

# Domestic Violence Affects 1 in 3 Russians, Poll Says

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A rally 'For justice for women forced to defend themselves, and for a law on domestic violence,' August 2018 **Sergei Konkov / TASS**

Nearly one-third of Russia's population has come face-to-face with domestic violence in their own families or among acquaintances, according to an independent survey published Friday.

Russia decriminalized certain forms of domestic violence in 2017, a decision that top lawmakers have [said](#) was a mistake two years later. Activists [say](#) the absence of a domestic violence law leaves women vulnerable to abuse at the hands of their partners, which official estimates say happens to one in five women.

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According to the Levada Center polling agency, 31% of Russian respondents have encountered domestic violence — either in their social circles (19%), between their parents (7%) or in their

own families (5%).

“Given the sensitivity of the topic of [domestic] violence in an interview setting, we can assume that the share may be higher in both cases,” Levada [said](#), referring to the 5% and 7% responses.

More than two-thirds (68%) said they’ve never heard of cases of abuse among people they know.

Respondents aged 40-54, respondents with lower education levels and women respondents were most likely to disclose cases of physical violence, the pollster said.

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Levada also asked respondents if they agreed with those who support three young sisters who allegedly murdered their abusive father in a case that has divided Russian society.

Forty-one percent of Russian respondents said they support the Khachaturyan sisters, while 29% didn’t support them. Women respondents were more likely to support them than men, with 47% of women and 33% of men saying they support the sisters.

Meanwhile, official figures [provided](#) to Russian media [say](#) the police have investigated more cases of repeat domestic violence last year than in 2017.

Levada conducted the survey among 1,608 respondents in 50 Russian regions on Aug. 22-28.

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