

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN GEORGIA

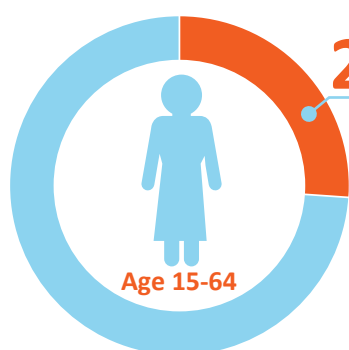
Violence against women — physical, sexual, and psychological — remains a widespread human rights’ violation and public health issue in Georgia. Despite significant progress in the policy realm in recent years, the prevalence data, while still not capturing the full scope of the issue, reveal the magnitude of the problem. Adverse social norms and discriminatory attitudes are underlying causes of violence against women. Gender inequality causes this grave violation of women’s rights, while the latter also reifies the former. It is commendable that the government of Georgia has made decisive steps to address the problem, among others, through the ratification of the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention, but more work is still ahead of us.

PREVALENCE AND FORMS OF VIOLENCE

Women suffer from numerous forms of violence, domestic violence being a common form. In Georgia, one in seven women aged 15-64 report they have been physically, sexually, or psychologically abused by an intimate partner in their lifetime and 1 in 29 in the last year.



Source: GEOSTAT and UN Women 2017¹



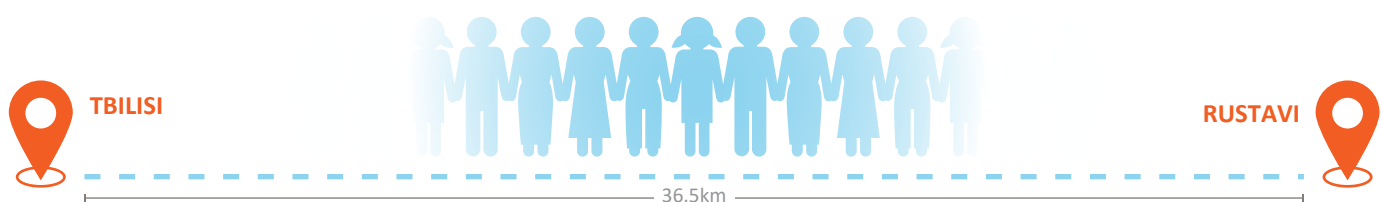
26.2%

of women aged 15-64 have experienced at least one form of:

- non-partner sexual violence;
- child sexual abuse;
- sexual harassment;

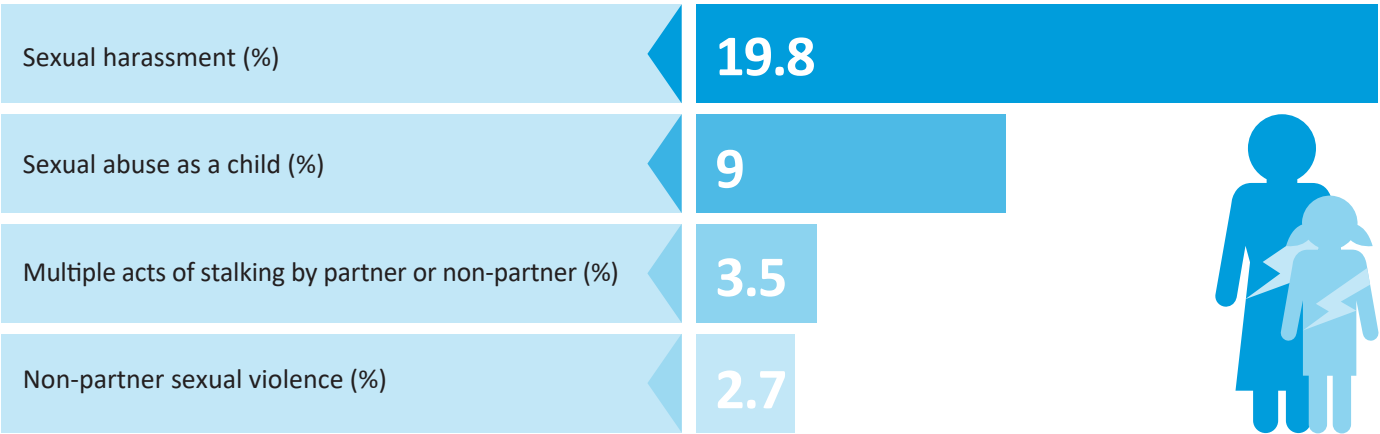
equivalent to over **317,000** women in Georgia.

