

## More than 1 billion women lack legal protection against domestic sexual violence: Global and Regional Trends in Women’s Legal Protection Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Harassment

According to the World Bank’s study on “Global and Regional Trends in Women’s Legal Protection Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Harassment”, more than one billion women lack legal protection against domestic sexual violence and close to 1.4 billion women lack legal protection against domestic economic violence. Economic abuse entails controlling a woman’s ability to access economic resources (money, education or employment) as a form of intimidation and coercion. In addition, women are often not legally protected against specific types of sexual harassment outside the home, such as at work, school, and in public places.

The Report aims to examine the roles that laws, policies, and specific programs or interventions may play toward achieving those goals. This is done through both multi-country analysis and country case studies. The series also discusses some of the factors that drive various forms of violence against women and girls, and their trends over time. Finally, the series aims to provide analysis related to the measurement of violence against women and girls and strategies as well as interventions to end these practices.

The analysis is conducted for 141 countries. For the year 2017, these countries account for more than 95 % of the population of adult women in the world (2.7 billion adult women out of a global estimate of 2.8 billion). When presenting statistics, trends are estimated globally for all countries together, as well as by regions. The regions and number of countries per region are East Asia and Pacific (17 countries), Europe and Central Asia (46 countries), Latin America and the Caribbean (21 countries), the Middle East and North Africa (14 countries), North America (two countries), South Asia (five countries), and sub-Saharan Africa (36 countries).

**Table: Share of Countries without Laws Against Domestic Violence, by Region (%)**

	Regions (Countries in Sample)							World (141)
	EAP (17)	ECA (46)	LAC (21)	MENA (14)	NA (2)	SA (5)	SSA (36)	
<b>Domestic Violence</b>								
2013	0.0	19.6	4.8	85.7	50.0	0.0	50.0	29.1
2015	0.0	13.0	4.8	71.4	50.0	0.0	50.0	25.5
2017	0.0	13.0	4.8	64.3	50.0	0.0	47.2	24.1
<b>Physical Violence</b>								
2013	0.0	21.7	4.8	78.6	50.0	0.0	47.2	28.4
2015	0.0	10.9	4.8	64.3	50.0	0.0	47.2	23.4
2017	0.0	10.9	4.8	57.1	50.0	0.0	44.4	22.0
<b>Sexual Violence</b>								
2013	35.3	39.1	14.3	92.9	0.0	0.0	58.3	43.3
2015	35.3	30.4	14.3	78.6	0.0	0.0	58.3	39.0
2017	29.4	28.3	14.3	78.6	0.0	0.0	52.8	36.2
<b>Emotional Violence</b>								
2013	5.9	19.6	4.8	92.9	50.0	0.0	52.8	31.2
2015	5.9	13.0	4.8	78.6	50.0	0.0	52.8	27.7
2017	5.9	13.0	4.8	71.4	50.0	0.0	47.2	25.5
<b>Economic Violence</b>								
2013	52.9	63.0	38.1	92.9	100.0	20.0	61.1	59.6
2015	47.1	54.3	38.1	85.7	100.0	20.0	61.1	55.3
2017	47.1	52.2	28.6	78.6	100.0	20.0	52.8	50.4
<b>Unmarried Intimate Partners</b>								
2013	70.6	69.6	23.8	100.0	50.0	100.0	77.8	68.8
2015	70.6	65.2	23.8	100.0	50.0	100.0	77.8	67.4
2017	70.6	67.4	23.8	100.0	50.0	100.0	75.0	67.4

Note: EAP = East Asia & Pacific; ECA=Europe & Central Asia; LAC=Latin America & Caribbean; MENA=Middle East & North Africa; NA=North America; SA=South Asia; SSA=sub-Saharan Africa.

**The key highlights of the Report are:**

- The share of countries without laws on domestic violence decreased from 29.1 % to 24.1 % thanks to legal reforms in Algeria, Belarus, Kenya, Latvia, Lebanon, the Netherlands, and Saudi Arabia over the last four years.
- Legal protection remains weak for sexual violence, where laws are lacking in more than one in three countries. For economic violence, half of the countries do not have specific legislation. For two in three countries, unmarried intimate partners are not protected under the law. Gaps in legislation are most frequent in the Middle East and North Africa and in sub-Saharan Africa.
- More than one billion women lack legal protection against sexual violence by an intimate partner or family member, and close to 1.4 billion lack legal protection against domestic economic violence, with little reduction over time in both cases.
- The share of countries without laws on sexual harassment decreased from 16.3 % to 13.5 % thanks to legal reforms in Cameroon, Chad, Egypt, and Guinea over the last four years.
- One in five countries do not have appropriate laws against sexual harassment in employment. The proportion is six in ten countries for sexual harassment in education and four in five for sexual harassment in public spaces. Criminal penalties are in place in only two thirds of countries and less than half for sexual harassment in employment.
- Estimates of the number of women lacking legal protection against sexual harassment in employment, education, and public places are at 362 million, 1.5 billion, and 2.2 billion, respectively.

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Warm regards,

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