and responses in cases of violence against women

### Surveys

Information on public knowledge, responses and attitudes towards intervention in cases of violence against women was available in 21 surveys conducted in 11 countries (see Figure 5.1).

**Figure 5.1.** Countries with surveys addressing public knowledge, attitudes towards intervention and responses in cases of violence against women



Surveys in each country (AT = 1; BE = 1; BG = 1; CY = 1; DE = 1; EE = 6; ES = 4; LT = 1; PL = 3; RO = 1; SI = 1)



The samples used and types of violence addressed in these surveys are described in Table 5.1 (see Appendix IV for further information).

**Table 5.1.** *Surveys, samples and type of violence*

Code	Sample	n	Type of violence*
AT-Survey 2	General population (men & women)	1245	Violence against women
BE-Survey 1	General population (men & women)	2073	Emotional, physical and sexual abuse
BG-Survey 1	General population (men & women)	-	Domestic violence
CY-Survey 1	General population (women)	1107	Domestic violence
DE-Survey 4	General population (women) + Professionals	1138	violence against women
EE-Survey 1	General population (men)	2056	Wife beating
EE-Survey 2	General population (men & women)	1111	Gender-based violence
EE-Survey 3	General population (men & women) + Students + Professionals	8055	Domestic violence
EE-Survey 4	General population (men & women)	1500	Intimate partner violence
EE-Survey 5	General population (men & women)	1001	Gender-based and domestic violence
EE-Survey 6	General population (men & women)	1076	Sexual violence
ES-Survey 1	General population (women)	7898	Violence against women
ES-Survey 2	General population (men & women)	2580	Gender-based violence
ES-Survey 3	Adolescents and young people	2457	Gender-based violence
ES-Survey 4	Students of secondary education and professionals	14001	Gender-based violence
LT-Survey 1	Victims	89	Domestic violence
PL-Survey 2a	General population (men & women)	1500	Domestic violence
PL-Survey 4	General population (men & women)	3000	Domestic violence
PL-Survey 8	General population (men & women)	1000	Domestic violence
RO-Survey 1	General population (men & women)	1050	Domestic violence
SI-Survey 1	General population (men & women)	1886	Intimate Partner violence

\* As defined in the title of the survey (see Appendix IV)

A wide variety of questions tapping public knowledge of resources and services for women victims of violence, public attitudes towards intervention or involvement in cases of violence against women and public responses to known cases of violence against women were used in the surveys analysed (see Appendix VI, Box VI.4).

### Studies

In relation to studies published in academic journals in the last five years addressing issues related to this section's topic, eight papers were identified by the countries' experts (see Table 5.2; see Appendix V for further information).

**Table 5.2.** *Studies, samples and type of violence*

Code	Sample	n	Type of violence
CZ-Study 1	Female victims	701	Intimate partner violence
DK-Study 1	Women victims and general practitioners	13/13	Intimate partner violence
EL-Study 1	General Practitioners and residents	25/15	Intimate partner violence
EL-Study 2	Public prosecutors and facilitators of mediation	15/3	Intimate partner violence
EL-Study 3	Social workers at the hospital	10	Intimate partner violence
ES-Study 2	Police officers	378	Intimate partner violence
FI-Study 1	Professionals in specialist health care	30	Domestic violence
SI-Study 1	Social workers	106	Family violence

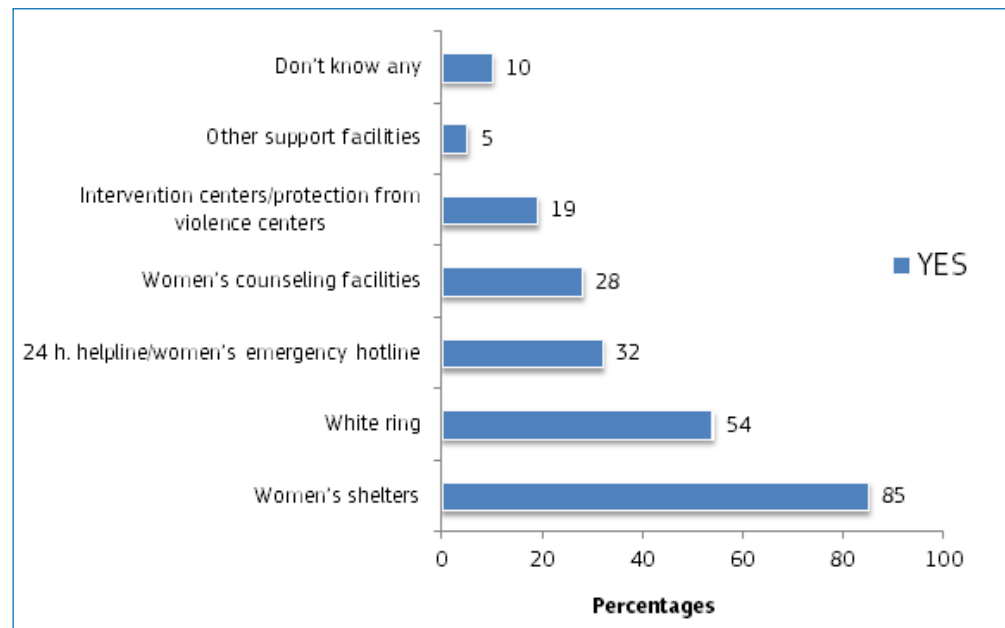
## Public knowledge, attitudes towards intervention and responses in cases of violence against women. Results of surveys and studies

Based on information from survey questionnaires and study summaries, this section was divided into four parts: 1) public knowledge of resources and services for women victims of violence; 2) public attitudes towards intervention or involvement in cases of violence against women; 3) public responses to known cases of violence against women; and 4) professional knowledge and attitudes towards intervention in cases of violence against women.

### Public knowledge of resources and services for women victims of violence

A number of surveys asked respondents specifically about their knowledge of services available for victims of violence against women. For example, a survey conducted in Austria among the general population (*AT-Survey 2*) asked whether respondents knew a number of counselling and support facilities. The most widely known resource was women's shelters (85% knew this resource), followed by the "White Ring" (54%), a non-governmental institution that supports crime victims regardless its type. Other resources such as hotlines or counselling services were less known to the public (see Figure 5.2).

**Figure 5.2.** Public knowledge of resources and services: Violence against women (AT-Survey 2. General population)



A Belgian survey (*BE-Survey 1*) addressed public knowledge with a single item. The information provided allowed us to compare knowledge of services helping violence victims both among victims (43% knew these services) and non-victims (services known by 28.7%). The percentage of non-victims with knowledge of these services may appear low, but the real surprise is the relatively low percentage of victims knowing these services.

Similarly, another survey conducted in Cyprus (*CY-Survey 1*) of women from the general population asked whether respondents were familiar with the services available for victims of domestic violence such as shelters, the hotline, legal aid, counselling and support, and programs for perpetrators. One third of the women said that they were little or not informed about the services available for victims of domestic violence. Only 57% of the women of the sample were aware of the existence of the hotline for victims of domestic abuse, while only 50% knew about the shelter and the support provided by the Association for the Prevention and Handling of Family Violence.

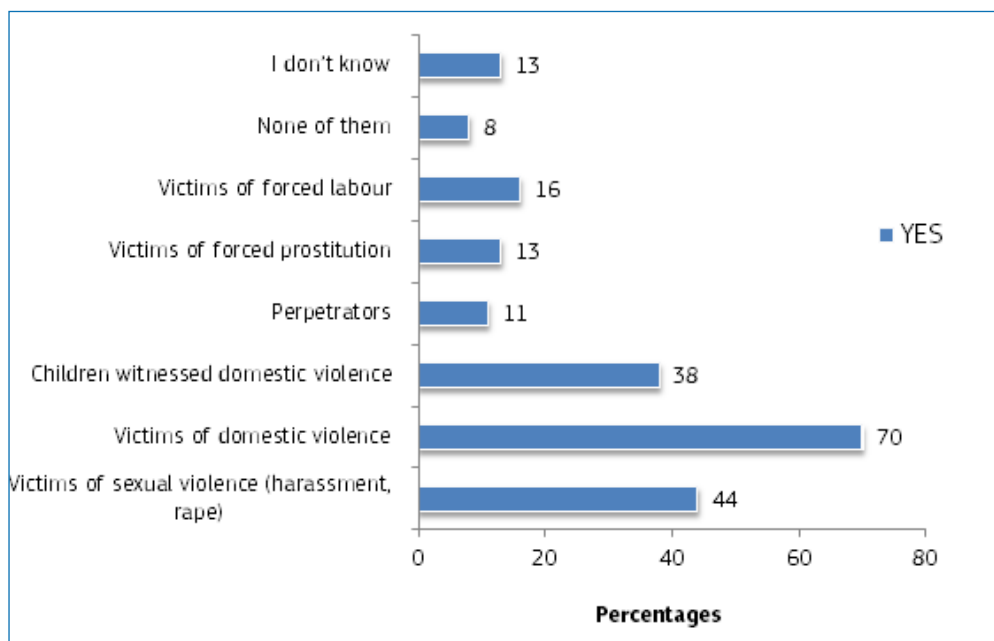
In a survey conducted in Germany among women from the general population (*DE-Survey 4*), respondents were asked about which were the most important sources of information on counselling services or other services to advise women victims of violence. Although counselling services were considered the most important, it is also interesting to note that the internet was considered as a preferred source of information by 45% of respondents (especially for those with higher education) (see Table 5.3).

**Table 5.3.** Preferred sources of information: Intimate partner violence and sexual violence (DE-Survey 4)

Counselling services	66.1%
Internet	43.6%
Related persons	32.1%
Offices	26.4%
Print media (newspaper/journal)	4.6%

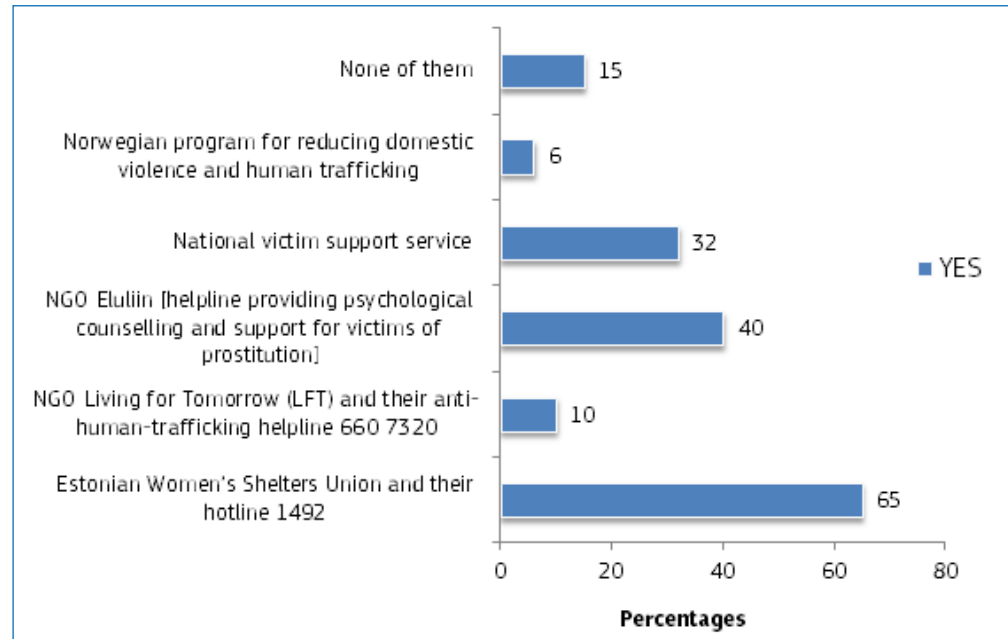
In an Estonian survey on gender-based violence among the general population (*EE-Survey 2*), respondents were asked two questions about the awareness of services for victims of violence. The first question asked them to indicate “Which of the following victim types do you know of services for?” The most well-known services were those for victims of domestic violence (70%), followed by victims of sexual violence and for children witnessing domestic violence, although these last two did not reach 50% of respondents. Other support services (e.g. for victims of forced prostitution or for perpetrators) were known only by a small percentage of respondents (see Figure 5.3).

**Figure 5.3.** Public knowledge of resources and services: Gender-based violence (*EE-Survey 2. General population*)



The other question in the same survey about knowledge of services for victims of violence was “Which of the following organisations or programs have you heard of?”. Again, the services that were most well-known among respondents were women’s shelters and their hotline (65%), and a helpline for victims of prostitution (40%) (see Figure 5.4).

**Figure 5.4.** Public knowledge of resources and services: Gender based violence (EE-Survey 2. General population)



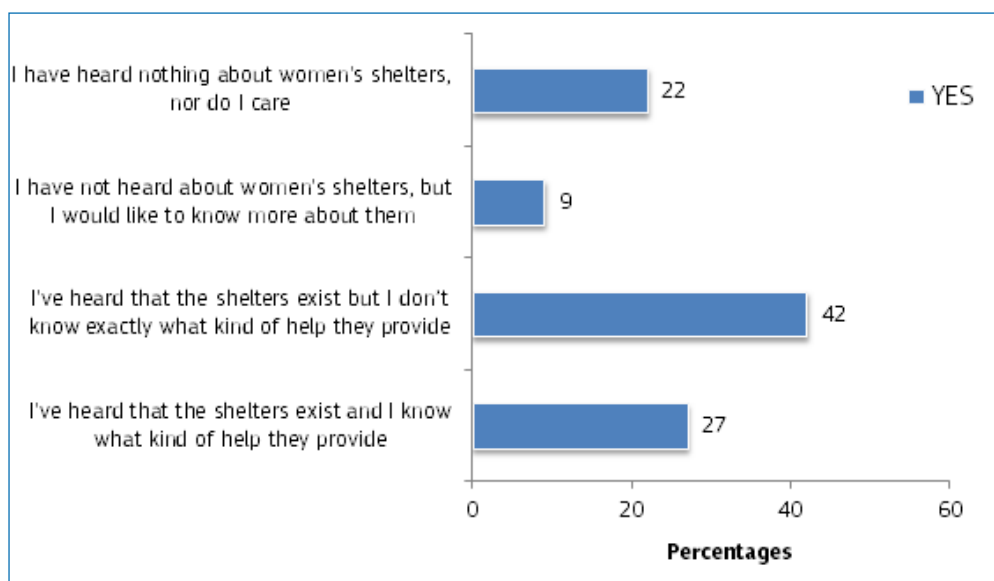
Interestingly, there were differences among specific socio-demographic groups regarding the best-known support services for victims (the Estonian Women's Shelters Union and their hotline). As Table 5.4 shows, this service was particularly less known for those with lower education and among minorities.

**Table 5.4.** Awareness of Estonian Women's Shelters Union and their hotline 1492: Disaggregated information (EE-Survey 2. General population)

	%
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	61
Female	68
<b>Age</b>	
15-24	57
25-34	69
35-59	71
60-64	63
65-74	62
75+	60
<b>Education</b>	
Primary	57
Secondary	63
Higher education	74
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
Estonians	76
Other nations (minorities)	39

Another survey conducted in Estonia on gender based and domestic violence among the general population (*EE-Survey 5*) asked participants specifically about shelters for women victims (“Have you heard about women’s shelters in Estonia?”). 27% of respondents had heard about this service and knew what kind of help they provided. Another 42%, however, did not know exactly what they were for. Another interesting result from this survey is that 22% not only did not know, but they also did not care. 9% wanted to know more about this service (see Figure 5.5).

**Figure 5.5.** *Have you heard about women’s shelters in Estonia?: Gender-based and domestic violence (EE-Survey 5. General population)*



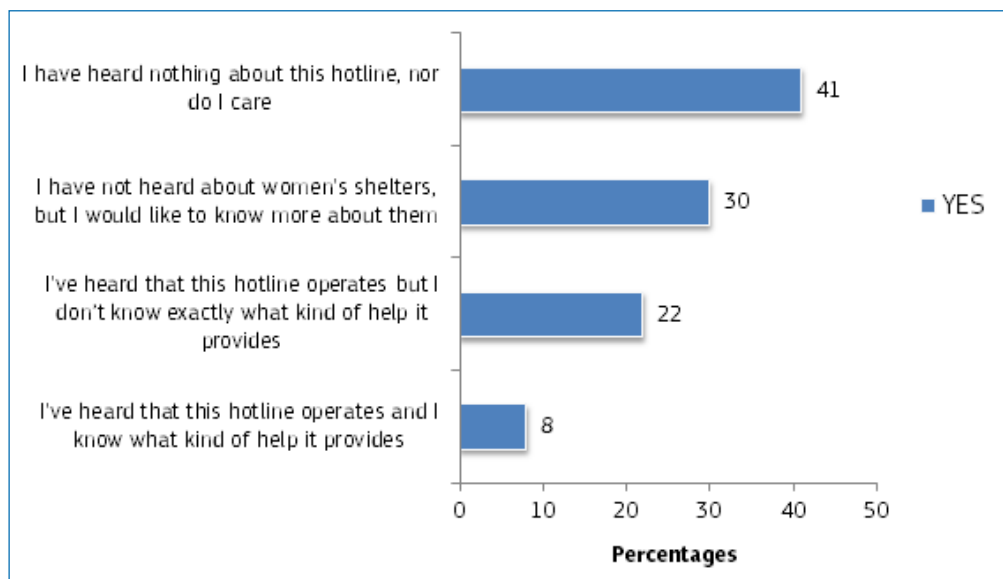
This survey provided disaggregated information, which once again illustrated important differences among different socio-demographic defined groups. For example, men from minority groups had a higher percentage of “I know nothing about shelters, nor do I care” (53%) than Estonian men in general (23%). Among women, only 8% of Estonian women did not know and did not care, compared to 24% of women from minority groups. There were also large differences according to level of education (see Table 5.5).

**Table 5.5.** Have you heard about women’s shelters in Estonia?: Disaggregated information (EE-Survey 5. General population)

	I've heard that shelters exist and I know what kind of help they provide. %	I've heard that the shelters exist but I don't know exactly what kind of help they provide. %	I have not heard about women's shelters, but I would like to know more about them. %	I have heard nothing about women's shelters, nor do I care. %
<i>Gender + Ethnicity</i>				
Estonian men	25	47	6	23
Minority men	11	23	13	53
Estonian women	39	48	5	8
Minority women	21	38	17	24
<i>Education</i>				
Lower than secondary	17	38	7	37
Secondary or vocational	27	43	9	21
Higher	38	43	9	10

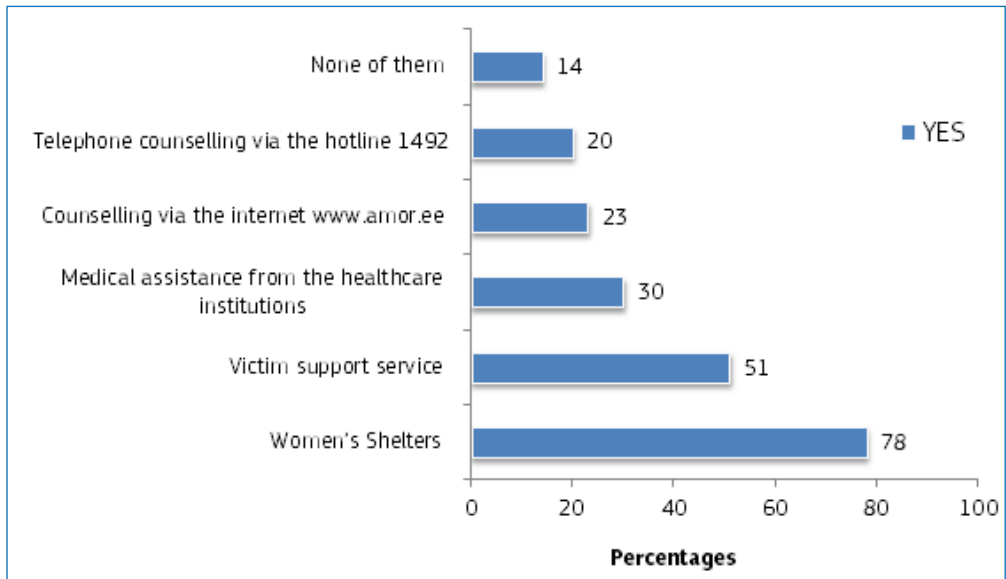
This Estonian survey also asked specifically about knowledge of a hotline for women victims (“Have you heard about the nationwide hotline 1492 for women victims?”). Only 8% of respondents had heard about this service and knew what kind of help they provide. Another 22%, however, did not know exactly what they were for. Interestingly, a large percentage of respondents (41%) not only did not know, but also did not care. 30% wanted to know more about this service (see Figure 5.6).

