

Spousal violence in Canada, 2019

by Shana Conroy

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Spousal violence in Canada, 2019: Highlights

- Findings from the General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadians' Safety (Victimization) show that spousal violence in the provinces was significantly lower in 2019 than in 1999. While 3.5% of Canadians in the provinces with a current or former spouse or common-law partner experienced self-reported spousal violence in the five years preceding 2019, this was down from 7.5% 20 years prior, marking a 54% decrease. Between 2009 and 2019, spousal violence remained unchanged in the territories (10.2% versus 9.8%).
- In 2019, spousal violence continued to be significantly more common among women, with 4.2% of women experiencing such violence compared with 2.7% of men. This represented approximately 432,000 women and 279,000 men in Canada.
- Not only did overall self-reported spousal violence decrease between 1999 and 2019 in the provinces, but declines were noted among those who experienced the most severe type of spousal violence measured—beating, choking, threatening to use or using a gun or knife, or sexual assault—as well as those who experienced other types.
- Among victims of spousal violence, women were more likely than men to report each of the negative emotional impacts measured by the 2019 GSS on Victimization, while men were more likely than women to say they felt no emotional impact. In particular, it was more common for women than men to report feeling fearful (38% versus 11%) and fearing for their lives (29% versus 3.8%), and to report impacts consistent with suspected Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (21% versus 9.8%).
- In all, the large majority (80%) of spousal victims said the violence they experienced was not reported to police. Among victims in the provinces, reporting to police in 2019 was lower compared with 20 years prior (19% versus 28% in 1999).

Spousal violence in Canada, 2019

by Shana Conroy, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics

Spousal abuse—a form of intimate partner violence—can include a range of unhealthy and destructive behaviours, such as manipulation and coercive control, emotional and financial abuse, physical and sexual violence, even homicide. Intimate partner violence has been identified by the Government of Canada—and at the international level—as a serious public health issue (Public Health Agency of Canada 2016; United Nations n.d.; Women and Gender Equality Canada 2021; World Health Organization, n.d.).

Violence in the context of an intimate partner or spousal relationship can have immediate and long-term adverse physical and psychological consequences for victims (Brown et al. 2015; Dim 2021; Dutton et al. 2006; Public Health Agency of Canada 2016), and children who are exposed to such violence have higher rates of violent victimization later in life (Burczycka 2017; Cotter 2021a; Cotter 2021c). Further, in addition to individual impacts, there is a public cost of such violence for communities and society as a whole as health care, social support and legal systems must respond (Barrett et al. 2021; Demaris and Kaukinen 2005; Public Health Agency of Canada 2016). It should be noted that, while intimate partner violence and spousal violence are largely considered to be a form of gender-based violence perpetrated by men against women, such violence—for both victims and perpetrators—is not limited to those of one gender or sexual orientation (Dim 2021; Oliffe et al. 2014; Public Health Agency of Canada 2009).

Statistics Canada releases annual police-reported data about intimate partner violence, but not all incidents are reported to police.¹ Due to the complexities of intimate relationships, spousal violence is particularly susceptible to underreporting. As a result, self-reported data are critical to understand the true magnitude of this problem (see Text box 1).

This *Juristat* article examines self-reported experiences of spousal violence in Canada. Based on the 2019 General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadians' Safety (Victimization), this article discusses the nature and prevalence of spousal violence, victim characteristics, the physical and emotional consequences of such violence and how victims sought support. The GSS on Victimization began collecting information on spousal violence in 1999; as such, the 2019 cycle marks 20 years of comparable data on the issue of spousal violence in Canada, an important milestone for research and analysis.

The COVID-19 pandemic began to have a widespread impact on the lives of Canadians in March 2020, just as data collection for the 2019 GSS on Victimization was ending. The data presented in this article, therefore, do not include information about spousal violence during the pandemic, when—in the interest of public health—many were living in isolation, some with their abuser. The findings in this article, however, will serve as a baseline for future analysis on the issue of spousal violence in Canada.

Text box 1 **Measuring intimate partner and spousal violence**

There are two primary methods of measuring spousal violence in Canada: administrative data collected from the police and survey data collected directly from Canadians. Many crimes are never reported to the authorities, and reasons for not reporting might vary by crime type. When it comes to spousal violence, victims could be reluctant to report to police due to reasons such as living arrangements, financial dependence and shared children. Victims might be unwilling or unable to seek out the police and, as a result, self-reported experiences of violence are an important complement to police-reported data.

Police-reported data

The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey collects information from police services in Canada on an annual basis. Administrative data include all incidents that come to the attention of police in a given year, and include victims of all ages. The UCR was designed to measure the prevalence of crime and its characteristics. It collects information about criminal incidents, victims and accused persons, and allows for trend analysis of crime and comparisons of crime between regions. According to the 2019 UCR, 11% of all victims of police-reported violence that year were victimized by a current or former spouse (Conroy 2021).²

Self-reported data

Another source of data on spousal violence is self-reported responses collected from surveys. At Statistics Canada, there are two large-scale instruments that capture information about intimate partner violence: the General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadians' Safety (Victimization) and the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS).

Text box 1 — end

Measuring intimate partner and spousal violence

This article is based on data from the 2019 GSS on Victimization, which has collected information on self-reported spousal violence every five years since 1999. In order to measure spousal violence, the GSS on Victimization asked those who are married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced and have had contact with their former partner in the previous five years, about a series of violent behaviours in the context of their spousal relationship both in the past year and in the past five years.³ The GSS on Victimization asks the following:

Has your current or former spouse or partner done any of the following?

- Threatened to hit you with their fist or anything else that could have hurt you
- Thrown anything at you that could have hurt you
- Pushed, grabbed or shoved you in a way that could have hurt you
- Slapped you
- Kicked you, bit you or hit you with their fist
- Hit you with something that could have hurt you
- Beaten you
- Choked you
- Used or threatened to use a gun or knife on you
- Forced you into any unwanted sexual activity by threatening you, holding you down or hurting you in some way
- Subjected you to a sexual activity to which you were not able to consent because you were drugged, intoxicated, manipulated or forced in other ways than physically

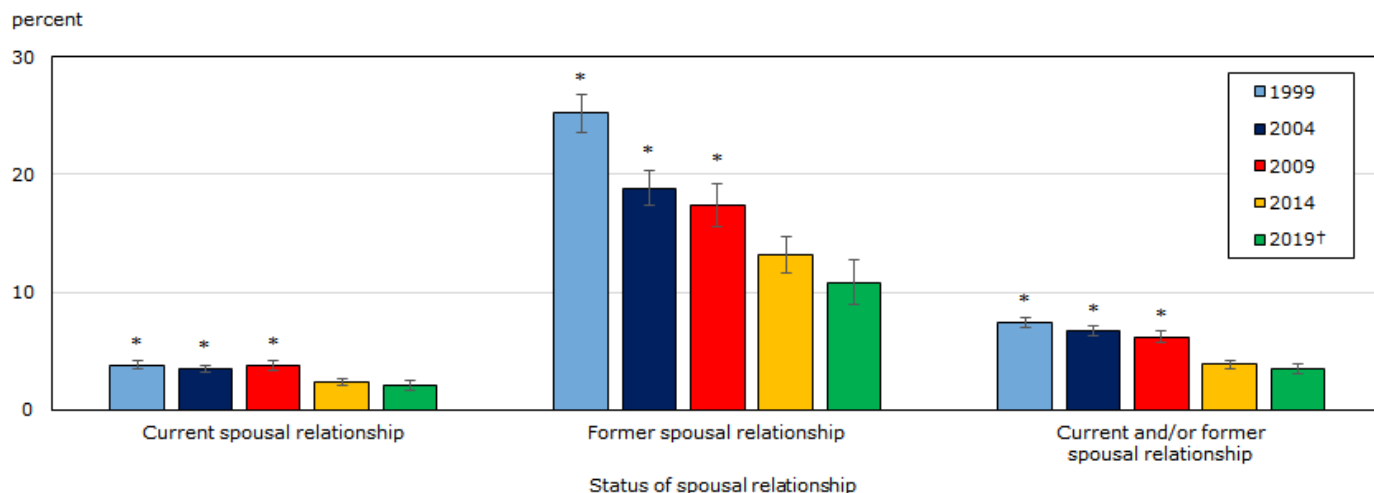
Not all spousal abuse reaches the criminal threshold. The GSS on Victimization also includes questions about emotional and financial abuse (see Text box 2). While these do not factor into the calculations for spousal violence specifically, they do provide insight about the circumstances in which spousal violence may occur.

The SSPPS, first conducted in 2018, also collects information about self-reported intimate partner violence. It includes violence perpetrated by spousal and non-spousal intimate partners in the year preceding the survey, and the lifetime experiences of such violence since age 15. The SSPPS included a broader range of physically and sexually violent behaviours—in addition to emotional, psychological and financial behaviours—within the scope of intimate partner violence. The Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics recently released several articles based on data from the SSPPS about intimate partner violence focusing on specific populations of interest (Cotter 2021b; Cotter 2021c; Heidinger 2021; Jaffray 2021a; Jaffray, 2021b; Savage 2021a; Savage 2021b).

Spousal violence significantly lower in the provinces in 2019 than 20 years prior

Findings from the GSS on Victimization show that self-reported spousal violence was significantly lower in the provinces in 2019 than in 1999 (Chart 1; Table 1).⁴ While 3.5% of Canadians in the provinces with a current or former spouse or common-law partner experienced spousal violence in the five years preceding 2019, this was down from 7.5% 20 years prior, marking a 54% decrease.⁵ This downward trend was seen in the context of both current and former spousal relationships. Most notably, while one-quarter (25%) of Canadians reported that they had experienced violence by a former spouse in the five years preceding the 1999 GSS on Victimization, by 2019, this had fallen to just over one in ten (11%).

Chart 1
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by status of spousal relationship and year, provinces, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019



* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. As information about gender was collected as of 2019, data from earlier cycles are based on sex (i.e., sex at birth) instead of gender (i.e., gender identity or gender expression). Missing responses are included in percent calculations. For comparability over time, trend analysis is limited to the provinces. Error bars represent the 95% confidence intervals and should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the interval would cover the true population value.

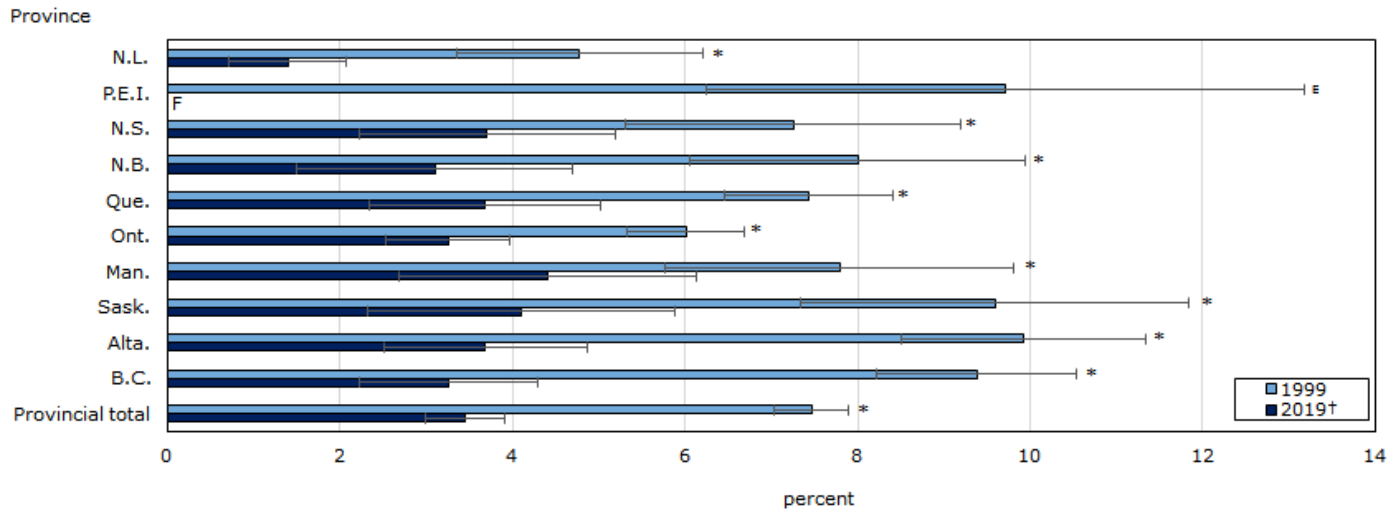
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

In the provinces, spousal violence decreased for both women and men: in 1999, 8.3% of women and 6.6% of men were victims of spousal violence in the preceding five years, proportions that dropped to 4.2% and 2.7%, respectively, in 2019 (Table 1). This marked a 49% decrease in spousal violence for women and a 60% decrease for men. For both current and former relationships, spousal violence decreased for women and men between 1999 and 2019.

Provinces each show a decrease in spousal violence between 1999 and 2019

Spousal violence in each of the provinces (with the exception of Prince Edward Island where sample size did not allow for a reliable estimate in 2019) was notably smaller in 2019 than 1999 (Chart 2; Table 2). Comparisons for the territories during the same time period are not possible. More recently, however, spousal violence did not decrease significantly in the territories between 2009 and 2019 (overall, 10.2% versus 9.8%) (Table 3).⁶

Chart 2
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by province and year, provinces, 1999 and 2019



⊞ use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. As information about gender was collected as of 2019, data from earlier cycles are based on sex (i.e., sex at birth) instead of gender (i.e., gender identity or gender expression). Missing responses are included in percent calculations. For comparability over time, trend analysis is limited to the provinces. Error bars represent the 95% confidence intervals and should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

Women more likely to be victims of spousal violence than men

According to the 2019 GSS on Victimization, 1.2% of Canadians were abused by a current or former spouse in the year preceding the survey (Table 4). In terms of gender, women were significantly more likely than men to experience spousal violence in the past year (1.5% versus 0.8%).⁷

In all, 3.5% of Canadians experienced self-reported physical or sexual violence from a spouse in the five years preceding the survey. Once again, spousal violence was significantly more common among women, with 4.2% of women experiencing such violence compared with 2.7% of men. This represented approximately 432,000 women and 279,000 men in Canada.⁸

In most provinces, spousal violence was similar to the national average (3.5%) (Table 5). Spousal violence, however, was significantly lower in Newfoundland and Labrador (1.4%), while it was significantly higher in the Northwest Territories (9.8%) and Nunavut (16%).

