

Violence experienced by total population

Statistics Explained

*Data extracted in March 2025
Planned article update: November 2028*

Highlights

On average in the EU, 64.2 females per 100 000 women and 10.9 males per 100 000 men were victims of sexual assault in 2022.

More women than men reported that they experienced physical or sexual violence perpetrated by their intimate partner based on the EU-GBV survey (wave 2021 for available countries).

More men than women reported that they experienced threatening or physical (but not sexual) violence perpetrated by non-partners based on the EU-GBV survey (wave 2021 for available countries).

More women than men have experienced serious violence perpetrated by their intimate partner, that was repeated or led to consequences. More men have experienced serious violence by non-partners than that perpetrated by their intimate partners (EU-GBV survey wave 2021 for available countries).

The violence experienced by women and men includes threats, physical or sexual violence perpetrated by intimate partners and non-partners. The survey also covered psychological violence perpetrated by intimate partners, sexual harassment experienced in the work environment, stalking and violent experiences during childhood.

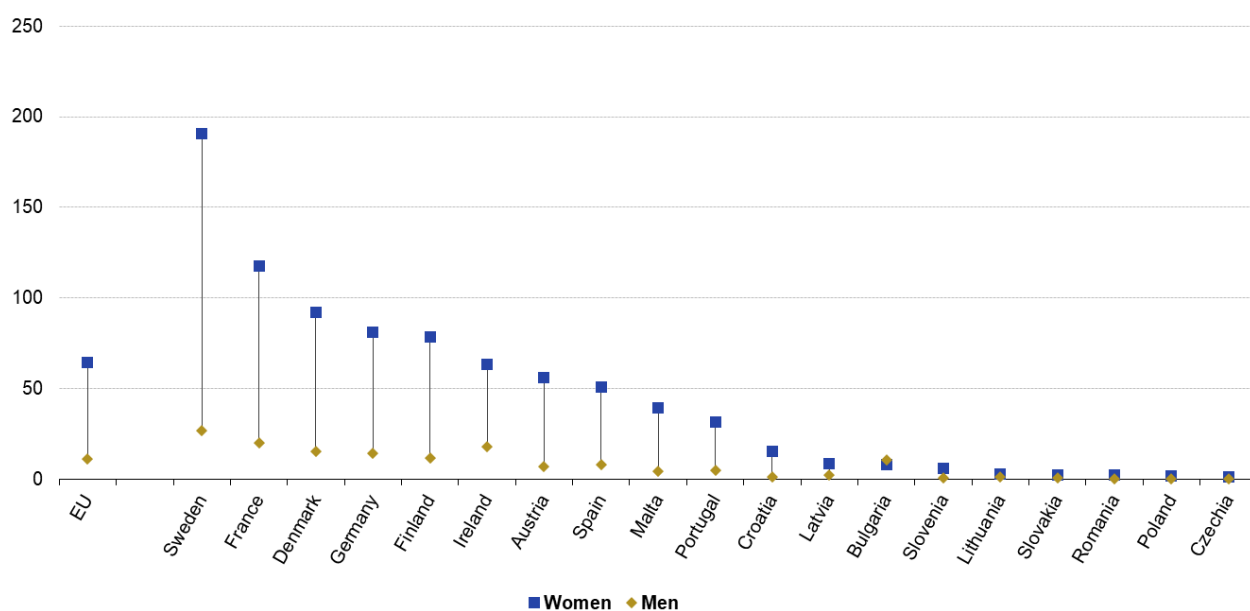
This article presents the prevalence of violence experienced by total population in 11 EU countries (Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal and Slovenia) that included in the EU gender-based violence survey (EU-GBV) (wave 2021) both women and men. Moreover, police data on victims of sexual abuse are included for available countries.

Police-recorded victims of sexual assault

Regarding sexual assault, in 2022 according to national police data, on average 64.2 women per 100 000 women were the victim of sexual assault in the EU. The number of male victims of sexual assault based on police data was 6 times lower – 10.9 per 100 000 men.

