

## Intimate partner violence: context and consequences

In 2017, the helpline for women victims of violence, "3919 - Violences Femmes Info", received 21,999 calls regarding violence against women. More than 9 in 10 of these, or 20, 428 calls<sup>1</sup>, pertained to intimate partner violence and 97% concerned women victims of male perpetrators.

### Victim's dependency

The offender is the victim's regular partner<sup>2</sup> in 79% of cases. For a fifth of the victims, the ex-partner is the perpetrator. A separation between the victim and perpetrator does not necessarily end the violence: 47% of the victims who called "3919" had been separated for more than a year before calling the helpline.

1 Figure 1. Distribution of calls for "violence against women"



Source: National "Solidarité Femmes" Federation -helpline for women victims of violence "3919 - Violences Femmes Info", 2017 - Processing by the ONDRP.

Scope: "Violence against women" calls (n = 21,999 calls).

Note: 7% of these calls concern other types of violence, such as sexual violence, sexual harassment at work, forced marriages, etc.

The following analysis focuses on the "Intimate Partner Violence" (IPV) forms filled out by women victims of a male perpetrator (9,632 forms).

The victims' place of residence is decisive in the pathway out of violence, since "housing is first and foremost the location where violence is primarily committed and may, in itself, become a means of control for the offenders"<sup>3</sup>. More than two-thirds of victims live in the same place of residence as their current or ex-partner (71%). When the perpetrator is the ex-partner, 11% of the victims were still living with them after the separation.

The victims are less financially independent than the offenders: 55% earn their own salary, compared to 76% of perpetrators. 49% of victims are employed, compared to 70% of perpetrators. And yet, "access to employment is strategic, both for women to rebuild their lives and have access to housing"<sup>4</sup>.

For three-fifths of victims, the violence began right at the beginning of their relationship or when they started living together (59%). Violence also emerged in specific contexts such as separation (24%), pregnancy, birth or adoption (14%).

(1) According to the "Living Environment and Security" victimisation surveys, between 2011 and 2017, an average of 302,000 individuals between the ages of 18 and 76 declare themselves to be victims of intimate partner violence each year. 7 out of 10 of these victims are women. ([https://inhesj.fr/sites/default/files/publications/files/2019-12/rapport\\_CVS\\_2018.pdf](https://inhesj.fr/sites/default/files/publications/files/2019-12/rapport_CVS_2018.pdf)). More information is available in the ONDRP annual report (p. 89) and the Note 34.

(2) The notion of partner is to be understood in the broad sense, encompassing spouses, cohabiting partners, civil partners, girlfriends and boyfriends, lovers, and ex-partners.

(3) Original version : « Le logement est tout d'abord le lieu où s'exercent principalement les violences et peut devenir lui-même un outil d'emprise pour l'auteur de ces violences ». Guide juridique : Logement et violences conjugales, Fédération Nationale Solidarité Femmes, Paris, 2017.

(4) Original version : « L'accès à l'emploi est stratégique, tant pour la reconstruction des femmes que pour l'accès au logement ». Fédération Nationale Solidarité Femmes, Violences Conjugales et exclusion sociale : domicile, hébergement, logement, Paris, « Accès à l'emploi et précarité », 2006, p.99.



97% are women victims of a male perpetrator  
(n = 13,810)



71% of women victims live with the offender  
(n = 4,285)



82% of women victims have at least one child  
(n = 8,591)



87% of women victims have suffered psychological violence  
(n = 9,632)

Source: National "Solidarité Femmes" Federation –helpline for women victims of violence "3919 – Violences Femmes Info", 2017 – Processing by the ONDRP.  
Scope: "Intimate partner violence" calls.

## Multiple forms of violence

Intimate partner violence often takes different forms. On average, women have reported being victims of 3 types of violence.

Psychological violence is nearly systematic (87% of women declared being victims of it). This violence is perpetrated through humiliation, sarcasm or criticism (85%), as well as denigration or contempt (75%).

Verbal violence is recurrent (76%), mainly perpetrated through insults or offensive language (89%).

Nearly 7 in 10 women have been victims of physical violence (68%), primarily blows (76%) and shoving, slaps or hair-pulling (61%).

A fifth of victims (21%) declared being victims of economic violence, perpetrated through economic blackmail (47%), not contributing to charges (24%) and control over expenses (23%).

Moreover, 8% of women have been victims of sexual violence. Half of these victims declared being victims of rape (54%) and a quarter of them of sexual harassment.

Note that 2% of women reported administrative violence such as confiscation of administrative papers (46%) or restricted access to their rights (29%).

## Repercussions on health

Most women victims of violence who called the "3919" helpline have at least one child (82%). These children are also victims of this violence as witnesses or victims.

According to more than 9 in 10 victims, their children are exposed to intimate partner violence. Such exposure has repercussions. Indeed, nearly a quarter of victims declared their children have also been victims of violence (24%). The victims specified their children felt scared, anxious, worried and stressed (93%). In nearly a fifth of the situations, victims noticed a loss of self-esteem in their children, as well as feelings of guilt (19%). Furthermore, some mentioned repercussions on their children's behaviour: 29% reported impulsivity and fits of anger, 23% violence and 21% withdrawal and isolation.

Violence also has repercussions for the victims: 93% of them felt scared, anxious, worried and stressed following the violence. Half of the victims mentioned loss of self-esteem, depression, weariness and fatigue. Likewise, more than 8 in 10 women victims expressed shame and a sense of guilt regarding the violence.

## SOURCES AND DEFINITIONS

The National "Solidarité Femmes" Federation is an association relying on a network of non-profits specialising in working with women victims of violence. In 2014, the toll-free number "3919" became the official helpline for women victims of violence.

Data bearing on victims and perpetrators of intimate partner violence are based on calls for which an "Intimate Partner Violence" specific form was completed. The studied data is that of women victims of a male perpetrator.

Since the "3919" helpline does not conduct surveys, variables are not necessarily entered. The number of respondents is given in each Figures (n = number of respondents).

To find out more, see: <http://www.solidaritefemmes.org/upload/FNSF-donnees-chiffrees-3919-2017.pdf>



INSTITUT NATIONAL DES HAUTES ÉTUDES  
DE LA SÉCURITÉ ET DE LA JUSTICE

Observatoire national de la délinquance et des réponses pénales  
Tél: +33(0)1 76 64 89 70 – Contact: [ondrp@inhesj.fr](mailto:ondrp@inhesj.fr)

Directrice de la publication: Hélène CAZAUX-CHARLES  
Rédacteur en chef: Christophe SOULLEZ