**Figure 5.6.** Have you heard about the nationwide hotline 1492 for women victims?: Gender based and domestic violence (EE-Survey 5. General population)



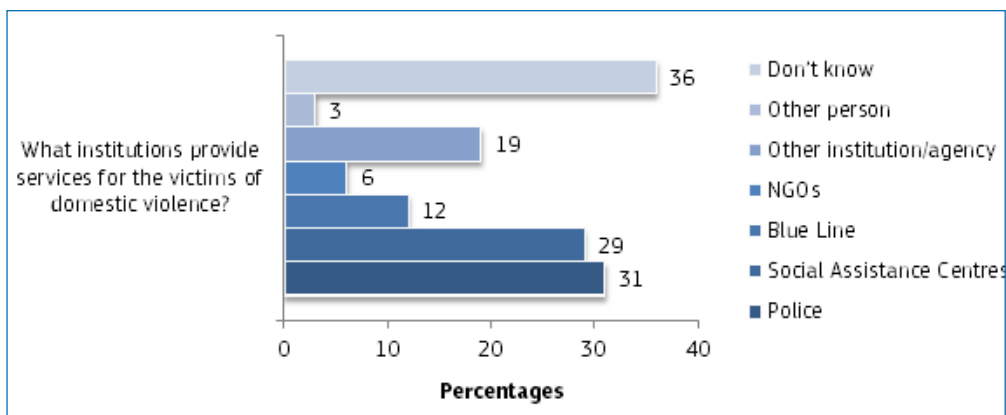
Estonia provides one more survey specifically tapping public knowledge about support services for victims of sexual violence (*EE-Survey 6*). Figure 5.7 provides information on the kind of support services for victims of sexual violence that respondents knew most about, of which women’s shelters was the best-known service, followed by victims support services.

**Figure 5.7.** What kind of support services for victims of sexual violence have you heard of?: Sexual violence (*EE-Survey 6. General population*)



Lastly, a survey conducted in Poland among the general population (*PL-Survey 8*) asked whether respondents were aware of institutions providing services for the victims of domestic violence. It is interesting to note that 36% did not know about any institution, and that only 31% mentioned the police. Awareness of other institutions otherwise below 30%, which suggests little knowledge of resources that could help victims (see Figure 5.8).

**Figure 5.8.** Public knowledge of resources and services: Domestic violence (*PL-Survey 8. General population*)



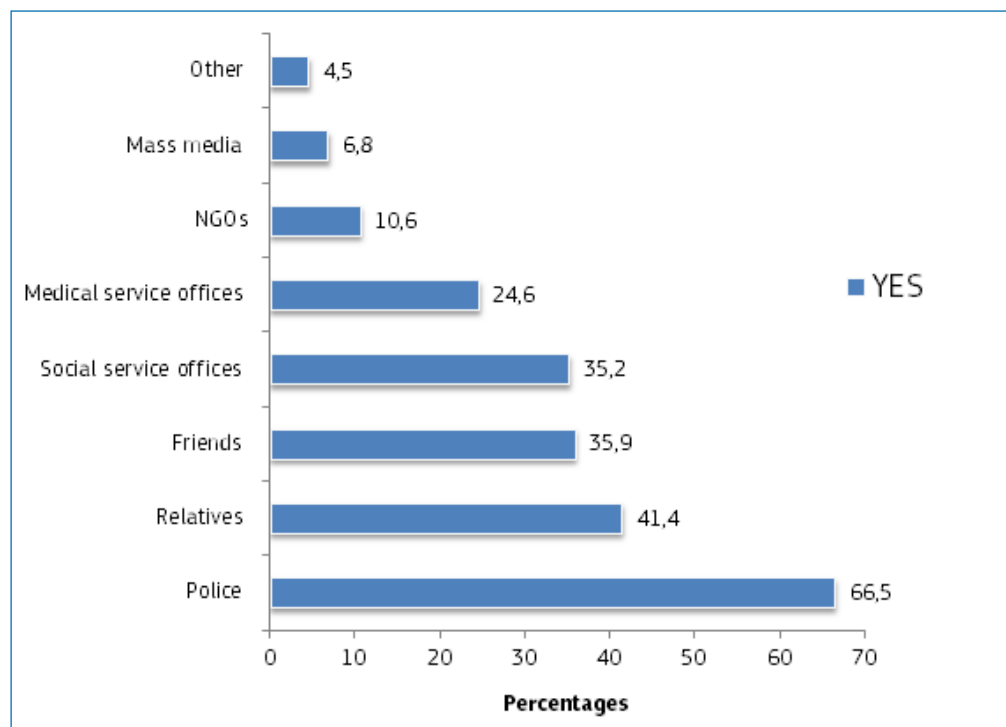


### Public attitudes towards intervention in cases of violence against women

Most information available in the surveys reviewed for this section addressed public attitudes towards intervention in cases of violence against women, that is, what people responded regarding their advice to victims, their willingness and their intentions to act should they hear or know of a case of violence against women (mostly partner violence against women). One study also addressed this topic.

For example, a Bulgarian survey among the general population (*BG-Survey 1*) asked what advice respondents would give if they became aware that a person of their circle of acquaintances has been a victim of domestic violence. Although most respondents suggested the police (66.5%), it is interesting to note that a large percentage would recommend turning to relatives and friends. Victims were also advised to contact social services or healthcare (see Figure 5.9).

**Figure 5.9.** *If a person from your circle of acquaintances shares with you she has been a victim of domestic violence, whom would you advise her to go to?: Domestic violence (BG-Survey 1. General population)*



In a survey conducted in Germany of women from the general population (*DE-Survey 4*), respondents were asked what kind of services they would recommend to women victims of partner violence (i.e. “Assuming that a friend of yours has been abused by her partner or husband. What do you recommend: where should she go?”), and also to victims of sexual violence (i.e. “Assuming that a friend of yours is/was raped, groped or sexually abused now or in the past. What do you recommend: where should she go?”). The results showed that women recommended the police in both cases, followed by doctors. Women’s shelters and counselling services were mentioned as often as doctors, in cases of domestic violence by partners (see Table 5.6).

**Table 5.6.** Recommendations to victims: IPV and Sexual violence (DE-Survey 4)

	Recommendation after domestic violence by partners (%)	Recommendation after sexual violence (%)
Police	63.4	74.1
Doctor	35.9	44.7
Women's shelter	34.8	19.3
Counselling service for families or women	34.6	27.1
Related persons: friend, colleague, sister, mother	28.5	22.9
Lawyer	18.7	19.8
Therapist	8.3	20.7
Local equal opportunities officers	7%	8.3

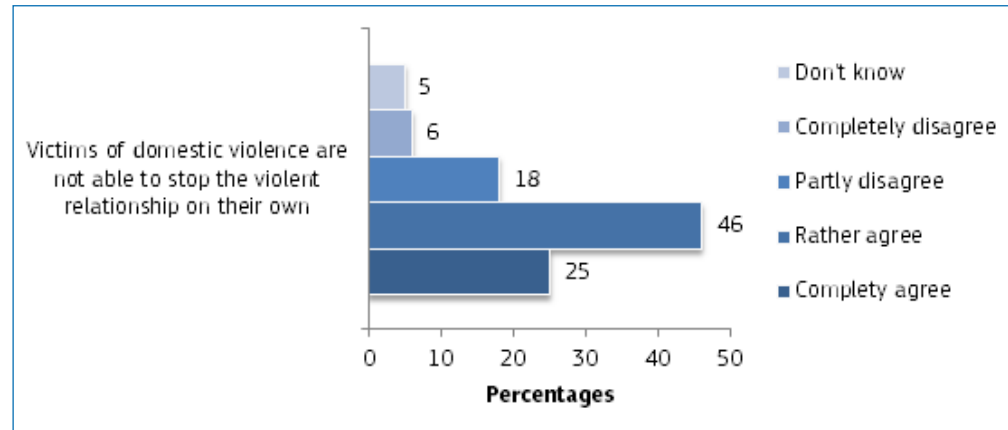
Disaggregated data by level of education suggests that the police were more strongly recommended by those with higher education, as was the case for other services (see Table 5.7).

**Table 5.7.** Recommendations in cases of domestic violence by level of education (DE-Survey 4)

	Primary education (%)	Secondary education (%)	Higher education (%)
Police	57.3	66.5	66.4
Counselling service for women	30	35.3	40.8
Women's shelter	33.4	35	36.7
Lawyer	18.8	15.3	28.4
Therapist	5.6	7.6	13.7

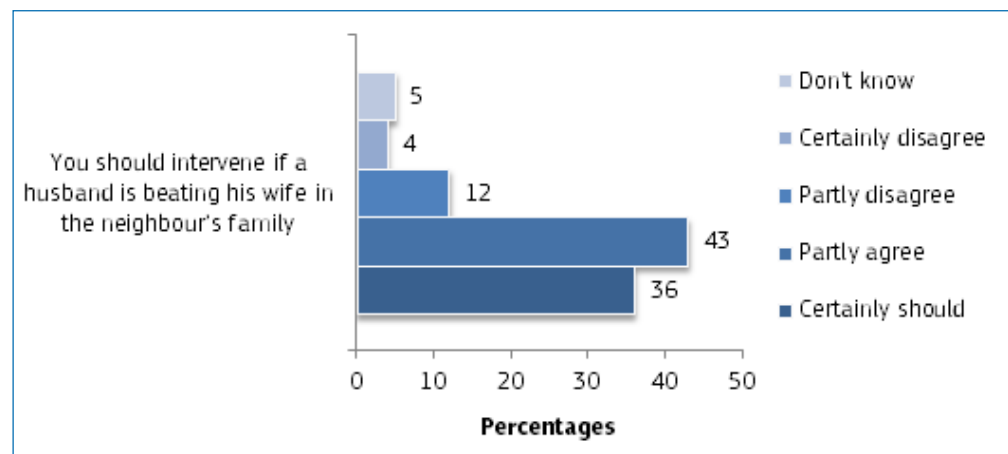
In Estonia, several surveys addressed public attitudes towards intervention in cases of violence against women. For example, one of these surveys (*EE-Survey 1*) asked indirectly whether a situation of domestic violence required external intervention to stop it (i.e. "A victim of domestic violence is not able to stop the violent relationship by herself"). Although 71% of respondents agreed or completely agreed with this statement, a sizable percentage of respondents (22%) completely or partly disagreed, suggesting that they believed that victims can escape from domestic violence by themselves (see Figure 5.10).

**Figure 5.10.** Public attitudes towards intervention: Domestic violence (EE-Survey 1. General population)



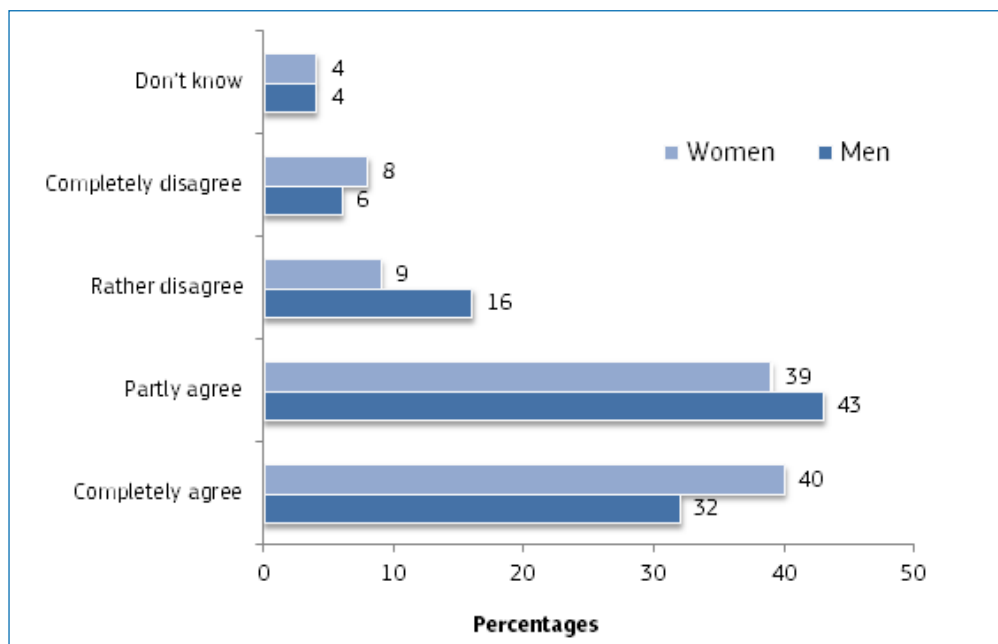
In another Estonian survey (*EE-Survey 3*), adult participants were asked whether they should intervene if a husband is beating his wife in the neighbour's family. A substantial percentage of respondents (79%) partly or completely agreed that they should intervene, which still leaves a sizable percentage believing that they certainly or partly should not (18%), and 5% that did not know (see Figure 5.11).

**Figure 5.11.** Public attitudes towards intervention: Domestic violence (EE-Survey 3. Students/Teachers)



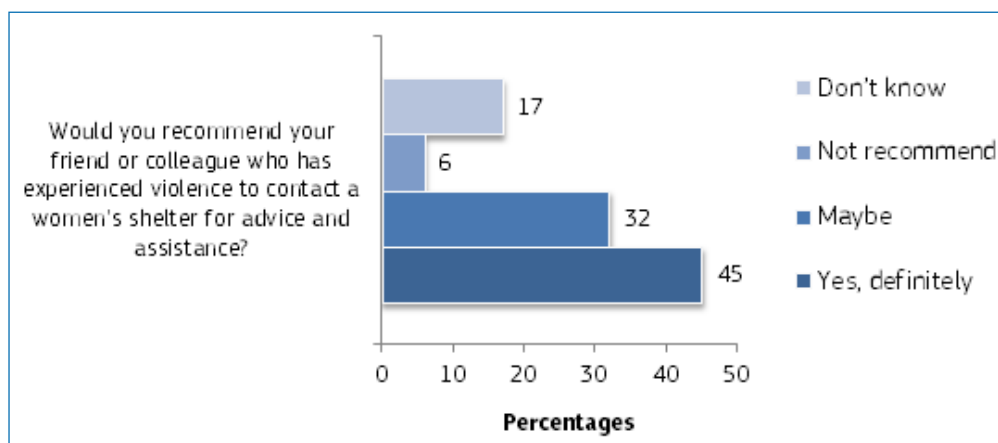
A similar question was asked in another Estonian survey (*EE-Survey 4*), where participants were asked: "What do you think of the following statement? Witnesses or over-hearers should intervene to stop a violent quarrel in the family". Results regarding agreement and disagreement were quite similar to those of the previous question (see Figure 5.12).

**Figure 5.12.** *Should witnesses intervene: Domestic violence (EE-Survey 4. General population)*



In another Estonian survey (*EE-Survey 5*) the issue of public attitudes toward intervention in cases of violence against women was addressed by asking participants whether they would suggest their friend seek help in a women's shelter. 45% of respondents would definitely recommend this, and 32% considered this as a possibility (i.e. "maybe"), 17% did not know, and 6% would not recommend it (see Figure 5.13).

**Figure 5.13.** *Public attitudes towards intervention: Gender based and domestic violence (EE-Survey 5. General population)*



Disaggregated information for this question revealed some interesting differences across socio-demographic groups (see Table 5.8). For example, among those who would definitely recommend women's shelters are Estonian women (60%), which

contrasts with the comparatively lower percentage of women from minority groups who would recommend this service (48%), and an even lower percentage among men (with only 22% of men from minority groups recommending this service). Those in the higher education groups (50%) would also recommend this service more than those with a lower level of education (34%).

**Table 5.8.** *Would you recommend your friend or colleague who has experienced violence to contact a women’s shelter for advice and assistance?: Disaggregated information (EE-Survey 5. General population)*

	Yes, definitely %	Maybe %	No %	Don’t know %
<i>Gender + Ethnicity</i>				
Estonian men	36	40	3	21
Minority men	22	33	18	27
Estonian women	60	28	3	9
Minority women	48	27	6	19
<i>Education</i>				
Less than secondary education	34	33	9	24
Secondary or vocational education	46	31	6	17
Higher education	50	35	4	11

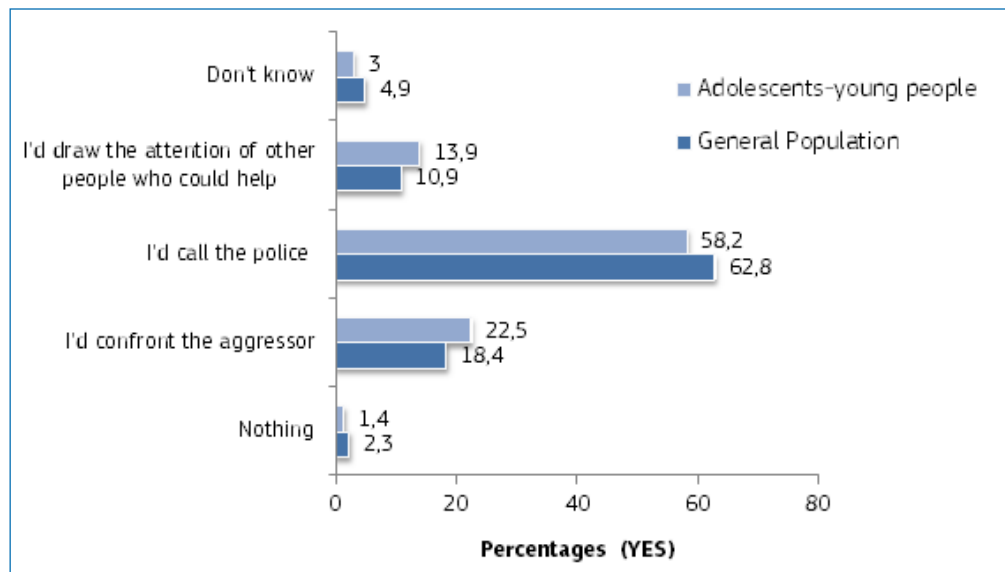
A survey in Spain among the general population asked respondents whether they would know where to go to report and file a complaint (*ES-Survey 1*). Those who answered “yes” were also asked: “And specifically, where would you go?” (see Table 5.9). 82% of respondents stated that they would know where to go to report a case, and among these most respondents mentioned the police (62.1%, and 19%), followed by the phone helpline for victims (31.6%), and the courts (7%). The same question was asked in another survey (*ES-Survey 2*) of the general population (88.3% mentioned that they knew where to go), who again mentioned the police as the main place to report a known case, followed by the phone help-line for victims, and the courts.

**Table 5.9.** *Would you know where to go to file a complaint in a case of mistreatment? And specifically, where would you go? (ES-Survey 1. Women general population)*

<b>Share of respondents (%)</b>	
YES	82.6
NO	13.8
Don't know	1.6
Don't answer	1.9
TOTAL	100.0
<b>Specifically, where would you go?</b>	
Police	62.1
Spanish military police (Guardia civil)	19.0
Courts	7.0
Women's associations	5.2
Centres for women's support	7.0
Victims' support helpline (016)	31.6
Regional helplines for victims' support	2.1
Other	2.5
Local council	1.6
Social Services	2.0
112	1.8
Don't answer	1.1
TOTAL	100.0

The same Spanish survey asked about what respondents thought they would do if they knew of a case of violence against women. The largest percentage of respondents thought that they would call the police (62.8%), a sizable percentage believed that they would confront the aggressor (18.24%), and others would call somebody else who could help the victim (10.9%). A small percentage did not know what they would do (4.9%), and 2.3% said that they would do nothing. This question was also asked in another survey (*ES-Survey 3*) of Spanish adolescents and young people. The percentages were similar, although it appears to suggest that they preferred a closer involvement with the aggressor (see Figure 5.14).