Violence more common in former spousal relationships than current spousal relationships

In 2019, a higher proportion of Canadians experienced spousal violence in the context of a former relationship compared with a current relationship. Just over one in ten (11%) people had been subjected to violence from a former spouse while 2.0% were victimized by a current spouse (Table 4). While there was no significant difference between women and men who experienced violence from a current spouse, women were more likely than men to experience violence from a former spouse (13% versus 7.7%).

Three-quarters (74%) of those who were abused by a former spouse reported that the violence occurred while they were still living together, and this was similar for women and men (75% and 74%[⊞], respectively).⁹ Almost half (45%) of victims of a former spouse said they experienced violence after separation and, of these, nearly four in ten (38%) said the violence occurred more than six months after their separation.¹⁰ Research has shown that breakups or separations are a risk factor for violence in an intimate partner or spousal relationship (Brownridge et al. 2008; Burczycka 2016).

Among those who said that they had been separated from their spouse at some point, nearly four in ten (38%) victims of spousal violence said they had separated because of violent or threatening behaviour.¹¹ This was more common among women than men (49% versus 22%[⊞]) (for information about spousal violence and the *Divorce Act*, see Text box 3).

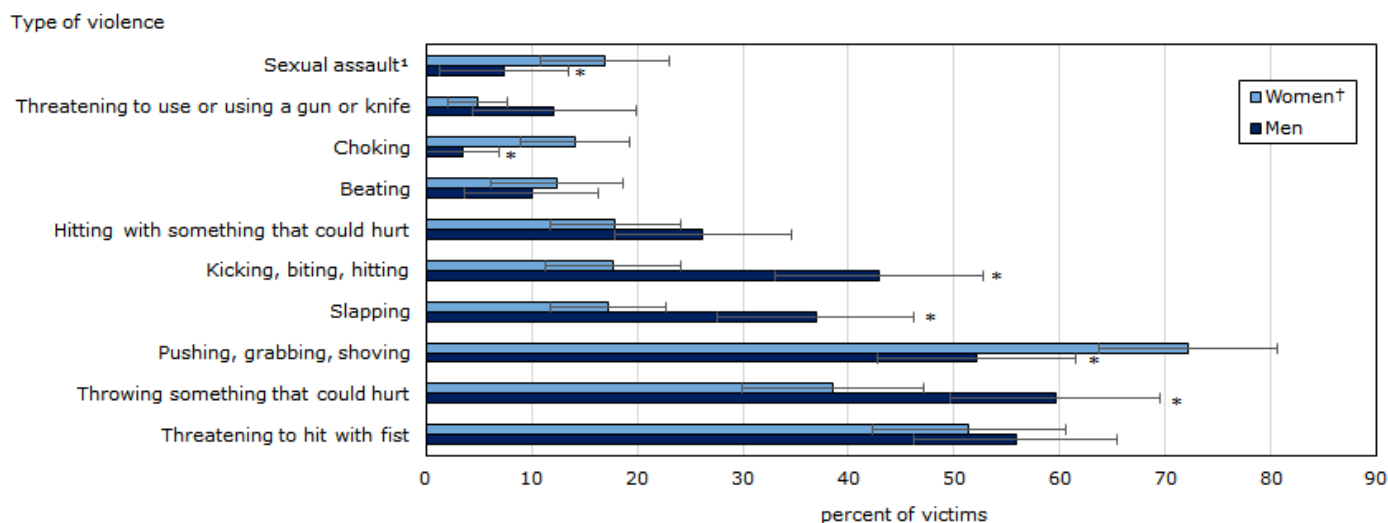
More than one in four spousal violence victims experience the most severe type of violence

Spousal violence can take on many forms, and it can vary in terms of severity. To measure spousal violence, the GSS on Victimization includes a series of violent behaviours. Of those who had experienced spousal violence in the past five years, more than six in ten (64%) victims had been pushed, grabbed or shoved by their spouse, while about half said their spouse threatened to hit them (53%) or threw something that could have hurt them (46%) (Table 6).¹²

More than one in four (28%) victims of spousal violence experienced the most severe type of spousal violence included in the GSS on Victimization: beating, choking, threatening to use or using a gun or knife, or sexual assault. Meanwhile, for 19% of victims, being kicked, bit, hit or hit with something that could hurt was the most severe type of violence they experienced, and for 35%, being pushed, grabbed, shoved or slapped was the most severe. For nearly one in five victims (18%), the most severe type of violence was their spouse threatening to hit them or throwing something that could hurt them.

Among victims of spousal violence, experiences differed for women and men. For instance, it was more common for women who were victims to be pushed, grabbed or shoved (72% versus 52% of men), sexually assaulted (17% versus 7.4%) or choked (14% versus 3.4%) by their spouse (Chart 3). In contrast, it was more common for men who were victims to experience their spouse throwing something that could hurt them (60% versus 39% of women), kicking, biting or hitting them (43% versus 18%) or slapping them (37% versus 17%).

Chart 3
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim and type of violence, Canada, 2019



* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

1. Includes being forced into unwanted sexual activity and being forced into sexual activity where unable to consent.

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. Missing responses are included in percent calculations. Excludes a small number of respondents who identified as gender diverse or did not state their gender. Respondents could select as many types of violence that applied in their situation. Error bars represent the 95% confidence intervals and should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

As spousal violence decreased over the past two decades in the provinces, declines were noted among those who experienced the most severe type of spousal violence measured—beating, choking, threatening to use or using a gun or knife, or sexual assault—as well as those who experienced other types (Table 7). The same trends generally applied for women and men.

Majority of spousal violence victims experience multiple incidents

Spousal violence is often a pattern of abuse that occurs over a period of time. Results from the 2019 GSS on Victimization show that while four in ten (39%) victims experienced a single incident in the past five years, the majority experienced multiple incidents (Table 6). Overall, nearly one in eight (13%) victims experienced two incidents, more than one in four (28%) experienced three to ten incidents and one in six (17%) experienced more than ten incidents. There were no significant differences between women and men in terms of the number of incidents of spousal violence they experienced.

An increased number of incidents was associated with more severe violence. Among those who had experienced one violent incident, one in ten (10%) experienced the most severe type of spousal violence measured by the GSS on Victimization—

beating, choking, threatening to use or using a gun or knife, or sexual assault.¹³ This proportion, however, grew to four in ten (40%^F) of those who experienced more than ten violent incidents.

Four in ten women who experience spousal violence sustain physical injury

According to the GSS on Victimization, one-third (33%) of spousal violence victims were physically injured, and this was significantly more common among women than men (39% versus 23%) (Table 8). Overall, 38% of victims—and 47%^E of women—who reported physical injuries from spousal violence had to take time off from daily activities.¹⁴ A small proportion (6.0%) of victims said that someone else was harmed or threatened during the violence they experienced, and this was more common for women than men (8.5% versus 2.4%).

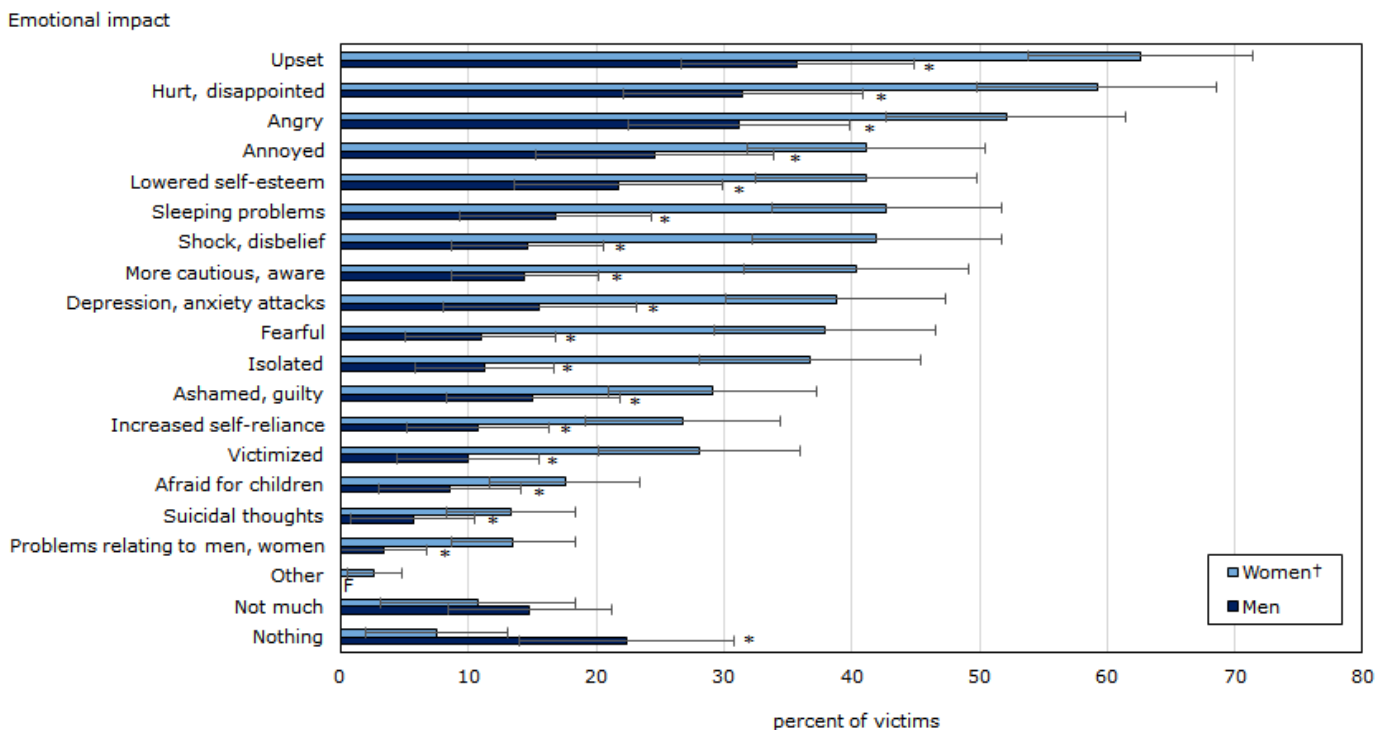
Among those who reported being injured, bruises were most common (83%).¹⁵ More than four in ten (44%) victims sustained cuts, scratches or burns while about one in six (16%) suffered internal injuries (Table 8). Nearly one in ten (8.9%) victims had fractures or broken bones resulting from spousal violence. In all, just over one in ten (11%) victims who reported physical injuries were hospitalized as a result of the spousal violence they experienced.¹⁶

Women more likely than men to suffer from negative emotional impacts after spousal violence

In addition to physical injury, research has shown that spousal violence victims often suffer from negative emotional impacts (Demaris and Kaukinen 2005; Dim 2021; World Health Organization n.d.). According to the GSS on Victimization, victims of spousal violence often reported suffering emotional consequences as a result of the abuse they experienced. The most common emotional impacts cited by victims were feeling upset (52%), hurt or disappointed (48%) and angry (44%) (Table 8).¹⁷ More than one-quarter of victims reported feeling isolated (27%) or experienced depression or anxiety attacks (29%). About one in six (14%) victims said that they were afraid for their children and one in ten (10%) said they had suicidal thoughts.

Among victims of this type of violence, women were significantly more likely than men to report each of the negative emotional impacts measured by the survey, while men were more likely than women to say they felt no emotional impact (Chart 4).

Chart 4
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim and emotional impact, Canada, 2019



^F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. Missing responses are included in percent calculations. Excludes a small number of respondents who identified as gender diverse or did not state their gender. Respondents could select as many emotional impacts that applied in their situation. Error bars represent the 95% confidence intervals and should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

Three in ten women who experience spousal violence report symptoms related to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Fear, and fear of an escalation in violence, was noted among victims of spousal violence. According to the GSS on Victimization, feeling fearful was reported by one-quarter (27%) of victims of spousal violence (Table 8) and one in five (19%) reported fearing for their lives.¹⁸ Both feeling fearful and fearing for their lives were significantly more common for women than men (38% versus 11% and 29% versus 3.8%, respectively).

Women are overrepresented among victims of spousal violence in its most extreme form, homicide. According to police-reported data from the Homicide Survey, there were 497 victims of intimate partner homicide between 2014 and 2019 (Conroy 2021). Eight in ten (80%) victims were women, three-quarters (75%) of whom were killed by a current or former spouse or common-law partner (as opposed to 25% of whom were killed by a non-spousal intimate partner—such as a current or former boyfriend or girlfriend, or an extra-marital lover). During the same period, among the victims of intimate partner homicide who were men, nearly two-thirds (65%) were killed by a spouse (while 35% were killed by a non-spousal partner).

Research has linked intimate partner violence to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (Brown et al. 2015; Demaris and Kaukinen 2008; Dutton et al. 2006; World Health Organization n.d.). Using questions from the Primary Care PTSD Screen Tool—a frontline assessment tool to identify those who might need treatment—the GSS on Victimization asked a series of questions¹⁹ related to nightmares and invasive thoughts, avoidance behaviours, and guarded and detached feelings.²⁰ Of those who had experienced spousal violence in the past five years, 16% reported at least three of these psychological impacts, which would be consistent with suspected PTSD.²¹ Among victims, it was significantly more common for women than men to report experiencing three or more impacts (21% versus 9.8%).

Text box 2

Spousal emotional and financial abuse

While not always criminal in nature, emotional and financial abuse might be part of a larger pattern of harmful behaviour that could, for many, lead to violence or co-occur with violence (Johnson and Leone 2005; Public Health Agency of Canada 2016; United Nations n.d.). Even if these types of abuse do not involve or escalate to the point of physical or sexual violence, such toxic behaviours contribute to coercive control, intimidating and instilling fear among victims.