That’s as many people as it would take to form a human chain standing shoulder to shoulder **from Tbilisi to Rustavi and back – twice.**



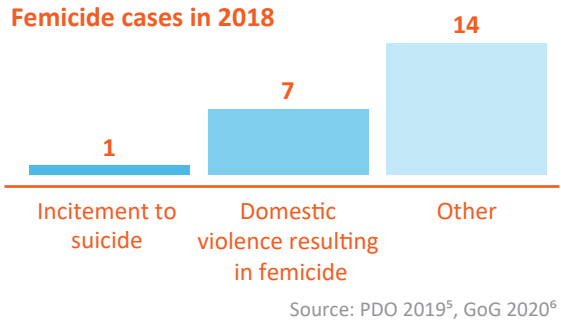
Source: GEOSTAT and UN Women 2017²

When looking at the types of non-intimate partner violence, sexual harassment is most common, followed by sexual abuse as a child, repeated stalking, and non-partner sexual violence.



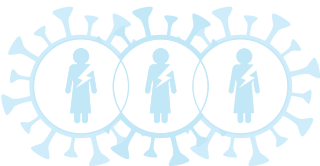
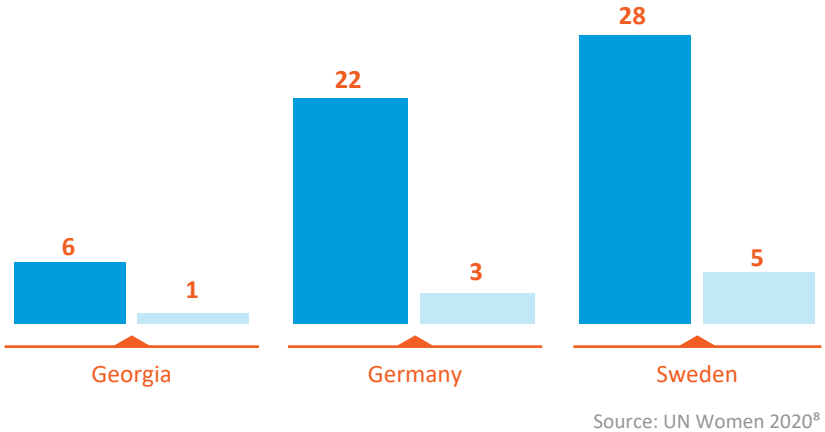
SDG Indicator 16.1.1: In **2018**, there were **22 cases** of femicide, equivalent to 1.13 murders per 100,000 women and 0.29 in 2019.

Source: Government of Georgia, 2020⁴



Despite being commonplace, the data likely underestimate the scope of the problem due to under reporting. Either Georgia has a significantly lower IPV prevalence than Sweden and Germany (and indeed, much of Europe), or it is under-reported on surveys. Supporting this contention is the fact that when respondents were allowed to use an anonymous survey response tool on a 2017 survey, the rates of childhood sexual harassment were higher than when asked directly.⁷

- Physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence lifetime prevalence (%)
- Physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence last 12 months (%)