**Figure 5.14.** *If you know of or witness aggression or mistreatment of a woman by a man, what do you think you would do?: Gender-based violence (ES-Survey 2 and 3. General population and adolescents-young people)*



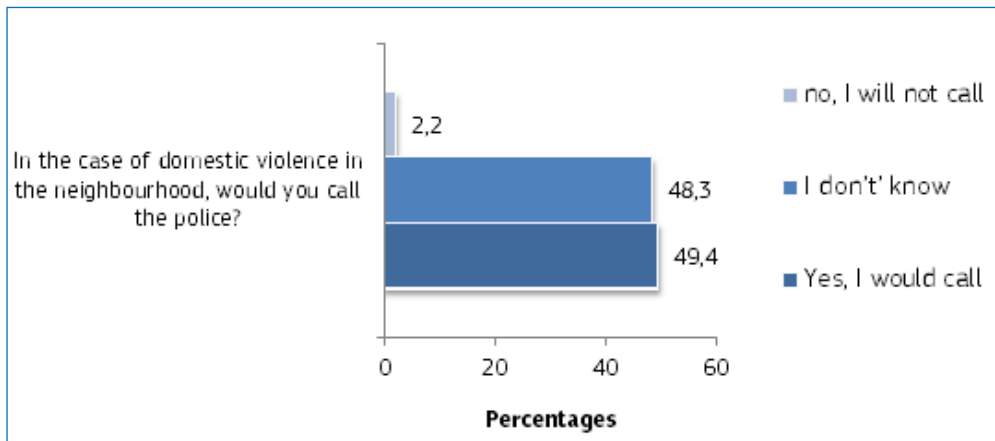
Another survey (*ES-Survey 4*) conducted in Spain among adolescents addressing dating violence asked two questions that differentiated between whether the person you know is the victim or the aggressor. The questions were: “What would you do if you became aware that a girl friend of yours has been or is being mistreated by the boy she is with?”, and “What would you do if you became aware that a boy friend of yours has mistreated or is mistreating the girl he is with?”. In both cases, the preferred response was to confront the aggressor, and the second preferred response was to tell somebody, although some differences can be observed depending on whether the aggressor is a friend. For example, when the aggressor is a friend, 22.9% would tell somebody, as compared to 31% when the victim is the friend. Also, when the aggressor is a friend 11.1% would do nothing, as compared to 6.8% when the victim is the friend (see Table 5.10).

**Table 5.10.** *Public attitudes towards intervention: Gender-based violence (ES-Survey 4. Adolescents)*

<i>What would you do if you became aware that a girl friend of yours has been or is being mistreated by the boy she is with? %</i>	
Nothing	6,8
I would end my relationship with him	16.1
I would tell somebody who could punish him	31.1
I would confront him	46
<i>What would you do if you became aware that a boy friend of yours has mistreated or is mistreating the girl he is with? %</i>	
Nothing	11.1
I would end my relationship with him	19.5
I would tell somebody who could punish him	22.9
I would confront him	46.5

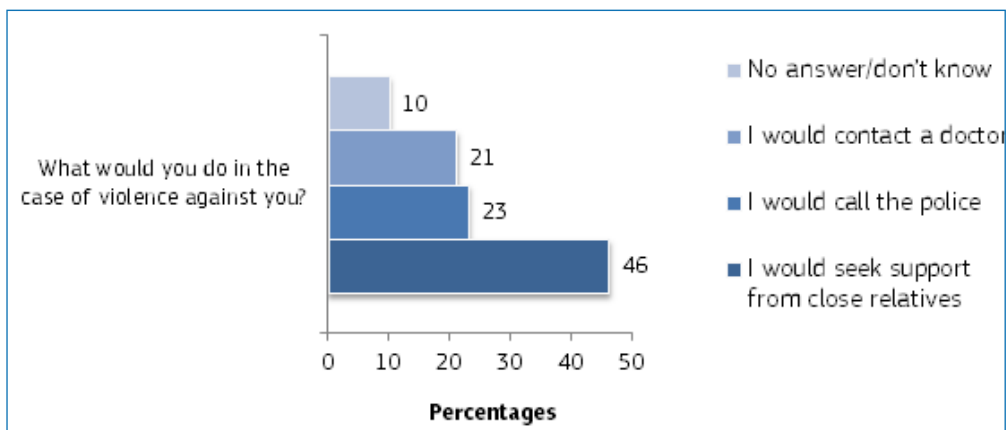
In a Lithuanian survey (*LT-Survey 1*), victims of domestic violence were also asked: “In the case of domestic violence in the neighbourhood, would you call the police?” Although about 50% of respondents said that they would call the police and only 2.2% said that they would not call, it is to some extent surprising that 48.3% answered that they did not know (see Figure 5.15).

**Figure 5.15.** Public attitudes towards intervention: Domestic violence (*LT-Survey 1. Victims*)



In the same survey victims were also asked: “What would you do in the case of violence against you?” As Figure 5.16 shows, the main choice was to seek support from relatives (46%), and contacting the police was the main choice only for 23% of respondents. Contacting doctors was also favoured by 21% of respondents (10% did not know or did not answer).

**Figure 5.16.** Public attitudes towards intervention: Domestic violence (*LT-Survey 1. Victims*)



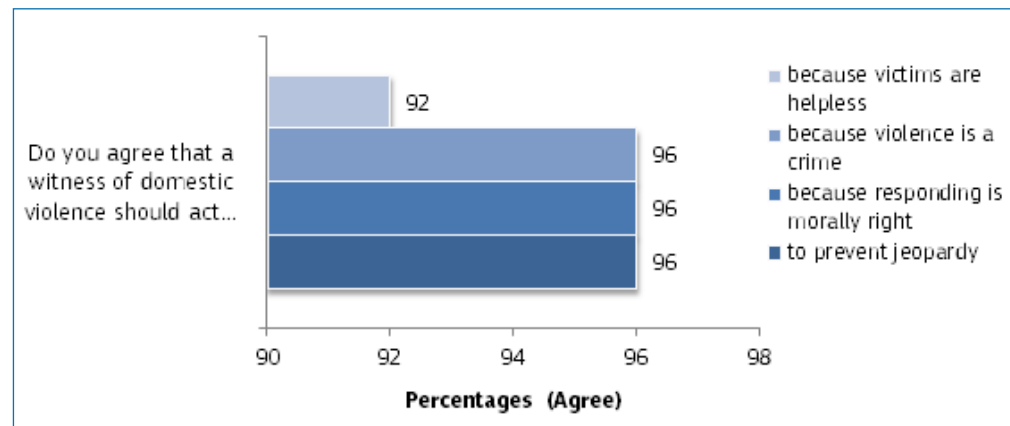
A study conducted in the Czech Republic (*Reporting to the police as a response to intimate partner violence; CZ-Study 1*) examined the circumstances that made intimate partner violence incidents more likely to be reported to the police, and the



victims' reasons for not reporting. Distrust of the police was an important factor for not reporting to the police (29% of women).

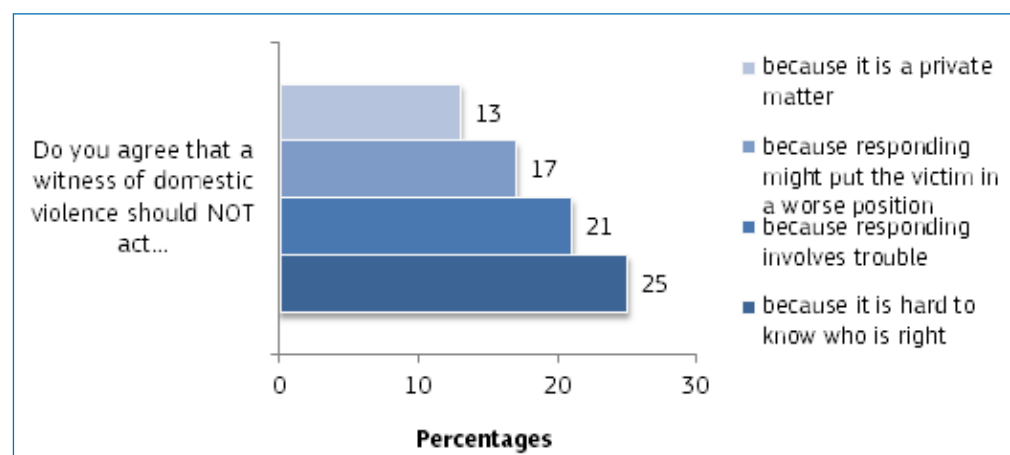
A Polish survey among the general population (*PL-Survey 2a*) also asked about the reasons why a witness of domestic violence should act. As can be seen in Figure 5.17 there was broad agreement among respondents.

**Figure 5.17.** Public attitudes towards intervention: Domestic violence (*PL-Survey 2a. General population*)



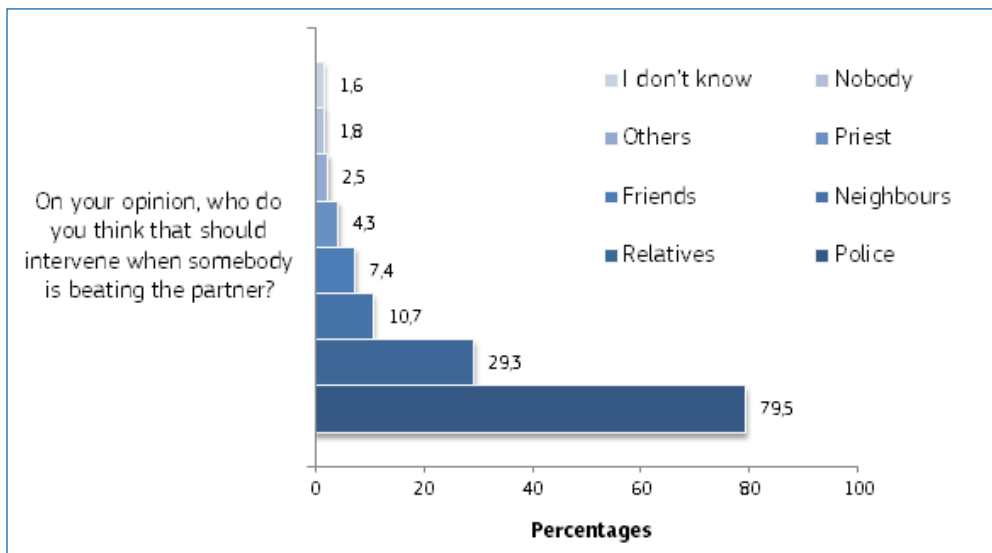
The same survey also asked about the reasons why witnesses of domestic violence should not act. For example, 25% of respondents agreed that a witness should not intervene because “it is hard to know who is right”. Also a substantial percentage of respondents thought that people should not intervene because “it involves trouble” (21%), or “puts the victim in a worse position” (17%), or “because it is a private matter” (13%) (see Figure 5.18). In a similar way, in a different Polish survey (*PL-Survey 4*), also among the general population, 17.8% of all respondents agreed that is not worth it or effective to support or help victims of domestic violence because they would return to the perpetrators.

**Figure 5.18.** Public attitudes towards intervention: Domestic violence (*PL-Survey 2a. General population*)



Finally, a survey conducted in Romania (*RO-Survey 1*) also asked about public opinions regarding who should intervene when somebody is beating their partner. Most respondents thought that it should be the police, followed by relatives, friends and neighbours (see Figure 5.19).

**Figure 5.19.** Public attitudes towards intervention: Domestic violence (*RO-Survey 1. General population*)

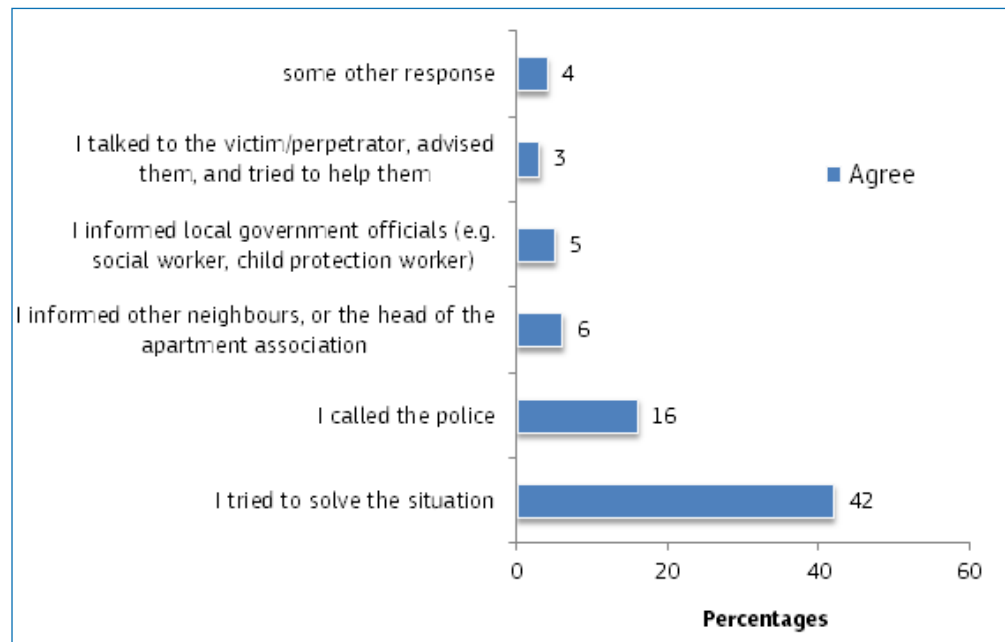


### Public responses in cases of violence against women

Finally, only a few surveys addressed actual public responses to known cases of violence against women and the reasons for not responding, as not responding (passivity, inhibition, etc.) is also a form of response in itself.

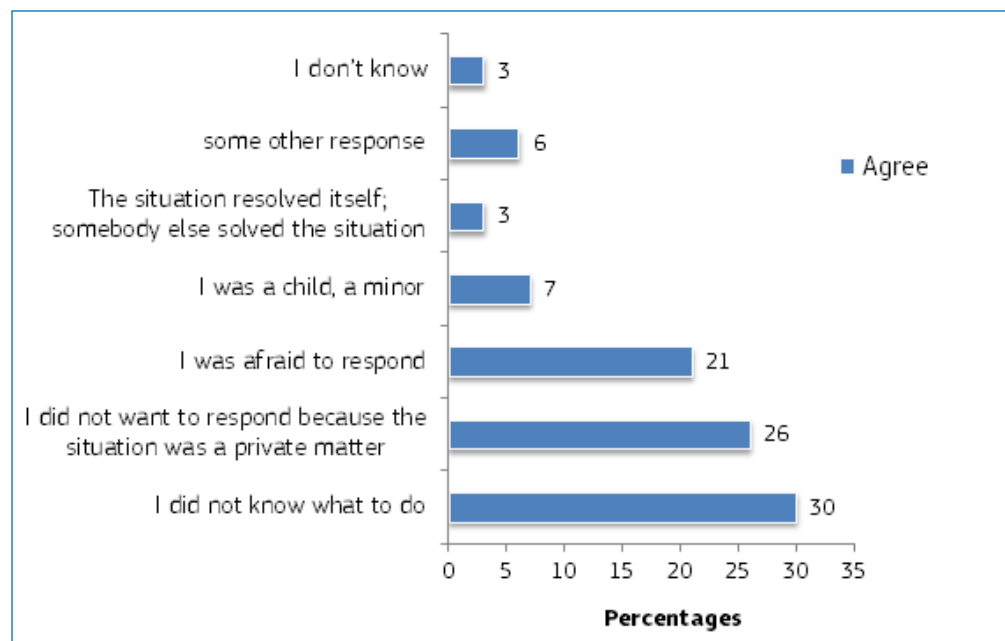
For example, in an Estonian survey on gender-based violence (*EE-Survey 2*), respondents were asked “Have you ever overheard, seen or suspected any case of domestic violence?” and those who answered affirmatively (53%) were in turn asked “Did you respond to it in any way or do something?”. 62% mentioned that they responded to the situation, 36% did not respond, 2% chose the option “don’t know”. Those who responded to the situation were asked “What did you do, how did you respond? Please indicate all appropriate options”. As Figure 5.20 shows, only 16% of those who were aware of cases of domestic violence called the police, and the majority tried to solve the situation by themselves.

**Figure 5.20.** *What did you do, how did you respond?: Domestic violence (EE-Survey 2. General population)*



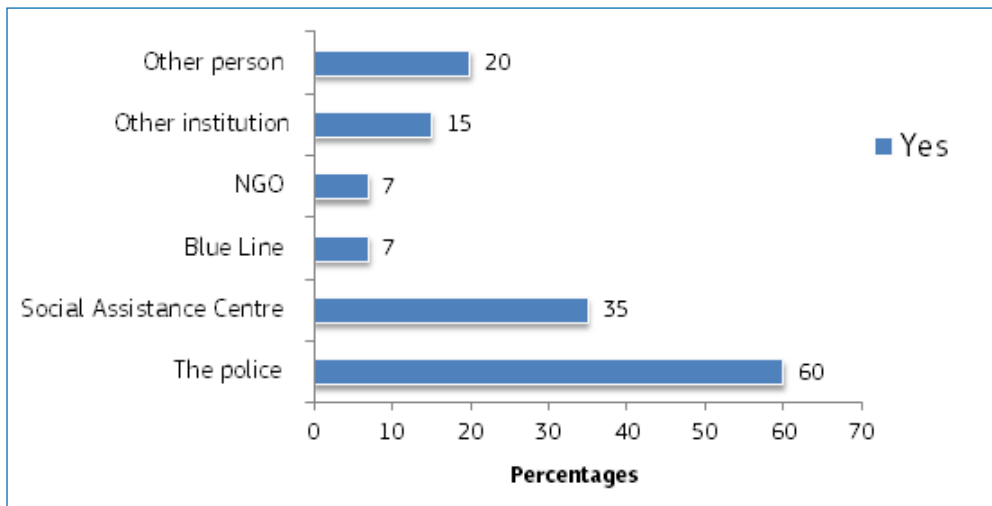
With regard to the reasons why respondents did not do anything in response to known cases of domestic violence, 30% did not know what to do and 21% were afraid. It is, however, remarkable that 26% of respondents considered that the violence was a “private matter” (see Figure 5.21).

**Figure 5.21.** *What is the main reason why you did not do anything?: Domestic violence (EE-Survey 2. General population)*



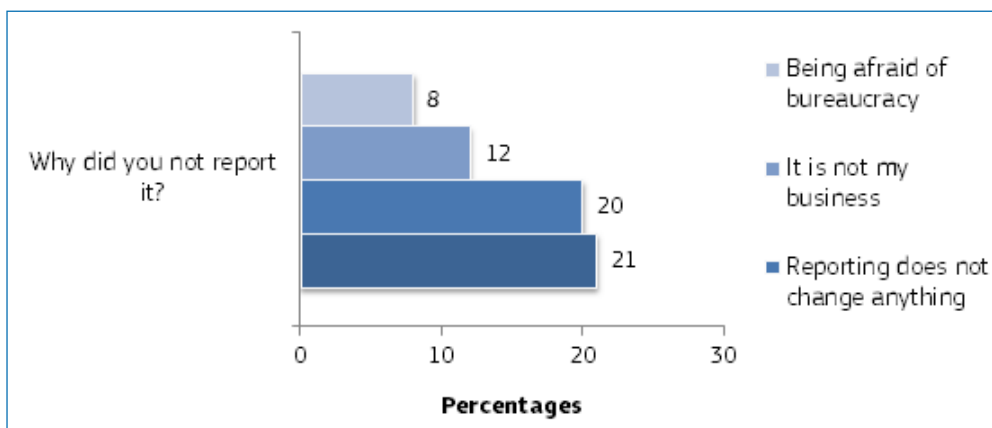
Also regarding domestic violence, a survey in Poland among the general population (PL-Survey 8) asked whether a known incident of violence was reported, and if so to whom. An average of 42% of respondents did report the incident of violence. Of those, 60% reported it to the police, followed by social assistance centres (see Figure 5.22).

**Figure 5.22.** Whom/where did you report it to?: Domestic violence (PL-Survey 8. General population)



As for the reasons why respondents did not report the incident, again it is interesting to note that 21% thought that these problems should be solved at home, that reporting does not change anything (20%), or that “it is not my business” (12%). This suggests not only that a large percentage of people who become aware of cases of domestic violence prefer not to get involved, but also that this lack of involvement is justified as being a private matter or something useless (see Figure 5.23).

**Figure 5.23.** Public responses in cases of violence against women: Domestic violence (PL-Survey 8. General population)



Finally, a survey conducted in Slovenia (*SL-Survey 1*) among women from the general population asked about respondents' responses or intentions to respond to known cases of violence against women. More than half of the women did not inform anyone about cases of violence they were aware of. Most women did not tell anyone or report the violence, as they took care of the problem by themselves. Among those who did seek help, most informed the police (36.2%), social services (31.3%), health center or a lawyer. In some cases, women decided to seek help from non-governmental organisations (15.3% of respondents). Priests were visited by 17.2% of women.