Police recorded victims of sexual assault, 2022

(per 100 000 inhabitants)



Note: data not available for 8 EU countries (Belgium, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Hungary, Netherlands); calculated as female victims per 100 000 female inhabitants and male victims per 100 000 male inhabitants

Source: Eurostat, annual crime statistics (crim_hom_soff)

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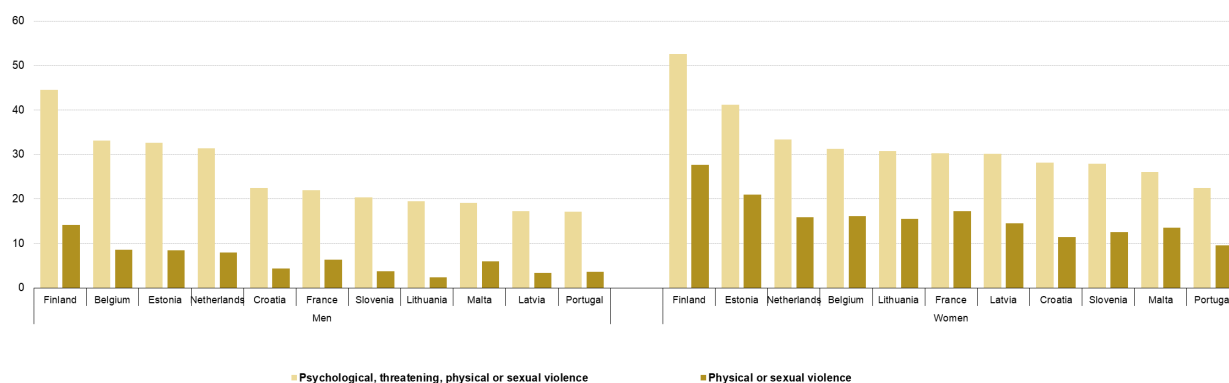
Figure 1: Police recorded victims of sexual assault, per 100 000 inhabitants, 2022 Source: Eurostat (crim_hom_soff)

Intimate partner violence reported in the EU-GBV survey

In the EU-GBV survey (wave 2021 for available countries), the highest share of women and men who have experienced psychological, physical or sexual violence perpetrated by their intimate partner was reported in Finland (respectively 53% and 45%), followed by Estonia, the Netherlands and Belgium.

The proportion of women who have experienced at least one violent act committed by their partner is slightly higher than that of men, but a significant difference is visible due to the nature of the violent act. More women than men reported in the survey that they have experienced acts of physical or sexual violence by their intimate partner (see Figure 2).

Proportion of persons who have experienced psychological, physical or sexual violence by intimate partner
(%, EU gender-based violence survey, wave 2021)



Note: prevalence rate calculated out of persons who have ever had a partner
Source: Eurostat, EU gender-based violence survey, wave 2021 (gbv_vtp_ipvt)

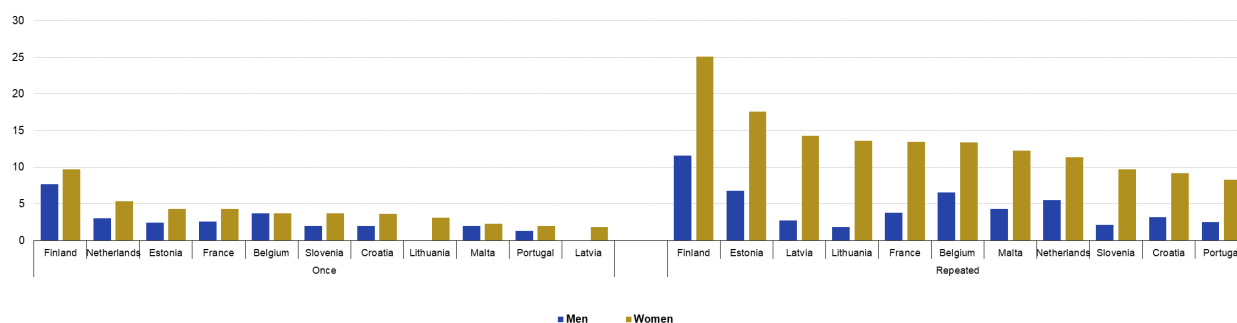
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Figure 2: Proportion of persons who have experienced psychological, physical or sexual violence by intimate partner Percentage, wave 2021 Source: Eurostat (gbv_vtp_ipvt)

As the survey questions were focused on the victim's experience of certain violent acts, both women and men could experience such violence due to victimising or putting up a defence against the perpetrator. Therefore, it is important to consider the seriousness of the violence experienced to better understand the victimisation.

