



EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY **"THE SITUATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN ADOLESCENCE IN** **SPAIN"**

The study entitled "The situation of violence against women in adolescence in Spain" has been promoted, financed and coordinated by the Government Delegation against Gender-based Violence, and carried out by the Preventive Psychology Unit of the Complutense University of Madrid. The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, the Education Departments of the Autonomous Communities and the Autonomous Cities of Ceuta and Melilla have also participated in the project. Its authorship belongs to: María José Díaz- Aguado Jalón (General management), Rosario Martínez Arias (Methodology), Javier Martín Babarro (Technical execution) and Laia Falcón (Background and documentation).

Its **main objective** is to find out the current situation of violence against women in adolescence in Spain, as well as the risk and protection conditions against such violence and the evolution detected when comparing the results obtained in 2020 with those of previous studies, the data of which was collected in 2010 and 2013.

The study on the current situation of adolescents in Spain, as well as on their risk and protection conditions, is based on a representative sample of 13,267 adolescents from 336 schools, distributed over 16 Autonomous Communities, in addition to the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla.

The following is a brief summary of the **MAIN RESULTS**. The study with the detailed results can be downloaded from the website of the Government Delegation against Gender Violence.

1. Current situation of adolescence. General results and definition of indicators

1.1 Gender-based violence within intimate partner relationships

The results obtained in 2020 reflect situations of gender-based violence within intimate partner relationships in which a higher percentage of adolescent girls admit to having experienced, sometime or more frequently, emotional abuse ("insult or ridicule", 17.3%), general abusive control ("decide for me down to the smallest detail", 17.1%) and control through mobile phone (14.9%). 11.1% acknowledge that "they have felt pressured into situations of a sexual nature in which they did not want to participate", 9.6% that they have been made to "feel fear", 8.7% that they have told them that "they were not worth anything" and 8% that the boy who abused them "boasted of said behaviours". When asking about the relationship with the boy who exerted the violence, only 16.9% of the adolescents answered that it was the boy they are currently dating. The rest acknowledge him to be the boy she was dating, wanted to date or who wanted to date her.

Figure 1 shows the results on gender-based violence within intimate partner relationships, which the girls admit to having experienced as victims; and in figure 2, which boys admit to having experienced as aggressors.

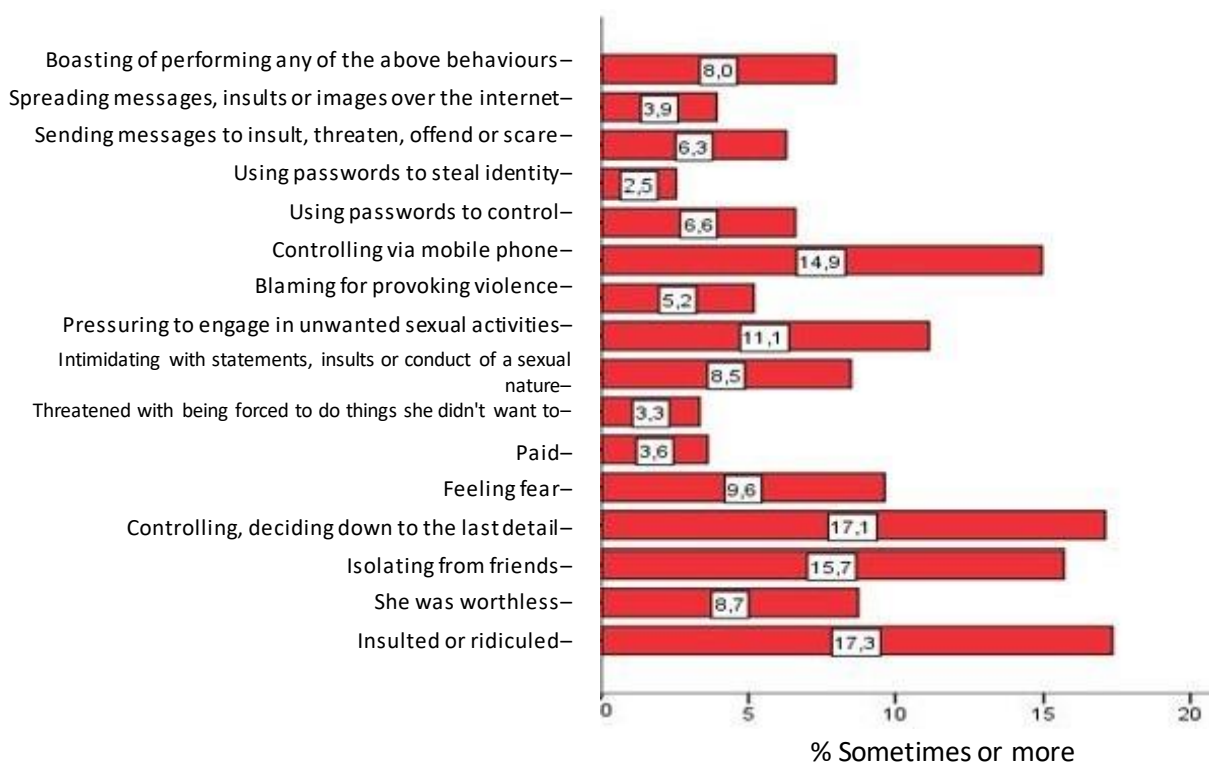


Figure 1. Percentage of girls who acknowledge in 2020 having experienced each situation of gender-based violence sometimes or more frequently