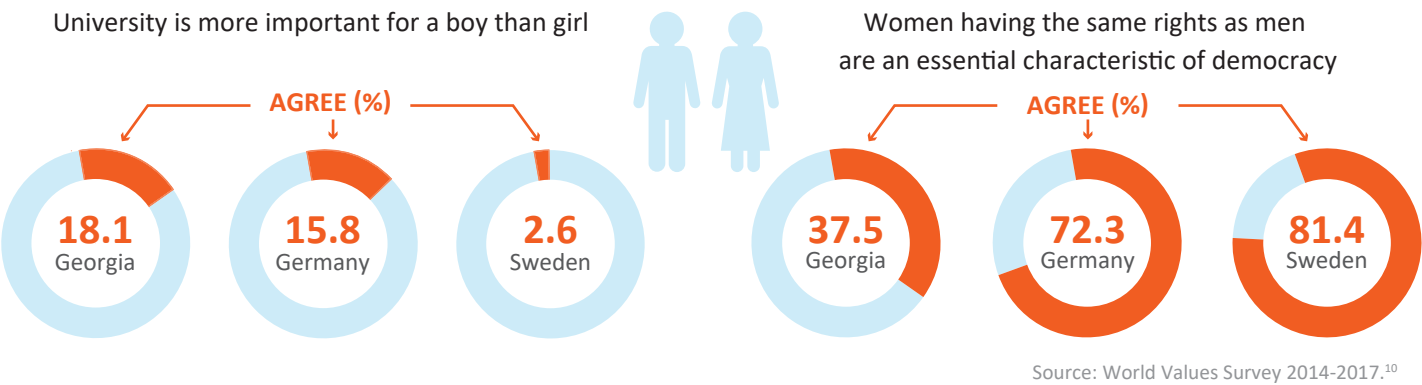


Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, violence against women and girls, in particular domestic violence, has dramatically escalated around the world. Rapid Gender Assessment of COVID-19 carried out in Georgia have revealed that **18% of women** have felt or heard of an increase in domestic violence, since the beginning of the outbreak.

Source: Source: UN Women 2020⁹

PUBLIC OPINION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

On top of the above, in Georgia, people have more adverse attitudes towards gender equality than in Sweden or Germany. This further suggests that women are under reporting rather than violence prevalence being low.



One of the underlying causes of the issue is the high degree of tolerance and acceptance of violence against women in the country. Indeed, **60% of women and 72% of men agree with one of the following statements that normalize violence.**

Violence between husband and wife is private and others should not intervene (%)		33
		50

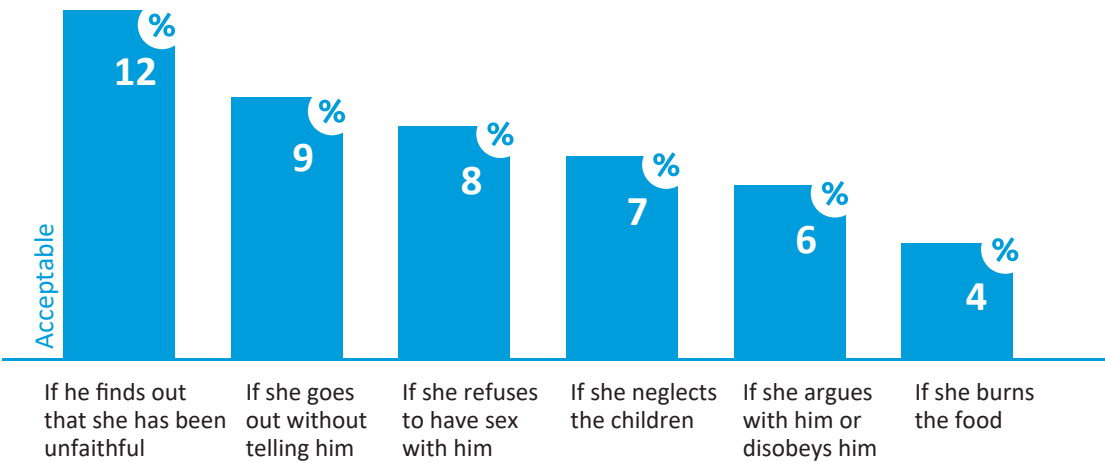
If a woman is raped, she has usually done something careless to put herself in that situation (%)		14
		22

A woman should tolerate violence to keep her family together (%)		12
		24

If a woman doesn't physically fight back, you cannot call it rape (%)		42
		50

Source: Source: GEOSTAT and UN Women 2017¹¹

And even teachers, who are legally responsible for reporting suspected domestic violence, sometimes think wife beating is acceptable. While most teachers think it is unacceptable for a husband to beat their wife, of the six statements presented below, **only 14% of teachers** report that it is entirely unacceptable for a husband to beat their wife in all cases.



