Violence Against Women: An EU-wide survey

Sami Nevala
Head of Sector Statistics and Surveys
Freedoms & Justice Research Department
Data needs

Calls for FRA to carry out the survey:
- European Parliament, Council

Indicators:
- UN Statistics Division / UNECE indicators
- Council of the EU indicators (Beijing indicators)
- OHCHR indicators

Other data needs:
- CEDAW comments to the Member States
- CoE Convention on preventing and combating VAW and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention)
- CoE recommendation 2002(5)
How the survey was carried out

- Random sample of women aged 18-74 years old
- Only one woman per household
- Face-to-face interviews
- Each interview between 25 mins to over 2 hours
- A standardised questionnaire for all countries
- Female interviewers with specialised training
- 2 years to develop the survey + 1 year for fieldwork
Survey project roadmap

Desk research → Stakeholder consultations → Call for tender → Sample design →

Selection and training of interviewers → Translations → Drafting the fieldwork documentation → Questionnaire design →

Programming the questionnaire → Piloting → Finalisation of the questionnaire → Data collection →

Communicating the results → Drafting the research outputs → Data analysis → Data cleaning, editing and weighting
The FRA VAW survey

- 28 EU Member States
- 1,500 interviews per Member State
- In total, interviews with 42,000 women
What the survey asked

- Physical and sexual violence – by partners & non-partners
- Psychological violence by partners
- Stalking and sexual harassment – incl. cyberharassment
- Experience of violence before age 15 – by an adult
- Fear of victimisation and its impact
- Awareness of law & support services
- Experiences since age 15 & in last 12 months
Overall prevalence of physical & sexual violence

An illustration of what women said about their experiences
In the 28 European Union Member States:

- 1 in 3 women has experienced physical and/or sexual violence (at least once since she was 15)
  - 8 % of women in the last 12 months

- 22 % of women have experienced physical or sexual violence by a partner

- 11 % of women have experienced some form of sexual violence

- 5 % of women have been raped

- 1 in 2 women has been sexually harassed
  - As many as 1 in 5 women in the last 12 months
Women’s emotional response in the most serious incident of violence by a partner (EU-28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Physical violence</th>
<th>Sexual violence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressiveness</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shock</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embarrassment</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilt</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annoyance</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Number of categories selected**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 or more</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>5,415</td>
<td>1,863</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Psychological consequences of violence by a partner (EU-28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Any partner</th>
<th>Physical violence</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panic attacks</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of self-confidence</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling vulnerable</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in sleeping</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration difficulties</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties in relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Services contacted after most serious incident of sexual violence by a partner (current or previous)

- Doctor, health centre or other: 22%
- Police: 15%
- Legal service/ lawyer: 15%
- Hospital: 12%
- Social services: 7%
- Women's shelter: 6%
- Another service/ organisation: 5%
- Victim support organisation: 4%
- Church/faith-based organisation: 4%
Acceptable if doctors routinely ask women who have certain injuries, whether they have been caused by violence (EU-28)
Victims who were satisfied with the assistance received, by type of service contacted (EU-28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Any partner (current and/or previous)</th>
<th>Physical violence</th>
<th>Sexual violence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor, health centre or other health care institution</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social services</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's shelter</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim support organisation</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church/faith-based organisation</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal service/ lawyer</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another service/ organisation</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some conclusions

- Ratification of the Istanbul Convention
- Implementation of the EU Victims’ Directive, in particular with regard to the needs of victims of sexual violence
- Targeted prevention and awareness raising for young women
- Men need to be positively involved in awareness raising efforts
Some conclusions (cont.)

- Intimate partner violence should be treated as a public matter rather than a private one
- Heavy alcohol use as one of the risk factors of violence
- Role of healthcare professionals
- Ensuring that victim support services have the necessary means to assist victims and inform women about their services
Psychological violence

An illustration of what women said about their experiences of psychological violence by partners
Types of psychological violence - examples

- Controlling behaviour trying to keep a woman from seeing friends, family or relatives; jealousy beyond normal concern;

- Economic violence preventing a woman from making decisions on family finances or shopping independently; forbidding her to work outside the home;

- Abusive behaviour forbidding a woman to leave the house or locking her up; scaring or intimidating her on purpose; threatening her with violence or threatening to hurt someone else the respondent cares about;

- Blackmail with/abuse of children
Psychological violence since the age of 15 by any partner (current or previous), EU-28

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Violence</th>
<th>Any partner (current and/or previous)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Controlling behaviour</td>
<td>35 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic violence</td>
<td>12 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abusive behaviour</td>
<td>32 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackmail with/abuse of children</td>
<td>8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Any psychological abuse</strong></td>
<td>43 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some conclusions

- Correlation between psychological violence and physical/sexual violence suggests that psychological violence should be considered as a warning sign.
- Police and other services should be trained to recognise the impact of psychological abuse on victims.
Stalking

Women’s experiences of repetitive behaviour by the same person that was offensive or threatening
Stalking

- Ranging from (for example):
  - waited for you outside your home/workplace without a legitimate reason;
  - deliberately followed you around;
  - made offensive, threatening or silent phone calls to you;
  - posted offensive comments about you on the internet.
Stalking

- 18% of women in EU-28 have been stalked at some point since the age of 15
- 5% of women have experienced stalking in the 12 months prior to interview – 9 million women in EU-28

- Out of all stalking victims in the EU, one in five had been stalked for over two years
- 23% of stalking victims in changed their email address or phone number due to the most serious case of stalking
Some conclusions

- EU Member States should review the use an effectiveness of laws against stalking
- Service providers need to be trained to understand and identify incidents of stalking
- Internet and social media platforms should take steps to proactively assist victimism of stalking to report abuse
Sexual harassment

An illustration of what women said about their experiences
Sexual harassment

- Ranging from (for example):

  - unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing;
  - sexually suggestive comments or jokes that offended;
  - receiving unwanted sexually explicit emails or SMS messages that offended (cyber-harassment)
Sexual harassment

- 55% of women have been sexually harassed in EU-28
- As many as 1 in 5 have experienced sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to interview (EU-28: 21 %)
- 32% of all victims in the EU said the perpetrator was a boss, colleague or customer
- 75% of women in qualified professions or top management jobs have been sexually harassed
- 20% of young women (18-29) in EU-28 have experienced cyber sexual harassment
Some conclusions

- Employers’ organisations and trade unions should further promote awareness of sexual harassment and encourage reporting.
- Member States should review adequacy of existing policies with regard to sexual harassment online.
- Addressing high levels of sexual harassment experienced by women in management.
What can be done

Need for policy responses from different fields
- Employment, health, education – working together

To critically look at societal & state responses
- Review scope & implementation of existing laws & policies
- Need to target men and women – gender equality

Training and support
- Specialist training and adequate resources for support organisations, healthcare, employers, police

Internet / social media platforms
- Proactively assist victims and address unwanted behaviour
Main results report

Available at http://fra.europa.eu to download or to order print copies free of charge
Details on the survey methodology:

*Technical report and survey questionnaire*

Available at [http://fra.europa.eu](http://fra.europa.eu)
Data explorer

- Data by topic, country…
- Visual presentation:
  - Country maps
  - Charts
  - Country comparisons
- Data tables
- All exportable for reuse

Thank you

www.fra.europa.eu

sami.nevala@fra.europa.eu
Physical and/or sexual violence by a current or previous partner

Key

- 10 % – 19 %
- 20 % – 29 %
- 30 % – 39 %

= 22 %
Prevalence of violence and gender equality

Prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence by a partner or non-partner since the age of 15 (%)