### **Professionals' knowledge and attitudes towards intervention in cases of violence against women**

Seven studies addressed professionals' knowledge and attitudes towards intervention in cases of intimate partner violence against women.

Four studies examined these attitudes among health care professionals. A study conducted in Denmark (*Barriers among Danish women and general practitioners to raising the issue of intimate partner violence in general practice: a qualitative study; DK-Study 1*) showed that although Danish women wanted general practitioners to ask about violence (in a respectful and non-judgmental manner), general practitioners were resistant towards such an inquiry and would benefit from training regarding how to respond to women who have been exposed to intimate partner violence. A second study was conducted in Finland (*Making sense of domestic violence intervention in professional health care; FI-Study 1*), which showed that health professionals tended to focus on fixing the injuries and consequences of domestic violence, avoiding the issue of violence as the cause of the symptoms and injuries. A third study conducted in Greece (*Managing intimate partner violence at the social services department of a Greek University hospital; EL-Study 3*) revealed that despite partner violence being very common among patients, lack of training was one of the main barriers to the effective management of intimate partner violence (early detection, adequate assessment and timely intervention), contributing to the low perceived self-efficacy of professionals in this area. A fourth study also conducted in Greece (*Measuring the effectiveness of an intensive IPV training program offered to Greek general practitioners and residents of general practice; EL-Study 1*) aimed to measure changes in actual intimate partner violence knowledge, perceived knowledge, perceived preparedness and detection ability of practicing general practitioners (GPs) and general practice residents, following an intensive intimate partner violence training program. The training program met high acceptance by both groups of participants and high practicality in clinical practice.

The other three studies addressing professionals' knowledge and attitudes were conducted with samples of police officers, prosecutors and social workers, respectively.

One study conducted in Spain (*Police attitudes towards policing partner violence against Women: Do they correspond to different psychosocial profiles?; ES-Study 2*) showed that police officers who expressed a general preference for unconditional law enforcement (i.e. regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges against the offender) scored higher in other-oriented empathy, were less sexist, tended to perceive the same incidents of partner violence as more serious and felt more personally responsible than the group of police officers who expressed a preference for a conditional law enforcement approach (i.e. depending on the willingness of the victim to press charges against the offender).

Another study conducted in Greece (*Prosecutors and use of restorative justice in courts: Greek case; EL-Study 2*) examined the experiences of prosecutors in Athens, as they implement a restorative justice (i.e. mediation) model in cases of intimate partner violence. The findings indicated that these professionals did not view mediation as an option or possibility, instead relying on strict law enforcement without taking into account the victim's immediate needs, the absence of direct and simultaneous work with victim services, or monitoring the batterer's compliance with the mediation requirements.

Finally, a study conducted in Slovenia (*Does social workers' personal experience with violence in the family affect their professional responses, and how?; SI-Study 1*) examined if and how social workers' personal experience with violence in the family influenced their professional responses. Social workers who had personally experienced violence from their parents and intimate partners were most reluctant to suggest shelter for battered women and children, parent counselling, or reporting the issue to the police.

## Summary and highlights

Public knowledge and responses to cases of violence against women was one of the four main topics regarding attitudes towards violence against women that emerged from the analysis of the survey questionnaires and study summaries provided for this review. Information on these issues was available in 21 surveys conducted in 11 countries and in 8 studies. After analysing this information, the results were organised into three areas: public knowledge of resources and services for women victims of violence, public attitudes towards intervention in cases of violence against women, and public responses to known cases of violence against women. Below, we summarise the main findings in this section of the report.

### Highlights

1. Information about public knowledge, attitudes toward intervention, and responses to known cases of violence against women was, in general, one of the topics with more information available across the surveys provided for this review.
2. Questions regarding public knowledge of resources for victims suggested that only some services were quite well-known to the public (e.g. women's shelters), while the public in general knew little about other services or resources for victims.
3. When disaggregated information was available, differences among specific socio-demographic groups emerged regarding the knowledge of resources and support services for victims (e.g. minority groups and the less educated had less knowledge). Also, when disaggregated information was available, socio-demographic differences emerged regarding what to do or what to recommend to victims.

4. Most information available in the surveys reviewed for this section addressed public attitudes towards intervention in cases of violence against women (i.e. what people responded regarding their willingness, intentions and behaviour should they hear or know of a case of violence against women). Information was mostly available regarding partner violence against women.
5. The results suggest that the police are the main resource to which the public would turn if discovering a case of violence against women. Some survey results suggest that attitudes favouring non-intervention are still prevalent.
6. Some survey results suggest that the way questions are framed can provide a different view and results on public attitudes towards intervention in cases of domestic violence (e.g. why people should react if they know of a case vs. why people should not react).
7. Only a few surveys addressed actual public responses to known cases of violence against women, and the reasons for not responding. Some survey results suggest that attitudes favouring non-intervention are still prevalent. In those countries where information was available, a significant number of respondents preferred not to get involved even if they were aware of a case of violence against women (“not my business”, or “it is a private matter” were among the reasons for not intervening).
8. Eight studies published in high quality journals in the last five years addressed victims’ responses and professional attitudes towards intervention in cases of violence against women. In general, most of these studies stressed the importance of training for more effective management of partner violence against women cases.

# 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the final section of this report we summarise the main findings of this review and their implications, with the aim of forming some recommendations for future research directions. The highlights and recommendations drawn from the findings of this research review aim to identify gaps in our knowledge while also pointing to new research directions in order to gain a better understanding of the public attitudes that contribute to perpetuating violence against women in the EU and its determinants. Increasing our knowledge base on public attitudes towards violence against women will clearly contribute to better-informed intervention and prevention efforts aiming to respond to this major challenge in a more effective way.

## EU surveys including information on attitudes towards violence against women

### Conclusions

In the last five years a relatively limited number of surveys conducted among the EU Member States included questions addressing attitudes towards violence against women. Forty surveys in 19 countries were finally considered for this review, as they met the criteria established for inclusion. Despite this limited number of surveys, the strength of this review resides in the fact that, by putting all the available information together, the data analysed for this report reflects the responses of around 85,000 European citizens.

In general, although addressing relevant issues regarding violence against women (e.g. prevalence), many surveys were not specifically designed to address attitudes towards violence against women, which explains the difficulties experienced by experts in identifying relevant material for this review. Those surveys included in the review did contain at least some of the information regarding attitudes towards violence against women requested in the questionnaire for experts. Most of these surveys addressed intimate partner violence against women (by partners and ex-partners, and also including dating violence among young people). Only a few surveys addressed other types of violence against women (e.g. sexual harassment and rape). Intimate partner violence against women was defined in a variety of ways, such as domestic violence, family violence, partner violence, or gender-based violence. There was also a wide variation in how the surveys defined this type of violence. Some surveys did refer to violence in generic terms (e.g. domestic violence), while others provided more objective defined or behaviour-oriented questions.



Although most surveys used samples from the general population (including those targeting only women or young people), a small number of them also addressed specific populations such as professionals (e.g. law enforcement, school) or victims, and almost none targeted perpetrators specifically. Moreover, most surveys did not incorporate relevant information on minorities or other risk groups (women with disabilities, elderly women, women in prostitution, or homeless women). Therefore, relevant information regarding attitudes towards violence among these groups was almost non-existing in the surveys analysed for this review.

### Recommendations

Clearly there is a need to develop surveys and other sources of data collection (e.g. administrative sources, demonstration projects, media analysis) that specifically address attitudes towards violence against women. To avoid the large variations in information availability and data collection between countries, these surveys should provide comparable data across the EU by being implemented at an EU-level, based on common content criteria and standardised methodologies.

For better and more reliable data collection on attitudes towards violence against women across the EU, comparable definitions of the different types of violence are needed. Future surveys and studies would benefit from the availability of a set of shared indicators and definitions of different types of violence against women.

Future data collection regarding attitudes towards violence against women needs to address not only attitudes among the general population, but also to target specific groups such as perpetrators, as well as groups that are more vulnerable or at risk. More accurate and comparable data on these risk groups would help to inform better-targeted education and intervention initiatives.

## Methodological issues in surveys including information on attitudes towards violence against women

### Conclusions

This review identified a large variety of questions tapping a wide range of attitudes towards violence against women. Although this wealth of information provides potentially important comparative information for future developments in the measurement of attitudes, there are also some drawbacks and limitations that need to be taken into account.

A main issue that emerged when analysing the information available on attitudes towards violence against women in the surveys provided for this review was that the same attitudinal topics are typically addressed with a variety of questions and formats, different samples, and with different definitions of violence. Different questions addressing the same issues in different countries clearly limit the possibility of comparing the information on relevant aspects regarding attitudes towards violence against women across countries (and its evolution over time).

Furthermore, it is important to note that when the same issues are framed with different questions, the responses can provide quite different images. For example, according to the 2010 Eurobarometer, 87% of Italian respondents think that dome-

stic violence against women is unacceptable and should always be punishable by law; however, it is to some extent surprising that in a survey in the same country included in this review, when a similar question is framed in a different way and addressed to other parts of the population by asking victims about particular episodes of partner violence, only 35.4% of women victims considered the violence as a crime, 44% considered that the episode of violence was something wrong but not a crime, and 19.4% considered the violence as “only something that happened”.

With only one exception, no questions addressing attitudes towards violence against women used in the surveys included in this review were based on selected instruments with adequate reliability and validity, or tested cross-culturally. These types of measurement instrument are clearly more adequate to provide better quality and more comparable data on attitudes towards violence across countries (see Nybergh, Taft, & Krant, 2013; Waltermaurer, 2005). On the other hand, another issue concerning self-reported attitudes towards violence against women in surveys and other types of studies is its sensitive nature. As Gracia et al. (2015) have noted, although this type of measurement tends to be more reliable and accurate for the general population, when addressing other samples, such as perpetrators of violence against women, response distortion can become an issue (see also Ruiz-Perez et al., 2007).

Finally, regarding other methodological issues such as types of survey and questionnaire administration methods, responses rates, confidentiality, interviewer training, etc., there were wide variations across the surveys analysed for this review (and in many cases information on these issues was not available). In any case, the same caveats made in the 2014 FRA survey report regarding the study and comparability of the available information on the prevalence of violence against women can be applied to the study of attitudes towards this violence at the European-level:

“The results of existing national surveys are, however, not fully comparable for the following reasons: surveys focus on different groups (for example, with the youngest and oldest age groups differing); different sample sizes and sampling approaches are used (ranging from population databases through to random route sampling); different survey modes are used (face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, postal questionnaires; with and without interviewers); and – most importantly, which puts a limit on direct comparability – different interview questions are asked covering different subjects.” (FRA, 2014, p. 15)

## Recommendations

Advances in measurement instruments are needed to adequately assess attitudes towards violence against women, as they are important research and intervention tools, not only for helping to improve our understanding of its prevalence among different samples, but also to evaluate outcomes or monitor changes after public education and prevention efforts.

The use of instruments with adequate reliability and validity, tested cross-culturally, can contribute to a more standardised approach to the measurement and comparison of attitudes towards violence against women across EU countries. Also, as self-reports of attitudes towards violence among specific groups (e.g. perpetrators),

methodological alternatives and new strategies should be considered (e.g. indirect or implicit measures, social media, Big Data).

To avoid the large variations in survey methodologies that make it difficult to get accurate, comparable data across the EU, more standardised approaches to data collection should be promoted. Moreover, the design of future large scale surveys and studies on attitudes towards violence against women should also take into account a substantial body of literature on methodological issues and good practices in conducting surveys and research on violence against women (e.g. Ellsberg & Heise, 2002; Ellsberg & Heise, 2005; Jansen et al., 2004; Kelmendi, 2013; Nybergh et al., 2013; Ruiz-Perez et al., 2007; Schwartz, 2000; Walby, 2001; Walby & Myhill, 2001; Waltermaurer, 2005).

## Availability of studies published in academic journals addressing attitudes towards violence against women in the EU

### Conclusions

This review clearly showed that there are very few studies addressing attitudes towards violence against women in EU countries published in academic journals of high scientific quality in the last five years. The small number of studies relevant for this research review (only 16 studies met the inclusion criteria), provided a clear indication of the “state” of the research in the EU on this important issue.

Research on attitudes towards violence against women has traditionally been an underdeveloped area, but this appears to be more evident in regions such as Europe. As Waltermaurer (2012) noted in a recent review of the literature: “There are many gaps to our knowledge internationally about the justification of intimate partner violence particularly in Europe and the Western Hemisphere” (p. 173). This was also the view of the ENEGE experts who expressed the difficulty in finding relevant research published in academic journals on attitudes towards violence against women.

The few studies included in this review did not allow us to identify main research topics in the study of attitudes towards violence against women. Study samples included the general population, young people, perpetrators, and professionals; while the topics addressed ranged from public views and attitudes (definitions of violence, victim-blaming attitudes, attitudes towards reporting to the police), attitudes of professionals (health, social workers, or law enforcement), or perpetrators’ attitudes. Therefore, we did not identify any main research domains or priorities with a substantial body of research.

### Recommendations

An EU-level framework for research on attitudes among violence against women should be established, identifying main research priorities.

Recommended research priorities could include (although should not be limited to): the measurement of attitudes, prevalence (including variations between and within countries), multiple-level determinants of attitudes, the link between attitudes and prevalence of violence against women, new strategies to change attitudes and its effectiveness, and the development of comparable monitoring systems.

This research effort should address not only attitudes among the general population, but also attitudes among specific samples (e.g. young people, victims, perpetrators, and professionals).

### Public attitudes towards violence against women in EU surveys and studies

#### Conclusions

After reviewing all the information provided by ENEGE experts, four key areas related to public attitudes towards violence against women were identified.

The first area concerned the public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem, which included three different but related issues: public awareness of violence against women as a social problem, public definitions, and public acceptability and perceived severity of different types of violence against women. The second area referred to public attributions, explanations, and justifications of violence against women. Three sets of explanatory factors were identified as possible causes of violence against women for the public: individual, relational/situational, and socio-cultural factors. As victim-blaming attitudes was a common factor mentioned in a substantial number of surveys as an explanation or justification of violence against women, this review specifically addressed these attitudes as a key area for this review. Finally, the fourth area identified included public and professionals' knowledge, attitudes towards intervention, and responses to known cases of violence against women.

The information analysed addressing these four areas referred mainly to partner violence against women (mainly physical violence), sexual violence, and rape. Very little information regarding other types of violence was available.

Taking into account the limitations in comparability of results across EU countries mentioned above, the available information in the surveys provided a preliminary "picture" of public attitudes towards violence against women in these four areas. According to this picture (which must be taken with caution), and where information was available: violence against women has not yet reached a prominent place among the public concerns; attitudes of acceptability and tolerance are still prevalent; gender stereotypes and sexist attitudes are still quite prevalent in some sectors of the society; victim-blaming attitudes are still widespread; the public in general has still little knowledge about other services or resources for victims; the police were the main resource to which the public would turn in cases of violence against women; and personal attitudes favouring non-intervention before known cases of violence against women were quite prevalent.

The analysis of the information available in the surveys included in this review revealed some worrisome results. For example, the acceptability of certain behaviours remained high in some circumstances (e.g. dating violence). A small but relevant percentage of respondents from different countries (including young people, adults, and also victims) tended to "accept" – in some circumstances – some violent behaviours against women, perceived as "not very serious" or considered "inevitable", including insulting, hitting, controlling, or even forced sex. Victim-blaming attitudes were not only widespread, but also particularly worrying in cases of sexual violence.

ce or rape. Some results also suggested that a significant number of respondents preferred not to get involved even if they were aware of cases of violence against women (“not my business”, or “it is a private matter” were among the reasons for not intervening).

Although topics such as victims’ reasons for not reporting have been extensively addressed in the 2014 FRA survey, however, victims’ views and attitudes were also included in this review as they related to other attitudes such as their acceptability or perceived severity of the violence or to victim-blaming attitudes.

Despite the efforts made in past surveys on a European level (i.e. 2010 Eurobarometer on domestic violence) to address extensively public knowledge of special laws for violence against women, campaigns of education and awareness, or the role of the EU in combating this violence, no reliable data was available in the surveys analysed on their impact, or for whom (e.g. men, risk groups, etc.) these initiatives and education efforts were more or less successful in changing public attitudes.

### Recommendations

The four key areas related to public attitudes towards violence against women identified in this review could guide the development of a set of indicators tapping attitudes towards violence in order to facilitate data comparability in future surveys and studies at the EU level.

Future surveys and studies at European level should include different types of violence against women, including a harmonised set of definitions, and target different types of populations, professionals, and risk groups.

The worrisome prevalence of some acceptability, tolerant, victim-blaming, and non-involvement attitudes regarding violence against women should be appropriately targeted and monitored in future surveys and studies.

Future surveys and studies should also monitor the effectiveness of public awareness-raising and education campaigns, and the passing of new laws and policies, on public attitude change across EU-countries, so lessons can be learnt and shared from this assessment. Identifying and targeting those sectors or specific groups in society more resistant to change should also be a priority. It is important not only to invest in public education and awareness-raising initiatives targeting attitudes towards violence against women, but also to ensure that these efforts are well informed, adequately targeted, and better designed to effectively monitor and assess their impact on public attitudes and their effects on curbing prevalence figures.

## Factors influencing attitudes towards violence against women in the EU: future directions for research

### Conclusions

For this review we asked experts for disaggregated survey results. We were particularly interested in this information as attitudes towards violence against women may be influenced by a number of individual and social background characteristics (e.g. age, gender, educational level, ethnic or religion background, minority or im-

migrant status). Disaggregated information was, however, scarce across the survey questionnaires included in this review. When disaggregated information was available, it was mainly regarding gender, age, and socio-economic background.

When the available disaggregated information was analysed, the results of this review suggested that attitudes towards violence against women are not evenly distributed across different socio-economic defined groups. This was the case for attitudes such as public awareness of violence against women as a social problem, acceptability and perceived severity, gender stereotypes and sexist attitudes, victim-blaming attitudes, or knowledge of resources and support services for victims. In general, little knowledge or negative attitudes were more common among males, the older, the less educated and with lower income, minority groups, and those living in rural areas. Information was, however, scant and generalisations should be made with caution and are limited by the nature of the data.

In some cases, variations within countries across different socio-demographic groups were larger than variations across countries. Results suggest that surveys results are important to identify and understand variations across countries, but also that socio-demographic information and other factors are key to better understanding variations within countries across different sectors of society.

### **Recommendations**

The inclusion and detailed analysis of socio-demographic data in surveys and studies are particularly important to better understand variations in attitudes towards violence against women across different social groups, and regarding different types of violence, which in turn would help to better target awareness-raising, public education, and intervention strategies. From a comparative point of view, this analysis would help to understand the importance of these factors in explaining within-country variations in the EU, and to better assess between-country variations, both in attitudes and prevalence.

Other factors influencing attitudes towards violence against women, beyond socio-demographic ones, need to be taken into account in future surveys and in-depth studies. Factors influencing attitudes are multiple and can be identified at multiple levels, including individual, relational, group, community, and macro (cultural) levels.

To better understand individual, group, community, as well as between-country and within-country variations in attitudes towards violence against women and the link with its prevalence, more advanced research is needed. Averages between countries provide only an initial approach to understanding the factors that shape attitudes.

An appropriate understanding of both between and within-country variations in attitudes towards violence against women (and in prevalence as well) will need complex multilevel analyses that take into account the effect and relative influence of multiple factors working at different levels, but also the complexity of their interactions. This multinational and multilevel type of research will require a new generation of studies, and an international EU-level research effort.