Source: UN Women 2019¹²

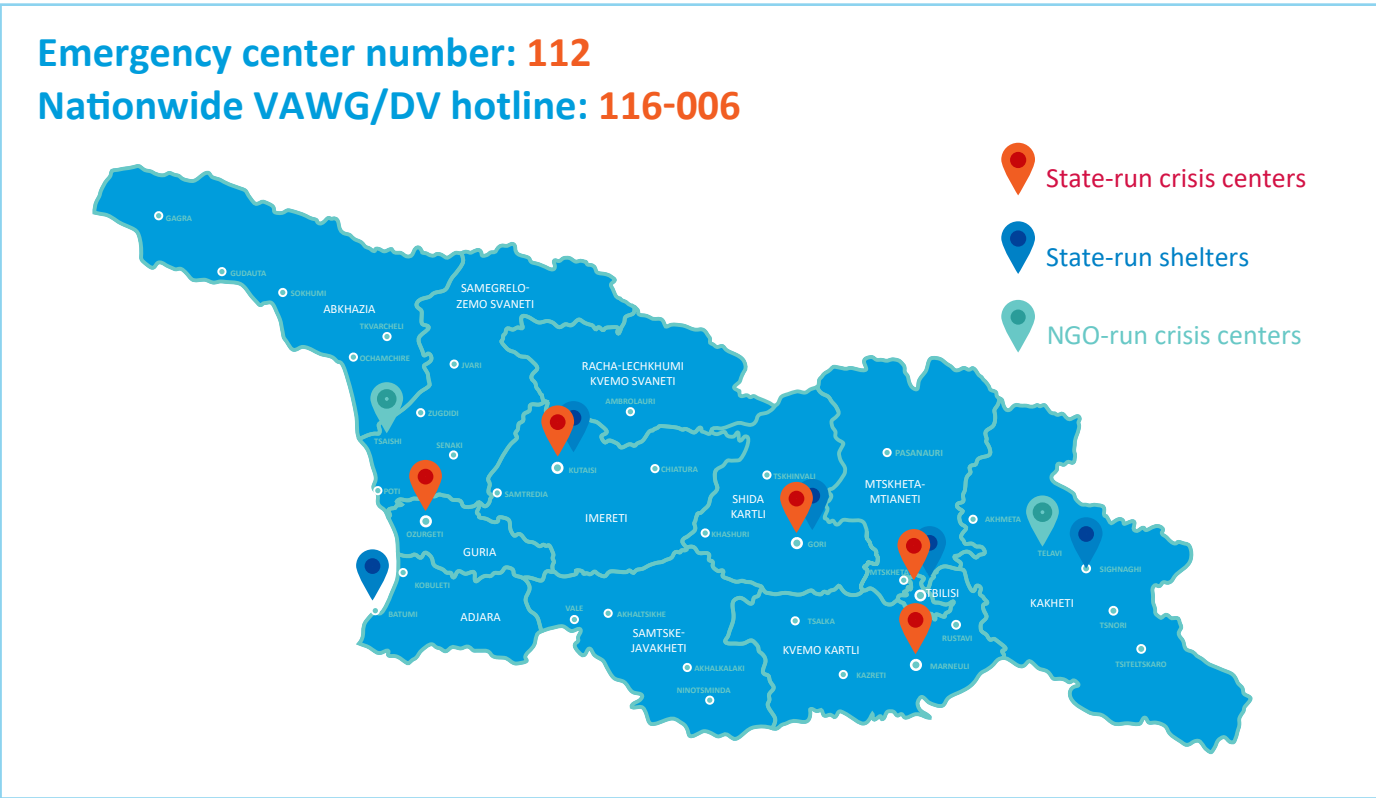
Even though the data paint a stark picture on social norms and stigma in Georgia, attitudes are changing for the better.