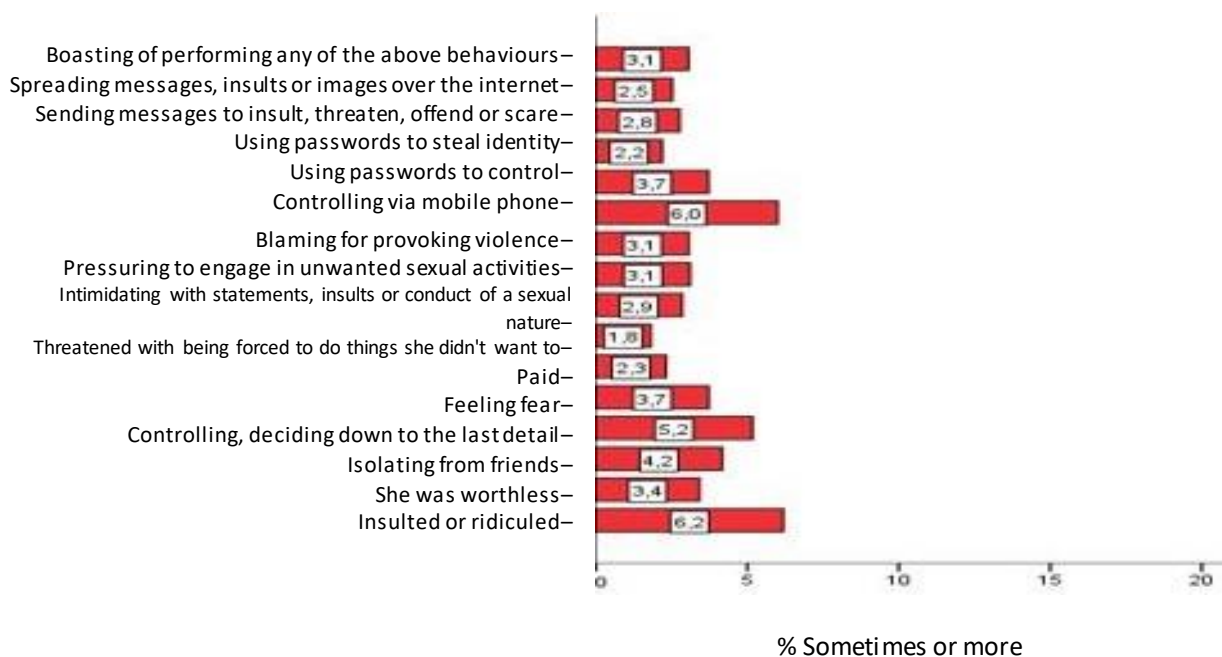


Figure 2. Percentage of boys who acknowledge in 2020 having exercised each situation of gender-based violence sometimes or more frequently



The percentage of boys who admit to having exercised each situation of gender-based violence is significantly lower than the percentage of girls who respond to having experienced them. For example, with respect to situations experienced at some time or more frequently: 2.3% of boys admit that they have “hit her”, compared to 3.6% of girls who admit to having gone through such a situation. 3.1% of the boys responded that “he has pressured her for sexual behaviours in which she did not want to participate”, compared to 11.1% of the girls who responded having felt pressured into such situations. 2.8% of the boys say they have “sent her messages via the Internet or mobile phone in which he insulted, threatened, offended or frightened her”, compared to 6.3% of girls who admit to having received them. Results that reflect a greater difficulty in recognising the situations experienced regarding gender-based violence in the boys who have exercised it than in the girls who have suffered it as victims. When asking about the relationship with the girl towards whom the aggressors directed the recognised situations of gender-based violence, only 20.7% of the boys answered that it was the girl they were currently dating. The rest acknowledge her to be the girl he was dating, wanted to date or who wanted to date him.

1.2 Sexual violence

To the generic question “have you felt pressured for sexual activities in which you did not want to participate?”, 14.1% of the girls answered affirmatively, who in almost all cases (97.4%) acknowledged that the pressure was exerted by a man. Considering this response and that of those who responded that the situation in which they were pressured was ultimately carried out, it is found that 6.4% of all the girls participating in the study admit to having suffered sexual violence.

The responses when asked about the identity of the person who pressured them reflect that most of the pressures are exerted by the boy with whom they date, went out, wanted to go out or who wanted to go out with them (55.7%), followed by those of a non-partner boy (47.6%), a man much older than them (24%) and another person (19.7%). The answers about the age at which they received these pressures reflect that some occurred from a very young age: 2.5% were less than six years old; 5.3% between 6-9 years; 11.6% between 9-12; 65.8% between 13-15; 41.5% between 16-18; and 6.3% between 18 and 20 years old.

Non-partner online sexual harassment situations are experienced by a high percentage of adolescent girls. The situations of this new form of violence against women which a higher percentage of girls between 14 and 20 years old have experienced once or more frequently, are related to showing (48%) or asking for sexual photographs (43.9%); and it stands at 23.4% with respect to receiving online cyber-sex requests. As with other forms of gender-based violence, the percentage of boys who admit to having carried out conduct related to sexual harassment online towards a non-partner girl is clearly lower than the number of girls who admit to having received it. The most frequent situation, recognised by 17.1% of boys, is requesting sexual photographs online. 7.4% of the boys admit that they have asked for cyber-sex online.



Tables 1 and 2 show these results.

Table 1. Situations of online sexual harassment suffered by girls with a non-partner boy

	Never	Once	Twice	Three or more times
I have been requested cyber-sex online	76.6%	8.1%	4.7%	10.7%
I have been asked to continue talking about sex after asking to stop	81.3%	7.6%	4.3%	6.8%
They have spread rumours online about my sexual behaviour	88.4%	5.5%	2.3%	3.8%
I have been asked for sexual photographs of me online	56.1%	12.6%	9.4%	21.9%
I have been shown sexual images online	52.0%	14.8%	10.8%	22.5%
I have received unwanted sexual emails or messages	63.2%	11.5%	7.9%	17.4%

Table 2. Situations of online sexual harassment carried out by boys towards a non-partner girl

	Never	Once	Twice	Three or more times
I have requested cyber-sex online	92.6%	3.1%	1.4%	3.0%
I have asked to continue talking about sex after she asks to stop	96.7%	1.9%	0.6%	0.8%
I have spread rumours online about her sexual behaviour	94.9%	2.8%	1.0%	1.3%
I have asked her for sexual photographs of her online	82.9%	6.7%	3.3%	7.0%
I have shown sexual images online	89.4%	4.3%	2.2%	4.1%
I have sent sexual messages unwanted by her	96.8%	1.4%	0.6%	1.1%

1.3. Identification with the dominance-submission mentality that underlies violence against women

The questionnaires included questions of three types of indicators related to this mentality, about sexist attitudes and justification of violence, stress of sexist gender roles and messages heard from adults in the environment, the results of which are presented below:

1. Sexist beliefs and justification of violence. In most beliefs, the percentage of boys who mostly or strongly agree is three times that of girls. This is reflected, for example, in the following: “a good father should let the rest of the family know who is in charge”, with which 5.4% of boys and 1.3% of girls recognise a high level of agreement, or “it is justified that a man attacks his wife or girlfriend when she decides to leave him” (2.3% and 0.9%, respectively). The beliefs to justify violence that elicit the greatest degree of agreement, high in the case of boys, are: “it is justified to attack the person who has taken what is yours” (18.6% of boys and 4.5% of girls) and “it is okay to hit the person who has offended you” (13.5% and 4%, respectively). These beliefs are closely related to the



traditional male stereotype and can lead to different types of violence, including violence against women, when an offence or assault is perceived to have been received.