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**ATTITUDES  
TOWARDS VIOLENCE  
AGAINST WOMEN  
IN THE EU**

**APPENDICES**



# Appendix I. Instructions to experts

## **Box I.1.** *Instructions to experts: Survey questionnaire*

*The main aim of this review is to analyse the results of surveys conducted in the EU addressing attitudes towards violence against women. To this end, you as expert should thoroughly review all relevant surveys in your country related to the aim of this study published in the last 5 years. When filling in the questionnaire as an expert, please pay particular attention to the following:*

- a) *We are interested in surveys that provide data/information about attitudes towards violence against women in your country by both partners and non-partners (e.g. violence by strangers, violence by other relatives, violence in the work place and other public and on-line space). Please identify all surveys relevant to this aim (use as many copies of the questionnaire as the number of surveys identified). These surveys may have been conducted on a local, regional, national or European level<sup>1</sup>. Remember that sometimes prevalence surveys, general crime surveys, work related surveys, new technologies surveys, etc. may also provide information relevant to the aim of this review. We are interested not only in general public attitudes (including professionals) but also, if available, the attitudes of perpetrators. Bear in mind that the most common form of violence against women is intimate partner violence (including physical, psychological and sexual), and most surveys will therefore focus on this type;*
- b) *Attitudes towards violence against women may be influenced by a number of individual and social background characteristics (e.g. age, gender, level of education, ethnic or religious background, immigrant status, personal history, exposure to violence). This is the reason why we ask about disaggregated information for the survey results. We are particularly interested in this information in order to better understand attitudes, and we would like experts to pay special attention to providing this information;*
- c) *We are particularly interested in the most recent surveys providing data on attitudes towards violence against women in your country. If available, identifying trends comparing recent data with previous surveys will provide valuable information.*

<sup>1</sup> At the European level, please only include surveys other than the 2010 *Eurobarometer on Domestic Violence Against Women* and the recent survey conducted by the European Union Agency for the Fundamental Rights (FRA), *Violence against women: an EU-wide survey*, which already provide comparative data across European Union Member States.

Notes: In the following sections of this questionnaire you will find a wide range of questions. Understandably, in many cases the survey from which you provide information will not cover all these questions, so you may leave many of them unanswered.

It is also possible that you will find relevant information in non-specialised surveys (e.g. crime report surveys), covered only by few items. Here too, you may have to leave many of the questions in this questionnaire unanswered.

**Box I.2. Instructions to experts: Qualitative and quantitative studies**

*Although the main aim of this review is to map surveys on attitudes towards violence against women in the EU, we are also interested in quantitative and qualitative studies of high scientific quality conducted in your country that also address this issue, published in academic journals<sup>1</sup> in the last 5 years. These studies sometimes provide relevant information not available in surveys that may be of interest for this review (e.g. studies on perpetrators' history, perceptions and attitudes towards violence against women, effectiveness of campaigns and preventive measures assessed through quantitative or qualitative studies). For this reason, we ask you, as an expert, to identify published quantitative and qualitative studies (up to five of each type) relevant to the aim of this review.*

<sup>1</sup> For high quality academic journals, include only those indexed in the Journal Citation Reports.



# Appendix II. Survey questionnaires and study summaries selection

Experts provided information based on 89 surveys and 88 studies (see Table II.1).

**Table II.1.** Number of surveys and studies received by country<sup>1</sup>

Country	Surveys	Quantitative studies	Qualitative studies	Country	Surveys	Quantitative studies	Qualitative studies
Austria	3	2	0	Italy	1	0	0
Belgium	1	4	1	Latvia	2	1	3
Bulgaria	5	3	4	Lithuania	2	2	1
Croatia	2	5	1	Luxembourg	1	0	0
Czech Republic	4	1	2	Malta	1	1	1
Cyprus	3	0	0	Netherlands	1	0	1
Denmark	2	4	1	Poland	10	0	0
Estonia	6	0	0	Portugal	6	4	1
Finland	2	0	1	Romania	3	4	2
France	5	1	1	Slovakia	3	3	4
Germany	4	2	2	Slovenia	3	2	1
Greece	2	4	3	Spain	4	5	1
Hungary	0	2	1	Sweden	2	0	0
Ireland	1	1	2	United Kingdom	8	1	1

We selected the survey questionnaires and study summaries for this research review by the following process: firstly, each survey questionnaire and study summary was assigned a code<sup>2</sup>; secondly, an analysis of the information provided (survey questionnaires and study summaries) was conducted in order to verify the relevance for their inclusion in the review. Regarding [survey questionnaires](#), the following [exclusion criteria](#) were established:

- 1) The survey was published before 2010.
- 2) The survey questionnaire does not correspond to the information requested (i.e. it is not a survey, or reports on the 2010 Eurobarometer on Domestic Violence Against

1 This selection is based on information provided by the 28 experts from EU countries contacted by ENEGE for this review. This selection of surveys and studies is as valid as the reliability of the source that provided them.

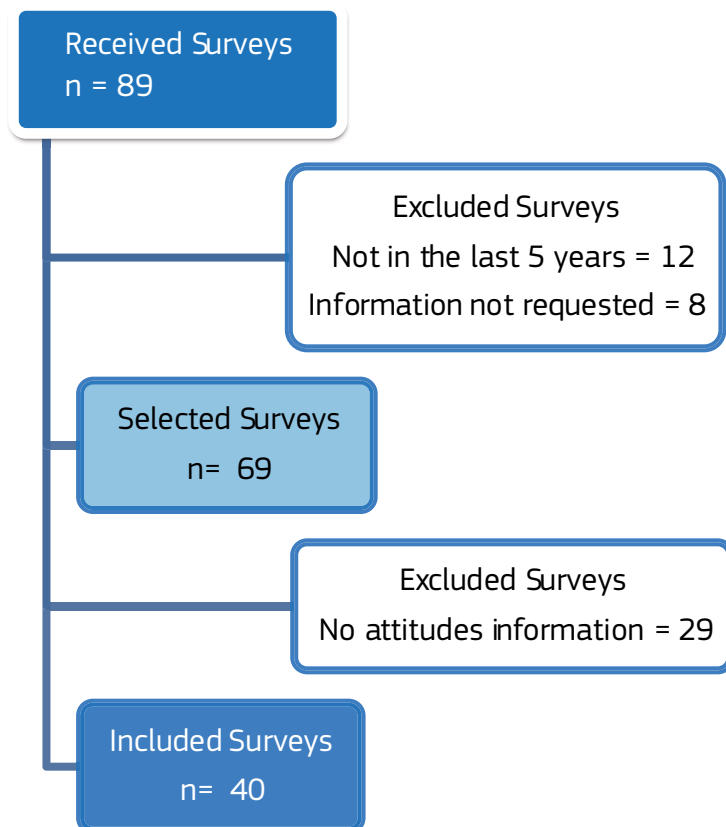
2 Codes are based on the country abbreviation and the number of surveys/studies in that country (see Appendix IV and V).

Women and/or the 2014 European Union Agency for the Fundamental Rights (FRA) survey).

3) The survey questionnaire does not contain any information on attitudes towards violence against women in the EU (e.g. the survey asks about the prevalence of violence but not about attitudinal issues).

As shown in Figure II.1, 89 survey questionnaires were received. 20 surveys questionnaires were excluded under exclusion criteria 1 and 2; 69 surveys questionnaires were read and assessed for inclusion; 29 were excluded because they provided no information on attitudes. In total, 40 survey questionnaires from 19 countries were included in the review.

**Figure II.1.** *Survey questionnaires selected for inclusion in the review*

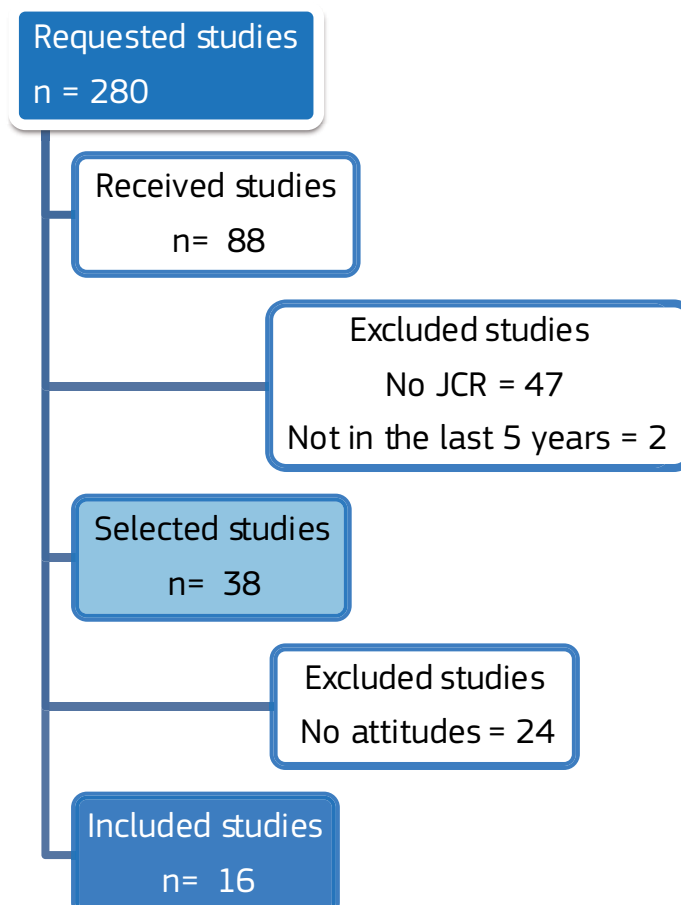


Regarding [study summaries](#), the following [exclusion criteria](#) were applied:

- 1) The study was published before 2010.
- 2) The journal where the study was published was not indexed in the Journal Citation Report.
- 3) The study summary does not contain any information on attitudes towards violence against women in the EU (e.g. the study deals with the prevalence of violence but not with attitudes).

As Figure II.2 shows, of the 280 potential study summaries (10 by country; 5 quantitative and 5 qualitative), 88 were received; 47 studies were excluded based on criteria 1 and 2; 38 study summaries were read and analysed, of which 24 were excluded because they did not provide any information on attitudes towards violence against women. Although it is possible that some studies published in academic journals with Journal Citation Reports impact factor were not included, the data provided is nevertheless an adequate sample that provides a “picture” of the scope of high quality research conducted in the EU addressing attitudes towards violence against women. In any case, the limited high quality research on attitudes towards violence against women is not surprising, as this has traditionally been an under-researched area, even internationally. As Waltermaurer (2012) noted in a recent review of the literature: “There are many gaps to our knowledge internationally about the justification of IPV particularly in Europe and the Western Hemisphere” (p. 173).

**Figure II.2.** *Study summaries selected for inclusion in the review*



This report therefore includes content from 40 survey questionnaires and 16 studies provided by the experts from 28 EU countries contacted by ENEGE (see Table II.2). The next chapter will provide a detailed descriptive analysis of the surveys and studies selected for this review.

**Table II.2.** *Number of surveys and studies selected by country*

Country	Surveys	Quantitative studies	Qualitative studies	Country	Surveys	Quantitative studies	Qualitative studies
Austria	1	0	0	Italy	1	0	0
Belgium	1	0	0	Latvia	0	0	0
Bulgaria	2	0	0	Lithuania	2	0	0
Croatia	0	0	0	Luxembourg	1	0	0
Czech Republic	3	3	0	Malta	1	0	0
Cyprus	3	0	0	Netherlands	1	0	0
Denmark	1	0	1	Poland	6	0	0
Estonia	6	0	0	Portugal	0	1	0
Finland	0	0	1	Romania	1	0	0
France	0	0	0	Slovakia	0	0	0
Germany	1	0	0	Slovenia	2	1	1
Greece	0	1	2	Spain	4	4	0
Hungary	0	0	0	Sweden	2	0	0
Ireland	0	0	0	United Kingdom	1	0	1

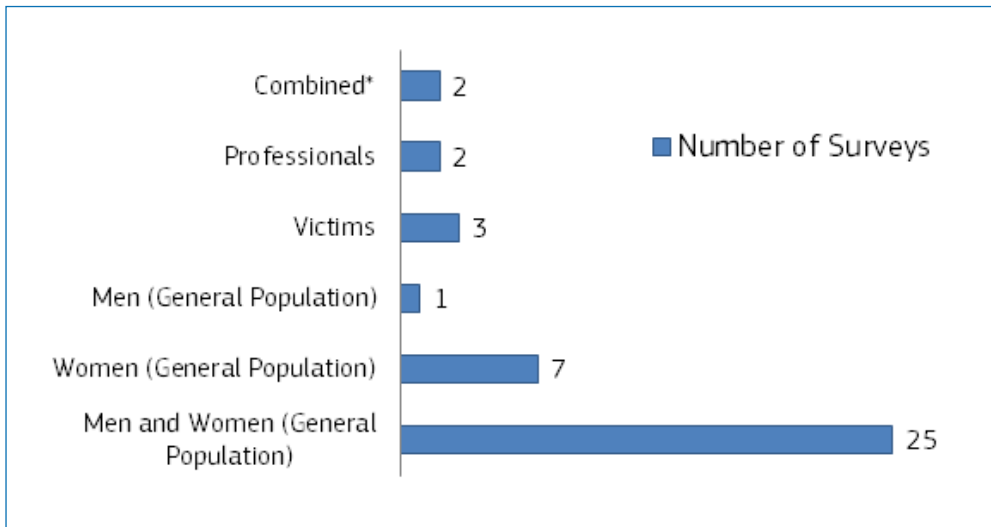
# Appendix III. Descriptive Analysis of surveys and studies

## The surveys

40 surveys in 19 countries were eventually included in this review, as they met the criteria established for inclusion. The data analysed for this report reflects the responses of around 85,000 European citizens. There were wide variations across countries regarding the availability of surveys. In some countries, no surveys were available in the requested period, whereas in others several were provided (see Appendix IV).

Some of the selected surveys did not specifically address violence against women, although they included a few questions related to attitudes towards violence against women (e.g. *Emancipation Monitor 2014*; *NL-Survey 1* or *Gender Equality Monitoring 2013*; *EE-Survey 4*). 35 surveys specifically addressed some type of violence or abuse. However, in most of the surveys addressing violence, the main topic was violence prevalence, frequency, consequences, etc., but not public attitudes (e.g. *Extent, Frequency, Nature and Consequences of Domestic Violence against Women in Cyprus*; *CY-Survey 1* or *Domestic violence: Prevalence and frequency of reporting*; *PL-Survey 8*). Few surveys were designed to specifically address attitudes towards violence against women. Interestingly, the only three surveys with the word “attitudes” related to some kind of violence against women were surveys on sexual violence and/or rape. Attitude-related concepts, which were present in some of the survey titles, were “public opinion” (e.g. *Public opinion barometer. The truth about Romania. Domestic violence*; *Ro-Survey 1*), “awareness” (e.g. *Gender-based and domestic violence: Awareness of the possibilities of obtaining assistance*; *EE-Survey 5*) or “social perception” (e.g. *Social perception of gender based violence by Adolescence and Young people*; *ES-Survey 3*).

The vast majority of surveys included in the review had a national scope and used representative samples. Some of the surveys addressed very specific samples, like victims of violence or professionals (see Figure III.1). Most surveys were conducted using the general population (men and women), with some using only men or women samples. Few surveys used specific samples (three victim samples and two professional samples). Almost no surveys specifically addressed perpetrators’ attitudes, although one was about public perception of perpetrators (*Diagnosis of the perpetrators of domestic violence: Domestic violence from the perspective of the Polish adult population*; *PL-Survey 2a*).

**Figure III.1.** Number of surveys selected and samples

\* Women from the general population and Social Services professionals; Women victims and Professionals working in specialised domestic violence programs

Although the vast majority of surveys selected addressed intimate partner violence against women, this type of violence was defined in a variety of ways (e.g. domestic violence, domestic violence against women, intimate partner violence, gender-based violence, violence in the private sphere and in partner relationships...). When the experts were asked to select the type of violence addressed in the survey (see Table III.1), in thirteen cases they selected all types: physical, sexual and psychological (control and emotional) violence by partners and non-partners. Ten surveys addressed all types of violence by partners. Two surveys (*AT-Survey 2* and *BG-Survey 5*) addressed physical and sexual violence (not psychological) by both partners and non-partners. Other surveys included some types of violence and, in some cases, the experts did not select any.

**Table III.1.** *Type of violence addressed in surveys*

Code	Violence by partners				Violence by non-partners			
	Physical	Sexual	Psy.* control	Psy.* emotional	Physical	Sexual	Psy.* control	Psy.* emotional
AT-Survey 2								
BE-Survey 1								
BG-Survey 1								
BG-Survey 5								
CY-Survey 1								
CY-Survey 2								
CY-Survey 3								
CZ-Survey 1								
CZ-Survey 3								
CZ-Survey 4								
DE-Survey 4								
DK-Survey 2								
EE-Survey 1								
EE-Survey 2								
EE-Survey 3								
EE-Survey 4								
EE-Survey 5 <sup>1</sup>								
EE-Survey 6								
ES-Survey 1								
ES-Survey 2								
ES-Survey 3								
ES-Survey 4								
IT-Survey 1								
LT-Survey 1								
LT-Survey 2								
LU-Survey 1								
MT-Survey 1								
NL-Survey 1								
PL-Survey 1 <sup>a</sup>								
PL-Survey 2 <sup>a</sup>								
PL-Survey 2 <sup>b</sup>								
PL-Survey 3								
PL-Survey 4								
PL-Survey 8								
RO-Survey 1								
SE-Survey 1								
SE-Survey 2								
SI-Survey 1								
SI-Survey 3 <sup>2</sup>								
UK-Survey 4								

\* Psychological

<sup>1</sup> EE-Survey 5: Women in shelters. They were asked about the services provided.<sup>2</sup> SI-Survey 3: No one selected by the expert.

Table III.2 shows the available methodological characteristics of the surveys selected for this review, as described by the experts. Although in many cases the information was lacking, when available, surveys were characterised in terms of whether the different types of violence addressed were defined; the survey method used (e.g. face to face, on-line, case study, telephone, written questionnaire); whether the survey used any confidential self-completion methodology; whether there was any information about response rates; whether the sample characteristics were described; whether the survey provided information about who conducted the survey (e.g. male/female interviewer), and if the interviewers were specifically trained.



**Table III.2.** *Methodological characteristics of surveys*

Code	Definition	Method*	Confidential	Response rate	Sample description	Conducted by**	Training
AT-Survey 2	-	OL	-	-	-	-	-
BE-Survey 1	YES	OL & T	-	41%	YES	-	-
BG-Survey 1	-	OL & WQ	YES	-	YES	-	-
BG-Survey 5	-	OL & WQ	YES	-	YES	-	-
CY-Survey 1	YES	WQ	YES	29.24%	YES	SC	-
CY-Survey 2	-	WQ	YES	-	YES	SC	-
CY-Survey 3	-	WQ	YES	-	-	-	-
CZ-Survey 1	YES	OL	YES	-	YES	-	-
CZ-Survey 3	-	FF	-	-	-	-	-
CZ-Survey 4	YES	FF	-	-	YES	W - W	YES
DE-Survey 4	-	FF & WQ	-	19%/65%	YES	-	-
DK-Survey 2	YES	FF & OL	YES	-	YES	SC	-
EE-Survey 1	-	OL	YES	44.5%	YES	-	-
EE-Survey 2	YES	FF	YES	28%	YES	-	-
EE-Survey 3	-	OL, T & WQ	YES	73%	YES	-	-
EE-Survey 4	-	FF	-	-	-	-	-
EE-Survey 5	-	FF	YES	-	YES	-	-
EE-Survey 6	-	OL	-	34%	YES	-	-
ES-Survey 1	YES	FF	-	-	YES	W - W	YES
ES-Survey 2	YES	FF	-	-	YES	-	-
ES-Survey 3	YES	FF	-	-	YES	-	-
ES-Survey 4	YES	OL	YES	-	YES	-	-
IT-Survey 1	YES	FF & T	-	-	YES	-	-
LT-Survey 1	YES	WQ	YES	-	YES	W - W	-
LT-Survey 2	YES	FF	-	41.7%	YES	-	-
LU-Survey 1	YES	WQ	YES	-	-	-	-
MT-Survey 1	-	FF	YES	-	YES	W - W	YES
NL-Survey 1	-	OL & WQ	YES	70%/72%	-	-	-
PL-Survey 1 <sup>a</sup>	YES	T	-	-	-	-	YES
PL-Survey 2 <sup>a</sup>	YES	T	-	-	YES	-	-
PL-Survey 2 <sup>b</sup>	YES	FF & WQ	-	-	YES	-	-
PL-Survey 3	YES	FF	-	50%-80%	YES	-	-
PL-Survey 4	YES	T	-	-	YES	-	-
PL-Survey 8	-	T	-	-	YES	-	-
RO-Survey 1	-	FF & WQ	-	-	YES	-	-
SE-Survey 1	-	WQ	-	40%-50%	-	-	-
SE-Survey 2	-	FF	-	-	-	-	-
SI-Survey 1	YES	WQ	YES	25%	YES	W - W	YES
SI-Survey 3	YES	-	-	-	-	-	-
UK-Survey 4	-	WQ	-	-	YES	-	-

Abbreviations: \*FF = Face to face; OL = Online; CS = Case Study; T = Telephone; WQ = Written Questionnaire

\*\* W - W = Women interviewed by Women; SC = Self-Completion

Some surveys provided definitions of the different types of violence. For example, in an Estonian survey (*EE-Survey 2*), sexual violence was defined as “an unwanted sexual activity towards a victim, such as touching the intimate parts (fumbling), coercion to sexual intercourse (rape). Sexual violence can occur in the family or outside the home”. In other surveys, the different types of violence were described using specific indicators (see Box III.1) or legal definitions (see Box III.2).