The percentage of women who have ever had a partner and who have repeatedly experienced physical (including threats) or sexual violence committed by their partner, ranges from 25% in Finland to 8% in Portugal. The share for men ranges from around 12% in Finland to below 3% in Latvia, Portugal, Slovenia and Lithuania.

Proportion of persons who have experienced intimate partner violence by frequency
(%, EU gender-based violence survey, wave 2021)



Note: prevalence rate calculated out of persons who have ever had a partner; data on once for men in Belgium, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Slovenia and repeated for men in Belgium, Lithuania, Slovenia and on once for women in Slovenia are disseminated with flag due to reliability
Source: Eurostat, EU gender-based violence survey, wave 2021 (gbv_vtp_freq)

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Figure 3: Proportion of persons who have experienced intimate partner violence by frequency Percentage, wave 2021 Source: Eurostat (gbv_vtp_freq)

The violence could result in the victim sustaining a physical injury or experiencing psychological consequences, as well as feeling that their life was in danger. Around 20% of women who had ever had a partner in Finland experienced physical or psychological consequences due to intimate partner violence, followed by Estonia (15%) and France (14%) (See more in Figure 6 in section Consequences of the violence). The share is much lower among men in all 11 EU countries (See more in Figure 6 in section Consequences of the violence).

More than 7% of women who have ever had a partner in Belgium, France, Finland, Estonia, Malta and Latvia felt that their life was in danger due to intimate partner violence. However, the number of men who have felt that their life was in danger due to intimate partner violence is too low to be communicated in the majority of countries or

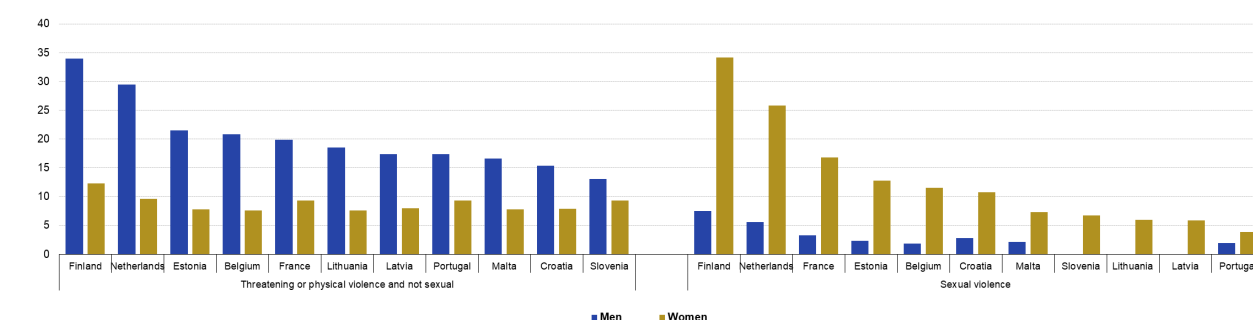
could only be communicated with the information being flagged due to possible unreliability.

Non-partner violence reported in the EU-GBV survey

Out of all men, 34% in Finland have experienced threatening or physical (but not sexual) violence committed by a non-partner, followed by over 20% in the Netherlands, Estonia and Belgium. The share of women is significantly lower in all countries (Figure 4).

The share of women who have experienced sexual violence committed by a non-partner ranges from 34% in Finland and 26% in the Netherlands to below 6% in Latvia and Portugal. The share of men who have experienced sexual violence committed by non-partner is below 3% in most countries (Figure 4).