2. *Stress from sexist gender roles.* In the 2010 and 2013 studies, a particular resistance to change in the emotional component of sexism had been detected. That is why in 2020 a block of questions was included for the first time on one of the main emotional problems detected in this regard: the stress they feel or would feel when opposing rigid sexist stereotypes, evaluated with questionnaires adapted to the stereotypes of each gender. The results reflect that:

- Situations that contradict the *traditional female role* that produce or would produce a lot of or extreme anxiety in girls are: that your partner “refuses to talk about your problems in the relationship” (44.1%) and “being unable to satisfy the affective needs of other family members” (36.6%). Furthermore, 28.1% of girls acknowledge a lot of or extreme anxiety if they feel “less attractive than before”, which reflects that the pressure linked to the stereotype of the female subject seems more overcome by them cognitively than emotionally. On the other hand, the situations that produce or would produce anxiety in a lower percentage of girls are: “being too tall” (6.9%) and “being tougher, stronger than your boyfriend” (4.4%). Which shows a fairly general elimination of the stereotype that forced women to be weak and fragile.
- Among the situations that contradict the *male chauvinist role* and which the boys recognise to produce or would produce a lot of or extreme anxiety, those of “subordination to women” stand out: “talking to a feminist” (at 13.9%) and “needing your partner to work outside the home to support the family” (at 9.5%).

The aforementioned results reflect the greater sensitivity of girls to detect sexism, as is also manifested in the rest of the questions about this problem. In support of which, it can be interpreted that the correlations between the stress of sexist gender roles with health problems and lack of self-esteem are higher in the case of girls, although they are also significant in boys.

3. *Messages about violence and relationships heard from adults in the environment.* The advice heard most frequently is that which coincides with the values of equality, mutual respect and non-violence. However, two pieces of advice that can increase the risk of gender-based violence continue to be transmitted: “jealousy is an expression of love” (21.9% respond having heard it often or many times) and “to have a good intimate relationship you must find your other half and thus become like one person”; this last advice seems to continue to be widely transmitted, since 39.9% claim to have heard it often or many times.

Boys continue to receive more frequent advice in favour of using violence to resolve conflicts. “If someone hits you, hit them back” has been heard often or many times by 41.2% of boys and 31.1% of girls. Conversely, the girls are the ones who have heard with a slightly higher frequency the messages that refer to intimate partner relationships, both those that can contribute to gender-based violence (such as “jealousy is an expression of love” or “a woman must avoid opposing the man she loves”), as well as those who advise equality (“a good relationship as a couple must be established as equals”).

The results on the dominance-submission mentality reflect that although a large majority of adolescents clearly reject sexism and the justification of gender-based violence, the anxiety they feel or would feel when opposing sexist stereotypes or the justification of violence as a general



form of conflict resolution (with which almost one in five boys clearly agree in 2020), continue to demonstrate important risk conditions, so it is advisable to guide the prevention of violence from a comprehensive perspective that helps to reject all forms violence, with a specific treatment of violence against women. On the other hand, although a clear minority, some cases of justification of gender-based violence are detected to which special attention must be paid.

1.4. Construction of identity and health problems

The construction of an adequate identity is the main evolutionary task during adolescence and represents an important condition of protection against different types of psychosocial risks, including violence against women. In order to evaluate it, four types of indicators have been included, on: the values with which they feel identified, the values of the ideal partner, self-esteem, and physical and psychological health problems, the results of which are presented below:

1. Values with which they feel identified. The main qualities for both boys and girls are: friendliness, intelligence, kindness and sincerity. Very significant differences are observed in the percentages of those who stand out: “defend equality among everyone” (31.8% of girls and 17.1% of boys); “money and possessions” (2.8% of girls and 11.7% of boys) and “physical strength” (2% of girls and 9.5% of boys).

2. Values of the ideal partner. Girls highlight as the three most important values of their partner, above all: sincerity (60.2%), goodness (50.8%) and friendliness (49.1%); and boys, friendliness and physical attractiveness, with very similar percentages (53.8% and 53.5%), followed by sincerity (51.6%). It seems, therefore, that the image of women as an object of physical attractiveness among boys persists. The main differences in the values of the ideal couple of boys and girls in 2020 occur in the percentages of those who highlight physical attractiveness (53.5% of boys and 37.1% of girls), as well as in defending equality among everyone (27.8% of girls and 11.2% of boys).

3. Self-esteem. Boys obtain significantly higher mean scores in self-esteem than girls. In relation to which it can also be interpreted that they are the ones who perceive that they have a better integration in the peer group at school.

4. Physical and emotional health problems. They admit to experiencing both types of problems much more frequently than the boys. Most boys don't experience any of the 11 problems they are asked about. However, the majority of girls admit that they experience the following five problems many times or often: they feel exhausted (68.7%), they are nervous (68.6%), they have a headache (56.8%), they feel sad (54.3) and they have back pain (52.9%). The most frequent problems in them are: feeling exhausted (43.6%) and nervous (41.2%). In the rest of the problems, the percentage of boys who admit to having them frequently is always less than 31%. These physical and psychological health problems are related to lower self-esteem and greater gender role stress, especially among girls.

1.5 Relationship with new technologies: problematic use, risky and protective behaviours

The results obtained in 2020 on these behaviours are summarised below:



- 1) *Most have given personal information that puts their privacy and security at risk*, which could be used to harm them, but the risk of which they seem to be unaware of, through behaviours such as: giving their age (80.2%), giving their own telephone number (75%), giving the name of their school (60%), sharing their location (47%) and giving their home address (40.4%). In these behaviours, the percentage of girls who have performed them is slightly higher than the percentage of boys.
- 2) *Behaviours risking victimisation (sexting, grooming...)*. Among which it is worth highlighting: meeting a boy or a girl who they have met through the internet (32.9%), posting a photo of him or her that his father or mother would not authorise (29.4%), talking about sex with someone they have met through the internet (24.5%), posting a sexual photo of themselves (13.3%), using a webcam when communicating with strangers (9.9%) and posting a photo of their sexual partner (5.2%).
- 3) *Behaviours that increase the risk of violence*. Among which it is worth highlighting: calling someone to annoy them (53.1%), spreading messages in which other people are insulted or offended (25.4%), thus acknowledging having contributed to harassment through new technologies, visiting a website with sexual content (71.5% of boys and 28.8% of girls) and visiting a website with violent content (39% of boys and 15.8% of girls). These behaviours are more frequent among boys than among girls and should demonstrate the risk they pose for different types of violence, and especially for gender-based violence within intimate partner relationships and sexual violence.
- 4) *Protective behaviours*. 75% of the girls and 56.4% of the boys have talked at some time or more frequently with their father or mother about what they do through the internet or on social networks. The need to increase it is clear as a basic condition for the protection of today's adolescents.
- 5) *Risk of addiction to the internet and social networks*. The integration of the 2020 results on the problematic use of the Internet and social networks reflects that girls, at almost all ages, score significantly more than boys in four factors: using it as emotional regulation, cognitive concern for such use, compulsive use and negative consequences in everyday life. It is the boys, on the contrary, who score more in the preference for social interactions through the Internet. It is not surprising that girls are the ones with the highest scores in almost all ages in the general sum of problematic use of the internet and social networks, through which the risk of addiction to ICTs is assessed. These gender differences cease to be significant at the end of adolescence, at age 20.