### **Box III.1.** *Examples of the definition of violence using specific indicators*

- ✓ *BE-Survey 1: The concept of violence is described using indicators such as forms and acts of violence, severity and relationship with the perpetrator:*
  - *Verbal and emotional abuse: insults, criticism, contempt for actions and words; control over relationships; attempt to limit contacts with family or friends; refusal to talk or discuss; intimidation; mistreatment of children, separation from children or threats to do it;*
  - *Economic abuse: appropriation of income or savings;*
  - *Physical abuse: throwing an object, pushing or grabbing brutally; scratching, biting, pinching, hair-pulling; slapping, punching or kicking, injuring with an object; armed threat, attempted murder or strangulation; preventing access to the home, locking in, locking out;*
  - *Sexual abuse: imposing degrading or humiliating sexual practices or gestures; forced sexual touching and (attempted) forced sexual relation.*
- ✓ *CY-Survey 1: Psychological, emotional, physical, social, economic and sexual violence are defined by the 33 specific examples of behaviour. Some examples are: pushing, shaking, burning, cutting, insulting in the presence of third persons, threat of abandonment, financial deprivation, hitting, threats, object throwing, punching and kicking, slapping, cigarette burning, swearing, use of bad language, death threat, prohibiting talking to third persons, prevention of employment, threat to hit, prohibition of communication with friends, pet abuse, forced sexual relations, threatening to injure children.*
- ✓ *CZ-Survey 1: Domestic violence consisted of 16 items including various forms of violent behaviour ranging from economic and psychological violence (such as preventing access to shared money and limiting contact with friends or relatives) to a very severe physical or sexual assault using a weapon or threatening the victim with the use of guns or killing. Aside from physical, psychological and sexual violence, domestic violence included damaging or destroying property (particularly belongings cherished by the victim), as well as any harassment or pressure from the aggressor against the victim's will.*
- ✓ *ES-Survey 4: The survey asks about 15 behaviours that fit with the usual typology of violence, although new elements (use of new technologies) have been included. Physical violence: breaking something of hers, beating her, making her feel scared, forcing her to do things she does not want to through threats. Sexual violence: Insisting on having a sexual relationship when she does not want to. Psychological violence/emotional: telling her that she's not worth anything, insulting her, telling her that he will hurt her if she leaves him, sending her internet or text messages, scaring, offending or threatening her, disseminating messages, insults or images of her without her permission. Psychological violence/control: telling her who she can or cannot talk to, where she can go, trying to prevent her from meeting friends, controlling everything she does, recording her with a mobile phone or video camera, or taking pictures of her without her knowledge.*

**Box III.2.** *Examples of legal definitions of violence*

- ✓ PL-Survey 2a: *Definition taken from the Blue Card procedure used by the police, covering physical, psychological and sexual violence. The main characteristics of each type of violence are defined. Psychological violence: insulting, threatening, controlling, limiting contacts, humiliation, harassment and similar. Physical violence: pushing, hitting, twisting hands, kicking, slapping, scratching, causing bleeding, burns etc. Sexual violence: forcing sexual intercourse and other unwanted sexual acts.*
- ✓ PL-Survey 2b: *Based on the legal concept of domestic violence, not necessarily against women. According to this definition: domestic violence means all one-off or repeated activities or omissions infringing the personal rights of family/household members, in particular exposing them to the risk of loss of life or health, infringing dignity, bodily inviolability, including sexual, depriving of freedom, damaging physical or mental health as well as causing suffering and moral harm.*

The most common survey method used was Face-to-Face (12), followed by Written Questionnaires (8), Online surveys (5) and Telephone surveys (4). Other surveys combined two or more methods. The experts informed us that confidential self-completion methodology was only used in 17 surveys (see Box III.3).

**Box III.3.** *Examples of confidential self-completion methodology used in surveys*

- ✓ EE-Survey 1: *A letter with information about the study was sent by post to all selected men in the sample. The letter also included a link for access to the electronic questionnaire and an individual code. In order to complete the online questionnaire, interviewees had to enter the individual code on the website. The answers were stored in a separate database so that the answers could not be associated with the specific code entered earlier.*
- ✓ ES-Survey 4: *Online surveys were anonymous so that students and teachers could answer freely.*
- ✓ LU-Survey 1: *Anonymous questionnaire to be returned through a self-addressed and pre-stamped envelope. It was also possible for respondents to be helped by professionals. In that case measures were also taken to guarantee confidentiality.*
- ✓ MT-Survey 1: *The nationwide quantitative research study adhered to the ethical and safety guidelines set down by the World Health Organization for domestic violence research. These measures focussed on ensuring confidentiality and privacy, primarily through the safety of the survey respondents and the MF&A field research team, to improve the quality of the data compiled.*

Information on survey response rates was only available in 12 survey questionnaires, and ranged from 19% to 80%. It is difficult to make comparisons among the response rates in this review, as response rates were not available in 28 survey questionnaires and because there were a wide range of survey methods. Nevertheless, most of the available response rates were over 40%, which is similar, for example, to the overall response rate in the FRA survey (2014). Almost no information was available about reasons for not participating in the survey. Regarding the description of the sample characteristics in the surveys analysed, some provided specific information about socio-demographic data such as gender, age, education, etc., but in others this information was missing (e.g. in *CZ-Survey 4* the survey included women aged 18-70, but no other sample characteristic was provided). In other cases, the information about sample characteristics was summarised according to its representativeness (e.g. *CZ-Survey 1*). Additional information about sample characteristics, such as ethnic minorities or non-nationals, is provided in some surveys, but most of them do not provide this type of information.

Only eight survey questionnaires provided information on who conducted the survey (e.g. male/female interviewer). Finally, the experts noted that only in five survey questionnaires interviewers had received specific training (see Box III.4).

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**Box III.4.** *Does the survey provide information about who conducted the survey or whether the interviewers were specifically trained? (MT-Survey 1)*

✓ *The interviewers were all women, carefully selected and employed to work on this research project. They received specialised training on interview techniques required when conducting primary research “by personal interviews” on sensitive issues. Detailed explanations were given of the protocol and field procedures necessary in the interviewing/data collection and input process. During the briefing, the research study questionnaire was thoroughly explained in order to ensure that field interviewers had fully understood all the various sections.*

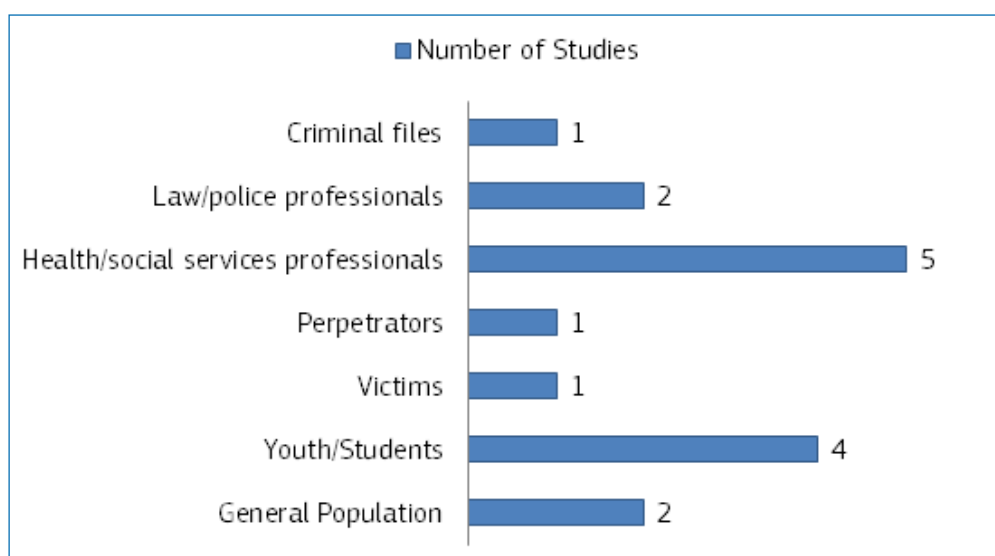
*Field interviewer training also covered gender-based violence and its effects on women’s health and how they responded to the abuse. Field interviewers were informed how to react when they came across a case of gender-based violence, to respect the respondent’s decisions and choices, and to ensure that the research did not lead to the participant suffering further harm. The questionnaire made provisions for ending the interview on a positive note, which emphasised a woman’s strengths and the unacceptability of violence. Interviewers were also equipped with a list of agencies and shelters assisting and taking in women going through this kind of experience, to be given to all participating female respondents, whether or not the survey respondent had disclosed problems/violence. Moreover, specific ground rules were established for selecting survey respondents, to be strictly adhered to by all interviewers, in order to acquire an appropriate representation of the target population. All major towns/villages of each geographic region were covered by allocating 1-2 towns/villages to each interviewer. Interviewers were instructed to interview only one respondent per household, not more than two respondents per street, and not to conduct personal interviews with relatives/friends/colleagues.*

## The studies

Very few studies addressing attitudes towards violence against women in EU countries were published in academic journals of high scientific quality in the last five years. In the end, 16 studies in 8 countries met the inclusion criteria for this review (see Appendix V).

The selected studies mainly addressed intimate partner violence. Eight of them were quantitative studies, five qualitative, and two used a mixed methodology approach. Regarding the sample composition in the selected studies, six were drawn from the general population (men and women, including adults, young people and students), seven were professionals (mainly from the health or legal sectors), one was composed of perpetrators, one of female victims, and one addressed study research into criminal file cases (see Figure III.2).

**Figure III.2.** Number of studies selected by sample composition



Three studies were conducted in the Czech Republic, one in Denmark, three in Greece, four in Spain, one in Finland, one in Portugal, two in Slovenia and one in the United Kingdom. In relation to the research questions posed in the selected studies (see Appendix V):

- Two of the studies conducted in the [Czech Republic](#) used university student samples to analyse the perception and definition of sexual harassment (*CZ-Study 2*; *CZ-Study 3*). The other, with a sample of female victims, addressed reporting to the police as a response to experiences of intimate partner violence (*CZ-Study 1*);
- The qualitative study conducted in [Denmark](#) addressed barriers and attitudes towards inquiring about intimate partner violence in primary care (*DK-Study 1*);
- The three studies conducted in [Greece](#) used samples of professionals. The first one evaluated the effectiveness of a training program on intimate partner violence knowledge and detection ability of general practitioners (*EL-Study 1*). The second analysed views of mediation in IPV by public prosecutors (*EL-Study 2*).

The third focused on perceived self-efficacy in managing IPV of hospital social workers (*EL-Study 3*);

- The qualitative study conducted in [Finland](#) identified practices and attitudes of health care professionals towards domestic violence (*FI-Study 1*);
- The study conducted in [Portugal](#) used a sample of young people to analyse attitudes towards dating violence and its socio-demographic correlates (*PT-Study 1*);
- Of the two studies carried out in [Slovenia](#), one explored social workers' personal experience and professional responses to intimate partner violence (*SI-Study 1*). The second, a qualitative study, reviewed criminal files to determine the characteristics of perpetrators (*SI-Study 3*);
- [Spain](#) is the country with the highest number of studies selected (four). One of them was based on a representative sample of the general population (*ES-Study 1*) and examined correlates of victim-blaming attitudes regarding partner violence against women among the Spanish general population. Another one analysed police attitudes towards policing partner violence against women (*ES-Study 2*). A third was based on a sample of adult male IPV perpetrators (*ES-Study 3*) and presented an instrument to evaluate perpetrators' responsibility attributions. The last one was based on a community sample (*ES-Study 4*) and studied the role of beliefs in a just world and ambivalent sexism on victim blaming and exoneration of the perpetrator in domestic violence;
- Finally, a qualitative study was conducted in the [United Kingdom](#) on a sample of young people (*UK-Study 2*), analysing gender stereotypes and their relation to interpersonal violence in heterosexual relationships.

## Appendix IV. Surveys

**Table IV.1.** Surveys selected by country: title, year (conducted/published), organisation, scope and sample

Code	Title of the survey	Year	Organisation	Scope	Sample*
AT-Survey 2	Fourth Women Barometer – Focus on Violence Against Women	2012/2012	Federal Chancellery	National	1245 women and men. Age 15-69. Representative sample
BE-Survey 1	Emotional, physical and sexual abuse-The experience of women and men	2008-2009/2010	Institute for the equality of women and men	National	2073 women and men. Age 18-75. General population
BG-Survey 1	Domestic violence in Bulgaria. Studies and facts	2010/2013	National Center for Study of Public Opinion	National	Women and men. Age 18+. Representative sample
BG-Survey 5	Without violence	2011/2013	IMAGO Association	National	2000 women and men. General population
CY-Survey 1	Extent, Frequency, Nature and Consequences of Domestic Violence against Women in Cyprus	2012/2014	Advisory Committee for the Prevention & Combating of Family Violence	National	1107 women Age 18-65+. Representative sample
CY-Survey 2	The detection of violent behaviour in the interpersonal relationships of young adults 18-25 years old in Cyprus	2012/2012	National Machinery of Women's Rights, Ministry of Justice and Public Order	National	1000 women and men. Age 18-25. General population
CY-Survey 3	Attitudes on Gender Stereotypes and Gender-based Violence among Young people	2011/2011	Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies [MIGS]	National	453 women and men. Age 15-18. Adolescents in five high schools
CZ-Survey 1	Survey on the prevalence of domestic violence	2012/2012	ProFem (NGO)	National	300 women. Age 18-65. Representative sample
CZ-Survey 3	IKSP_SEXKRIM2011 (IKSP= Institute of Criminology and Social Prevention, SEXKRIM = sexual criminality)	2011/2014	Institute of Criminology and Social Prevention	National	978 women and men. Age 15+. General population
CZ-Survey 4	Intimate Partner Violence 2013	2013/2013	Charles University in Prague	National	1500 women. Age 18-70 years. General population
DE-Survey 4	Report of the government on the situation of women's shelters, counselling services and other offers of support for women who experienced violence and their children	2011/2012	Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Young people	National	1138 representative female population (aged 16-65 years). The study also included all specialised social services dealing with violence against women (representative); local equal opportunities officers (non-representative); and counselling services (non representative)

DK-Survey 2	Dating violence in Denmark	2011/2012	National Institute of Public Health	National	2780 women and men. Age 16-24. General population
EE-Survey 1	The survey on Estonian men's attitudes and behaviour: health, education, employment, migration, and family planning	2014/2015	University of Tartu	National	2056 men. Age 16 – 55. General population
EE-Survey 2	The Survey on Estonian population's awareness of gender-based violence and human trafficking	2014/2014	Ministry of Social Affairs	National	1111; 3 focus groups N = 24. Women and men. Age 15+. General population
EE-Survey 3	Survey on awareness of risk behaviour in three target groups	2013-2014/2014	Police and Boarder Guard Board	National	3850 women and men. Age 18-74. General population. 3853 students. Women and men. 352 teachers. Representative samples
EE-Survey 4	Gender Equality Monitoring 2013	2013/2014	The Ministry of Social Affairs	National	1500 women and men. Age 15–74. General population; representative sample
EE-Survey 5	Gender-based and domestic violence: Awareness of the possibilities of obtaining assistance	2013/2013	Estonian Women Shelters' Union	National	1001 women and men. Age 15–74. General population; representative sample
EE-Survey 6	Attitudes towards sexual violence	2014/2014	Estonian Sexual Health Association	National	1076 women and men. Age 15–74. Internet users
ES-Survey 1	Macro survey on violence against women	2011/2012	Ministry for Equality. Centre for Sociological Research (CIS).	National	7898 women. Age 18+. General population. Representative sample
ES-Survey 2	Social perception of Gender Based Violence	2012/2014	Centre for Sociological Research	National	2580 women and men. Age 18+. General population
ES-Survey 3	Social perception of gender based violence by Adolescence and Young people	2013/2015	Centre for Sociological Research	National	2457 women and men. Age 15-29. General population
ES-Survey 4	Equality and gender based violence prevention among adolescents.	2010/2010	Ministry for Health, Social Services and Equality.	National	11020 students of secondary education (boys and girls) Representative sample; average age 17 years; 2727 female and male teachers; 254 school staff
IT-Survey 1	Violence inside and outside the family	2014/2015	ISTAT	National	21,000 women. Age 16-70; 4000 foreign women legally resident in Italy. Age 16-70. General population. Representative sample
LT-Survey 1	Evaluation of Women Victims of Domestic Violence Quality of Life, Emotional Condition and Accessibility of Support in Lithuania	2012-2013/2013	Institute of Hygiene, Department of Public Health Research	National	89 women experienced violence. Age 21-69
LT-Survey 2	Prevalence Study of Violence and Abuse against Older Women	2010/2010	Vytautas Magnus University	European	515 elderly women experienced violence. Age 60+. Representative sample



LU-Survey 1	Domestic violence in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg: studying Risk Factors for Targeted prevention	2012-2014/2015	Public Health Department, Luxembourg Institute of Health	National	133 women victims; 10 men victims; 32 men perpetrators; 7 women perpetrators
MT-Survey 1	A nationwide research study on the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Malta and its impact on their employment prospects	2010/2011	Commission on Domestic Violence Malta	National	1200 women. Representative sample
NL-Survey 1	Emancipation Monitor 2014	2013/2014	The Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP) and Statistics Netherlands	National	2155 men and women. Age 16+. General population
PL-Survey 1 <sup>a</sup>	Diagnosis of domestic violence against women and men in Poland (Part 1 – Nationwide survey)	2010/2011	Research Agency TNS OBOP for the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	National	1500 men; N = 1500 women. Age 18+
PL-Survey 2 <sup>a</sup>	Diagnosis of the perpetrators of domestic violence: Domestic violence from the perspective of the Polish adult population	2011/2012	KRC for the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	National	1500 women and men. Age 18+. General population
PL-Survey 2 <sup>b</sup>	Nationwide survey of professionals implementing corrective and educational programmes for people using domestic violence	2011/2012	KRC for the Ministry of Employment and Social Policy	National	119 professionals, selected from the centres implementing Ministry programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence
PL-Survey 3	Evaluation of the local system of counteracting domestic violence – ways of support and severity of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) from the perspective of victims of violence	2013/2013	University of Social Sciences and Humanities/ Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	National	545; 96% women. Victims in specialised domestic violence programs (330); members of interdisciplinary teams (215)
PL-Survey 4	Diagnosis of the extent and forms of domestic violence against adults and children, and providing characteristics of victims and perpetrators	2014/2014	WYG PSDB for the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	National	3000 women and men. General population
PL-Survey 8	Domestic violence: Prevalence and frequency of reporting	2014/2014	Ipsos for the Ministry of Interior	National	1000 women and men. Age 16+. Representative sample
RO-Survey 1	Public opinion barometer "The truth about Romania. Domestic violence"	2013/2013	INSCOP Research	National	1050 women and men. Age 18+. Probabilistic sample
SE-Survey 1	Young people, sex and internet	2009/2013	Swedish Agency for Young people and Civil Society	National	Students in the third year of secondary education
SE-Survey 2	Where is the dividing line? An investigation of attitudes about rape	2008/2011	Amnesty International in Sweden	National	2626 women and men

SI-Survey 1	National survey on violence in the private sphere and in partner relationships	2009/2010	Institute of Criminology at the Faculty of Law of the University of Ljubljana	National	752 female. Representative sample
SI-Survey 3	Survey on proceedings and the perception of dating violence (advisory services of secondary schools)	2010/2010	Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs, and Equal Opportunities	National	Professionals. Advisors at high schools
UK-Survey 4	The REaDAPT project (Relationship Education and Domestic Abuse Prevention tuition)	2011-2012/2012	University of Manchester, University of Keele, University of London	European (England, France, Spain)	2395 young girls and boys (primary and secondary school)