Proportion of persons who have experienced threatening, physical or sexual violence by non-partner
(%, EU gender-based violence survey, wave 2021)



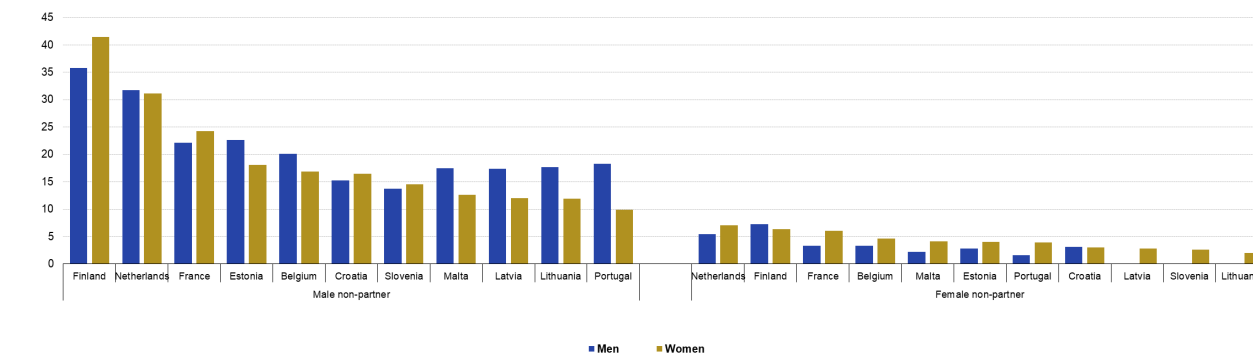
Note: prevalence rate calculated out of all persons; data on sexual violence experienced by men for Belgium, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Slovenia not disseminated or disseminated with flag due to reliability
Source: Eurostat, EU gender-based violence survey, wave 2021 (gbv_vtp_npvt)

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Figure 4: Proportion of persons who have experienced threatening, physical or sexual violence by non-partner Percentage, wave 2021 Source: Eurostat (gbv_vtp_npvt)

In most cases, the non-partner perpetrator is male, regardless of whether the victims are women or men. In Finland, 36% of men and 41% of women have experienced threatening, physical or sexual violence perpetrated by a male non-partner, while around 7% of both women and men have experienced this kind of violence perpetrated by a female non-partner (Figure 5).

Proportion of persons who have experienced violence by male or female non-partner
(%, EU gender-based violence survey, wave 2021)



Note: prevalence rate calculated out of all persons; data on female non-partner for men in Belgium, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Slovenia and for women in Slovenia not disseminated or disseminated with flag due to reliability
Source: Eurostat, EU gender-based violence survey, wave 2021 (gbv_vtp_perp)

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Figure 5: Proportion of persons who have experienced violence by male or female non-partner Percentage, wave 2021 Source: Eurostat (gbv_vtp_perp)

Consequences of the violence reported in the EU-GBV survey

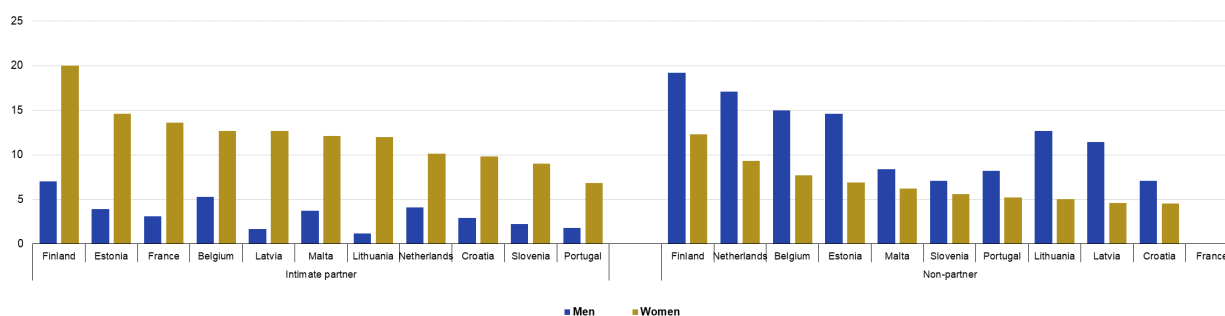
Based on the EU-GBV survey, women experienced mostly serious violence perpetrated by intimate partners while for men it was perpetrated by non-partners.