1.6 Recognised influence of different media in their idea of gender-based violence

Based on what adolescents acknowledge, the main sources of knowledge they have about gender-based violence in 2020 are the internet (75% highlight this), followed by television or film (70.4%). To a lesser extent are: awareness campaigns in the street or public transportation (52.2%), what I have talked about with friends (50.1%), explanations from a teacher in class (43.4%), what I have discussed with friends (41%) and what I have read (40.1%). A special relevance is that 16.8% recognise that what they have seen in their family has had a lot of influence on their idea of gender-based violence. In almost all forms of media for which it is asked, the percentages of girls



who recognise its influence are significantly higher than those of boys who respond this way, with the sole exception of “the explanations of a teacher in class” (which reflects the importance of involving men in the prevention of violence against women so that its effectiveness reaches boys). The differences based on gender are higher in media that involve the active participation of adolescents (internet, reading, talking with their mother, talking with friends) and are minimal with respect to the experiences in intimate partner relationships themselves and the explanations of a teacher in class.

These results show that, although the media and new technologies frequently stand out as risk conditions for gender-based violence, they also provide important tools to eradicate it. They also reflect the special relevance of school activities to reach both girls and boys.

1.7 The role of the school in preventing violence against women from an adolescent perspective

The main results obtained in 2020 in relation to the educational proposals included in the State Pact against Gender-based Violence of 2017 are presented below:

- 1) *Activities to build equality and prevent sexism.* Most of the students acknowledge having worked in class, at least once a week, on the following activities or topics: participating “in teams made up of boys and girls” (71.6%), trying to “resolving conflicts that arise in class in a fair way” (59.3%), “the role of feminism in advancing towards equality between men and women” (57.4%), “what is machismo and how to prevent it” (51.8%) and “the role of women in the topics we study” (51.2%).
- 2) *The prevention of gender-based violence.* 47.8% of the students admit to remembering that their school has worked on “the problem of violence that some men exert against women as their partner or ex-partner”. The most common school procedures for this objective are usually workshops or conferences (77.2%), followed by the teacher's explanation (73.4%), the viewing of videos (72.6%) and to a lesser extent teacher explanations (54.2%) and teamwork (53%). Only 35.1% acknowledge having carried out the most effective type of activity so that the rejection of gender-based violence is incorporated into their identity: teamwork developing their own proposal on how to prevent it. These activities are carried out especially in 3rd and 4th year of Secondary. In this sense, it should be kept in mind that the average age of initiation of relationships in 2020 is 13.3 years (13.6 in the case of girls and 13.05 in that of boys); and that the fact of starting them earlier increases the risk of experiencing gender-based violence, especially among boys.
- 3) *Affective-sexual education for equality.* To the question “Do you remember your school working on sexuality?” 51.7% of adolescents answered affirmatively. A vast majority of those who acknowledge having discussed sexuality state that all the topics that are asked were included. The highest percentages occur in medical-type objectives: “prevention of the infection of diseases” (94.5%) and of “unwanted pregnancies” (89.7%). The least covered topics are: “what to do so that my right to sexual freedom is respected” (69.5%), “other types of affective-sexual diversity” (69.7%), “how can machismo influence sexuality” (72.3%) and “how to avoid situations of risk of sexual abuse” (74.9%). These results reflect the need to increase measures that allow the extension of affective-sexual education programmes for equality, so that they reach the entire population in the best conditions, from the standpoint of respect to sexual freedom, as a fundamental part of respect for



human rights, and which include the prevention of situations of abuse, helping to overcome machismo and violence against women in this area as well.

- 4) *Prevention of risks derived from ICTs.* 52.5% of adolescents remember having worked in school on this objective. In other words, almost half of adolescents between the ages of 14 and 20 (47.5%), who have not worked in school on how to use ICTs well, lack this important protection condition. Those who responded that their school has worked on this issue seem to have worked in a widespread way to prevent the main risks, with the exception of the use of pornography, a behaviour that considerably increases the risk of violence against women and to which more attention should be paid to prevention programmes, which should also involve families to encourage communication with their children about what they do and what happens to them on the internet and social networks.

2. Types of situations regarding gender-based violence and risk and protection conditions

The consequences of violence depend on its severity and repetition. That is why it is very important to analyse how the 16 situations of gender-based violence within intimate partner relationships that the girls admit to having experienced and the boys to have exercised are combined. An analysis that makes it possible to clearly differentiate three groups, with different risk and protection conditions, around which prevention should be oriented.

2.1 Three situations detected among girls:

- *Group one, without violence.* This is made up of 62.8% of the adolescent girls. It is characterised by not having experienced situations of abuse in their partner. The set of results allows us to consider this group as having *good protection against violence against women.*
- *Group two, psychological victimisation and control.* This is made up of 31.7% of the adolescent girls. It is characterised by having sometimes experienced abusive behaviour in their partner, especially situations of psychological abuse and control. The set of results obtained allows us to consider this group as having *medium protection against violence against women.*
- *Group three, multiple and frequent victimisation.* This is made up of 5.5% of the adolescent girls. It is characterised by having frequently experienced gender-based violence and of different types: psychological abuse, control abuse, through ICTs, physical and sexual assaults. The set of results obtained allows us to consider this group as having *high risk against violence against women.*

2.2 Three situations detected among boys:

- *Group one, without gender-based violence within intimate partner relationships.* This group includes 83.1% of the boys. It is characterised by not having exercised situations of abuse with their partner. The set of results allows us to consider this group as having *good protection against the risk of exercising violence against women.*
- *Group two, with psychological violence.* This group includes 14.2% of the boys. It is characterised by having sometimes exercised behaviours of psychological abuse and control within intimate partner relationships. The set of results allows us to consider this



group as having *intermediate protection against the risk of exercising violence against women*.