\* As described in the expert survey questionnaire

# Appendix V. Studies

**Table V.1.** Study summaries selected by country: Reference, sample, method and type of violence

Code	Reference	Sample	Method	Type of Violence*
CZ-Study 1	Podaná, Z. (2010). Reporting to the police as a response to intimate partner violence. <i>Sociologický časopis/Czech Sociological Review</i> , 46, 453-474.	709 female victims of IPV	Quantitative	IPV
CZ-Study 2	Vohlídalová, M. (2011). The perception and construction of sexual harassment by Czech university students. <i>Sociologický časopis/Czech Sociological Review</i> , 47, 1119-1147.	700 university students	Mixed	Non-IPV
CZ-Study 3	Smetáčková, I. & Pavlík, P. (2011). Sexuální obtěžování na vysokých školách: Teoretické vymezení, metodologický přístup, výzkumné výsledky [Sexual harassment at universities: theoretical definition, methodological approach, research results]. <i>Sociologický časopis/Czech Sociological Review</i> , 47, 361-386.	832 university students	Mixed	Non-IPV
DK-Study 1	Mørk, T. I., Andersen, P. T., & Taket, A. (2014). Barriers among Danish women and general practitioners to raising the issue of intimate partner violence in general practice: a qualitative study. <i>BMC Women's Health</i> , 14, 74.	13 women (survivors of IPV and without history of IPV) + 13 GPs	Qualitative	IPV
EL-Study 1	Papadakaki, M., Petridou, E., Kogevinas, M., & Lionis, C. (2013). Measuring the effectiveness of an intensive IPV training program offered to Greek general practitioners and residents of general practice. <i>BMC Medical Education</i> , 13, 2-11.	25 GPs and 15 residents	Quantitative	IPV
EL-Study 2	Wasileski, G. (2015). Prosecutors and use of restorative justice in courts: Greek case. <i>Journal of Interpersonal Violence</i> , 30, 1-24.	15 public prosecutors and 3 facilitators of mediation process	Qualitative	IPV
EL-Study 3	Papadakaki, M., Kastrinaki, E., Drakaki, R., & Chliaoutakis, J. (2013). Managing intimate partner violence at the social services department of a Greek university hospital. <i>Journal of Social Work</i> , 13, 533-549.	10 hospital social workers	Qualitative	IPV
ES-Study 1	Gracia, E. & Tomás, J. M. (2014). Correlates of victim-blaming attitudes regarding partner violence against women among the Spanish general population. <i>Violence Against Women</i> , 20, 26-41.	1006 respondents (general population)	Quantitative	IPV
ES-Study 2	Gracia, E., García, F., & Lila, M. (2011). Police attitudes towards policing partner violence against women: do they correspond to different psychosocial profiles? <i>Journal of Interpersonal Violence</i> , 26, 189-207.	378 police officers	Quantitative	IPV

ES-Study 3	Lila, M., Oliver, A., Catalá-Miñana, A., Galiana, L., & Gracia, E. (2014). The Intimate Partner Violence Responsibility Attribution Scale (IPVRAS). <i>European Journal of Psychology Applied to Legal Context, 6</i> , 29-36.	423 adult male IPV offenders	Quantitative	IPV
ES-Study 4	Valor-Segura, I., Expósito, F., & Moya, M. (2011). Victim blaming and exoneration of the perpetrator in domestic violence: the role of beliefs in a just world and ambivalent sexism. <i>Spanish Journal of Psychology, 14</i> , 195-206.	485 people (general population)	Quantitative	IPV
FI-Study 1	Husso, M., Virkki, T., Notko, M., Holam, J., & Laitila, A. (2012). Making sense of domestic violence intervention in professional health care. <i>Health and Social Care in the Community, 20</i> , 347-355.	30 professionals in specialist health care	Qualitative	IPV
PT-Study 1	Machado, C., Caridade, S., & Martins, C. (2010). Violence in juvenile dating relationships self-reported prevalence and attitudes in a Portuguese sample. <i>Journal of Family Violence, 25</i> , 43-52.	4667 participants, aged 13 to 29	Quantitative	IPV
SI-Study 1	Pecnik, N. & Bezensek-Lalic, O. (2011). Does social workers' personal experience with violence in the family relate to their professional responses, and how? <i>European Journal of Social Work, 14</i> , 525-544.	106 social workers	Quantitative	Non-IPV
SI-Study 3	Podreka, J. (2014). Intimate partner homicides in Slovenia and their gender-specific differences. <i>Revija za kriminalistiko in kriminologijo / Ljubljana, 65</i> , 60-73.	30 closed criminal cases	Qualitative	IPV
UK-Study 2	McCarry, M. (2010). Becoming a "proper man": young people's attitudes about interpersonal violence and perceptions of gender. <i>Gender and Education, 22</i> , 17-30.	77 young people aged 15 to 18	Qualitative	IPV

\* IPV = Intimate Partner Violence; Non-IPV = Non-Intimate Partner Violence

**Table V.2.** *Content of studies: selection of main results*

Study	Research Question	Main Results
CZ-Study 1	Reporting to the police as a response to intimate partner violence (IPV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Distrust of the police proved to be an important factor for not reporting to the police (29% of women).</li> <li>✓ The victim's subjective evaluation of the incident, especially her belief that the incident was a crime, was an important factor for reporting.</li> <li>✓ Other reasons given by IPV victims for not reporting the incident to the police were that they often tried to keep the matter private and were likely to express fear of further victimisation by the offender or by the police.</li> <li>✓ Controlling behaviour by the partner contributes to the victim's distrust of the police.</li> <li>✓ Threats and indirect aggression lead to reporting to the police.</li> <li>✓ IPV victims are less reluctant to report to the police if they have some kind of direct or indirect evidence of violence (e.g. severe injuries were more likely to be reported to the police).</li> <li>✓ Sexual violence in an intimate relationship still seems to be a taboo subject. Severe sexual abuse made no difference to reporting behaviour, and, moreover, sexually abused women who did not report the incident were more likely to fear that the police would not believe them or would not help them.</li> <li>✓ Distrust of the police may, in some cases, also be connected to the learned helplessness of abused women.</li> </ul>
CZ-Study 2	Perception and definition of sexual harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Despite a high percentage of university students (67%) encountering some form of sexual harassment (SH) during their studies, the students rarely discussed their experience in terms of SH.</li> <li>✓ The students saw SH as a remote problem that did not relate to them.</li> <li>✓ SH was perceived as an extreme experience violating all regular norms of interpersonal behaviour.</li> <li>✓ Students have a tendency to see victims of harassment as having provoked the behaviour or as being unable to defend themselves.</li> <li>✓ Women, younger students, girls from the country, and weak and naive women were seen as victims of sexual harassment.</li> <li>✓ Responsibility for sexual harassment was transferred to the victims of harassment.</li> <li>✓ Students identified SH only with explicit and physical forms of harassment.</li> </ul>
CZ-Study 3	Definition of sexual harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Despite a high percentage of university students (78%) personally experiencing teacher behaviours that can be characterised as sexual harassment (SH), only 3% of them said explicitly that they had been sexually harassed.</li> <li>✓ One of the reasons for this contradiction was the relatively low awareness about SH in Czech society.</li> <li>✓ A narrow definition of SH was often preferred and the gender dimension of the problem was not considered.</li> <li>✓ Students did not label their experiences as SH because of their very narrow definition.</li> </ul>

DK-Study 1	Barriers and attitudes towards inquiry about IPV in primary care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Despite Danish women wanting general practitioners to ask about violence in a respectful and non-judgmental manner, general practitioners were resistant towards such an inquiry.</li> <li>✓ General practitioners would benefit from training regarding how to respond to women who have been exposed to IPV.</li> </ul>
EL-Study 1	Effectiveness of a training program on IPV knowledge and detection ability of general practitioners (GPs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The training program met high acceptance and high practicality in clinical practice.</li> <li>✓ The GPs in the intervention group performed better than the GPs in the control group on "Perceived preparedness" and "Perceived knowledge".</li> </ul>
EL-Study 2	Views of mediation in IPV by public prosecutors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Prosecutors' experiences, professional positions and views of mediation in adult cases of gendered violence were shaped by their legal training.</li> <li>✓ Their perceptions reflected their work in an adversarial system.</li> <li>✓ Their views were complex yet ultimately unreceptive and their practices failed the victims of IPV.</li> <li>✓ Three dominant themes emerged: misperception of the rationale for using mediation - the artificial role of the batterer, misunderstanding of interpersonal violence dynamics, and marginalizing the battered victims; conflicting roles and responsibilities of the prosecutor in the mediation process; consequences of mediation and the fallacy of offender therapy.</li> </ul>
EL-Study 3	Perceived self-efficacy in managing IPV of hospital social workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Lack of training was stressed by social workers as one of the main barriers to effective IPV management, contributing to low perceived self-efficacy.</li> <li>✓ Another issue that emerged from this study was the lack of professional protocols for the management of IPV cases.</li> </ul>
ES-Study 1	Victim-blaming attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Victim-blaming attitudes were more common among respondents who were older, less educated, and who placed themselves at the bottom of the social scale.</li> <li>✓ Victim-blaming attitudes were higher among respondents who thought that IPV against women was common in society, considered it more acceptable, and knew women victims of partner violence in their circle of friends and family.</li> </ul>
ES-Study 2	Police attitudes towards policing partner violence against women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Two attitudes toward policing partner violence were considered - one reflecting a general preference for conditional law enforcement (depending on the willingness of the victim to press charges against the offender) and the other reflecting a general preference for unconditional law enforcement (regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges against the offender).</li> <li>✓ Police officers who expressed a general preference for unconditional law enforcement scored higher in other-oriented empathy, were less sexist, tended to perceive the same incidents of partner violence as more serious, and felt more personally responsible than the group of police officers who expressed a preference for a conditional law enforcement approach.</li> </ul>

ES-Study 3	Perpetrators responsibility attribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Three responsibility attribution factors were identified in this instrument responded by IPV perpetrators: responsibility attribution to the legal system, responsibility attribution to the victim, and responsibility attribution to the offender personal context.</li> <li>✓ This measure is linked to satisfaction with the legal system, victim-blaming attitudes, alcohol consumption, hostile sexism, stressful life events, social desirability, impulsivity and household income.</li> </ul>
ES-Study 4	Victim blaming and exoneration of the perpetrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Participants blamed the victim and exonerated the aggressor more when no cause of the aggression was mentioned than when a cause was mentioned (the woman wanted to separate, to see an old male friend, or simply to take a trip with her female friends). Hostile sexism and just world beliefs influenced victim blaming and exoneration of the perpetrator.</li> </ul>
FI-Study 1	Making sense of domestic violence intervention in professional health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The study identified practices and attitudes of health care professionals towards domestic violence.</li> <li>✓ The obstacles to intervention on domestic violence were described as lack of relevant knowledge and know-how.</li> <li>✓ The interviewees did not consider it appropriate to raise the topic of violence and deal with the issue within the medical context: domestic violence is seen as a social problem and thus as belonging to the domain of social work, psychology or individual psychopathology.</li> <li>✓ The complex health and social factors involved were re-defined in terms of the individual victim's attributes and his/her responsibility: domestic violence was defined as a problem merely for the individual and the victims were seen as responsible for the situation.</li> <li>✓ Violence was seen as a cause of many possible psychological problems and disturbances.</li> <li>✓ The authors concluded that there appeared to be a tendency for health professionals to focus on fixing the injuries and consequences of domestic violence while bypassing violence as the cause of symptoms and injuries.</li> </ul>
PT-Study 1	Attitudes on dating relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Although not uncommon (dating partner was reported by 25.4% and abuse of a partner by 30.6%), the attitudinal data revealed a general disapproval of the use of violence.</li> <li>✓ Support for violence was higher among males, participants with lower educational and social status and those who had never been involved in a dating relationship.</li> <li>✓ The best predictors of violence were educational status and attitudes toward partner.</li> </ul>
SI-Study 1	Social workers' personal experience and professional responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Social workers who had personally experienced violence from their parents and intimate partners were most reluctant to suggest shelter for battered women and children, parent counselling, or notification to the police.</li> <li>✓ The results highlighted the importance of addressing the influence of personal experiences of violence on professional judgments, through supervision and other programs supporting quality in social work with children exposed to violence in their families.</li> </ul>

SI-Study 3	Perpetrators motives in IPV murders and attempted murders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ In 67% of cases of intimate partner murders and attempted murders of women, the court concluded that the explanation for the perpetrator behaviour was connected to his arrogance and jealousy.</li><li>✓ A review of criminal files showed that, in almost one third of cases, the perpetrators mainly murdered or attempted to murder women who were seen as rivals or authority, and they were blamed for the departure of a partner.</li></ul>
UK-Study 2	Attitudes on interpersonal violence and perceptions of gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ The incidence and prevalence of gendered interpersonal violence is not decreasing.</li><li>✓ Research with young people revealed significant acceptance and tolerance of interpersonal violence if perpetrated by men in intimate heterosexual relationships.</li><li>✓ In order to understand the continued tolerance of male abuse/violence, it is necessary to appreciate how young people conceptualise the role of women and men within intimate heterosexual relationships.</li></ul>



# Appendix VI. Survey questions

**Box VI.1.** Survey items on public perceptions of violence against women as a social problem (Chapter 2)

## Public awareness of violence against women as a social problem

- ✓ BG-Survey 1:  
*How do you treat domestic violence as a social phenomenon in the Bulgarian society?*
- ✓ CY-Survey 2:  
*Level of agreement or disagreement with... (completely agree, agree, somewhat agree, disagree, completely disagree);*  
- *Couples in Cyprus experience less violent incidents, compared to other countries*
- ✓ CZ-Survey 1:  
*Estimate the extent of violent sexual criminality and rape*
- ✓ RO-Survey 1:  
*Why do you think that Romania is among the EU countries with high rates of violence against women? (Agree, disagree, don't know);*  
- *Domestic violence has always been present in Romania*  
- *Domestic violence is an issue of public interest*

## Public definitions of violence against women

- ✓ BG-Survey 5:  
*How do you define sexual violence? (Physical act of rape or attempted rape; Trafficking in women for sexual exploitation);*  
*Have you got any experience, and if yes, can you indicate the place of sexual abuse: home, at work, in a public place, other?*
- ✓ CY-Survey 1:  
*Which of the following behaviours can be considered as acts of violence by a spouse/partner?: pushing, shaking, hair pulling, hot water burning, etc.*

## ✓ EE-Survey 2:

*Respondents were asked to assess the extent to which they agree with the following statement (completely agree, partly agree, partly disagree, completely disagree, don't know);*

- *Violence in the family/intimate relationship is a crime*
- *Is prostitution violence against women?*

*Do you think it is sexual violence when someone does the following...?*

## ✓ PL-Survey 4:

*Do you agree that...:*

- *...rape cannot occur among partners/spouses?*

### **Public acceptability and perceived severity of violence against women**

## ✓ CY-Survey 3:

*It is OK for a boy:*

- *... to shout at his girlfriend if she is constantly nagging/arguing*
- *... to shout at his girlfriend if she is not treating him with respect*
- *... to set limits on how his girlfriend dresses*
- *... to set limits on where his girlfriend goes*
- *... to push a girl into having sex if she has been flirting with him all night*
- *... to spy on his partner's mobile phone*
- *... to push a girl into having sex if they have been dating*
- *... to threaten to leave a partner in order to achieve something you want*
- *... to hit his girlfriend if she has been unfaithful*
- *... threaten to hit a partner as long as he doesn't actually hit him/her*
- *... to hit his girlfriend if she is constantly nagging/arguing*
- *... to push a girl into having sex if he has spent a lot of money on her*
- *... to hit his girlfriend if she is not treating him with respect*

## ✓ CZ-Survey 1:

*What particular forms of behaviour have the victims encountered from their intimate partner? (16 items were used)*

## ✓ CZ-Survey 4:

*The incident...;*

- *Taking everything into account, how serious was the incident of partner violence you suffered? (Very serious, Somewhat serious, Not very serious, Don't Know, No answer)*
- *Did you regard the incident as a crime, wrong but not a crime or something that just happens? (A crime, Wrong but not a crime, Just something that happens, Don't Know, No answer)*

- ✓ DK-Survey 2:  
*Reasons for not reporting the violence to the police:*
  - Preferred to forget the violence
  - Not serious enough
  - Good friends again
  - Did not want the police to be involved
  - Afraid to be perceived as guilty
  - No-one would have believed me
  - Did not believe the police could make any difference
  - Shame and guilt
  - No trust in police
  
- ✓ EE-Survey 4:  
*Physical punishment of a spouse (cohabitant) is sometimes inevitable*
  
- ✓ ES-Survey 1:  
*Why you did not report the incident?*
  - I didn't take it that seriously
  
- ✓ ES-Survey 2 and 3:  
*I will now read some circumstances and behaviours that can occur in the relationships between women and men. Tell me if you consider them as something Unavoidable, Acceptable in some circumstances or Totally unacceptable;*
  - Constant quarrelling
  - Insulting and despising the partner
  - Controlling a partner's comings and goings
  - Preventing the partner from seeing family and friends
  - Verbal threatening
  - Pushing and beating when angry
  - Not allowing the partner to work or study
  - Telling the partner what they can or cannot do
  - Denigrating the partner in front of the children
  - Forced sexual relationships

*A reason why women do not file a complaint against the perpetrators...*

  - They do not consider aggressions as something serious

*Tell me to what extent you agree with the following statements:*

  - Some women file false complaints to obtain economic benefits and hurt their partners
  - Some women may keep on tolerating violence for fear of being accused of filing a false complaint
  - Some women withdraw the complaints filed, but this does not mean that the complaints are false

## ✓ ES-Survey 4:

*Do the following behaviours constitute mistreatment of a girl by a boy? (Not at all, A bit, Quite, A lot);*

- *Telling her that she is not worth anything*
  - *Contradicting her*
  - *Making her feel scared*
  - *Insulting her*
  - *Breaking something of hers*
  - *Telling her whom she can or cannot talk to, or where to go*
  - *Trying to stop her seeing her friends*
  - *Controlling everything she does*
  - *Insisting on having a sexual relationship when she does not want to*
  - *Telling her that he will hurt her if she leaves him*
  - *Beating her*
  - *Forcing her to do things she does not want to through threats*
  - *Recording her with a mobile phone or video camera, or taking pictures of her when she does not know*
  - *Sending her internet or text messages, scaring, offending or threatening her*
  - *Disseminating messages, insults or images of her without her permission*
- Not leaving the relationship with the boyfriend after an incident of dating violence;*
- *Asking him not to do it again and give him a second chance*

## ✓ IT-Survey 1:

*How severe do they consider the episode they have been victims of?*

- *The episode was very serious*
- *The episode was quite serious*
- *She considers the episode as a crime (an offense)*
- *She considers the episode as something wrong but not a crime*
- *Only something that happened*
- 

## ✓ LT-Survey 1:

*Why you don't leave the violent relationship?*

- *My intimate partner promised to change*
- *Because of the children*
- *I have no financial possibility to leave this household*
- *I don't know*
- *I still love my intimate partner*
- *It's a shame for me to divorce*
- *I depend on my intimate partner financially*
- *I want to stay with my intimate partner*
- *I do not think that violence is a reason for the divorce*
- *I want to stay together with my partner*

- ✓ LT-Survey 2:  
*Reasons for not-reporting/talking about the most serious incident*
  - *Did not think anyone would be able to do anything*
  - *Thought the incident was too trivial*
  - *Did not want anyone to get involved*
  - *Did not want the perpetrator to go to prison*
  - *Was ashamed or had feelings of guilt*
  - *Did not think that anyone would believe me*
  
- ✓ MT-Survey 1:  
*Reasons for not-reporting*
  - *...it's not that important*
  
- ✓ PL-Survey 1a:  
*Insulting a wife/partner by a husband/partner during the quarrel is normal (acceptable).*
  
- ✓ PL-Survey 2a:  
*Do you agree that if a husband/partner only hits his wife/partner occasionally, it is not violence?*
  
- ✓ PL-Survey 3:  
*Reasons for not reporting*
  - *Fear of retribution/revenge by the offender*
  - *Feeling of shame*
  - *Don't want to put children under stress*
  - *Previous interventions by the police were not effective*
  - *It's not that important*
  - *Don't want to see the perpetrator arrested*
  - *Other*
  
- ✓ PL-Survey 4  
*Do you agree that...:*
  - *...the behaviour may be seen as violence only if it leaves scars, wounds/bruises on the victim's body?*
  - *...insulting a partner during a quarrel is a normal behaviour?*
  
- ✓ SE-Survey 2:  
*It is an extenuating circumstance if the perpetrator was under the influence of alcohol or drugs? Having a steady relationship with the women, or having had sex before with a woman is an extenuating circumstance*

## ✓ SI-Survey 3:

*A list of behaviours classified in 5 groups (Not violence, Mild violence, Violence, Strong violence, Very strong violence).*