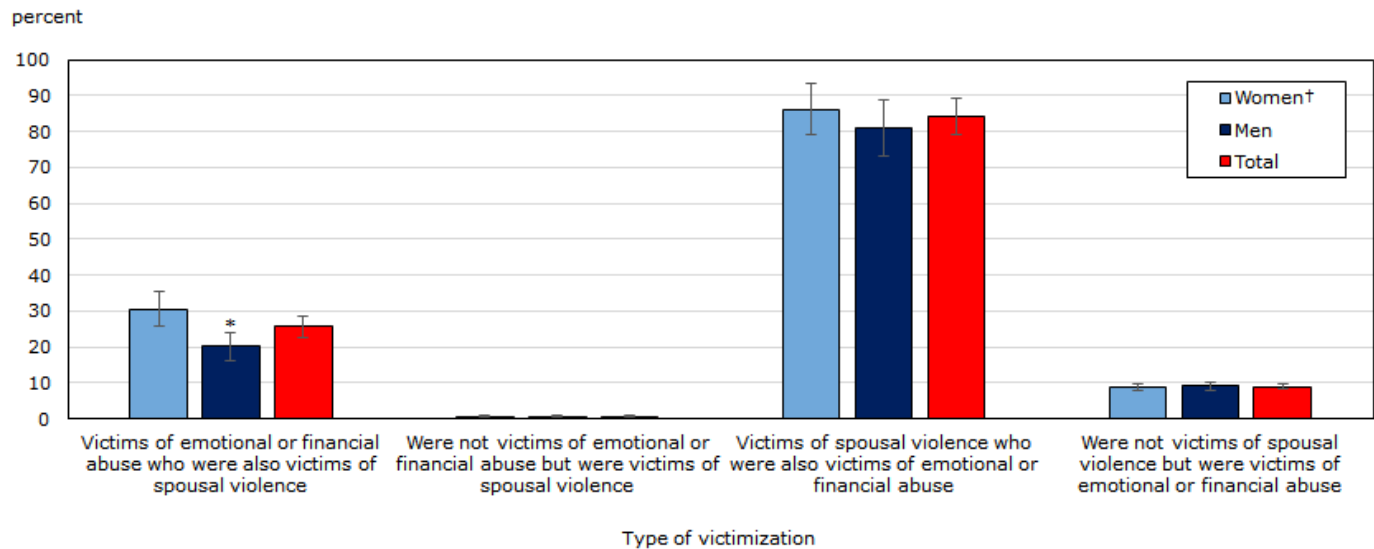
According to the GSS on Victimization, 11% of Canadians reported experiencing emotional abuse by a current or former spouse in the past five years, and the proportions of women and men who experienced this type of abuse were similar (12% versus 11%).²² This manifested as a spouse putting the other down or calling them names to make them feel bad (60%), being jealous or not wanting their spouse to talk to other men or women (47%), demanding to know who their spouse is with or where their spouse is (38%) and trying to limit their spouse's contact with family or friends (30%).²³ Less commonly, victims of emotional abuse reported that their spouse damaged or destroyed possessions or property (13%), harmed or threatened to harm someone close to them (7.3%) and harmed or threatened to harm pets (5.0%).

Overall, 2.2% of people reported experiencing financial abuse from their spouse, including being prevented from having access to family income and being forced to give money, possessions or property. Financial abuse was more commonly experienced by women than men (2.7% versus 1.6%). While 2.7% of people living in the provinces said that their spouse prevented them from knowing or having access to the family income in 1999, it was significantly lower in 2019 (1.6%).²⁴ Differences were also significant for women and men over the same period: being prevented from having access to the family income decreased from 3.9% to 2.1% of women and from 1.5% to 1.0% of men.

In 2019, emotional and financial abuse by a spouse often coincided with spousal violence. One in four (26%) victims of spousal emotional or financial abuse also experienced spousal violence—and this was higher among women than men—while less than one percent (0.6%) of those who had not experienced emotional or financial abuse were victims of spousal violence (Text box 2 chart). Inversely, the large majority (84%) of spousal violence victims had also experienced emotional or financial abuse, and less than one in ten (9.0%) of those who were not victims of spousal violence had experienced emotional or financial abuse.

Text box 2 — end Spousal emotional and financial abuse

Text box 2 chart Spousal emotional and financial abuse, and spousal violence, in the past five years, by gender of victim and type of victimization, Canada, 2019



* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. Missing responses are included in percent calculations. In addition to women and men, includes a small number of respondents who identified as gender diverse or did not state their gender. Error bars represent the 95% confidence intervals and should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

Large majority of spousal violence not reported to police

According to the GSS on Victimization, 35% of household victimization (i.e., break and enter, motor vehicle or parts theft, theft of household property and vandalism) and 24% of non-spousal violent victimization was reported to the police in 2019 (Cotter 2021a). Meanwhile, one in five (19%) spousal violence victims said the violence they experienced in the past five years was reported to police, either by the victim or by someone else (Table 9). In all, the large majority (80%) of spousal victims said the violence they experienced was not reported to police.

Among spousal violence victims in the provinces, reporting to police in 2019 was lower compared with 20 years prior (19% versus 28% in 1999) (Table 10). Compared with 1999, reporting to police in 2019 was lower for victims who were women (38% versus 22%) while there was no difference among men (15% versus 14%).

In 2019, the vast majority (90%^E) of victims who reported the violence they experienced to police themselves said they did so to stop the violence and receive protection.²⁵ Almost half (47%^E) said they felt a duty to notify police, while 36%^E reported following the recommendation of someone else, and 31%^E reported so that their spouse would be arrested or punished.

Of the victims who did not report spousal violence to police, the most common reasons for not doing so were that the incident was a private or personal matter and handled informally (68%), the crime was minor and not worth taking the time to report (61%) and no one was harmed (55%) (Table 9).²⁶ These were the most common reasons for women and men, respectively. Men were more likely than women to say they did not report to police because no harm was intended (56% versus 37%) and no one was harmed (64% versus 49%).

Nearly three-quarters of spousal violence victims who reported to police were satisfied with the police response

The large majority (88%^E) of victims who said the violence they experienced was reported to police stated that the police visited the scene, and three-quarters (74%^E) said the police made a report or conducted an investigation.²⁷ Around four in ten said their spouse was given a warning (42%^E) or taken away (38%^E) by police. One-third (32%^E) of victims reported that police laid charges against their spouse.

Where spousal violence was reported to police, nearly three-quarters (73%^E) of victims were satisfied with the police response (Table 9). More specifically, 32%^E of victims who reported were very satisfied, 41%^E were somewhat satisfied, 12%^E were somewhat dissatisfied and 15%^E were very dissatisfied with the police response.²⁸ Satisfaction with police response did not change significantly among victims in the provinces between 1999 and 2019 (Table 10).

Over one in three victims of spousal violence used formal support services

Regardless of whether violence is reported to the police, victims of violence may seek support in other ways. In 2019, more than one in three (37%) victims of spousal violence in the past five years used formal support services, and this was more common among women than men (44% versus 26%) (Table 9). This is likely impacted by several factors, including women experiencing more negative emotional impacts following violence and an increased availability of services for women. For instance, the large majority of shelters that serve victims of abuse provide services to women and their accompanying children or to women only (Moreau 2019). In addition, cultural norms around masculinity—particularly in the context of heterosexual relationships—might prevent men from seeking support following victimization (Dim 2021; Oliffe et al. 2014; Public Health Agency of Canada 2009).

Most often, victims reached out to a counsellor, psychologist or social worker for support (34%), and this was more common for women than men (42% versus 23%).²⁹ Other reported support services included a crisis centre or crisis line (11%), a victim service or witness assistance program (7.4%), a victim support group or centre (6.1%), a shelter or transition house (5.6%), a community, family or cultural centre (4.6%), a sexual assault centre (1.6%) or another type of support group (8.0%). Between 1999 and 2019, the use of formal support services did not change significantly among victims in the provinces (Table 10).

Two-thirds of victims of spousal violence sought informal support

Aside from formal support services, two-thirds (66%) of spousal violence victims sought informal support by speaking with someone about the violence they experienced, and this was also more common for women than men (72% versus 55%) (Table 9). Almost half of victims said they spoke with a family member (47%) or a friend or neighbour (45%), and these were most common for both women (54% and 49%, respectively) and men (34% and 37%, respectively).³⁰ Less than one in five victims spoke with a co-worker (19%), a doctor or nurse (17%) or a lawyer (15%), while a small proportion reported speaking with a priest, rabbi, imam or another spiritual advisor (6.2%). It was more common for women than men to speak with a family member (54% versus 34%) or a doctor or nurse (24% versus 6.1%).

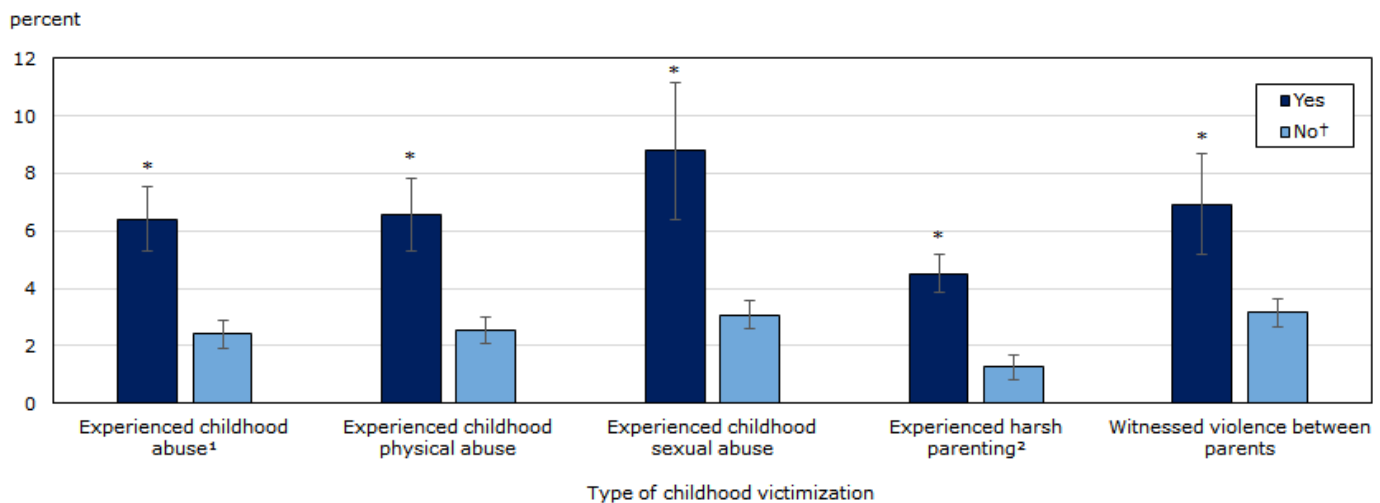
It should be noted that one-third (34%) of spousal victims did not speak with anyone about the violence they experienced, and this was more common among men than women (44% versus 28%). Among victims of spousal violence in the provinces overall, seeking informal support did not change significantly between 1999 and 2019 (Table 10).

Text box 3 Child maltreatment and changes to the *Divorce Act*

According to the 2019 General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization, spousal violence often occurred in the presence of children. Half (50%) of spousal violence victims who had children living in the household said that children witnessed the violent incident.³¹ Further, research has shown a link between childhood maltreatment and experiences of violence later in life (Brown et al. 2015; Burczycka 2017; Cotter 2021a; Cotter 2021c; Cotter and Savage 2019; World Health Organization n.d.). The GSS on Victimization asked respondents about their experiences of childhood physical and sexual abuse, harsh parenting³² and witnessing parental violence prior to age 15.³³

Those who had been abused by an adult during childhood were more likely to report experiencing spousal violence in the past five years than those who were not abused as children (6.4% versus 2.4%) (Text box 3 chart). Spousal violence was more common among those who had experienced harsh parenting (4.5% versus 1.3% of those who had not experienced harsh parenting) and those who had witnessed violence between their parents during childhood (6.9% versus 3.1% of those who had not witnessed such violence).

Text box 3 chart
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by type of childhood victimization, Canada, 2019



* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

1. Includes physical and sexual abuse.

2. Includes being spanked with a hand or being slapped on the hand, being told things that really hurt their feelings, being made to feel like they were not wanted or loved, and not having basic needs met, such as keeping them clean or providing food or clothing.

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. Missing responses are included in percent calculations. In addition to women and men, includes a small number of respondents who identified as gender diverse or did not state their gender. Error bars represent the 95% confidence intervals and should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

On March 1, 2021, changes to the *Divorce Act*—as part of Bill C-78—came into force, emphasizing the best interests of the child (Department of Justice 2020a; Department of Justice 2020b). The *Divorce Act*, which pertains to married couples who are divorcing (not common-law couples nor married couples who are separating), now includes measures that cover family violence and its impacts on child well-being. The nature and seriousness of family violence will be taken into account by courts when determining parenting arrangements, as will ongoing or pending proceedings and orders involving the parties (e.g., criminal court proceedings and restraining orders).

The *Divorce Act* includes a broad range of behaviours under family violence, including physical and sexual violence, threats, coercive and controlling behaviours, behaviours that lead family members to fear for their safety and exposing children to such behaviours, both directly and indirectly. Under the *Divorce Act*, family violence includes single and recurring incidents that happen before, during or after separation. In order for family violence to be taken into account by judges, evidence must be presented—such as witness statements, injury photographs, incident recordings, 9-1-1 calls and medical records (Department of Justice 2020a).

While these legislative changes came into effect beyond the reference period of the 2019 GSS on Victimization, they will likely have an impact for victims of spousal violence in Canada moving forward.

Spousal violence associated with age, no difference by sexual orientation

Demographic patterns for spousal violence were often similar to violent victimization. For instance, compared with those aged 55 and older, spousal violence was generally more prevalent among younger age groups (Table 11). Among those aged 55 and older, a small proportion (1.3%) were victims of spousal violence in the past five years, lower than any other age group. Past research has shown that younger people are at greater risk of almost all types of violence (Cotter 2021a; Cotter and Savage 2019; Perreault 2015; Savage 2021b).

