

## Persistent challenge: violence against women



*"We can no longer ignore that too many women in Europe do not feel safe. Too many experience harassment and violence. EU countries need to step up their efforts to better support women. We need to do much more to tackle violence against women and honour their rights. And we need to do it now,"* said FRA Director Michael O'Flaherty.

FRA's '[Crime, safety and victims' rights](#)' report reveals that:

- **Harassment** – over one in four women (28%) were victims of harassment in the year before the survey. Women experience more sexual harassment than men and mostly in public.
- **Violence** – most often a family member or a relative (30%) attacks the woman, and in most cases in their home (35%). A high proportion of victims suffer from psychological after effects.
- **Worry about crimes** – to protect themselves, 83% of young women limit where they go or with whom they spend their time.
- **Underreporting** – over two out of three women (68%) did not report incidents of violence to the police. This confirms that official statistics on reported crime significantly underestimate the extent of

violence against women.

These figures corroborate the findings of FRA's 2012 [violence against women survey](#). They also underpin why countries should offer better support to women. Such support should take into account the specific needs of women victims when it comes to legal sanctions against perpetrators, education and training for police officers as well as legal and healthcare professionals.

Countries should also boost measures that seek to prevent violence against women. Campaigns that confront men's violence against women and educate men, who are mostly the perpetrators, are examples of how to provide preventative support.

The EU [Victims' Rights Directive](#) and [strategy](#) offer a clear way forward to protect and empower victims. This ranges from training and guidance on how to identify and help victims to targeted support for women victims, including shelters and reporting mechanisms.

The newly-established [Victims' Rights Platform](#) should further bolster efforts to guarantee the rights of women and better protect them from the widespread violence and harassment that continues to blight their lives.

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