- *Insulting, humiliating or offending in public*
- *Being jealous of friends*
- *Restricting or prohibiting gatherings with friends*
- *If the girlfriend/boyfriend has to continuously report what she/he is doing, where she/he is going when they are not together*
- *If the boy/girl often gets angry or furious with his girlfriend/her boyfriend*
- *Stalking*
- *Breaking or throwing things around during an argument*
- *Beating, kicking, pinching, pulling hair, choking, twisting hands*
- *Forcing to use alcohol or drug*
- *Blaming their girlfriend/boyfriend for their own problems*
- *Threatening a girlfriend/boyfriend to harm their boyfriend/girlfriend or family, if she/he leaves him/her*
- *Frequently apologizing for the violence by saying 'I'm sorry, I'll never do this again'*
- *Persuading a girlfriend/boyfriend to do things they don't want to by saying 'if you loved me, you'd do this'*
- *Making decisions for a girlfriend/boyfriend, such as what she/he will wear, where she/he will go*
- *Forced kissing or sexual intercourse*
- *Touching in a sexual way when a girlfriend/boyfriend does not want to*
- *Restricting or forbidding contact with the family*
- *Remarking that a girlfriend/boyfriend is stupid*
- *Remarking that a girlfriend/boyfriend is too fat and telling her /him to go on a diet*
- *Insisting that a girlfriend/boyfriend arrives at a date exactly on time*
- *Checking calls and text messages or reading e-mails of a girlfriend/boyfriend without her/his permission*

*In situations of dating violence;*

- *Generally they don't define events as violence*
- *The partner would consider these situation as a mistake and apologise*

## ✓ UK-Survey 4:

*It is OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if he is drunk*

**Box VI.2.** *Survey items on public attributions, explanations and justifications (Chapter 3)*

✓ CY-Survey 2:

*Level of agreement or disagreement with...* (completely agree, agree, partly agree, disagree, completely disagree);

- *Violence in relationships is more common among young people of low socio-economic status*
- *Violence can sometimes correct certain behaviours*
- *Relationship issues only concern the couple*
- *Loss of control is to blame for violence in interpersonal relationships*
- *Men have the right to control their partner*
- *Those who experience violence by their own parents become perpetrators in their adult relationships*
- *Perpetrators of violence in interpersonal relationships are violent in all relationships*
- *Violence is an outburst of anger*

✓ CY-Survey 3:

*Some men are violent toward women because....* (1 = Never, 4= Always):

- *...they are jealous*
- *...they cannot control their anger*
- *...they consider themselves superior to women*
- *...of alcohol or drug use*
- *...they want to control women*
- *...they can't control their sexual urges*
- *...they are physically stronger than women*
- *...women provoke them*
- *...they misunderstand women*
- *...they have mental problems*
- *...they were abused as children*
- *...they are naturally aggressive*
- *...they can't take no for an answer*
- *...no one stops them*
- *...they are under stress*
- *...women are not patient enough with them*
- *...women are not sensitive/tender enough with them*
- *...society expects them to*
- *...that makes them attractive to women*
- *...women like it*
- *...it is necessary*

## ✓ CZ-Survey 3:

*Do you agree that...? (Agree, Disagree, Don't Know):*

- *The majority of violent sexual crimes perpetrators suffered abuse as a child*
- *The majority of violent sexual crimes perpetrators has some form of sexual deviance*
- *Sexual deviance is incurable*
- *Perpetrators of serious sexual crimes were prosecuted for similar offenses in the past*
- *Regardless on the court-ordered treatment (psychiatric, serological), the perpetrators will do it again*

## ✓ DE-Survey 4:

*What kept you from going to a counselling service?:*

- *It is a private matter, I'm embarrassed*

## ✓ EE-Survey 2:

*Describe a typical perpetrator of domestic violence (Focus Group)*

## ✓ ES-Survey 2 and 3:

*Do you agree completely, partly agree, partly disagree or completely disagree with the following statements?*

- *There are more perpetrators among immigrants*
- *Perpetrators are mentally ill*
- *Women victims of VAW have a low education level*
- *Victims hold on because of their children*
- *Their daughters and sons are reasons for women not report the violence*

*Reasons for gender-based violence: Substance abuse, psychological/mental disorder, having suffered physical or sexual abuse, conflicts and separation/divorces, religious beliefs and practices, changes in responsibilities assumed now by women and men within the relationship.*

## ✓ LT-Survey 2:

*Why you don't leave the violent relationship?*

- *My intimate partner promised to change*
- *Because of the children*
- *I have no financial possibility to leave this household*
- *I don't know*
- *I still love my intimate partner*
- *It's a shame for me to divorce*
- *I depend on my intimate partner financially*
- *I want to stay with my intimate partner*
- *I do not think that violence is a reason for the divorce*
- *I want to stay together with my partner*



- ✓ MT-Survey 1:  
*Survey respondents were asked to state if they agreed/disagreed with six statements*
  - *It is important for a man to show his wife/partner who is the boss*
  - *It's a wife's obligation to have sex with her husband even if she doesn't feel like it*
  - *A good wife obeys her husband even if she disagrees*
  - *If a man mistreats his wife, others outside the family should intervene*
  - *Family problems should only be discussed with people in the family*
  - *A woman should be able to choose her own friends even if her husband disapproves*
  
- ✓ NL-Survey 1:  
*Agreement or disagreement with...*  
*Sexual Violence:*
  - *When a woman says no to a sexual overture, she means no*
  - *A man slapping a woman's buttocks while passing by is a compliment for the women*
  - *A man in a steady or marital relationship is entitled to have sex with his partner*
  - *Youngsters and men too often force themselves upon women**Intimate Partner Violence:*
  - *When a man abuses his wife he should leave the house, not the woman*
  - *In domestic violence cases the police should respond with reticence*
  - *In cases of domestic violence: when two people fight they both are to blame*
  
- ✓ PL-Survey 1a:  
*Do you agree that insulting a wife/partner by a husband/partner during the quarrel is normal (acceptable)?*  
*Please select/indicate circumstances that accompanied the occurrence of violence*
  - *Alcohol*
  - *Financial problems*
  - *Marital problems...*
  
- ✓ PL-Survey 2b:  
*Are circumstances of domestic violence...?*
  - *Alcohol*
  - *Experiencing violence in childhood*
  - *Experiencing violence from relatives*
  - *Marital problems...*

## ✓ PL-Survey 3:

*Reasons for not reporting*

- *Fear of retribution/revenge by the offender*
- *Feeling of shame*
- *Don't want to put children under stress*
- *Previous interventions by the police were not effective*
- *It's not that important*
- *Don't want to see the perpetrator arrested*
- *Other*

## ✓ PL-Survey 4:

*Regarding sexual behaviour, the wife should always agree with her husband*

## ✓ RO-Survey 1:

*Please express your agreement or disagreement regarding the following statements (Agree, Disagree, Don't Know):*

- *Domestic violence (among partners) only happens in poor households*
- *Domestic violence only happens among uneducated people*
- *Being beaten is a divine punishment*
- *A man who does not beat his wife doesn't really love her*
- *Women is the property of men*

*Please express your agreement or disagreement regarding the following statement*

- *If a woman has children, even if she is beaten she cannot leave the relationship*

## ✓ SI-Survey 1:

*How do the victims of violence respond to violence and what are their survival strategies? Why do women victims not report violence by partners or non-partners, or do not leave a violent relationship?*

**Box VI.3.** *Survey items on victim-blaming attitudes (Chapter 4)*

- ✓ CY-Survey 1:  
*Reasons for not reporting violence in the family (Yes, No):*
  - *I thought that I may be to blame*
  
- ✓ CY-Survey 2:  
*Do you agree with the following statements? (Agree, Disagree):*
  - *Sometimes individuals cause the violence inflicted on them by their own behaviour*
  - *The perpetrator will change behaviour towards his/her partner if he or she becomes more obedient*
  - *Women's behaviour and clothing provokes violence in the relationship*
  - *If the partner changes, the violence will stop*
  
- ✓ CY-Survey 3:  
*Some men are violent toward women because:*
  - *...women provoke them*
  - *...women are not patient enough with them*
  - *...women are not sensitive/tender enough with them**It is OK for a boy:*
  - *... to shout at his girlfriend if she is constantly nagging/arguing*
  - *... to shout at his girlfriend if she is not treating him with respect*
  - *... to push a girl into having sex if she has been flirting with him all night*
  - *... to hit his girlfriend if she has been unfaithful*
  - *... to hit his girlfriend if she is constantly nagging/arguing*
  - *... to hit his girlfriend if she is not treating him with respect*
  
- ✓ DK-Survey 2:  
*It is OK for a man to beat his partner in the case of infidelity (Agree, Disagree, Neither)*  
*Reasons for not reporting violence to the police*
  - *Preferred to forget the violence*
  - *Not serious enough*
  - *Good friends again*
  - *Did not want the police to be involved*
  - *Afraid to be perceived as guilty*
  - *No-one would have believed me*
  - *Did not believe the police could make any difference*
  - *Shame and guilt*
  - *No trust in police*

## ✓ EE-Survey 1:

*To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree):*

- *Wives could avoid being beaten by their husbands if they knew when to stop talking*
- *Battered wives are responsible for their abuse because they intended it to happen*
- *Wives try to get beaten by their husbands to get sympathy from others*
- *When a husband beats his wife, it is caused by her behaviour in the weeks before the beating*
- *A sexually unfaithful wife deserves to be beaten*

## ✓ EE-Survey 2:

*To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement (Completely agree, Partly agree, Don't know, Partly disagree, Completely disagree):*

- *Often victims of domestic violence are partly to blame for what happened*
- *Women cause their victimisation or rape by their clothing*

## ✓ EE-Survey 6:

*Please evaluate to what extent you agree with the following statements (Completely agree, Partly agree, Don't know, Partly disagree, Completely disagree):*

- *Victims of rape who used alcohol before it took place are partly responsible for what happened*
- *Victims of rape have a bad reputation*
- *Many women have an unconscious wish to be raped*
- *A woman who has let herself be kissed and embraced shouldn't refuse to have sex*

## ✓ ES-Survey 2:

*If women suffer violence it is because they allow it to happen (Completely agree, Partly agree, Partly disagree, Completely disagree, Don't know)*

## ✓ ES-Survey 4:

*Please express your agreement or disagreement with the following statement (Completely disagree, partly disagree, partly agree, completely agree):*

- *If a women is mistreated by her partner and does not leave him, that means that she does not dislike the situation*
- *If a women is beaten by her husband, she must have done something to provoke him*
- *It is justified for a man to beat his wife or girlfriend if she decides to leave him*

## ✓ LU-Survey 1:

*According to you, what elements or events triggered the violence?:*

- *Your own behaviour*

- ✓ MT-Survey 1:  
*Reasons for not reporting*
- ✓ PL-Survey 2a:  
*Do you agree that...:*
  - *...a wife hit/struck by her husband/partner is very often responsible for his behaviour?*
  - *...a husband/partner is justified if he hits his wife/partner if she made him angry?*
  - *...a husband/partner is justified if he hits his wife/partner if he finds out that she has been unfaithful?*
- ✓ PL-Survey 4:  
*Do you agree that a perpetrator would cease using violence if he found a partner who does not provoke him?*
- ✓ RO-Survey 1:  
*Please express your agreement or disagreement regarding the following statement (Disagree, Agree, I don't know/I can't answer):*
  - *Women are sometimes beaten because of their own fault*
  -
- ✓ SE-Survey 1:  
*Do you agree?:*
  - *If a woman is raped when she is drunk, then she is at least partly responsible for not being in control*
  - *Usually it is only women who dress provocatively who are raped*
  - *A woman who "teases" men deserves everything that happens*
  - *When women are raped it is often because they said "no" ambiguously*
  - *A woman who dresses in tight clothes should not be surprised if a man tries to force her to have sex*
- ✓ SE-Survey 2:  
*Do you think...:*
  - *... that the woman herself is responsible for being raped if she dresses and acts "provocatively"?*
  - *... that the woman herself is responsible if she has flirted and petted with the man before the rape?*
  - *... the woman herself is responsible for being raped if she is known to have had many partners?*
  - *...that the woman herself is responsible for being raped if she voluntarily follows a man home for example after a party/restaurant?*
  - *... that the woman herself is responsible for being raped if she is under the influence of alcohol/drugs?*
  - *...that the woman herself is responsible for being raped if she does not resist bodily or screams?*
  - *...that the woman herself is responsible for being raped if she had sex with the man before?*

- ✓ SI-Survey 3:  
*Responses estimated by professors/advisors:*
  - *They blame themselves*
  
- ✓ UK-Survey 4:  
*It is OK for a man to hit his wife/partner...*
  - *...if she cheats on him with another man*
  - *...if he thinks she deserves it*
  - *...if she really embarrasses him*

**Box VI.4.** *Survey items on public knowledge, attitudes towards intervention and responses in cases of violence against women (Chapter 5)*

#### **Public knowledge of resources and services for women victims of violence**

- ✓ AT-Survey 2:  
*Do you know about the following counselling and support facilities?*
  - *Women's shelters*
  - *White ring*
  - *24 h. helpline/women's emergency hotline*
  - *Women's counselling facilities*
  - *Intervention centres/ protection from violence centres*
  - *Other support facilities*
  - *Don't know any*
  
- ✓ BE-Survey 1:  
*Did you know about the services helping violence victims?*
  
- ✓ CY-Survey 1:  
*Whether the respondents were familiar with the services available for victims of domestic violence such as shelter, hotline, legal aid, counselling and support, and programs for perpetrators.*
  
- ✓ DE-Survey 4:  
*Assuming that you seek more detailed information on counselling services or other services which could help your friend, please put a cross against the two most important sources of information in the list;*
  - *Newspapers/magazines*
  - *Internet*
  - *Related person (friends, acquaintances)*
  - *Counselling services*
  - *Offices*
  - *Others (namely)*
  - *I don't know a way to find information*

## ✓ EE-Survey 2:

*Please indicate all those in the following list to who you know have support services available for them:*

- *Victims of sexual violence (harassment, rape)*
- *Victims of domestic violence*
- *Children who have witnessed domestic violence*
- *Perpetrators*
- *Victims of forced prostitution*
- *Victims of forced labour*
- *None of them*
- *I don't know*

*Which of the following organisations or programs have you heard about?*

- *Estonian Women's Shelters Union and their hotline 1492*
- *NGO Living for Tomorrow (LFT) and their anti-human-trafficking helpline 660 7320*
- *NGO Eluliin [helpline providing psychological counselling and support for victims of prostitution]*
- *National victim support service*
- *Employment Inspectorate*
- *Norwegian program for reducing domestic violence and human trafficking*
- *None of them*

## ✓ EE-Survey 5:

*Have you heard about women's shelters in Estonia?*

- *I've heard that the shelters exist and I know what kind of help they provide*
- *I've heard that the shelters exist but I don't know exactly what kind of help they provide*
- *I have not heard about women's shelters, but I would like to know more about them*
- *I have heard nothing about women's shelters, nor do I want to*

*Have you heard about nationwide hotline 1492 for women victims?*

- *I've heard that this hotline operates and I know what kind of help it provides*
- *I've heard that this hotline operates but I don't know exactly what kind of help it provides*
- *I have not heard about this hotline but I would like to know more about it*
- *I have heard nothing about this hotline, nor do I want to*

## ✓ EE-Survey 6:

*What kind of support services for victims of sexual violence have you heard about?*

- *Women's Shelters*
- *Victim support service*
- *Medical assistance in the health care institutions*
- *Counselling via the internet [www.amor.ee](http://www.amor.ee)*
- *Telephone counselling in the hotline 1492*
- *None of them*

## ✓ PL-Survey 8:

*What institutions provide services for the victims of domestic violence?*

- Police
- Social Assistance Centres
- Blue Line
- NGOs
- Other institution/agency
- Other person
- Don't know

**Public attitudes towards intervention or involvement in cases of violence against women**

## ✓ BG-Survey 1:

*If a person from your circle of acquaintances shares with you that she has been a victim of domestic violence, who would you advise them to contact?*

- Police
- Relatives
- Friends
- Social service offices
- Medical service offices
- NGOs
- Mass media
- Other

## ✓ DE-Survey 4:

*Assuming that a friend of yours has been abused by her partner or husband, what do you recommend? Where should she go?;*

*Assuming that a friend of yours is/was raped, groped or sexually abused now or in the past, what do you recommend? Where should she go?*

- Police
- Doctor
- Women's shelter
- Counselling service for families or women
- Related persons: friend, colleague, sister, mother
- Lawyer
- Therapist
- Local equal opportunities officers

## ✓ EE-Survey 1:

*To assess the extent to which they agree with the following statement*

- *A victim of domestic violence is not able to stop a violent relationship by herself*



- ✓ EE-Survey 3:  
*Participants were asked whether they should intervene if the husband is beating his wife in the neighbour's family (certainly should, partly should, partly should not, certainly should not, don't know)*
- ✓ EE-Survey 4:  
*What do you think of the following statement? (Completely agree, partly agree, partly disagree, completely disagree, don't know)*  
*- Witnesses or over-hearers should intervene to stop a violent quarrel in the family*
- ✓ EE-Survey 5:  
*Would you recommend your friend or colleague who has experienced violence to go to a women's shelter for advice and assistance? (Definitely yes, Maybe, No, Don't know).*
- ✓ ES-Survey 1, 2 and 3:  
*Would you know where to go to file a complaint in a case of mistreatment? (Yes, No, Don't Know)*  
*If YES: "And specifically, where would you go?" (open question, max 3 answers)*  
*Should you find out about or witness an aggression or mistreatment of a woman by a man, what do you think you would do?*
- ✓ ES-Survey 4:  
*What would you do if you became aware that a girl friend of yours has been or is being mistreated by the boy she is with?*  
*What would you do if you became aware that a boy friend of yours has mistreated or is mistreating the girl he is with?*  
*- Nothing*  
*- I would end my relationship with him*  
*- I would tell somebody who could punish him*  
*- I would confront him*
- ✓ LT-Survey 1:  
*In the case of domestic violence in the neighbourhood, would you call the police? (Yes/No, I don't know)*  
*What would you do in the case of violence against you?*  
*- I would seek the support of close relatives*  
*- I would call the police*  
*- I would contact a doctor*  
*- No answer/I don't know*

✓ PL-Survey 2a:

*Do you agree that a witness of domestic violence should react.. (Yes/No):*

- *...to prevent jeopardy*
- *...because responding is morally right*
- *...because violence is a crime*
- *...because victims are helpless*

*Do you agree that a witness of domestic violence should NOT react..*

- *...because it is hard to know who is right*
- *...because responding involves trouble*
- *...because responding might put the victim in a worse position*
- *...because it is a private matter*

✓ PL-Survey 4:

*It is not worth or effective to support or help victims of domestic violence because they would return to the perpetrators (Yes/No)*

✓ RO-Survey 1:

*In your opinion, who do you think should intervene when somebody is beating a partner?*

- *Police*
- *Relatives*
- *Neighbours*
- *Friends*
- *Priest*
- *Others*
- *Nobody*
- *I don't know*

## Public responses to known cases of violence against women

### ✓ EE-Survey 2:

*Have you ever overheard, seen or suspected any case of domestic violence?;*

*If YES: Did you respond to it in any way or do something? (yes, no, don't know).*

*If YES: What did you do, how did you respond? Please indicate all appropriate options:*

- *I tried to solve the situation*
- *I called the police*
- *I informed other neighbours, the leader of the apartment association*
- *I informed local government officials (e.g. social worker, child protection worker)*
- *I talked to the victim/perpetrator, advised them, and tried to help them*
- *Some other response*

*If NOT: What is the main reason why you did not do anything?:*

- *I did not know what to do*
- *I did not want to respond because the situation was a private matter*
- *I was afraid to respond*
- *I was a child, a minor*
- *The situation resolved itself; somebody else solved the situation*
- *Some other reason*
- *I don't know.*

### ✓ PL-Survey 8:

*Have you reported the incidence of violence? (Yes/No)*

*Whom/where did you report it to?*

- *The police*
- *Social Assistance Centre*
- *Blue Line*
- *NGO*
- *Other institution*
- *Other person*

*Why did you not report it?*

- *Domestic problems should be solved at home*
- *Reporting does not change anything*
- *It is not my business*
- *Being afraid of bureaucracy*
- *Didn't know where to report*

### ✓ SI-Survey 1:

*Responses/or intentions to response to known cases of violence against women*