- *Group three, abusers, with multiple and frequent victimisation*. This group includes 2.7% of the boys. It is characterised by having frequently exercised situations of abuse of different types: psychological, controlling, physical, sexual and through new technologies. The set of results allows us to consider this group as having *high risk of exercising violence against women*. Their average age at the start of relationships is 12.39 years, significantly earlier than the rest of the boys.

2.3 Relationship between intimate partner violence and other forms of violence against women

There is a relationship between having experienced gender-based violence within intimate partner relationships in adolescence and the other two forms of violence against women evaluated:

- *Non-partner online sexual harassment*. There is a statistically significant relationship between the type of exposure to gender-based violence within intimate partner relationships and the six situations of non-partner online sexual harassment for which it is asked (the girls if they have received it and the boys if they have exercised it). The relationship between these two forms of violence against women is also reflected in the fact that those who have experienced gender-based violence within intimate partner relationships (GBV) in more than one relationship (with their current partner and with a previous partner) have also experienced more sexual harassment online than those who only experienced GBV in one relationship.
- *Sexual violence*. There is a relationship between feeling pressured into unwanted sexual situations and the GBV that girls admit to having suffered. The percentages of girls who have received pressure for sexual situations in which they did not want to participate are 7.5% in the group that has not experienced GBV, 22% in the group that has experienced psychological GBV, and 44.8% in the group that has experienced multiple and frequent violence.

2.4 Differences in indicators of well-being and socio-emotional development between the three groups

There is a statistically significant relationship between having experienced gender-based violence within the intimate partner relationship and all the types of well-being and socio-emotional development indicators evaluated. The meaning of these differences is summed up below:

1. *Sexism and justification of violence*. The risk of boys exercising GBV increases with their identification with sexism, the justification of violence as a way to resolve conflicts and the justification of gender-based violence. Said identification also increases the risk of experiencing gender-based violence with girls, although the relationship between these variables is greater in the case of boys. It has also been found that sexist attitudes and justification of violence are important risk factors for the repetition of gender-based violence in more than one relationship, both in girls, as victims, and in boys as aggressors.

2. *Stress from sexist gender roles*. The results make it possible to highlight the two types of sexist gender role stress (due to subordination to women and intellectual inferiority) among the main risk factors of gender-based violence by boys, since those who acknowledge having exercised multiple



forms of GBV and frequently show more stress, followed by the group that has exercised psychological GBV; and, finally, the group that has not exercised such violence. There is also a relationship, although of a lesser magnitude, between the two types of stress evaluated in them (due to lack of physical attractiveness and due to lack of relational acceptance) and the fact of having suffered GBV, finding that those who have experienced multiple forms of and frequent GBV are those who show the greatest stress, followed by those who have experienced psychological GBV; and, finally, the group that has not experienced such violence.

3. Messages heard in the family setting and gender-based violence. The group of boys who admit to having exercised multiple forms of and frequent GBV have heard messages in favour of the dominance of men over women in an intimate partner relationship much more frequently than the other two groups, the differences being somewhat greater with the group that has not exerted gender-based violence. The three following messages stand out in this regard: “women should avoid opposing the man they love”, “it is convenient that the man be a little superior to the woman ...” and “jealousy is an expression of love”. The differences in the messages that advise using violence as a reaction are oriented in the same direction, although these are of lesser magnitude. In the messages expressed positively, in favour of equality and alternative solutions to violence, there are also differences in the expected sense, although less than those observed in the messages in favour of violence and, above all, the man's dominance over the woman. In some of the messages, the group of boys who admit to having exercised psychological violence occupies an intermediate position between the other two, although closer to the group that has not exercised gender-based violence. Also among girls, those who have suffered gender-based violence in their partner, and especially those who have experienced it more frequently and seriously, respond to having heard sexist messages more frequently, about men's dominance over women and in favour of the use of violence, than those who have not experienced GBV; although, as with the other aforementioned indicators of sexism, the differences in the girls are of less magnitude than those observed in the boys. Messages that can encourage such violence in boys and make it difficult for girls to detect situations of gender-based violence and get out of them as of the first sign of abuse. Results that reflect where they have been able to learn to identify themselves with the dominance-submission model that leads to violence against women, as well as the need to involve families in the prevention of these problems.

4. Values with which they feel identified. The differences reflect a greater identification with ethical values (such as friendliness, kindness or the defence of equality) among those who have not experienced GBV, to the detriment of other values (such as physical attractiveness, physical strength, money or possessions, power or fame), more prominent by those who have experienced GBV. Among the girls, there are differences in 9 of the 12 values that are asked. Those who have not experienced GBV do not emphasise physical attractiveness and being a leader in groups as much, but rather kindness, friendliness and the defence of equality. The differences regarding money and possessions are significant between the three groups: the more violence, the more this attribute is mentioned. Among boys, the main differences occur between the group with multiple forms of GBV, which differs from the other two groups in emphasising money and possessions, as well as physical strength, and emphasising intelligence less. There are differences between the three groups associated with the severity of the violence that they acknowledge to have exercised in the percentages of those who highlight values related to power and fame. In the opposite direction, the differences are aimed at three ethical values of special relevance: kindness,



friendliness and defending equality among all people. Furthermore, the group of boys who did not exercise GBV mentions physical attractiveness significantly less than the other two groups.

5. *Values of the ideal partner.* In the case of girls, the group that has not experienced violence differs from the other two in mentioning money and possessions and being a leader less in the groups and in mentioning friendliness more. There are also significant differences in the percentages of those who highlight physical strength as a value of the partner, more in the group that has experienced multiple forms of GBV, followed by the group that has experienced psychological GBV and, finally, the group without violence. Among the boys, the main differences are observed between the group that has exercised multiple forms of GBV, which presents lower percentages in the values: friendliness, kindness, sincerity, intelligence; showing higher percentages in most of the rest of the values that are asked, with the sole exception of physical attractiveness, in which it is the group that has exercised psychological GBV that shows the highest percentage, with no significant differences between the other two groups.

6. *Self-esteem and integration in the peer group.* Both girls and boys who have experienced GBV, the former as victims and the latter as aggressors, and especially those who have experienced it more severely and frequently, have a slightly lower average score in self-esteem than those who have not experienced such violence. The relationship between these two variables can be two-way, that is to say, violence lowers self-esteem (especially among victims) and lower self-esteem increases the risk of violence. On the other hand, the boys who acknowledge having exercised multiple forms of GBV are perceived to have a lower level of integration in the peer group at school than the other two groups of boys. A result that can be interpreted as a consequence of the relationship between abuse and isolation, which could also be two-way.