Violence between husband and wife is private and others should not intervene (%)	2009	2017	Believe that wife beating is justified at least in some circumstance (%)	2009	2017
	78 women	33 women		34 women	22 women

Source: UN Women 2010¹³ and GEOSTAT and UN Women 2017¹⁴

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

The Government of Georgia does provide a number of services for victims/survivors of violence against women and domestic violence. The government has a nationwide VAWG/DV hotline (116-006), in addition to the state emergency hotline (112). The +112 phone number also has an innovative smart phone app tied to it. In addition there are eight shelters and seven crisis centers for the victims/survivors of violence against women and domestic violence run by Government and NGOs.



Source: UN Women 2020¹⁵

Most women are aware of legislation prohibiting domestic violence, and at least some of the services available to victims of domestic violence.



Source: UN Women 2017¹⁶

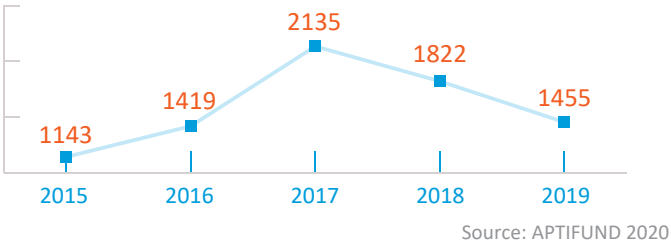
While there is a far way to go in terms of preventing violence against women in Georgia, the data show that the situation is improving with more women reporting violence.

Reported IPV to authorities (%)	2010	2017
	1.8	18

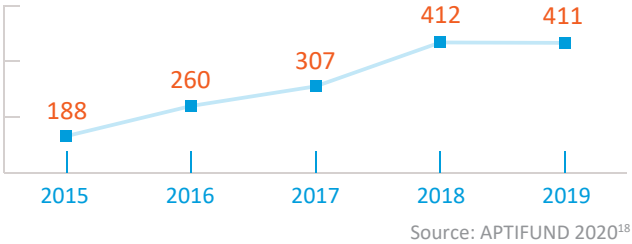
Source: Source: GEOSTAT and UN Women 2017¹⁷

This is reflected in the data on calls to +112 and the domestic violence hotline. More women are also gaining access to services.