Spousal violence did not differ significantly by sexual orientation. Other research, however, has shown a higher prevalence of intimate partner violence among those who are non-heterosexual (Cotter 2021a; Jaffray 2021a; Jaffray 2021b). Spousal violence among the sexual minority population—that is, those who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or another sexual orientation other than heterosexual—in the provinces was significantly lower in 2019 than 2009 (5.3% versus 20%^E) (Table 12).³⁴

A higher proportion of Indigenous people experience spousal violence

According to the 2019 GSS on Victimization, a higher proportion of the Indigenous population—that is, those who are First Nations people, Métis and Inuit—experienced spousal violence. While 3.4% of non-Indigenous people experienced spousal violence in the past five years, the prevalence was more than twice as high for Indigenous people (7.5%) (Table 11). In particular, this difference reflected the experiences of the Inuit and Métis, 15%^E and 9.4% of whom experienced this type of abuse, respectively. The proportion of First Nations people who were victims of spousal violence did not differ significantly from non-Indigenous people.

Among Indigenous victims of spousal violence, 20%^E said the violence they experienced was reported to police, similar to non-Indigenous people (19%).³⁵ Spousal violence among Indigenous people in the provinces did not change significantly between 2009 and 2019 (Table 12). More specifically, however, spousal violence declined for Indigenous women (15%^E in 2009 versus 7.5%^E in 2019).³⁶

A higher prevalence of spousal violence among the Indigenous population is consistent with other research, as Indigenous peoples have higher rates of violent victimization in general (Boyce 2016; Cotter 2021a; Heidinger 2021; Perreault 2015). The present day conditions of Indigenous peoples are greatly impacted by Canada's colonial history. Structural policies and practices, like the residential school system and the Sixties Scoop, have led to longstanding and intergenerational trauma among the Indigenous population. Compounding issues—such as increased poverty, overcrowded housing and addiction issues—have resulted from these structural policies and practices, leading to the conditions for interpersonal violence (Hoffart and Jones 2018; National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls 2019; O'Neill et al. 2018).

Spousal violence more common for those with a disability, less common for visible minorities and immigrants

In 2019, spousal violence was more common for those with a disability (Table 11).³⁷ Among this population, 5.1% of people reported they had experienced spousal violence in the past five years. Meanwhile, 2.7% of those without a disability said the same. Between 2014 and 2019 in the provinces, spousal violence among those with a disability did not change significantly (Table 12).³⁸

A smaller proportion of individuals belonging to a group designated as visible minority reported being victims of spousal violence in the five years preceding 2019 (2.3% compared with 3.9% of non-visible minorities) (Table 11).³⁹ The same pattern emerged for immigrants as a smaller proportion of immigrants were victims of spousal violence than non-immigrants in the same period (1.6% versus 4.2%).⁴⁰ Spousal violence among visible minorities in the provinces declined between 1999 and 2019 (5.5% versus 2.3%) (Table 12). More recently, between 2009 and 2019, spousal violence among the immigrant population decreased (4.4% versus 1.6%).⁴¹

These three findings are consistent with research on the topic of intimate partner and spousal violence, in addition to violent victimization more broadly (Cotter 2021a; Cotter 2021b; Cotter and Savage 2019; Savage 2021a).

No notable difference in spousal violence across income and education groups, and for those living in and outside of census metropolitan areas

Results from the 2019 GSS on Victimization show that there were no significant differences in the proportions of people who experienced spousal violence according to income and highest level of education (Table 11).

Similarly, spousal violence did not differ among those who live in census metropolitan areas (CMAs)⁴² and those in non-CMAs. Between 1999 and 2019 in the provinces, spousal violence decreased significantly for those living in CMAs (7.8% versus 3.5%) and those living in non-CMAs (6.9% versus 3.4%) (Table 12).

Summary

According to the 2019 General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadians' Safety (Victimization), 3.5% of Canadians with a current or former spouse or common-law partner experienced self-reported spousal violence in the five years preceding the survey. Spousal violence was significantly more common among women than men, with 432,000 women and 279,000 men experiencing this type of violence. In the provinces, spousal violence was significantly lower in 2019 than 20 years prior, and a larger decrease was noted among men than women.

Among victims of spousal violence in 2019, it was more common for women to be sexually assaulted, choked, and pushed, grabbed or shoved by their spouse. Inversely, it was more common for men to experience their spouse throwing something that could hurt them, slapping them, and kicking, biting or hitting them. Overall, more than one in four victims of spousal violence experienced the most severe type of violence included in the GSS on Victimization: beating, choking, threatening to use or using a gun or knife, or sexual assault.

Of those who experienced spousal violence, women had greater impacts. One-third of spousal violence victims were physically injured, and this was significantly more common among women than men. In addition, women were more likely than men to report feeling each of the negative emotional impacts measured by the survey, and men were more likely than women to say they felt no emotional impact.

According to the 2019 GSS on Victimization, the large majority of spousal violence victims said the police were never alerted to the violence they experienced. Among spousal violence victims in the provinces, reporting to police in 2019 was lower than in 1999.

While downward trends for violence are promising at first glance, many Canadians are still victims of spousal violence and cope with the resulting impacts. It should be reiterated that the nature of this type of crime—where the victim is more likely to live with or be dependent on the perpetrator, particularly if children are involved—makes it susceptible to underreporting to police. An important area for future research will be spousal violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. With many individuals staying at home and isolating from others—and the compounding health, financial and education stressors—it will be important to measure any changes in spousal violence in order to provide appropriate support for victims and their families.

Survey description

This article uses data from the General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadians' Safety (Victimization). In 2019, Statistics Canada conducted the GSS on Victimization for the seventh time. Previous cycles were conducted in 1988, 1993, 1999, 2004, 2009 and 2014, with questions about spousal violence introduced in 1999. The main objective of the GSS on Victimization is to better understand issues related to the safety and security of Canadians, including perceptions of crime and the justice system, experiences of intimate partner violence, and how safe people feel in their communities.

The target population was persons aged 15 and older living in the provinces and territories, except for those living full-time in institutions.

Data collection took place between April 2019 and March 2020. Responses were obtained by computer-assisted telephone interviews, in-person interviews (in the territories only) and, for the first time, the GSS on Victimization offered a self-administered internet collection option to survey respondents in the provinces and in the territorial capitals. Respondents were able to respond in the official language of their choice.

An individual aged 15 or older was selected within each sampled household to respond to the survey. An oversample of Indigenous people was added to the 2019 GSS on Victimization to allow for a more detailed analysis of individuals belonging to this population group. In 2019, the final sample size was 22,412 respondents.

In 2019, the overall response rate was 37.6%. Non-respondents included people who refused to participate, could not be reached, or could not speak English or French. Respondents in the sample were weighted so that their responses represent the non-institutionalized Canadian population aged 15 and older.

For the quality of estimates, the lower and upper bounds of the confidence intervals are presented in charts and tables. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value.

Comparability with previous cycles

As Statistics Canada continues to modernize, the 2019 GSS on Victimization allowed respondents to complete their questionnaires online, in addition to traditional collection by telephone. This change in data collection for the 2019 GSS on Victimization was done to address several challenges, namely to reduce respondent burden and to respond to increasing collection costs. Many respondents welcomed this new method of collection and chose to answer the survey online.

During data certification, an analysis of responses between the two collection modes (telephone and online) showed a “mode effect”—that is, there were differences in how Canadians answered certain survey questions based on the method that they used to provide their responses. These differences impact the comparability of data from the 2019 GSS on Victimization to previous victimization survey cycles. As a result, trend analysis of non-spousal violent and household victimization indicators is not possible (for more information, see Cotter 2021a). No such mode effect, however, was identified for the spousal violence variables.

While comparisons of overall changes in criminal victimization over time are not recommended, Statistics Canada deems the data from the 2019 GSS on Victimization to be of good quality, robust and relevant to inform public policy on criminal victimization in Canada. For the first time, data from the provinces and territories were released together in a timely manner, giving data users an earlier start on their investigations of Canada-wide issues. It should be noted, however, that trend analysis in this article is limited to either the provinces or the territories. In addition, as information about gender was collected as of 2019, data from earlier cycles are based on sex instead of gender. Sex refers to sex at birth while gender refers to the gender that a person internally feels (gender identity along the gender spectrum) or publicly expresses (gender expression) in their daily life, including at work, while shopping or accessing other services, in their housing environment or in the broader community. In all, 0.3% of respondents identified as gender diverse (i.e., not exclusively female or male) in 2019.

Changes to 2019 GSS on Victimization represent Statistics Canada’s ongoing modernization efforts, undertaken with the goal of maintaining high quality and relevant data that provide important insights. As the GSS program continues to modernize, Statistics Canada will continue to consult stakeholders and partners to address their information needs.

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Notes

^E use with caution

1. Statistics Canada is a departmental member of the Government of Canada’s Family Violence Initiative, which seeks to address spousal violence—and family-related violence against children and youth, and seniors—in Canada (Public Health Agency of Canada 2020). As such, Statistics Canada has released the annual report, “Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile,” which primarily discusses police-reported data. For the latest version of the annual family violence report, see Conroy 2021.
2. Includes all types of violent *Criminal Code* violations—as covered by the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey—not only the types of violence covered by the General Social Survey on Victimization.
3. Unless otherwise noted, data are presented for the past five years. Often, data for the past year cannot be presented due to small sample size.

4. For comparability over time, trend analysis for 1999 to 2019 is limited to the provinces. As information about gender was collected as of 2019, data from earlier cycles are based on sex (i.e., sex at birth) instead of gender (i.e., gender identity or gender expression). Differences are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) unless otherwise noted.
5. For readability, percentages in text have been rounded unless they are small (i.e., less than 10%). In such cases, a decimal place is shown for that number.
6. For comparability over time, trend analysis for 2009 to 2019 is limited to the territories. Trend data for earlier years are not available. Due to differences in how data were collected, data from the territories cannot be combined with data from the provinces prior to 2014. As information about gender was collected as of 2019, data from earlier cycles are based on sex (i.e., sex at birth) instead of gender (i.e., gender identity or gender expression).
7. While the 2019 General Social Survey on Victimization collected information from gender diverse respondents, numbers are too small to be analyzed separately from women and men; however, those who are gender diverse and those who did not state their gender are include in overall totals.
8. Data not shown.
9. Data not shown.
10. Differences between women and men cannot be presented due to small sample size. The General Social Survey on Victimization asked victims of a former spouse who had experienced more than one incident if they thought the violence they experienced increased in terms of frequency or intensity after they split up; however, the data cannot be presented due to small sample size.
11. Data not shown.
12. Respondents could select as many types of violence that applied in their situation.
13. Data not shown.
14. The corresponding proportion of men cannot be presented due to small sample size.
15. Respondents could select as many types of injury that applied in their situation. Differences between women and men cannot be presented due to small sample size.
16. Data not shown. Differences between women and men cannot be presented due to small sample size.
17. Respondents could select as many emotional impacts that applied in their situation.
18. Data not shown.
19. The General Social Survey on Victimization asked those who had experienced spousal violence the following questions: "In the past month, have you experienced any of the following? Had nightmares about it or thought about it when you did not want to? Tried hard not to think about it or went out of your way to avoid situations that reminded you of it? Felt constantly on guard, watchful or easily startled? Felt numb or detached from others, activities or your surroundings?"
20. For more information about the Primary Care Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Screen Tool, see Prins et al. 2003.
21. Data not shown.
22. Data not shown. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years.
23. Respondents could select as many types of emotional abuse that applied in their situation.
24. The 1999 General Social Survey on Victimization did not include the second type of financial abuse: being forced to give money, possessions or property.
25. Data not shown. Respondents could select as many reasons that applied in their situation. Differences between women and men cannot be presented due to small sample size.
26. Respondents could select as many reasons that applied in their situation.
27. Data not shown. Respondents could select as many actions that applied in their situation. Differences between women and men cannot be presented due to small sample size.
28. Data not shown. Differences between women and men cannot be presented due to small sample size.
29. Respondents could select as many formal supports that applied in their situation.
30. Respondents could select as many informal supports that applied in their situation.
31. Data not shown. Includes those who have children living in the household and had their children at the time of the incident. Witnessing includes seeing or hearing. Includes those who thought the children witnessed the incident. The difference between women and men was not significant (56%^E versus 42%^E).

32. Includes being spanked with a hand or being slapped on the hand, being told things that really hurt their feelings, being made to feel like they were not wanted or loved, and not having based needs met, such as keeping them clean or providing food or clothing.
33. For more information on child maltreatment and violent victimization in adulthood, see Cotter 2021a.
34. Trend data for earlier years are not available. Sexual orientation was first included in 2009. In 2009 and 2014, the question on sexual orientation was only asked of those aged 18 and older; as such, those aged 15 to 17 are excluded.
35. Data not shown.
36. Trend data for earlier years are not available. The questions used to measure Indigenous identity changed as of 2009 and are not comparable to previous cycles. The corresponding trend for Indigenous men cannot be presented as the estimate for 2009 is too unreliable to be published.
37. A person is defined as having a disability if they have one or more of the following types of disability: seeing, hearing, mobility, flexibility, dexterity, pain-related, learning, developmental, memory, mental health-related or unknown.
38. Trend data for earlier years are not available. The questions used to measure disability changed as of 2014 and are not comparable to previous cycles.
39. Disaggregated data according to individual visible minority identity groups cannot be presented due to small sample size with the exception of those who are Chinese: among the Chinese population, 1.9% experienced spousal violence in the past five years.
40. The General Social Survey on Victimization is conducted in English or French; therefore, immigrants who do not speak either official language would not have completed the survey.
41. Trend data for earlier years are not available. The question used to measure immigrant status was first included in 2009 and is not comparable to previous cycles.
42. A census metropolitan area (CMA) consists of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major urban core. A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more live in the urban core. To be included in the CMA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the central urban area, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. Reflects where the respondent was living at the time of the survey and not necessarily where the victimization occurred and is based on the classification of CMAs at the time of each cycle.