7. *Health problems.* Both problems are more frequent in girls who have experienced violence against women, and especially among those who have experienced multiple forms of and frequent violence. Differences that can be interpreted as an expression of the damage that violence has on the health of the victims. Among boys, the differences only become significant among the group that has not exercised GBV, which has fewer health problems, rather than the other two groups (which do not differ from each other).

8. *Consumption of pharmaceuticals and other drugs.* Gender-based violence experienced in adolescence, in the girls as victims and in the boys as aggressors, is related to a higher consumption of all the substances that are asked about: tranquillisers, antidepressants, tobacco, alcohol, cannabis and other illegal drugs. The higher frequency of use is especially accentuated among those who have experienced the most serious and frequent violence.

9. *Risky behaviours with ICTs.* Among the girls, the lowest score in the three factors including these behaviours (disclosure of personal information, risk of sexual victimisation and risk of violence) is the group that has not experienced GBV, followed by the group that has at any point experienced psychological violence and finally the group that has experienced multiple forms of and frequent violence. This same pattern is observed among boys in the first two factors (disclosure of personal information and risk of sexual victimisation), while in the risk factor for violence, the differences are only significant between the group that has not experienced GBV and the other two groups.



10. *Risk of Internet addiction.* The severity of gender-based violence in intimate partner relationships experienced by girls, as victims, and boys, as aggressors, is related to a more problematic use of the Internet, with a higher risk of addiction, in the following factors: cognitive concern for said use and negative consequences in daily life. In the case of girls, the use of the Internet to regulate emotions is also related to the severity of the GBV suffered; and in the case of boys, the preference for online social interaction. In the other two factors, the differences only become statistically significant between the group that has not experienced gender-based violence in intimate partner relationships and the other two groups, which do not differ from each other. In addition, both girls and boys who have experienced multiple forms of and frequent GBV are overrepresented among those who dedicate more than four hours a day to online social networks, the maximum time offered as a possible response.

11. *Time spent studying, reading and academic career.* Girls who have suffered GBV, and especially those who have experienced it more severely and frequently, are overrepresented among those who dedicate less than an hour or nothing to studying a day. Boys who have exercised multiple forms of and frequent GBV are overrepresented among those who do not study at all and those who do not spend any daily time reading beyond academic texts. Differences that can be related to the fact that experiencing GBV in adolescence increases the risk of school problems, such as absenteeism, repetitions of grade and lower expectations of continuing to study, especially among those who have experienced such violence more repeatedly and in multiple forms, both in boys and girls.

12. *Working on the topics proposed in the State Pact at school reduces the risk of experiencing gender-based violence, in girls as victims and in boys as aggressors.* The percentage of those who remember having worked in school on each of the three topics proposed in the State Pact (gender-based violence in intimate partner relationships, sexual education and use of ICTs) is higher among those who have not experienced GBV, followed by the group who has sometimes experienced violence of a psychological nature and, lastly, from the group with multiple forms of and frequent GBV. The differences are greater among the boys, with the percentages of those who remember having worked on these issues in the group that has exercised multiple forms of and frequent GBV (between 15.1% and 20.4%, depending on the subject) being very much a minority, multiplying by three the percentage of those who remember said work in the group that has not exercised GBV.

3. Evolution between 2010, 2013 and 2020

To find out the evolution during the last decade, equivalent samples were selected from the 15 Autonomous Communities that participated in the studies carried out in 2010, 2013 and 2020, resulting in a total sample of 26,334 adolescents, aged between 14 and 20 years, 7,120 teachers and 641 representatives of the Management Teams of the schools.

3.1. Changes in gender-based violence

The statistically significant differences in the indicators on violence within intimate partner relationships evaluated through the same questions in 2010, 2013 and 2020 are presented below:



1) *Between 2010 and 2013 there was a clear increase in gender-based violence experienced by adolescents in Spain.* This conclusion can be reached both by the increases in the percentages of girls who acknowledged having experienced eight of the twelve situations of abuse that were asked about since 2010, as well as the changes in the percentages of boys who acknowledged having exercised six of these situations. The increase in percentages between 2010 and 2013 was of greater magnitude in the case of the situations in which the girls acknowledged having experienced it as victims, than in the situations in which the boys acknowledged having acted as aggressors. The analysis of the relationship between said change and the rest of the results obtained in the 2013 study led to relating it, fundamentally, to the increase in the use of new technologies to exercise abuse, as well as to the rest of the changes detected in intimate partner relationships attributable to ICTs.

2) *Between 2013 and 2020 there was a clear decrease in gender-based violence within intimate partner relationships experienced by adolescents in Spain.* This conclusion allows us, firstly, to achieve the significant decrease in the percentages of girls who acknowledged having experienced the eight situations of abuse in which there had been increases between 2010 and 2013, as well as in the three situations of gender-based violence through ICTs evaluated for the first time in 2013. As evidence of the decrease in gender-based violence between 2013 and 2020, it is also worth considering the significant decrease in the percentage of boys who acknowledged having engaged in 10 of the 15 situations of abuse for which they were asked under the same terms in both studies. To assess the decrease in gender-based violence in intimate partner relationships between 2013 and 2020, it should be taken into account that the use of ICTs (to which the increase was related in the previous period) is much higher in 2020 than in 2013 and that among the situations of gender-based violence that show a significant decrease are three of the five situations of gender-based violence exercised through said technologies: “controlling her via mobile phone”, “using her passwords to control her” and “using her passwords to impersonate her identity”, both through what the girls admit to having suffered as well as what the boys admit to having exercised.

3) *Between 2010 and 2020, there is a significant decrease in control violence.* The general decrease in gender-based violence observed in 2020 (compared to 2013) leads to placing the level of control violence at levels significantly lower than in 2010 in two of the most frequent situations recognised by girls: “he has controlled me by deciding for me down to the smallest detail” and “he has isolated me from friends”. On the other hand, statistically lower percentages are observed in 2020 than in 2010 in nine of the situations of abuse that boys admit to having exercised. The change is of greater magnitude in psychological violence and control: “controlling by speaking on her behalf down to the smallest detail”, “isolating her from friends” and “insulting and ridiculing her”. The fact that two of these situations coincide with the most relevant changes detected through what the girls respond makes it possible to highlight them as indicators of the progress made during the last decade in the prevention of gender-based violence through control. In this sense, it should be kept in mind that most of the awareness campaigns aimed at adolescents on gender-based violence have focused on control violence in recent years; and that, according to the results obtained in 2020, “awareness campaigns on the street or in public transport” are highlighted by both adolescents and teachers as one of the main influences on their idea of gender-based violence (according to the results obtained in this study as well as in the research on “Minors and gender violence”, 2020).