While intimate partner violence is often committed repeatedly, especially against women, violence by non-partners often happens only once. Significantly more women and men have experienced violence committed by non-partners once, compared with the share of women and men who have experienced repeated non-partner violence.

Both women and men have experienced physical injury or psychological consequences due to intimate partner and non-partner violence. 20% of women who had ever had a partner in Finland experienced physical or psychological consequences due to intimate partner violence, followed by Estonia (15%) and France (14%). The share is much lower among men in all 11 EU countries.

The share of women who have experienced consequences due to intimate partner violence is slightly higher than the share of women who have experienced consequences due to non-partner violence. However, there is a significant difference regarding experiences for men: a significantly higher percentage of men have experienced consequences due to non-partner violence compared with men who have experienced consequences due to intimate partner violence (Figure 6).

Proportion of persons who have experienced consequences due to violence by intimate partner and non-partner
(%, EU gender-based violence survey, wave 2021)



Note: prevalence for intimate partner calculated out of persons who have ever had a partner; data on non-partner for France, on intimate partner for men in Belgium, Lithuania, Latvia, Slovenia not disseminated or disseminated with flag due to reliability
Source: Eurostat, EU gender-based violence survey, wave 2021 (gbv_vtp_cnq)

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Figure 6: Proportion of persons who have experienced consequences due to violence Percentage, wave 2021 Source: Eurostat (gbv_vtp_cnq)

A similar tendency is visible when looking at people who feel their life is in danger due to the violence they experienced. A slightly higher number of women have felt this due to intimate partner violence than due to non-partner violence, but significantly more men have felt their life was in danger due to non-partner violence than due to intimate partner violence.

Sexual harassment at work based on the EU-GBV survey

Out of those people who are working at present or who had worked previously, the percentages of those people who have experienced sexual harassment at work ranges from 20% of men in Slovenia to 5% in Latvia and from 54% of women in Finland to 11% in Latvia (Figure 7).

Proportion of persons who have experienced sexual harassment at work
(%, EU gender-based violence survey, wave 2021)

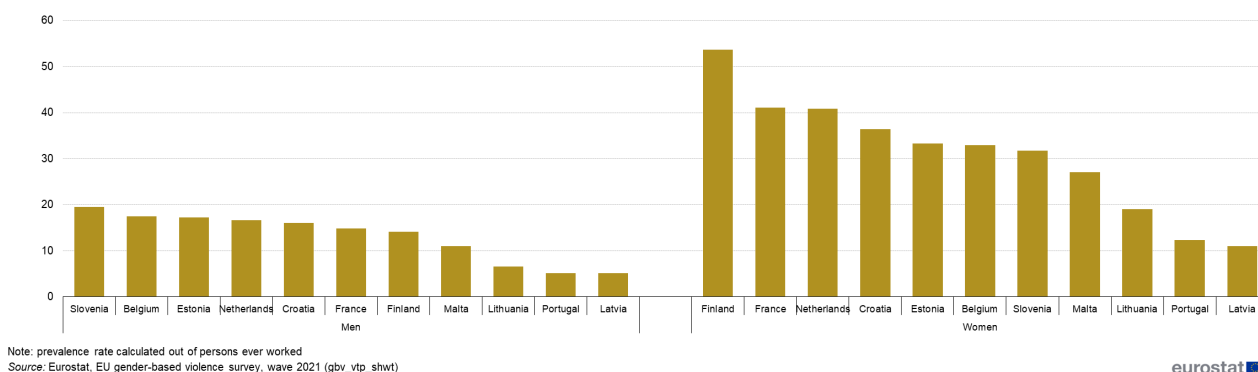


Figure 7: Proportion of persons who have experienced sexual harassment at work Percentage, wave 2021
Source: Eurostat (gbv_vtp_shwt)

Younger women and men (aged 18-29) reported in the survey a higher prevalence rate of sexual harassment at work than older people (65-74).

Source data for tables and graphs

Violence experienced by total population - data for graphs

Data sources

Data on violence experienced by people can be obtained from different sources:

- administrative data provide information about victims whose experience was recorded by the police or support institutions;
- survey data could show the wider picture on people who disclose their experience of violence at the hands of another person.