Detailed data tables

Table 1
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by status of spousal relationship, gender and year, provinces, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019

Status of spousal relationship	1999									
	percent	Women			Men			Total		
		95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent
	from	to	percent	from	to	percent	from	to	percent	
Current relationship¹										
Yes, experienced violence	3.5 [*]	3.1	4.0	4.0 [*]	3.5	4.6	3.8 [*]	3.4	4.2	
No, did not experience violence	91.4 [*]	90.6	92.1	90.3 [*]	89.4	91.1	90.8 [*]	90.2	91.3	
Former relationship²										
Yes, experienced violence	28.1 [*]	26.1	30.3	21.5 ^{***}	19.0	24.2	25.2 [*]	23.6	26.9	
No, did not experience violence	70.8 [*]	68.7	72.8	76.5 ^{***}	73.7	79.0	73.3 [*]	71.6	74.9	
Current and/or former relationship³										
Yes, experienced violence	8.3 [*]	7.7	8.9	6.6 ^{***}	6.0	7.3	7.5 [*]	7.0	7.9	
No, did not experience violence	87.0 [*]	86.2	87.8	87.8 [*]	86.9	88.7	87.4 [*]	86.8	88.0	
	2004									
Status of spousal relationship	2004									
	percent	Women			Men			Total		
		95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent
	from	to	percent	from	to	percent	from	to	percent	
Current relationship¹										
Yes, experienced violence	3.1 [*]	2.7	3.6	3.8 [*]	3.3	4.4	3.5 [*]	3.2	3.8	
No, did not experience violence	94.8	94.1	95.3	93.6 ^{**}	92.9	94.3	94.2	93.7	94.6	
Former relationship²										
Yes, experienced violence	21.4 [*]	19.6	23.4	15.7 ^{***}	13.8	17.9	18.9 [*]	17.5	20.3	
No, did not experience violence	77.6 [*]	75.6	79.5	82.2 ^{***}	79.9	84.2	79.7 [*]	78.2	81.1	
Current and/or former relationship³										
Yes, experienced violence	7.2 [*]	6.7	7.8	6.1 ^{***}	5.5	6.7	6.6 [*]	6.2	7.1	
No, did not experience violence	90.8 [*]	90.1	91.5	91.3 [*]	90.6	92.0	91.1 [*]	90.6	91.5	
	2009									
Status of spousal relationship	2009									
	percent	Women			Men			Total		
		95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent
	from	to	percent	from	to	percent	from	to	percent	
Current relationship¹										
Yes, experienced violence	3.2 [*]	2.7	3.8	4.4 ^{***}	3.7	5.1	3.8 [*]	3.4	4.3	
No, did not experience violence	95.2	94.5	95.9	93.9 ^{**}	93.1	94.6	94.5	94.0	95.0	
Former relationship²										
Yes, experienced violence	20.1 [*]	17.8	22.5	14.2 ^{***}	11.8	16.9	17.4 [*]	15.7	19.3	
No, did not experience violence	79.0 [*]	76.5	81.2	84.4 ^{***}	81.6	86.9	81.4 [*]	79.5	83.2	
Current and/or former relationship³										
Yes, experienced violence	6.4 [*]	5.7	7.1	6.0 [*]	5.3	6.8	6.2 [*]	5.7	6.7	
No, did not experience violence	92.1 [*]	91.3	92.9	92.3 [*]	91.4	93.0	92.2 [*]	91.6	92.7	

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 1 — end

Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by status of spousal relationship, gender and year, provinces, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019

Status of spousal relationship	2014								
	percent	Women		percent	Men		percent	Total	
		95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval	
	from	to	from	to	from	to	from	to	
Current relationship¹									
Yes, experienced violence	1.8	1.5	2.2	2.9***	2.4	3.4	2.3	2.1	2.7
No, did not experience violence	96.6 [†]	96.1	97.1	95.6**	94.9	96.1	96.1 [†]	95.7	96.4
Former relationship²									
Yes, experienced violence	13.8	12.0	15.9	12.5 [†]	10.2	15.3	13.2	11.7	14.8
No, did not experience violence	84.9	82.8	86.9	85.7 [†]	82.8	88.2	85.3	83.6	86.8
Current and/or former relationship³									
Yes, experienced violence	3.5	3.2	3.9	4.2***	3.7	4.9	3.9	3.6	4.3
No, did not experience violence	94.9 [†]	94.3	95.3	94.1	93.4	94.7	94.5 [†]	94.0	94.9
	2019 [†]								
Status of spousal relationship	percent	Women		percent	Men		percent	Total	
		95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval	
	from	to	from	to	from	to	from	to	
Current relationship¹									
Yes, experienced violence	2.1	1.6	2.8	1.9	1.5	2.5	2.0	1.7	2.5
No, did not experience violence	95.3	94.4	96.1	94.5	93.5	95.4	94.9	94.2	95.5
Former relationship²									
Yes, experienced violence	13.1	10.4	16.2	7.6**	5.7	10.1	10.8	9.0	12.9
No, did not experience violence	85.1	81.9	87.9	90.8**	88.2	92.9	87.5	85.4	89.3
Current and/or former relationship³									
Yes, experienced violence	4.2	3.5	5.0	2.7**	2.2	3.3	3.5	3.0	3.9
No, did not experience violence	93.3	92.4	94.1	93.9	92.9	94.7	93.6	92.9	94.2

* significantly different from reference category only ($p < 0.05$)

** significantly different from estimate for women only ($p < 0.05$)

*** significantly different from reference category and estimate for women ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

1. Includes those who are legally married or living common law.

2. Includes those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years.

3. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years.

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. As information about gender was collected as of 2019, data from earlier cycles are based on sex (i.e., sex at birth) instead of gender (i.e., gender identity or gender expression). Missing responses are not shown but they are included in percent calculations; therefore, responses may not add up to 100%. For comparability over time, trend analysis is limited to the provinces. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

Table 2
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim, province and year, provinces, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019

Province	1999								
	Women			Men			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Newfoundland and Labrador	4.2 ^{E*}	2.8	6.1	5.4 ^{E*}	3.4	8.4	4.8 [*]	3.5	6.4
Prince Edward Island	11.7 ^E	7.6	17.7	F	F	F	9.7 ^E	6.7	13.8
Nova Scotia	8.4 [*]	6.0	11.6	6.1 ^E	3.9	9.4	7.3 [*]	5.5	9.5
New Brunswick	8.6 [*]	6.3	11.7	7.4 ^E	5.0	10.7	8.0 [*]	6.3	10.2
Quebec	7.9 [*]	6.7	9.3	7.0 [*]	5.7	8.5	7.4 [*]	6.5	8.5
Ontario	7.0 [*]	6.1	8.0	5.0 ^{***}	4.2	6.1	6.0 [*]	5.4	6.7
Manitoba	9.0	6.5	12.3	6.6 ^E	4.3	10.0	7.8 [*]	6.0	10.1
Saskatchewan	11.3 [*]	8.5	15.0	7.8 ^{E*}	5.4	11.3	9.6 [*]	7.6	12.1
Alberta	11.2 [*]	9.3	13.4	8.6 [*]	6.9	10.8	9.9 [*]	8.6	11.4
British Columbia	10.0 [*]	8.4	11.8	8.8 [*]	7.3	10.7	9.4 [*]	8.3	10.6
Provincial total	8.3[*]	7.7	8.9	6.6^{***}	6.0	7.3	7.5[*]	7.0	7.9

Province	2004								
	Women			Men			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Newfoundland and Labrador	6.1 ^{E*}	4.0	9.2	4.1 ^{E*}	2.4	7.0	5.1 [*]	3.7	7.0
Prince Edward Island	6.2 ^E	3.5	10.7	F	F	F	5.1 ^E	3.3	8.0
Nova Scotia	7.6 [*]	5.7	10.2	7.4 ^E	5.2	10.5	7.5 [*]	6.0	9.4
New Brunswick	6.2 ^{E*}	4.3	8.8	6.7 ^E	4.6	9.7	6.5 [*]	5.0	8.3
Quebec	6.1	5.1	7.4	4.7 [*]	3.6	6.0	5.4 [*]	4.6	6.3
Ontario	6.6 [*]	5.7	7.6	6.3 [*]	5.3	7.4	6.4 [*]	5.7	7.2
Manitoba	8.0	6.3	10.1	6.7 [*]	4.8	9.1	7.3 [*]	6.1	8.8
Saskatchewan	8.8	6.5	11.8	7.9 ^{E*}	5.6	11.1	8.4 [*]	6.6	10.6
Alberta	9.9 [*]	8.0	12.2	7.5 [*]	5.7	9.7	8.7 [*]	7.4	10.3
British Columbia	8.7 [*]	6.9	10.9	6.3 [*]	4.7	8.4	7.5 [*]	6.3	8.9
Provincial total	7.2[*]	6.7	7.8	6.1^{***}	5.5	6.7	6.6[*]	6.2	7.1

Province	2009								
	Women			Men			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Newfoundland and Labrador	5.0 ^{E*}	3.0	8.3	F	F	F	4.1 ^{E*}	2.7	6.2
Prince Edward Island	6.3 ^E	3.4	11.3	F	F	F	7.0 ^E	4.3	11.2
Nova Scotia	6.2 ^{E*}	4.1	9.3	4.8 ^E	2.9	7.9	5.5	4.0	7.5
New Brunswick	5.6 ^{E*}	3.5	8.7	5.4 ^E	3.5	8.5	5.5	4.0	7.6
Quebec	5.5	4.4	7.0	5.1 [*]	3.9	6.5	5.3 [*]	4.4	6.3
Ontario	6.3 [*]	5.2	7.5	6.2 [*]	5.0	7.6	6.2 [*]	5.4	7.1
Manitoba	6.4 ^E	4.3	9.4	8.3 ^{E*}	5.4	12.5	7.4 [*]	5.5	9.8
Saskatchewan	8.6 ^E	6.0	12.2	7.9 ^{E*}	5.2	11.8	8.2 [*]	6.2	10.8
Alberta	8.6 [*]	6.5	11.4	6.5 [*]	4.8	8.9	7.6 [*]	6.2	9.3
British Columbia	6.2 [*]	4.6	8.4	6.7 [*]	4.8	9.3	6.5 [*]	5.2	8.1
Provincial total	6.4[*]	5.7	7.1	6.0[*]	5.3	6.8	6.2[*]	5.7	6.7

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 2 — end

Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim, province and year, provinces, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019

Province	2014								
	Women			Men			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Newfoundland and Labrador	2.6 ^E	1.6	4.1	F	F	F	2.1 ^E	1.4	3.2
Prince Edward Island	6.8 ^E	3.6	12.5	F	F	F	5.3 ^E	3.3	8.4
Nova Scotia	5.4 [*]	4.0	7.2	3.9 ^E	2.8	5.4	4.6	3.7	5.8
New Brunswick	4.9 ^E	3.4	7.1	4.2 ^E	2.6	6.6	4.5	3.4	6.1
Quebec	3.2	2.5	4.2	3.7	2.7	5.1	3.5	2.8	4.3
Ontario	2.7 [*]	2.1	3.4	4.7 ^{***}	3.8	5.8	3.7	3.2	4.4
Manitoba	2.9 ^E	1.8	4.6	3.7 ^E	2.3	5.8	3.3 ^E	2.4	4.5
Saskatchewan	6.5 ^E	4.4	9.3	3.3 ^E	1.8	5.8	4.9	3.6	6.7
Alberta	5.1	3.8	6.9	4.2 ^E	2.8	6.4	4.7	3.6	6.0
British Columbia	3.9	2.8	5.2	4.6 ^E	3.2	6.6	4.2	3.2	5.4
Provincial total	3.5	3.2	3.9	4.2^{***}	3.7	4.9	3.9	3.6	4.3

Province	2019 [†]								
	Women			Men			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Newfoundland and Labrador	1.3	0.7	2.7	1.4	0.7	2.8	1.4	0.9	2.3
Prince Edward Island	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
Nova Scotia	2.9	1.6	5.2	4.5	2.6	7.7	3.7	2.5	5.5
New Brunswick	2.6	1.5	4.5	3.6	1.6	8.0	3.1	1.8	5.2
Quebec	4.4	2.7	7.1	2.9	1.8	4.4	3.7	2.6	5.3
Ontario	4.5	3.4	6.0	2.0 ^{**}	1.4	3.0	3.2	2.6	4.1
Manitoba	5.6	3.5	8.8	3.3	1.6	6.6	4.4	3.0	6.5
Saskatchewan	5.8	3.3	9.8	2.4	1.1	5.0	4.1	2.6	6.3
Alberta	3.7	2.5	5.4	3.7	2.2	6.0	3.7	2.7	5.1
British Columbia	3.7	2.5	5.5	2.8	1.7	4.7	3.3	2.4	4.5
Provincial total	4.2	3.5	5.0	2.7^{**}	2.2	3.3	3.5	3.0	3.9

^E use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

^{*} significantly different from reference category only ($p < 0.05$)^{**} significantly different from estimate for women only ($p < 0.05$)^{***} significantly different from reference category and estimate for women ($p < 0.05$)[†] reference category

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. As information about gender was collected as of 2019, data from earlier cycles are based on sex (i.e., sex at birth) instead of gender (i.e., gender identity or gender expression). Missing responses are included in percent calculations. For comparability over time, trend analysis is limited to the provinces. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

Table 3
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim, territory and year, territories, 2009, 2014 and 2019