3.2. Changes in sexist attitudes and justification of violence

The results reflect a significant decrease in the last decade in the identification of adolescents in Spain with the dominance-submission mentality that leads to gender-based violence, which occurs mainly between 2013 and 2020. Although in the three years evaluated, the girls show a greater rejection of this mentality than the boys, the advance is significant in both groups and of greater magnitude among the boys. Results that can be related to the decrease in gender-based violence in intimate partner relationships between 2013 and 2020, detected through the situations that girls acknowledge having suffered as victims and boys having acted as aggressors.

3.3. Changes in the values with which they identify and in the ideal partner

The comparison between values could only be made between 2013 and 2020, detecting as main differences:

- 1) *Values by which they would like to be identified.* There is a significant increase in both boys and girls of ethical values, related to equality, kindness and justice, to the detriment of other values, such as physical attractiveness or being a famous person. The greatest difference occurs in the increase in the value of seeking equality among all people, which occurs both in boys (from 12.5% to 17.1%) and especially in girls (from 15.6% to 31.8%).
- 2) *Values of the ideal partner.* The changes that are observed between 2013 and 2020 in the ideal partner are closely related to those that occur with respect to the values by which they would like to be identified, increasing in both cases ethical values, in relation to equality, kindness and justice, to the detriment of other values, such as physical attractiveness or being a famous person. The most important change is, again, the increase in the value seeking equality among all people that occurs in boys and, above all, in girls. In the girls, it goes from being highlighted by 10.1% in 2013 to 27.8% in 2020. In the boys, from 6% to 11.2% respectively.

3.4. Changes in risky online behaviour

In 2013, a block of questions on online risky behaviours was included for the first time, which was expanded with new questions in 2020. The comparison of the results obtained in 2013 and 2020 in the questions posed in both studies in the same way reflects a very significant increase in 12 of the 13 risk behaviours that were asked, with the sole exception of using a webcam when communicating with strangers, which decreases. The analysis of the changes in the three factors into which these behaviours are grouped reflects that:

- *Online behaviours of disclosure of personal information.* The average score obtained by the entire group in 2020 is significantly higher than that of 2013. The increase is higher in girls than in boys.
- *Risky online sexual victimisation behaviours.* The average score on this factor is higher in 2020. Boys obtain significantly higher mean scores in self-esteem than girls. The increase in these behaviours between 2013 and 2020 is higher in girls.
- *Risky online violence behaviours* The average score increases in 2020 for both boys and girls. They show higher scores on this factor in both 2013 and 2020.



The aforementioned results reflect that, with the growing use of the internet and social networks, adolescents have also increased certain behaviours that can give a potential bully information, photos or videos with which to coerce them. The results obtained when asked if they have worked in the school on how to use the internet and social networks well reflect that 52.5% of adolescents remember said work and that those who respond this way have less risk of exercising (in the case of boys) and to suffer (in the case of girls) gender-based violence. Hence the need to extend school prevention of ICT risks to the entire population.

3.5. Changes in the influence they attribute to different media on their idea of gender-based violence

The comparison of the importance that adolescents attribute to each medium in their idea of gender-based violence during the decade evaluated reflects that:

- 1) *Changes related to new technologies.* The influence of the internet increases significantly between 2010-2013 and 2020 and the influence of what they have read decreases (in books, brochures, press, etc.); changes parallel to that produced in society as a whole as a consequence of digitisation, which are more pronounced among adolescents who have grown up with ICTs.
- 2) *The role of the school.* Between 2010-2013 and 2020, there is a low-magnitude decrease regarding the influence attributed to the explanations of a female teacher in class or to teamwork; and a decrease of medium magnitude to the explanations of a male teacher in class.
- 3) *The role of the family.* Increases in 2020 compared to 2010-2013: the influence attributed especially to: what they have discussed with their mother; second, to what they have seen in their family; and also (although to a lesser extent), what they have discussed with their father.
- 4) *Relationships among peers.* The influence attributed increases considerably in 2020 compared to 2010-2013: first, to what they have talked about with female friends; second, to what they have talked about with male friends.

The growing influence attributed in recent years to what has been talked about with friends and in family contexts reflects an important advance in overcoming the taboo that prevented talking about this topic with those closest to them. Changes that can be related to the significant decrease in gender-based violence in adolescents between 2013 and 2020.

In relation to the changes previously stated, it is worth considering those found when addressed with the same question among the teaching staff. In which it is reflected that the influence of the following media in their idea of gender-based violence increases from 2010 compared to 2013 and increases again in 2020: internet, training courses (both initial and permanent), work groups and what is discussed with their father or mother. In the opposite direction are the changes in the influence of the written press, radio and television. The influence of specialised books and experts is significantly greater in 2020 than in the 2010-2013 period.



3.6. Changes in the distribution of daily time

The main differences detected in the distribution of daily time in adolescents in Spain in the decade evaluated are summarised below:

- 1) The time spent watching television decreases very significantly, especially between 2013 and 2020, for both girls and boys.
- 2) With regard to video games, there are two stages: the first (2010-2013), with a slight increase in responses that reflect less time; and the second, between 2013 and 2020, in which the percentages of those who dedicate more than two hours a day increase compared to the previous stage. The changes are significant in both girls and boys, and especially in the boys, who in the three moments evaluated respond that they dedicate much more time to this activity.
- 3) In the *time dedicated to studying*, the percentage of those who dedicate more than three hours a day to this activity increases significantly between 2010 and 2020, both in girls and in boys. However, they are the ones who spend more time on this activity in the three years evaluated.
- 4) The *time spent participating on social networks online* increased between 2010 and 2013 and, above all, between 2013 and 2020. The main increase is concentrated among those who respond that they dedicate more than three hours a day to this activity. In all the years evaluated, the percentage of girls who responded this way is higher than the percentage of boys, differences that increase throughout the decade and are very important in 2020.
- 5) *Browsing/watching videos and downloading online*, two types of activity that also increased between 2010 and 2013 and increased again between 2013 and 2020.
- 6) *Reading novels, comics...* The percentages of those who do not dedicate any time or less than one hour a day to this activity increased between 2010 and 2013 and increased again between 2013 and 2020; as well as those of the responses that reflect reading more than two hours in 2020 compared to the previous years evaluated.
- 7) In the daily time spent *playing sports*, the clearest difference is the increase in percentages between those who dedicate more than three hours a day, which occurs in boys and girls, although in all the years evaluated the percentage of boys who do more than two hours a day of sport is considerably higher; and that of girls among those who do nothing or less than an hour.