Survey data has an individual victim perspective and provides information on prevalence. However, these data only capture part of the actual prevalence and number of incidences of violence due to the unwillingness of the respondents to share these experiences.

The development of the EU-wide survey on gender-based violence (EU-GBV) began in 2016. Testing of the questionnaire and methodology was carried out at national level over the period 2017–2019. The main survey implementation started in 2020. The survey focus was on women, but data on experiences by men was collected by 11 EU countries (Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal and Slovenia). Data collection in these EU countries ran from September 2020 – February 2023 (wave 2021). More information about the survey information can be found on Eurostat's webpage [Overview - Gender-based violence - Eurostat](#).

Annual crime data collection includes data from police and other law enforcement agencies, public prosecutors, law courts, prisons, relevant ministries, and statistical offices. Data based on official figures for police-recorded offences (criminal acts) is used in this article. More information about the crime data collection can be found on Eurostat's webpage [Overview - Crime and criminal justice - Eurostat](#).

Additional data, other than those used in this article, including reporting the violence, sexual harassment at work and background of respondents who have experienced violence are available in Eurostat's online database.

Context

Methodology and guidelines for the EU gender-based violence survey (EU-GBV survey) are disseminated in the [EU-GBV survey guidelines](#).

It should be noted that the prevalence of gender-based violence as reported in the survey varies at national level. Based on the literature review and as described in the survey guidelines, the extent to which violence is tolerated in the wider community might influence the number of persons who are ready to share their experience of violence in the survey.

Based on the literature review and also results of the survey, both women and men are experiencing violence. However, the experiences of women and men are very different with regard to the type of perpetrator and type of violence as well as seriousness and consequences of the experienced violence.

Note the terminology used in the survey:

- Intimate partners are persons with whom a person has or has had an intimate relationship, including current or former spouses, civil union partners or cohabitants, an informal relationship or dating.
- Non-partners are all other perpetrators with whom a person does not have or has never had an intimate partnership.
- Psychological violence by an intimate partner includes a range of behaviours, encompassing acts of emotional abuse and controlling behaviour towards the respondent: belittling and humiliating; forbidding the respondent to see friends or family, or to engage in hobbies or other activities; tracking the respondent via GPS, phone or social networks; forbidding the respondent to leave the house without permission or locking the respondent up; constantly accusing the respondent of being unfaithful or getting angry if the respondent speaks to another person; forbidding the respondent to work; controlling the finances of the whole family and the respondent's personal expenses; keeping or taking away the respondent's ID card/passport to control the respondent; shouting and smashing things or behaving in a certain way with the aim of scaring or intimidating the respondent; threatening to hurt the respondent's children or other people close to the respondent; threatening to take away the respondent's children or to deny custody; and threatening to harm themselves if the respondent leaves them.
- Threatening covers the behaviour or acts involving fear, such as threatening to harm the respondent.
- Physical violence refers to a range of violent types of behaviour or acts involving harm and fear, such as pushing or shoving the respondent; pulling their hair; slapping or throwing something at them; punching the respondent or beating them with an object; kicking; burning (with fire or acid or by some other means); trying to choke or strangle the respondent; threatening to use or actually using a knife, gun, acid or something similar; or using force against the respondent in some other way with the aim of hurting them.
- Sexual violence includes unwanted sexual intercourse through force or physical violence, or by exploiting a situation in which the respondent is not able to refuse sexual intercourse because they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. It also includes unwanted sexual intercourse which the respondent is too afraid to refuse, and cases in which the respondent is forced into unwanted sexual intercourse with another person or persons. Attempts to carry out any of the above acts or any other unwanted sexual behaviour that the respondent finds degrading or humiliating are also included. Finally, this type of violence also covers unwanted sexual touching by non-partners.

Methodological details and quality of the survey is provided in the metadata.

Publication rules:

- estimates should not be published if based on fewer than 20 sample observations or if the non-response for the item concerned exceeds 50%
- estimates should be published with a flag if based on 20 to 49 sample observations or if non-response for the item concerned exceeds 20% and is lower or equal to 50%
- estimates should be published in the normal way when based on 50 or more sample observations and non-response for the item concerned is lower than 20%

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- [Policy context on gender-based violence](#)