



The Scottish Women's Convention

Survey on Violence against Women and Girls 2026

The following infographic analyses the results of a survey conducted to seek women's views on a range of issues relating to violence against women and girls. The purpose of this survey was to help shape our response to the Scottish Government consultation on Protection in the Justice System for Women and Girls, as well as other future policies advocating for respect, acceptance and wellbeing for women in Scotland. **Please be aware that this report addresses sensitive topics that some readers might find upsetting.** The survey explored issues such as non-fatal strangulation, spiking, pregnancy, non-harassment orders and online harms. By examining the responses, our findings identify several key trends, concerns, and influences, highlighting areas where greater awareness, education, or support may be needed.

THE SCOTTISH WOMEN'S CONVENTION (SWC)

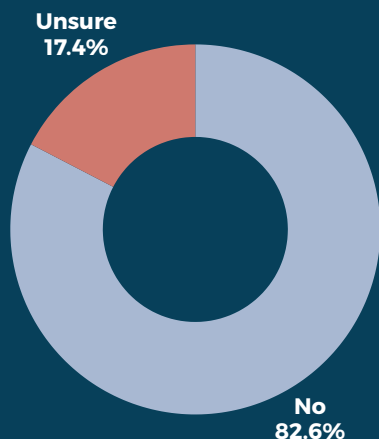
The SWC is funded to engage with women across Scotland to ensure that their views are represented in policy and decision-making processes. The SWC uses the views of women to respond to a variety of parliamentary, governmental, and organisational consultation papers at Scottish, UK and international levels.

The SWC gathers information using different methods, including roadshows, thematic conferences, surveys, and both in-person and online roundtable events. Working together with many other equalities organisations and community groups, we use our broad network to ensure that women from a range of backgrounds are heard and acknowledged. We are continually reviewing innovative ways of engaging with women and developing our trauma-informed and culturally sensitive practice to support vital contributions from as many women as possible.

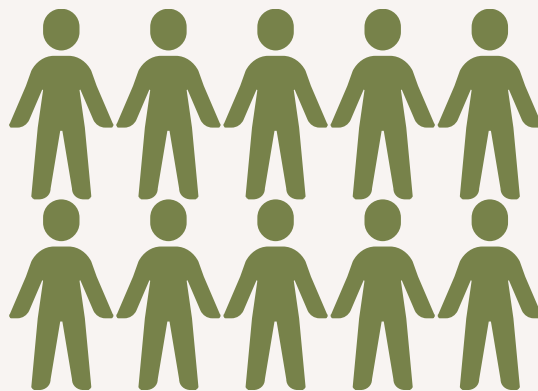


Survey Results

Do you think that the law currently treats non-fatal strangulation (for example, being choked or having your breathing restricted) as seriously as it should?

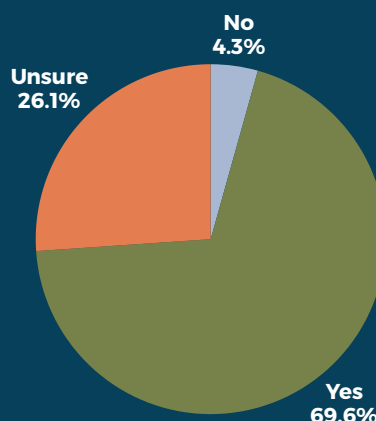


100% of women held the view that it should be illegal to create, or ask someone to create, fake intimate images of a person without their consent.

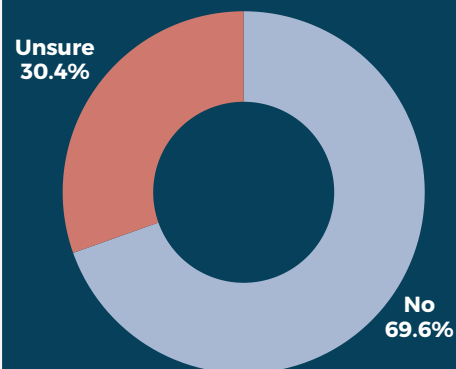


100%
of women felt that it is “very important” that police and courts clearly record when non-fatal strangulation happens in a case.