3.7. Changes in the messages of the family setting

The results obtained reflect as the main difference a very significant decrease between 2013 and 2020 in two frequent messages about intimate partner relationships related to gender-based violence: “jealousy is an expression of love”, in which control violence is justified, and “to have a good relationship with a partner you must find your other half and thus become like one person”, in which love is associated with the nullification of individuality. It is noteworthy that the lowest frequency with which they have heard the message about jealousy occurs both in girls, and, especially, in boys. These changes should be related to the decrease in control gender violence that occurs between 2013 and 2020, evaluated through the situations that girls acknowledge as victims and boys as aggressors.



Regarding the messages related to violence or its alternatives, the main difference is observed in the advice “if someone hits you, hit them back”. The percentage of adolescents who have listened to it frequently increases significantly between 2013 and 2020 in both boys and, especially, girls. A worrying result, which highlights the need to involve families in the eradication of violence as a form of conflict resolution, replacing it with procedures that prevent or stop it from its inception, as well as the need for the construction of equality to be aimed at eradicating the problems that sexism imposes on each gender (violence in men and submission in women) and not its generalisation.

3.8 Changes in school activities for the construction of equality

A comparison of student responses in 2010, 2013 and 2020 reflects that the six equality-building activities that were asked in the three studies increased from 2010 to 2013 and from 2013 to 2020. The largest changes occur between 2013 and 2020 in the following three activities: “we work on what machismo is and how to correct it”; “activities are carried out on the role of women in the topics we study”; and “we work in class in teams made up of girls and boys”.

In the same direction of the results obtained through the students, those observed through the teachers are oriented when comparing their responses in 2010, 2013 and 2020, according to which:

- 1) *The quality of the relationship between male and female students improves*, as perceived by the teaching staff in six of the thirteen indicators evaluated. Significant changes occur surrounding questions about how both girls and boys feel in these relationships, as well as around cooperative work in mixed teams.
- 2) *The percentage of teachers who respond that they frequently carry out “activities specifically aimed at the prevention of violence” and “critically analyse the image that the media presents about men and women” has increased.*
- 3) *Teacher-student relations have improved between 2013 and 2020*, without significant differences between 2010 and 2013. This conclusion allows us to reach the results obtained in two factors that integrate situations about trust and communication, as well as about coexistence and motivational teaching.

The global nature of these results reflects that the schools in Spain have in recent years been increasing the activities aimed at the proactive construction of equality and the prevention of sexism, proposed in the State Pact, although it is necessary to increase efforts so that this incorporation becomes widespread.

3.9. Changes in the prevention of gender-based violence from school

47.8% of the students admit to remembering that their school has worked on “the problem of violence that some men exert against women as their partner or ex-partner”. The comparison made with equivalent samples in the answer to this question reflects similar percentages between 2010 and 2013, as well as a statistically significant increase (of 8 percentage points) between 2013 and 2020 in the percentage of adolescents who remember having addressed this problem at school. To assess the importance of this result, it should be taken into account that in the three studies carried out (in 2010, 2013 and 2020), having dealt with the problem of gender-based violence in school significantly reduces the risk of exercising or suffering such violence in intimate partner relationships during adolescence; and that in the study “Minors and gender-based



violence” published in 2020, it has been found that it also reduces the risk of intergenerational reproduction of violence in girls who have been exposed to gender-based violence against their mother.

The comparison of the answers given by the teachers in 2010, 2013 and 2020 about the activities carried out the previous year to prevent gender-based violence, reflect a significant increase in 2020, compared to 2010/2013, in the percentage of those who carried out four of the seven activities for which they are asked: explain the subject, through videos with advertisements or media reports, through film, as well as through teamwork so that students can develop their own proposals on how to prevent it. In teamwork activity, the significant increase occurred between 2010 and the 2013-2020 period. The percentage of those who responded to having distributed written material on this topic in 2010 is significantly higher than in 2013 and 2020. In individual work on this topic, no significant changes are observed.

In all the years evaluated, the teachers who have worked on the prevention of gender-based violence assess its effectiveness very positively. Since 2010, more than 70% of the teachers who have worked on it estimate that it has been rather or very effective in achieving the 10 objectives that are being asked about. The most significant increases in the number of teachers who consider it rather or very effective in influencing participating students occur in the following three objectives:

- 1) *Developing a more mature concept of love and its limitations*, with an increase in 2020 compared to 2013/2010.
- 2) *Knowing how to detect the first manifestations of abuse in one's partner and how it evolves*, with an increase in 2020 compared to 2013-2010.
- 3) *Detecting violence in other couples and helping to stop it*, with an increase between 2010 and 2013 and again between 2013 and 2020.

3.10 The relationship of changes in adolescence and educational contexts with those of society as a whole

The decrease in gender-based violence detected between 2013 and 2020 seems to be closely related to other changes that occurred in that period in: adolescence, families, school and society as a whole.

In adolescence, the changes produced in: the reduction of sexism, the reduced justification of gender-based violence and the greater importance given to “the defence of equality among all people”, as a priority value with which to identify and for one's ideal partner.

In families, changes in messages about intimate relationships are especially significant, eradicating stereotypes about the dominance of men over women and replacing them with messages in favour of equality. The influence that adolescents attribute to what they have discussed with their mother and father on their idea of gender-based violence has also increased significantly. This reflects significant progress in overcoming the taboo that prevented talking about this topic within the family.



The role of the school is reflected in multiple indicators evaluated through adolescents, teachers and management teams, in which it is evident that the activities developed to build equality and to prevent violence against women have been increasing.

These changes seem to be part of a general transformation that affects society as a whole, as has also been stated on the streets, in art, in the media and in the State Pact against Gender-based Violence of 2017.

The recognition of the advances detected in the construction of equality and the prevention of gender-based violence should not prevent the acknowledgement, in addition, that there are still many adolescents who experience such violence, that the changes are minor in more serious forms of violence, that it is necessary to extend school prevention so that it reaches the entire population under the optimal conditions (currently, half of adolescents do not remember it), involving more families in said prevention, that the existing risks through new technologies are very frequent and serious and it is also necessary to prevent other forms of violence against women, paying special attention to sexual violence in its different manifestations, including online sexual harassment, which affects a very high percentage of adolescents.