Territory	2009								
	Women			Men			Total		
	95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval		
	percent	from	to	percent	from	to	percent	from	to
Yukon	6.0	5.3	6.9	F	F	F	6.5	5.8	7.2
Northwest Territories	11.6	10.6	12.8	12.2	11.0	13.5	11.9	11.2	12.6
Nunavut	16.1	14.9	17.3	F	F	F	13.5	12.7	14.4
Territorial total	10.4	9.8	11.1	10.1	9.3	10.9	10.2	9.8	10.7
Territory	2014								
	Women			Men			Total		
	95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval		
	percent	from	to	percent	from	to	percent	from	to
Yukon	6.8 ^E	3.7	12.3	6.8 ^E	4.0	11.3	6.8 ^E	4.5	10.2
Northwest Territories	13.5 ^E	8.7	20.2	12.9 ^E	6.9	22.7	13.2 ^E	9.1	18.6
Nunavut	17.0 ^E	11.1	25.0	15.9 ^E	10.7	23.2	16.5 ^E	11.8	22.6
Territorial total	12.1	9.4	15.5	11.7	8.5	15.9	11.9	9.7	14.6
Territory	2019 [†]								
	Women			Men			Total		
	95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval		
	percent	from	to	percent	from	to	percent	from	to
Yukon	6.3	3.9	9.9	4.0	2.0	7.8	5.1	3.4	7.6
Northwest Territories	9.8	5.9	15.9	9.9	5.2	17.9	9.8	6.8	13.9
Nunavut	21.9	14.2	32.3	9.5 [*]	5.4	16.2	15.6	10.8	21.9
Territorial total	11.9	9.1	15.5	7.8	5.3	11.3	9.8	7.8	12.2

^E use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from estimate for women only ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same gender relationships. As information about gender was collected as of 2019, data from earlier cycles are based on sex (i.e., sex at birth) instead of gender (i.e., gender identity or gender expression). Missing responses are included in percent calculations. For comparability over time, trend analysis is limited to the territories. Due to differences in how data were collected, data from the territories cannot be combined with data from the provinces prior to 2014. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value. There were no significant differences between 2019 and other reference years.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

Table 4
Victims of spousal violence in the past year and past five years, by gender, status of spousal relationship and time frame, Canada, 2019

Status of spousal relationship and time frame	Women†			Men			Total ¹		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Current relationship²									
Experienced spousal violence in the past year									
Yes	1.1	0.7	1.6	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.9	0.7	1.2
No	96.1	95.3	96.8	95.2	94.2	96.0	95.6	95.0	96.2
Don't know ³	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.9	0.4	0.2	0.6
Experienced spousal violence in the past five years									
Yes	2.1	1.6	2.8	1.9	1.5	2.5	2.0	1.7	2.5
No	95.3	94.4	96.1	94.5	93.5	95.4	94.9	94.2	95.5
Former relationship⁴									
Experienced spousal violence in the past year									
Yes	3.0	1.7	5.4	1.3	0.6	2.7	2.4	1.5	3.9
No	94.9	92.6	96.6	95.9	94.0	97.3	95.2	93.7	96.4
Don't know ³	0.2	0.1	0.5	1.1	0.5	2.6	0.6	0.3	1.2
Experienced spousal violence in the past five years									
Yes	13.1	10.5	16.3	7.7*	5.7	10.2	10.9	9.1	12.9
No	85.1	81.8	87.8	90.7*	88.1	92.8	87.4	85.3	89.2
Current and/or former relationship⁵									
Experienced spousal violence in the past year									
Yes	1.5	1.1	2.1	0.8*	0.6	1.2	1.2	0.9	1.5
No	95.8	95.0	96.4	95.2	94.3	95.9	95.4	94.8	96.0
Don't know ³	0.3	0.1	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.9	0.4	0.3	0.6
Experienced spousal violence in the past five years									
Yes	4.2	3.6	5.0	2.7*	2.2	3.3	3.5	3.0	4.0
No	93.3	92.4	94.1	93.9	92.9	94.7	93.6	92.9	94.1

* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

1. In addition to women and men, includes a small number of respondents who identified as gender diverse or did not state their gender.

2. Includes those who are legally married or living common law.

3. Includes victims of spousal violence in the past five years who didn't know if the violence occurred in the past year.

4. Includes those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years.

5. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years.

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. Missing responses are not shown but they are included in percent calculations; therefore, responses may not add up to 100%. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

Table 5
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim and province or territory, 2019

Province or territory	Women			Men			Total ¹		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		to	from		to	from		to	from
Newfoundland and Labrador	1.3 [†]	0.7	2.7	1.4 [*]	0.7	2.8	1.4 [†]	0.9	2.3
Prince Edward Island	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
Nova Scotia	2.9	1.6	5.2	4.5	2.6	7.7	3.7	2.5	5.5
New Brunswick	2.6 [†]	1.5	4.5	3.6	1.6	8.0	3.1	1.8	5.2
Quebec	4.4	2.7	7.1	2.9	1.8	4.4	3.7	2.6	5.3
Ontario	4.5	3.4	6.0	2.0 ^{**}	1.4	3.0	3.2	2.6	4.1
Manitoba	5.6	3.5	8.8	3.3	1.6	6.6	4.4	3.0	6.5
Saskatchewan	5.8	3.3	9.8	2.4	1.1	5.0	4.1	2.6	6.3
Alberta	3.7	2.5	5.4	3.7	2.2	6.0	3.7	2.7	5.1
British Columbia	3.7	2.5	5.5	2.8	1.7	4.7	3.3	2.4	4.5
Yukon	6.3	3.9	9.9	4.0	2.0	7.8	5.1	3.4	7.6
Northwest Territories	9.8 [†]	5.9	15.9	9.9 [†]	5.2	17.9	9.8 [†]	6.8	13.9
Nunavut	21.9 [†]	14.2	32.3	9.5 ^{***}	5.4	16.2	15.6 [†]	10.8	21.9
Canada[†]	4.2	3.6	5.0	2.7^{**}	2.2	3.3	3.5	3.0	4.0

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from reference category only ($p < 0.05$)

** significantly different from estimate for women only ($p < 0.05$)

*** significantly different from reference category and estimate for women ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

1. In addition to women and men, includes a small number of respondents who identified as gender diverse or did not state their gender.

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. Missing responses are included in percent calculations. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

Table 6
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim and incident characteristic, Canada, 2019

Incident characteristic	Women†			Men			Total ¹		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Type of violence²									
Sexual assault ³	16.9	11.7	23.9	7.4*	3.2	16.3	13.1	9.3	18.1
Threatening to use or using a gun or knife	4.9	2.7	8.6	12.1	6.3	22.1	7.7	4.8	12.0
Choking	14.1	9.7	20.1	3.4*	1.2	9.2	9.8	7.0	13.7
Beating	12.4	7.4	20.0	10.0	5.2	18.4	11.4	7.6	16.7
Hitting with something that could hurt	17.9	12.6	25.0	26.2	18.7	35.4	21.0	16.4	26.6
Kicking, biting, hitting	17.7	12.2	25.0	42.8*	33.4	52.9	27.4	22.0	33.5
Slapping	17.2	12.4	23.5	36.9*	28.2	46.6	24.8	20.0	30.2
Pushing, grabbing, shoving	72.2	63.0	79.8	52.2*	42.8	61.4	63.9	57.4	70.0
Throwing something that could hurt	38.5	30.3	47.4	59.6*	49.4	69.0	46.5	40.0	53.1
Threatening to hit with fist	51.4	42.3	60.4	55.8	46.1	65.1	53.4	46.5	60.3
Most severe type of violence⁴									
Beating, choking, threatening to use or using a gun or knife, sexual assault	32.4	24.7	41.1	21.2	13.6	31.4	27.8	22.2	34.3
Kicking, biting, hitting, hitting with something that could hurt	10.3	6.5	16.1	31.5*	23.0	41.5	18.5	14.0	24.0
Pushing, grabbing, shoving, slapping	39.8	30.7	49.7	29.1	21.1	38.6	35.4	29.0	42.4
Threatening to hit with fist, throwing something that could hurt	17.5	11.4	26.0	18.1	11.5	27.3	18.3	13.5	24.3
Number of incidents									
One incident	34.4	27.1	42.6	44.0	34.5	53.9	38.6	32.6	44.9
Two incidents	13.9	8.0	23.2	12.9	7.4	21.4	13.4	8.8	20.0
Three to ten incidents	28.4	21.2	36.8	28.3	20.2	38.1	28.1	22.6	34.5
More than ten incidents	20.7	13.3	30.8	12.6	7.4	20.5	17.4	12.2	24.2

* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

1. In addition to women and men, includes a small number of respondents who identified as gender diverse or did not state their gender.

2. Respondents could select as many types of violence that applied in their situation.

3. Includes being forced into unwanted sexual activity and being forced into sexual activity where unable to consent.

4. Most severe type of violence is calculated differently in this table compared with Table 7; here, it is based on victims of spousal violence, not the population of interest as a whole.

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. Missing responses are included in percent calculations. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

Table 7
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim, most severe type of violence and year, provinces, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019

Most severe type of violence	1999									
	Women			Men			Total			
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		
		from	to		from	to		from	to	
Beating, choking, threatening to use or using a gun or knife, sexual assault	3.6*	3.3	4.0	1.1***	0.9	1.3	2.3*	2.1	2.6	
Kicking, biting, hitting, hitting with something that could hurt	0.9*	0.8	1.2	2.8***	2.4	3.3	1.9*	1.7	2.1	
Pushing, grabbing, shoving, slapping	2.9*	2.5	3.3	1.6***	1.3	2.0	2.3*	2.0	2.5	
Threatening to hit with fist, throwing something that could hurt	0.8	0.7	1.1	1.1*	0.8	1.4	1.0*	0.8	1.1	
Most severe type of violence	2004									
	Women			Men			Total			
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		
		from	to		from	to		from	to	
Beating, choking, threatening to use or using a gun or knife, sexual assault	2.8*	2.4	3.2	1.0***	0.8	1.2	1.9*	1.7	2.1	
Kicking, biting, hitting, hitting with something that could hurt	0.7*	0.6	0.9	2.1***	1.7	2.5	1.4*	1.2	1.6	
Pushing, grabbing, shoving, slapping	2.9*	2.6	3.3	2.1***	1.7	2.5	2.5*	2.2	2.8	
Threatening to hit with fist, throwing something that could hurt	0.8	0.6	1.0	0.9*	0.7	1.2	0.8	0.7	1.0	
Most severe type of violence	2009									
	Women			Men			Total			
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		
		from	to		from	to		from	to	
Beating, choking, threatening to use or using a gun or knife, sexual assault	2.2*	1.8	2.6	0.6E**	0.4	0.9	1.4*	1.1	1.6	
Kicking, biting, hitting, hitting with something that could hurt	0.9*	0.7	1.1	2.2***	1.8	2.7	1.5*	1.3	1.8	
Pushing, grabbing, shoving, slapping	2.4*	2.0	2.8	1.9*	1.6	2.4	2.2*	1.9	2.5	
Threatening to hit with fist, throwing something that could hurt	1.0	0.7	1.3	1.3*	1.0	1.6	1.1*	0.9	1.4	
Most severe type of violence	2014									
	Women			Men			Total			
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		
		from	to		from	to		from	to	
Beating, choking, threatening to use or using a gun or knife, sexual assault	1.2	1.0	1.5	0.7E**	0.5	1.0	1.0	0.8	1.2	
Kicking, biting, hitting, hitting with something that could hurt	0.3	0.2	0.5	1.5***	1.2	1.9	0.9*	0.8	1.1	
Pushing, grabbing, shoving, slapping	1.4	1.2	1.7	1.3*	1.0	1.6	1.4	1.2	1.6	
Threatening to hit with fist, throwing something that could hurt	0.6	0.4	0.8	0.8E	0.5	1.1	0.7	0.5	0.8	

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 7 — end

Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim, most severe type of violence and year, provinces, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019

Most severe type of violence	2019†								
	Women			Men			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
from		to	from		to	from		to	
Beating, choking, threatening to use or using a gun or knife, sexual assault	1.4	1.0	1.8	0.6**	0.4	0.9	1.0	0.7	1.2
Kicking, biting, hitting, hitting with something that could hurt	0.4	0.3	0.7	0.8**	0.6	1.2	0.6	0.5	0.9
Pushing, grabbing, shoving, slapping	1.7	1.2	2.3	0.8**	0.5	1.1	1.2	1.0	1.6
Threatening to hit with fist, throwing something that could hurt	0.7	0.5	1.2	0.5	0.3	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.9

^E use with caution

* significantly different from reference category only ($p < 0.05$)

** significantly different from estimate for women only ($p < 0.05$)

*** significantly different from reference category and estimate for women ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. As information about gender was collected as of 2019, data from earlier cycles are based on sex (i.e., sex at birth) instead of gender (i.e., gender identity or gender expression). Most severe type of violence is calculated differently in this table compared with Table 6; here, it is based on the population of interest as a whole, not victims of spousal violence. Missing responses are not shown but they are included in percent calculations; therefore, responses may not add up to 100%. For comparability over time, trend analysis is limited to the provinces. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

Table 8
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim, physical injury and emotional impact, Canada, 2019

Physical injury or emotional impact	Women†			Men			Total†		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Physical injury									
Yes	39.1	30.4	48.6	22.8*	15.4	32.4	32.5	26.2	39.5
Type of physical injury²									
Bruises	86.9 ^E	70.2	94.9	F	F	F	83.2	70.6	91.1
Cuts, scratches, burns	39.4 ^E	24.9	55.9	F	F	F	43.9	31.3	57.3
Fractures, broken bones	6.8 ^E	3.4	13.4	F	F	F	8.9	4.7	16.2
Miscarriage ³	F	F	F	...	...	...	F	F	F
Internal injuries	15.5 ^E	8.6	26.3	F	F	F	15.8	8.9	26.3
Other	7.0 ^E	2.7	16.7	F	F	F	5.6	2.3	12.8
No	60.3	50.8	69.0	76.8*	67.1	84.3	67.0	59.9	73.3
Emotional impact⁴									
Upset	62.7	53.5	71.0	35.7*	27.2	45.3	51.8	45.1	58.4
Hurt, disappointed	59.2	49.6	68.1	31.5*	22.9	41.6	48.0	41.2	54.9
Angry	52.1	42.8	61.2	31.2*	23.2	40.4	43.6	37.0	50.5
Annoyed	41.2	32.2	50.7	24.6*	16.5	35.1	34.4	28.0	41.5
Lowered self-esteem	41.1	32.8	50.0	21.7*	14.6	30.9	33.3	27.6	39.5
Sleeping problems	42.7	34.1	51.9	16.8*	10.6	25.7	32.4	26.5	38.9
Shock, disbelief	41.9	32.6	51.9	14.6*	9.6	21.6	31.0	24.9	37.9
More cautious, aware	40.3	31.9	49.4	14.4*	9.5	21.2	30.0	24.4	36.1
Depression, anxiety attacks	38.8	30.6	47.6	15.5*	9.4	24.7	29.5	23.8	35.9
Fearful	37.8	29.6	46.9	11.0*	6.3	18.4	27.1	21.7	33.4
Isolated	36.7	28.5	45.8	11.2*	6.9	17.9	26.6	21.3	32.6
Ashamed, guilty	29.1	21.7	37.8	15.1*	9.4	23.3	23.4	18.5	29.3
Increased self-reliance	26.8	19.9	35.0	10.7*	6.3	17.6	20.4	15.7	26.0
Victimized	28.1	20.9	36.6	9.9*	5.6	17.1	20.8	16.1	26.5
Afraid for children	17.6	12.4	24.3	8.6*	4.4	16.1	14.0	10.4	18.4
Suicidal thoughts	13.3	9.0	19.3	5.6*	2.4	12.9	10.3	7.1	14.5
Problems relating to men, women	13.5	9.3	19.2	3.4*	1.2	9.0	9.5	6.7	13.2
Other	2.6	1.1	5.9	F	F	F	2.8	1.5	5.1
Not much	10.7	5.1	21.1	14.8	9.4	22.4	12.9	8.2	19.6
Nothing	7.5	3.5	15.4	22.4*	15.1	31.9	13.3	9.3	18.6

... not applicable

^E use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. In addition to women and men, includes a small number of respondents who identified as gender diverse or did not state their gender.