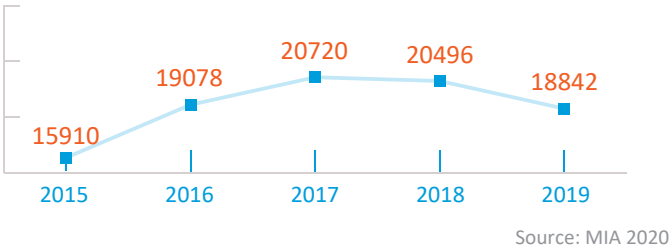
116-006



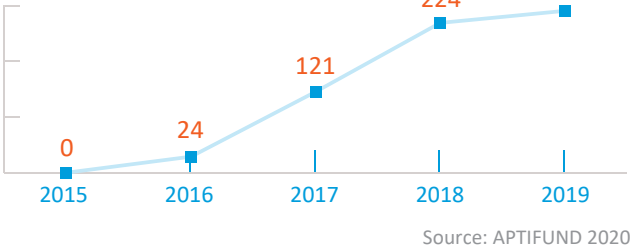
SHELTERS



112

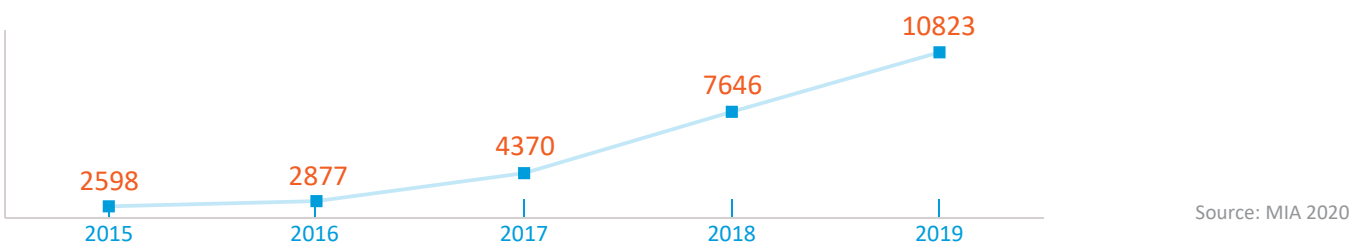


CRISIS CENTERS

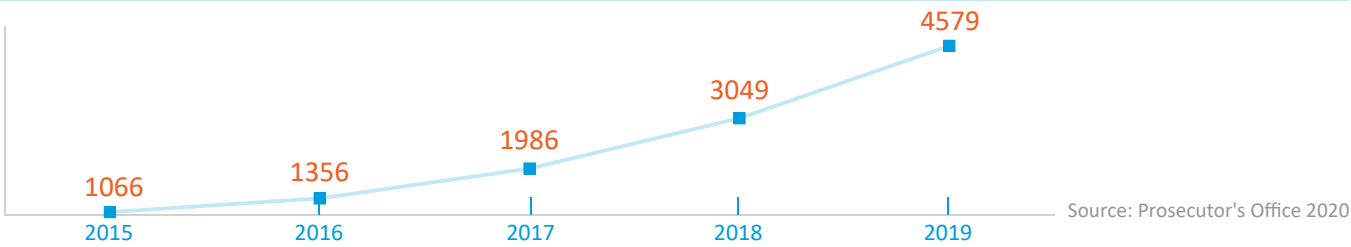


And, authorities are acting on the increased reporting. For instance, in 2019, 2661 persons were convicted of crimes related to violence against women (Supreme Court, 2020).

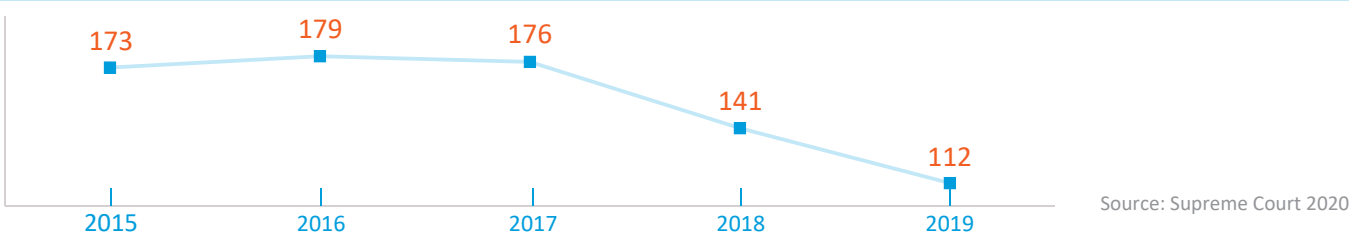
Restraining orders



Criminal prosecutions



Protective orders



Endnotes

- 1 GEOSTAT, UN Women and the EU for Georgia, National Study on Violence against Women in Georgia 2017 (UN Women, 2018).
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Administration of the Government of Georgia. Statistical Annex: Voluntary National Review 2020. Available at: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26391Statistical_Annex_Georgia.pdf
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- 8 UN Women. Global Database on Violence against Women. 2020. Available at: <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en>
- 9 UN Women. Rapid Gender Assessment of the COVID-19 Situation in Georgia. 2020. Available at: <https://georgia.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/08/rapid-gender-assessment-of-the-covid-19-situation-in-georgia>
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- 14 GEOSTAT, UN Women and the EU for Georgia, National Study on Violence against Women in Georgia 2017 (UN Women, 2018).
- 15 UN Women. Country Gender Equality Profile. 2020. Available at: <https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20georgia/attachments/publications/2020/country%20gender%20equality%20profile%20of%20georgia.pdf?la=en&vs=2312>
- 16 GEOSTAT, UN Women and the EU for Georgia, National Study on Violence against Women in Georgia 2017 (UN Women, 2018).
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 APTIFUND, "Statistics of beneficiaries services", 2020. Available at: <http://atipfund.gov.ge/res/docs/zaladobis-statistika-2019-IIIkv.pdf>

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