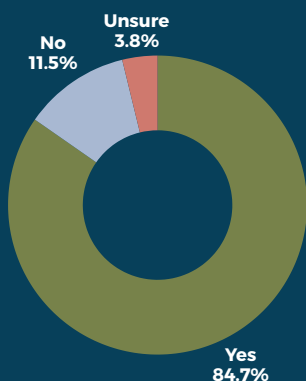
Do you think there should be a specific law just for spiking, rather than relying on existing laws?



Do you think current laws deal well with spiking?



Do you think crimes committed against pregnant women by a partner or ex-partner should be treated as more serious in law?



Women's Experiences

Non-Fatal Strangulation

It's not treated seriously enough.

There are several outcomes that are life altering even if we aren't killed.

The data will help shine a light on how prevalent it is and encourage police and others to take it seriously.

On legislation, police and court records...

It is often regarded as violent assault rather than attempted murder. Violence to restrict breathing should be regarded as an attempt on someone's life.

They always escalate to worse. It's a pattern of behaviour that needs identified.

What more can be done - awareness, responses and prevention...

Support & education for victims, increased penalties for perpetrators, information sharing between support agencies.

Dealing with the root cause such as educating young men and women about toxic masculinity, abuse and violence.

People should be made aware of the physical and psychological damage inflicted by offenders.

A campaign about ALL the risks, not just death.

Women's Experiences

Spiking

I have had alcohol added to my drink without consent, spoke to the police and no action was taken.

I know of many girls who have been spiked but not a prosecution or the incident being taken seriously enough.

It is such a violation and puts victims at high risk, so it should be recognised as its own standalone offence.

On legislation, prosecution and liability...

Better awareness by bar staff - possibly a campaign for hospitality workers to be aware of risks and people in danger.

I think venues should be able to be held liable where they have not taken sufficient care.

Victims need a separate helpline from mainstream policing to report if they have been, or believe that they may have been raped or sexually assaulted following spiking of their food or drink.

Public awareness campaigns should be the same as drink driving.

More awareness and less victim blaming.

Calls for awareness and easier reporting...

Women's Experiences

Pregnancy

I experienced abuse while heavily pregnant at the hands of a partner. Pregnant women are more physically and emotionally vulnerable and often unable to escape. Violence and abuse against pregnant women should be regarded as abuse to both woman and baby (therefore two victims). Baby experiences high cortisol and stress hormones which can affect long term development. There's a physical risk to baby e.g. risk of pre term labour, risk to life of babies.

Additional vulnerability - it should be added as a modifier or an aggravator to the charge.

Non-harassment orders

For some victims I imagine this will be very effective and the desired outcome however it fails to hold the perpetrator accountable via any other means and may give them more space to continue abusive behaviours with a new partner.

If a perpetrator is determined to contact a person a NHO will not prevent them. NHOs rely on victims reporting breaches and they may be too afraid to do so.

Too many women have been murdered when this has been ignored.

None of the above works and tinkering round the edges is a waste of time and money while women and girls continue to live in fear, are terrorised and die by male violence.

Should we have them and how long should they last?

Women's Experiences

Online Harms

“ Men know it is morally repugnant, that is why they are doing it. There are already too few consequences for their behaviour.”

“ It is a major intrusion of their human rights and privacy.”

On regulating technology...

“ The whole technology should be banned to prevent harm to women, children and other vulnerable people.”

“ More accessible and responsive reporting mechanisms by big providers like Google, TikTok etc. Preventative action such as VAWG programmes within schools.”

“ No one needs this technology.”

“ Encourage more recreational time away from technology and encourage safe and responsible use of IT etc. Support and encourage parents to engage positively with their children over the risks of IT.”

On protecting women and girls from online harm...

“ Scottish Government are not doing enough to protect women and girls.”

“ Police and Courts need resources to act when offences are reported.”



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THANK YOU!

Thank you to all of the women who provided their invaluable insight into their experiences, especially considering the difficult nature of this topic. We are forever grateful for the sustained engagement women give to our organisation, and we will continue to utilise the information given to inform Scottish policy-making practice.

SWC Contact Details

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