2. Includes those who were physically injured. Respondents could select as many types of injury that applied in their situation.

3. Includes those whose sex at birth and gender were female.

4. Respondents could select as many emotional impacts that applied in their situation.

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. Missing responses are included in percent calculations. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

Table 9
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim and actions taken, Canada, 2019

Actions taken	Women†			Men			Total‡		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Reported to police									
Yes	22.4	16.5	29.7	14.1	8.0	23.8	19.0	14.7	24.3
Who reported									
Victim reported	71.2 ^E	54.5	83.6	F	F	F	64.1 ^E	49.1	76.8
Someone else reported	28.8 ^E	16.4	45.5	F	F	F	35.9 ^E	23.2	50.9
Satisfaction with police response²									
Satisfied	76.4 ^E	62.4	86.3	F	F	F	73.3 ^E	59.1	83.9
Not satisfied	23.6 ^E	13.7	37.5	F	F	F	26.6 ^E	16.0	40.8
No	76.6	69.2	82.7	85.4	75.8	91.6	80.2	74.8	84.7
Reasons for not reporting to police³									
The incident was a private or personal matter and handled informally	65.0	53.0	75.4	71.1	61.1	79.4	67.8	59.7	75.0
The crime was minor and not worth taking the time to report	59.2	48.1	69.5	62.8	52.1	72.5	61.1	53.2	68.4
No one was harmed	48.7	38.3	59.2	64.0 ⁺	53.3	73.5	55.5	47.7	63.0
No harm was intended	37.5	27.1	49.1	55.9 ⁺	45.3	66.0	44.8	37.3	52.6
Did not want spouse in trouble with the law	46.3	35.4	57.6	38.2	29.1	48.2	43.4	35.7	51.5
Police would not have considered the incident important enough	37.9	28.0	48.8	39.0	29.9	48.9	38.8	31.7	46.4
Did not want others to find out about the victimization	37.2	27.1	48.6	28.5	20.3	38.4	33.3	26.3	41.1
Did not want the hassle of dealing with the police	30.4	22.0	40.3	34.7	25.7	44.9	32.7	26.1	40.1
Feared or did not want the hassle of dealing with the court process	28.7	20.5	38.6	20.2	13.4	29.2	24.9	19.1	31.8
There was a lack of evidence	24.0	16.8	33.2	23.0	15.6	32.7	23.4	18.1	29.8
Police would not have been efficient or effective	23.9	16.3	33.5	19.6	12.7	29.1	22.7	17.2	29.4
Reporting would bring shame and dishonour to the family	22.2	15.1	31.3	19.5	12.6	29.1	20.9	15.8	27.2
Didn't think spouse would be convicted or adequately punished	18.0	11.8	26.3	16.6	10.9	24.5	17.3	12.8	22.9
Fear of revenge by spouse	17.8	11.3	26.7	12.9	7.1	22.2	15.6	11.0	21.7
Felt they would not be believed	13.5	7.9	22.0	18.1	11.4	27.5	15.3	10.8	21.2
The police would be biased	9.5	5.2	16.7	19.3	12.5	28.7	14.3	10.0	20.0
Afraid child protection would take child ⁴	14.1 ^E	6.9	26.7	11.9 ^E	5.3	24.6	13.2	7.8	21.6
Received unsatisfactory service in the past	10.3	5.8	17.7	11.5	6.3	20.1	11.5	7.7	16.9
Dealing with the police could have caused victim trouble with the law	8.2	3.0	20.4	5.0	2.4	10.0	6.8	3.3	13.3
It was reported to another official	F	F	F	F	F	F	3.3	1.4	7.5
For some other reason	12.4	6.2	23.3	F	F	F	8.5	4.7	15.1

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 9 — end
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim and actions taken, Canada, 2019

Actions taken	Women†			Men			Total¹		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Used a formal support service									
Yes	44.3	35.5	53.4	25.6*	17.4	35.9	36.7	30.6	43.2
Type of formal support service⁵									
Counsellor, psychologist, social worker	42.0	33.4	51.2	22.9*	15.1	33.2	34.3	28.3	40.9
Crisis centre, crisis line	14.9	9.8	22.1	4.6*	1.8	11.5	10.8	7.4	15.5
Victim services, witness assistance program	10.6	6.5	16.7	F	F	F	7.4	4.8	11.2
Victim support group, centre	9.8	5.9	16.0	F	F	F	6.1	3.7	9.9
Shelter or transition house	8.4	4.9	14.0	F	F	F	5.6	3.4	9.3
Community, family, cultural centre	5.2	2.8	9.4	F	F	F	4.6	2.7	7.7
Sexual assault centre	1.7	0.5	5.1	F	F	F	1.6	0.6	4.3
Other support group	9.2	5.4	15.2	6.4	2.7	14.4	8.0	5.3	12.1
No	55.5	46.4	64.3	73.1	62.7	81.4	62.7	56.1	68.8
Sought informal support									
Yes	72.1	62.0	80.4	54.9*	44.8	64.6	65.6	58.6	71.9
Type of informal support⁶									
Family member	54.2	44.8	63.3	34.1*	25.2	44.3	46.6	40.1	53.3
Friend or neighbour	49.0	39.9	58.3	36.7	27.1	47.5	44.6	37.8	51.5
Co-worker	18.0	11.6	26.9	20.4	12.9	30.6	18.8	13.8	25.1
Doctor or nurse	23.6	16.5	32.6	6.1*	2.6	13.6	16.6	11.9	22.8
Lawyer	16.5	11.1	23.8	12.3	7.0	21.0	14.8	10.7	20.0
Priest, rabbi, imam or another spiritual advisor	6.1	3.8	9.7	6.5	2.5	15.4	6.2	4.0	9.7
No	27.7	19.4	37.9	43.7*	34.2	53.6	33.8	27.5	40.6

^E use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. In addition to women and men, includes a small number of respondents who identified as gender diverse or did not state their gender.

2. Includes those who personally reported to police.

3. Includes those who did not report to police. Respondents could select as many reasons that applied in their situation.

4. Includes those who had a child in the household.

5. Respondents could select as many formal supports that applied in their situation.

6. Respondents could select as many informal supports that applied in their situation.

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. Missing responses are included in percent calculations. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

Table 10
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim, actions taken and year, provinces, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019

Actions taken	1999								
	Women			Men			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
	from	to	from	to	from	to	from	to	
Reported to police									
Yes ¹	38.2 [*]	34.5	42.0	15.4 ^{**}	12.3	18.9	28.1 [*]	25.5	30.8
Satisfaction with police response²									
Satisfied	68.7	63.1	73.8	57.9	46.9	68.3	66.1	61.0	70.8
Not satisfied	30.1	25.2	35.5	39.9	29.7	51.0	32.5	27.9	37.5
No	61.7 [*]	57.9	65.3	84.6 ^{**}	81.1	87.7	71.9 [*]	69.1	74.4
Used a formal support service³									
Yes	48.5	44.6	52.4	16.7 ^{**}	13.9	20.0	34.4	31.6	37.3
No	48.5	44.5	52.5	80.5 ^{**}	76.9	83.6	62.7	59.7	65.6
Sought informal support⁴									
Yes	81.3	78.0	84.2	56.4 ^{**}	51.5	61.1	70.3	67.3	73.1
No	16.0 [*]	13.3	19.0	40.8 ^{**}	36.1	45.6	26.9	24.2	29.8
Actions taken	2004								
	Women			Men			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
	from	to	from	to	from	to	from	to	
Reported to police									
Yes ¹	36.5 [*]	32.5	40.6	17.4 ^{**}	14.1	21.4	27.8 [*]	25.0	30.7
Satisfaction with police response²									
Satisfied	63.8	57.2	69.9	62.6	50.8	73.1	63.5	57.6	69.0
Not satisfied	35.5	29.4	42.2	32.4 ^E	22.3	44.3	34.6	29.1	40.5
No	62.6 [*]	58.4	66.6	82.1 ^{**}	78.2	85.4	71.5 [*]	68.5	74.3
Used a formal support service³									
Yes	46.7	42.7	50.9	19.5 ^{**}	16.0	23.5	34.3	31.3	37.4
No	52.5	48.4	56.5	79.4 ^{**}	75.3	82.9	64.7	61.6	67.7
Sought informal support⁴									
Yes	83.4 [*]	79.9	86.4	60.0 ^{**}	54.7	65.1	72.7	69.6	75.7
No	15.9 [*]	13.0	19.3	39.0 ^{**}	34.0	44.2	26.4 [*]	23.5	29.5
Actions taken	2009								
	Women			Men			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
	from	to	from	to	from	to	from	to	
Reported to police									
Yes ¹	30.0	25.4	35.1	13.4 ^{**}	9.9	17.9	21.8	18.7	25.4
Satisfaction with police response²									
Satisfied	65.5	54.9	74.7	52.4	36.9	67.5	61.5	52.8	69.5
Not satisfied	34.5	25.3	45.1	40.7 ^E	26.8	56.3	36.4	28.5	45.1
No	68.9	63.8	73.6	85.9 ^{**}	81.2	89.6	77.3	73.7	80.5
Used a formal support service³									
Yes	37.9	33.1	43.0	18.0 ^{**}	14.0	22.7	28.1 [*]	24.9	31.5
No	61.5	56.4	66.3	81.2 ^{**}	76.4	85.1	71.2 [*]	67.8	74.4
Sought informal support⁴									
Yes	79.5	74.7	83.6	56.0 ^{**}	49.4	62.4	67.9	63.6	71.9
No	19.5	15.5	24.3	43.5 ^{**}	37.1	50.1	31.3	27.4	35.6

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 10 — end
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim, actions taken and year, provinces, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019

Actions taken	2014								
	Women			Men			Total		
	95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval		
	percent	from	to	percent	from	to	percent	from	to
Reported to police									
Yes ¹	35.3*	29.6	41.4	24.0***	18.1	31.2	29.1 [†]	24.9	33.7
Satisfaction with police response²									
Satisfied	73.8	64.2	81.5	54.9**	39.2	69.7	65.2	55.9	73.5
Not satisfied	26.1 ^E	18.4	35.7	40.6 ^E	26.7	56.3	32.7	24.7	41.9
No	64.0*	57.9	69.6	76.0***	68.8	81.9	70.6 [†]	66.0	74.8
Used a formal support service³									
Yes	55.8*	49.5	61.9	19.9**	15.2	25.6	36.0	31.7	40.6
No	43.2*	37.2	49.5	79.1**	73.4	83.9	63.0	58.5	67.3
Sought informal support⁴									
Yes	80.4	75.2	84.8	58.4**	51.5	64.9	68.3	63.7	72.5
No	18.6	14.3	23.8	40.6**	34.2	47.5	30.7	26.5	35.3
	2019 [†]								
Actions taken	Women			Men			Total		
	95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval		
	percent	from	to	percent	from	to	percent	from	to
Reported to police									
Yes ¹	22.1	16.2	29.4	13.8	7.7	23.7	18.7	14.3	24.1
Satisfaction with police response²									
Satisfied	F	F	F	F	F	F	73.3 ^E	58.7	84.1
Not satisfied	F	F	F	F	F	F	26.7 ^E	15.9	41.3
No	77.0	69.5	83.1	85.7	75.9	92.0	80.6	75.1	85.0
Used a formal support service³									
Yes	44.2	35.4	53.5	25.4**	17.2	35.9	36.6	30.5	43.2
No	55.7	46.5	64.6	73.2**	62.8	81.6	62.8	56.2	69.0
Sought informal support⁴									
Yes	72.2	61.9	80.6	54.7**	44.5	64.6	65.6	58.5	72.0
No	27.7	19.4	38.0	43.9**	34.4	54.0	33.9	27.6	40.8

^E use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from reference category only (p < 0.05)

** significantly different from estimate for women only (p < 0.05)

*** significantly different from reference category and estimate for women (p < 0.05)

[†] reference category

1. Includes those who personally reported to police and those who said the violence they experienced was reported to police by someone else.

2. Includes those who personally reported to police.

3. For a list of formal support services, see Table 9.

4. For a list of informal supports, see Table 9.

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. As information about gender was collected as of 2019, data from earlier cycles are based on sex (i.e., sex at birth) instead of gender (i.e., gender identity or gender expression). Missing responses are not shown but they are included in percent calculations; therefore, responses may not add up to 100%. For comparability over time, trend analysis is limited to the provinces. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

Table 11
Victims of spousal violence in the past year and the past five years, by victim characteristic and time frame, Canada, 2019

Victim characteristic	Past year			Past five years		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to
Age group (years)						
15 to 24	4.4 ^E	1.6	11.1	10.4 ^{E*}	4.8	20.8
25 to 34	2.7 [*]	1.6	4.3	6.0 [*]	4.5	7.8
35 to 44	1.6 [*]	1.0	2.7	5.9 [*]	4.5	7.5
45 to 54	0.9 [*]	0.6	1.6	3.1 [*]	2.3	4.0
55 and older [†]	0.4	0.3	0.7	1.3	1.0	1.6
Sexual orientation						
Heterosexual [†]	1.2	0.9	1.5	3.4	3.0	3.9
Gay, lesbian, bisexual, sexual orientation n.e.c. ¹	F	F	F	5.3	3.0	9.1
Gay, lesbian	F	F	F	F	F	F
Bisexual	F	F	F	10.3 ^E	5.2	19.4
Sexual orientation n.e.c. ¹	F	F	F	F	F	F
Indigenous identity						
Indigenous	3.0	1.5	6.0	7.5 [*]	4.9	11.1
First Nations	4.1	1.6	10.5	7.3	3.7	13.9
Métis	F	F	F	9.4 [*]	5.2	16.5
Inuit	6.3 ^{E*}	3.9	10.2	15.0 ^{E*}	9.1	23.6
Non-Indigenous [†]	1.2	0.9	1.5	3.4	2.9	3.9
Disability²						
Has a disability	1.7 [*]	1.2	2.5	5.1 [*]	4.2	6.2
Mild or moderate disability	1.5	1.1	2.1	4.9 [*]	4.0	6.1
Severe or very severe disability	2.9	1.3	6.7	5.8 [*]	3.6	9.3
Unknown severity	F	F	F	F	F	F
Does not have a disability [†]	0.9	0.6	1.3	2.7	2.2	3.2
Visible minority						
Visible minority	0.8	0.4	1.9	2.3 [*]	1.4	3.6
South Asian	F	F	F	F	F	F
Chinese	F	F	F	1.9	0.7	5.3
Black	F	F	F	F	F	F
Filipino	F	F	F	F	F	F
Arab	F	F	F	F	F	F
Latin American	F	F	F	F	F	F
Southeast Asian	F	F	F	F	F	F
West Asian	F	F	F	F	F	F
Korean	F	F	F	F	F	F
Japanese	F	F	F	F	F	F
Visible minority n.i.e. ³	F	F	F	F	F	F
Multiple visible minorities	F	F	F	F	F	F
Non-visible minority [†]	1.3	1.0	1.7	3.9	3.4	4.4
Immigrant status						
Immigrant	0.4 [*]	0.2	0.8	1.6 [*]	1.1	2.3
Non-immigrant [†]	1.5	1.1	1.9	4.2	3.7	4.9
Personal income						
Less than \$20,000 [†]	1.9	1.1	3.2	4.3	3.1	6.0
\$20,000 to less than \$40,000	1.0	0.7	1.5	3.2	2.4	4.2
\$40,000 to less than \$60,000	1.2	0.6	2.2	3.4	2.5	4.5
\$60,000 to less than \$80,000	1.2	0.7	2.2	3.5	2.5	4.7
\$80,000 or more	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.2	2.5	4.1

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 11 — end
Victims of spousal violence in the past year and the past five years, by victim characteristic and time frame, Canada, 2019

Victim characteristic	Past year			Past five years		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to
Highest level of education						
High school diploma or less [†]	1.1	0.7	1.9	2.9	2.2	3.6
Trade or college certificate or diploma, or university certificate or diploma below the bachelor's level	1.4	0.9	2.1	3.7	3.0	4.6
Bachelor's degree or above	1.1	0.7	1.6	3.8	3.1	4.8
Place of residence⁴						
Census metropolitan area [†]	1.2	0.9	1.6	3.5	3.0	4.1
Not a census metropolitan area	1.1	0.7	1.8	3.5	2.7	4.4

^E use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

[†] reference category

1. n.e.c.: not elsewhere classified.

2. A person is defined as having a disability if they have one or more of the following types of disability: seeing, hearing, mobility, flexibility, dexterity, pain-related, learning, developmental, memory, mental health-related or unknown. Based on the global severity score, severity classes were established. Severity scores increase with the number of disability types, the level of difficulty associated with the disability and the frequency of the activity limitation. The name assigned to each class is simply intended to facilitate use of the severity score. It is not a label or judgement concerning the person's level of disability.

3. n.i.e.: not included elsewhere.

4. A census metropolitan area (CMA) consists of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major urban core. A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more live in the urban core. To be included in the CMA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the central urban area, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. Reflects where the respondent was living at the time of the survey and not necessarily where the victimization occurred.

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. Missing responses are included in percent calculations. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).

Table 12
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim, victim characteristic and year, provinces, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019

Victim characteristic	1999									
	percent	Women			percent	Men			Total	
		95% confidence interval		to		95% confidence interval		to	95% confidence interval	
		from	to			from	to		from	to
Sexual orientation¹										
Heterosexual	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Gay, lesbian, bisexual, sexual orientation n.e.c. ²	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Indigenous identity³										
Indigenous	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Non-Indigenous	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Disability⁴										
Has a disability	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Does not have a disability	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Visible minority										
Visible minority	7.4 [*]	5.6	9.7	3.7 ^{E***}	2.5	5.5	5.5 [*]	4.4	6.8	
Non-visible minority	8.5 [*]	7.9	9.2	7.2 ^{***}	6.4	7.9	7.8 [*]	7.4	8.3	
Immigrant status⁵										
Immigrant	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Non-immigrant	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Place of residence⁶										
Census metropolitan area	8.9 [*]	8.2	9.8	6.7 ^{***}	5.9	7.6	7.8 [*]	7.3	8.4	
Not a census metropolitan area	7.3 [*]	6.4	8.3	6.5 [*]	5.6	7.6	6.9 [*]	6.3	7.7	
Victim characteristic	2004									
	percent	Women			percent	Men			Total	
		95% confidence interval		to		95% confidence interval		to	95% confidence interval	
		from	to			from	to		from	to
Sexual orientation¹										
Heterosexual	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Gay, lesbian, bisexual, sexual orientation n.e.c. ²	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Indigenous identity³										
Indigenous	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Non-Indigenous	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Disability⁴										
Has a disability	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Does not have a disability	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Visible minority										
Visible minority	3.8 ^E	2.6	5.6	3.8 ^E	2.3	6.2	3.8 ^E	2.7	5.3	
Non-visible minority	7.6 [*]	7.0	8.2	6.4 ^{***}	5.8	7.1	7.0 [*]	6.6	7.5	
Immigrant status⁵										
Immigrant	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Non-immigrant	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Place of residence⁶										
Census metropolitan area	7.0 [*]	6.3	7.8	6.3 [*]	5.5	7.1	6.6 [*]	6.1	7.2	
Not a census metropolitan area	7.6 [*]	6.7	8.7	5.7 ^{***}	4.9	6.6	6.7 [*]	6.1	7.4	

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 12 — continued
Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim, victim characteristic and year, provinces, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019

Victim characteristic	2009									
	percent	Women			percent	Men			Total	
		95% confidence interval		to		95% confidence interval		to	95% confidence interval	
		from	to			from	to		from	to
Sexual orientation¹										
Heterosexual	6.1*	5.5	6.8	5.9*	5.2	6.7	6.0*	5.5	6.5	
Gay, lesbian, bisexual, sexual orientation n.e.c. ²	20.8 ^{E*}	12.3	33.0	F	F	F	20.2 ^{E*}	12.7	30.5	
Indigenous identity³										
Indigenous	15.4 ^{E*}	10.8	21.4	F	F	F	9.5	6.9	13.1	
Non-Indigenous	6.0*	5.4	6.7	6.1*	5.4	6.9	6.1*	5.6	6.6	
Disability⁴										
Has a disability	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Does not have a disability	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Visible minority										
Visible minority	6.9 ^{E*}	4.9	9.6	3.1 ^{E**}	1.7	5.6	5.0*	3.7	6.7	
Non-visible minority	6.3*	5.6	7.0	6.4*	5.7	7.3	6.4*	5.8	6.9	
Immigrant status⁵										
Immigrant	4.9*	3.6	6.6	4.0 ^{E*}	2.8	5.8	4.4*	3.5	5.6	
Non-immigrant	6.8*	6.1	7.6	6.6*	5.8	7.5	6.7*	6.1	7.3	
Place of residence⁶										
Census metropolitan area	6.6*	5.8	7.6	6.4*	5.5	7.4	6.5*	5.9	7.2	
Not a census metropolitan area	5.9	5.0	7.0	5.4*	4.3	6.6	5.6*	4.9	6.5	
Victim characteristic	2014									
	percent	Women			percent	Men			Total	
		95% confidence interval		to		95% confidence interval		to	95% confidence interval	
		from	to			from	to		from	to
Sexual orientation¹										
Heterosexual	3.4	3.0	3.8	4.2 ^{***}	3.6	4.9	3.8	3.5	4.2	
Gay, lesbian, bisexual, sexual orientation n.e.c. ²	10.6 ^E	6.4	17.0	F	F	F	8.0 ^E	5.3	12.0	
Indigenous identity³										
Indigenous	9.7 ^E	6.3	14.5	8.0 ^E	4.7	13.4	8.8	6.4	12.1	
Non-Indigenous	3.3	3.0	3.8	4.1 ^{***}	3.6	4.7	3.7	3.4	4.1	
Disability⁴										
Has a disability	6.1	5.2	7.2	5.6*	4.4	7.1	5.9	5.1	6.8	
Does not have a disability	2.6	2.3	3.1	3.8 ^{***}	3.2	4.5	3.2	2.9	3.7	
Visible minority										
Visible minority	2.5 ^E	1.7	3.7	3.4 ^E	2.1	5.5	3.0	2.1	4.1	
Non-visible minority	3.7	3.3	4.2	4.3*	3.7	4.9	4.0	3.6	4.4	
Immigrant status⁵										
Immigrant	2.8	2.0	3.7	3.0 ^{E*}	2.0	4.3	2.9*	2.2	3.7	
Non-immigrant	3.8*	3.3	4.3	4.6*	3.9	5.4	4.2	3.8	4.6	
Place of residence⁶										
Census metropolitan area	3.3	2.8	3.8	4.3 ^{***}	3.6	5.1	3.8	3.4	4.2	
Not a census metropolitan area	4.1	3.4	4.9	4.1*	3.3	5.2	4.1	3.5	4.8	

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 12 — end

Victims of spousal violence in the past five years, by gender of victim, victim characteristic and year, provinces, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019

Victim characteristic	2019†								
	percent	Women		percent	Men		percent	Total	
		95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval			95% confidence interval	
	from	to	from	to	from	to	from	to	
Sexual orientation¹									
Heterosexual	4.1	3.4	5.0	2.7**	2.2	3.3	3.4	2.9	3.9
Gay, lesbian, bisexual, sexual orientation n.e.c. ²	6.3	3.1	12.2	F	F	F	5.3	3.0	9.2
Indigenous identity³									
Indigenous	7.5 ^E	4.0	13.6	6.2 ^E	2.8	13.5	6.9	4.3	10.9
Non-Indigenous	4.1	3.4	5.0	2.6**	2.1	3.2	3.4	2.9	3.9
Disability⁴									
Has a disability	6.5	5.1	8.2	3.5**	2.5	4.7	5.1	4.2	6.1
Does not have a disability	3.0	2.2	3.9	2.4	1.8	3.1	2.7	2.2	3.2
Visible minority									
Visible minority	3.2	1.6	6.0	1.7	0.9	3.0	2.3	1.5	3.6
Non-visible minority	4.6	3.8	5.4	3.0**	2.5	3.7	3.8	3.3	4.4
Immigrant status⁵									
Immigrant	1.9	1.3	2.9	1.4	0.8	2.4	1.6	1.1	2.3
Non-immigrant	5.0	4.1	6.0	3.3**	2.7	4.1	4.2	3.7	4.8
Place of residence⁶									
Census metropolitan area	4.0	3.2	5.0	2.9	2.3	3.7	3.5	3.0	4.1
Not a census metropolitan area	4.6	3.3	6.4	2.1**	1.5	2.9	3.4	2.6	4.4

.. not available for a specific reference period

^E use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from reference category only (p < 0.05)

** significantly different from estimate for women only (p < 0.05)

*** significantly different from reference category and estimate for women (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Sexual orientation was first included in 2009. In 2009 and 2014, the question on sexual orientation was only asked of those aged 18 and older; as such, those aged 15 to 17 are excluded.

2. n.e.c.: not elsewhere classified.

3. The questions used to measure Indigenous identity changed as of 2009 and are not comparable to previous cycles.

4. A person is defined as having a disability if they have one or more of the following types of disability: seeing, hearing, mobility, flexibility, dexterity, pain-related, learning, developmental, memory, mental health-related or unknown. The questions used to measure disability changed as of 2014 and are not comparable to previous cycles.

5. The question used to measure immigrant status was first included in 2009 and is not comparable to previous cycles.

6. A census metropolitan area (CMA) consists of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major urban core. A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more live in the urban core. To be included in the CMA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the central urban area, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. Reflects where the respondent was living at the time of the survey and not necessarily where the victimization occurred and is based on the classification of CMAs at the time of each cycle.

Note: Spousal violence includes physical and sexual violence. Includes those who are legally married or living common law, and those who are separated or divorced from a legal marriage or common-law union and have had contact with their former partner in the past five years. Spousal relationships include same-gender relationships. As information about gender was collected as of 2019, data from earlier cycles are based on sex (i.e., sex at birth) instead of gender (i.e., gender identity or gender expression). Missing responses are included in percent calculations. For comparability over time, trend analysis is limited to the provinces. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value.**Source:** Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization).