

## **Ending Violence Against Women and Girls:**

## **Experiences and Attitudes of 16 year olds in Northern Ireland**

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## Key Findings

1. **91% of young males and 96% of young females have experienced one or more violent acts or behaviours** at some point in their lifetime
2. 76% of all young people reported having unwanted comments about their physical appearance
3. Young females experience **disproportionately more** violent acts and behaviours than young males
4. **Young people who are not religious or those whose religion is other than Catholic or Protestant report disproportionately more experiences of violent acts and behaviours** than those who identify themselves as Catholics or Protestants
5. **Young people with disabilities experience disproportionately more** violent acts and behaviours than those who do not have disabilities
6. **Young people who identify with a sexual orientation other than heterosexual experience disproportionately more** violent acts and behaviours than those who identify themselves as heterosexual
7. **Almost one in five young males believe** that posting jokes or nasty comments of a sexual nature on social media (19%), or cat calling, wolf whistling and shouting at someone in the street (18%) **are acceptable behaviours**
8. **More than half of young females personally know someone who has** touched, hugged or kissed a girl or woman without her agreement (57%)
9. **Four in ten young males personally know someone who has** posted a joke or made nasty comments of a sexual nature on social media about a girl or a woman (41%), or someone who has shared intimate photos or videos of a girl or woman without her agreement (40%)

## 1. Background

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a worldwide problem and a violation of fundamental human rights. The victims often suffer the consequences for years to come, experiencing psychological distress or physical health problems. In order to promote the protection of women and girls against violence, the Council of Europe had undertaken a series of initiatives and campaigns across Europe. Following this, the Istanbul Convention, which is a legal framework produced by the Council of Europe to prevent and end VAWG, was brought into being. It proposes standards for the governments to tackle VAWG, structured around four pillars of prevention; protection of victims and witnesses; prosecution of perpetrators; and integrated policies. The UK government signed up to the Istanbul Convention in June 2012 and ratified it (brought into law) in July 2022. It will come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022.

Following England, Scotland and Wales, which all have national strategies for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls (England: 2021, Scotland: updated in 2017, Wales: updated in 2022), The Executive Office (TEO) in Northern Ireland is designing the Equally Safe Strategy: A Strategy to End Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG). Strategies are informed by evidence gathered from many sources, one strand being research. To help inform the development of the strategy, TEO commissioned a set of 31 questions to be included in the 2022 Young Life and Times (YLT) Survey.

## 2. Methods

The YLT Survey is an annual survey run by Access Research Knowledge (ARK). ARK is a social policy hub, established in 2000 by researchers at Ulster University and Queen's University Belfast. Every year, ARK administer the survey to a nationally representative sample of 16-year-old boys and girls living in Northern Ireland.

In 2022, due to the demand for questions in the YLT Survey, the survey was split into two versions; the VAWG module and some other questions were included in only one version of the survey, which was offered to 1,055 respondents and at least one VAWG item was completed by 1,034 respondents, which hereafter in this report is considered the 'overall sample' or 'all respondents'. The VAWG section of the survey was introduced by the following paragraph:

*"The next few questions are about your understanding of gender-based violence, especially, but not only, violence against women and girls. By 'acts of violence' we mean any criminal offences or any words or behaviours which hurt or cause fear or anxiety to a victim or which humiliate or belittle them".*

Respondents were then asked 31 questions related to VAWG, divided into three sections:

- 1) **Personal experience of violent acts and behaviours** (18 items)
- 2) **Perceived acceptability of violent acts and behaviours** (six items)
- 3) **Personally knowing someone who has done violent acts and behaviours** (seven items)

This report presents findings for the overall sample and by the following Section 75 categories:

- Gender
  - Statistics are presented for males and females.
  - Statistics on respondents who identified as other than male or female, are not reported due to small numbers.
- Religion
  - Statistics are presented for Catholics; Protestants; and respondents with No/Other religion.
  - There was a small number of respondents in the 'Other' religion category. For disclosure purposes, they were grouped with the 'No religion' category.

- Disability
  - Statistics are presented for respondents with and without disabilities.
  - Disability was defined in the survey as “any physical, mental or developmental/sensory health condition/illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more”, which “reduce(s) the respondent’s ability to carry out day-to-day activities”.
- Sexual orientation
  - Statistics are presented for heterosexual respondents and respondents with other sexual orientation.
  - The YLT survey does not directly ask about sexual orientation. This information was inferred from respondents’ gender and their sexual attraction.
  - The other sexual orientation category includes all respondents who did not fall into the category of being heterosexual. They indicated being attracted to the same sex, both sexes, or no one. More granular analysis, beyond heterosexual vs. other sexual orientation, was not possible due to the low numbers in the other sexual orientation categories.

The remaining five Section 75 categories are not included in this report due to: not being relevant as all respondents were 16 years old (age, marital status); insufficient quality of the data (racial group); a question being asked only in the other version of the survey (political opinion); or a question not being asked at all (dependants).

The focus of this report is on experience of violence and not perpetration.

### 3. Personal experience of violent acts and behaviours

Respondents were asked if they have personally experienced any of the 18 different types of violent acts and behaviours presented to them. These questions aimed to establish the prevalence of violent or abusive experiences within the study sample.

**Survey question:** *“Regardless of your gender, have you ever personally experienced any of the following?”* (18 types of violent acts and behaviours were presented to respondents as shown in Figure 1 below)

**Response options:** Never/Rarely/Sometimes/Often

(Please note that certain response options were merged for specific analyses)



**Figure 1. Percentage of all respondents who have experienced violent acts and behaviours**

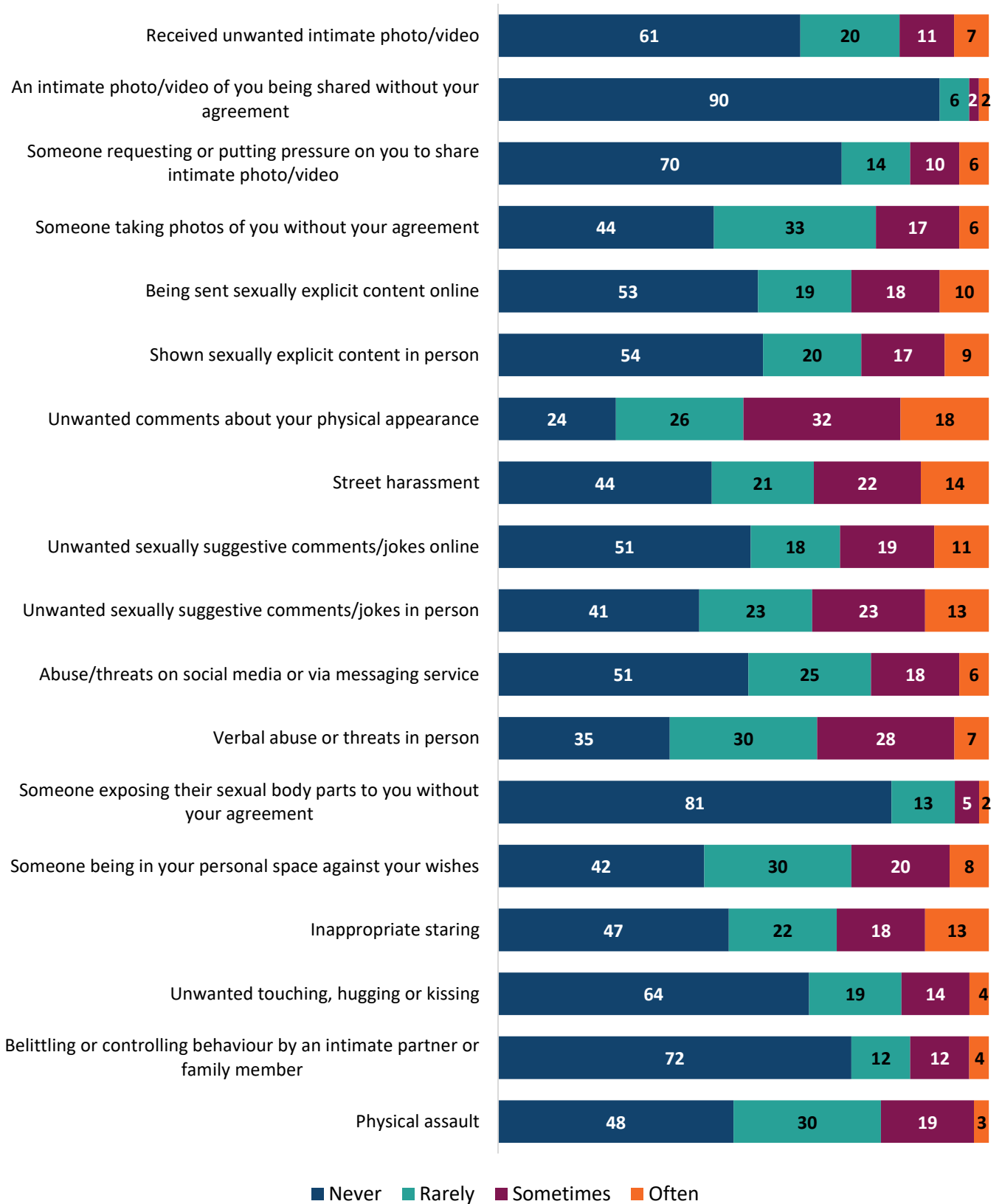


Figure 1 shows that the most frequently experienced violent act or behaviour by all respondents was unwanted comments about their physical appearance. Of all respondents, 18% experienced it 'often' and a further 32% experienced it 'sometimes'. Also frequently experienced was street harassment, for example, cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting, reported by 14% as 'often' and a further 22% as 'sometimes'. Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes in person were reported by 13% of respondents as 'often' and a further 23% as 'sometimes'; and verbal abuse or threats in person, reported by 7% as 'often' and a further 28% as 'sometimes'. The least frequently reported was an intimate photo/video of them being shared without their agreement, with 10% of respondents ever experiencing this.

### 3.1 Experiencing violent acts and behaviours at least once

This section looks at the **proportion of respondents who experienced each type of violent act or behaviour at least once in their lifetime** (this means they answered 'rarely', 'sometimes' or 'often').

For ease of interpretation, the experiences are grouped, based on similarities, as follows:

#### **Receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos:**

- Received an unwanted intimate photo/video
- An intimate photo/video of you being shared without your agreement
- Someone requesting or putting pressure on you to share an intimate photo or video
- Someone taking photos of you without your agreement
- Being sent unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos online
- Being shown unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos in person

#### **Verbal abuse and inappropriate comments:**

- Unwanted comments about your physical appearance
- Street harassment, for example, cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at someone in the street
- Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes online

- Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes in person
- Abuse or threats on social media or via messaging service, for example, Snapchat or Instagram
- Verbal abuse or threats in person

**Unwanted inappropriate attention:**

- Someone exposing their sexual body parts to you without your agreement
- Someone being in your personal space against your wishes
- Inappropriate staring
- Unwanted touching, hugging or kissing

**Coercive control:**

- Belittling or controlling behaviour by an intimate partner or family member

**Physical assault:**

- Physical assault, for example, being hit, punched, pushed, slapped

### 3.1a All respondents

Looking at all acts of violence and behaviours together, the majority of respondents (94%) reported having experienced at least one act of violence or behaviour against them at some point in their lifetime. Table 1 shows, for each act or behaviour, the proportion of respondents who experienced it at least once.

**Table 1. Percentage of all respondents who have personally experienced violent acts and behaviours at least once in their lifetime**

Behaviour/Act of violence	All respondents
<b>Receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos:</b>	
Received an unwanted intimate photo/video	39%
An intimate photo/video of you being shared without your agreement	10%
Someone requesting or putting pressure on you to share an intimate photo or video	30%

<b>Behaviour/Act of violence</b>	<b>All respondents</b>
Someone taking photos of you without your agreement	56%
Being sent unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos online	47%
Being shown unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos in person	46%
<b>Verbal abuse and inappropriate comments:</b>	
Unwanted comments about your physical appearance	76%
Street harassment, for example, cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at someone in the street	56%
Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes online	49%
Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes in person	59%
Abuse or threats on social media or via messaging service, for example, Snapchat or Instagram	49%
Verbal abuse or threats in person	65%
<b>Unwanted inappropriate attention:</b>	
Someone exposing their sexual body parts to you without your agreement	19%
Someone being in your personal space against your wishes	58%
Inappropriate staring	53%
Unwanted touching, hugging or kissing	36%
<b>Coercive control:</b>	
Belittling or controlling behaviour by an intimate partner or family member	28%
<b>Physical assault:</b>	
Physical assault, for example, being hit, punched, pushed, slapped)	52%

As shown in Table 1, respondents most commonly reported having experienced (at least once) unwanted comments about their physical appearance (76%) and verbal abuse or threats in person (65%). The least commonly experienced were an intimate photo/video of them being shared without their agreement (10%) and someone exposing their sexual body parts to them without their agreement (19%).

### **Receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos**

Over half of respondents had someone take a photo of them without their agreement (56%) at least once. A similar proportion had been shown unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos online (47%) or in person (46%). Two in five respondents (39%) had received an unwanted intimate photo/video, while three in ten had experienced someone requesting or putting pressure on them to share an intimate photo or video. One in ten had an intimate photo or video of them shared without agreement.

### **Verbal abuse and inappropriate comments**

All the acts or behaviours in the verbal abuse section had been experienced at least once by around half (49%) or more respondents, with three quarters having experienced unwanted comments about their physical appearance (76%) and two thirds experiencing verbal abuse or threats in person (65%).

### **Unwanted inappropriate attention**

More than half of respondents had experienced someone being in their personal space against their wishes (58%) at least once, while 53% had experienced inappropriate staring. Just over a third (36%) had experienced unwanted touching, hugging or kissing. One in five respondents (19%) had experienced someone exposing their sexual body parts to them without their agreement.

### **Coercive control**

Around three in ten respondents (28%) had experienced belittling or controlling behaviour by an intimate partner or family member at least once.

### **Physical assault**

Around half of respondents (52%) had experienced physical assault at least once.

### 3.1b Gender

Looking at all acts of violence and behaviours together, the majority of males (91%) and females (96%) reported having experienced at least one act of violence against them at some point in their lifetime and this gender difference was statistically significant.

**Table 2. Percentage of respondents who have personally experienced violent acts and behaviours at least once in their lifetime by gender**

Behaviour/Act of violence	Females	Males	Difference
<b>Receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos:</b>			
Received an unwanted intimate photo/video	52%	20%	S
An intimate photo/video of you being shared without your agreement	10%	9%	NS
Someone requesting or putting pressure on you to share an intimate photo or video	40%	15%	S
Someone taking photos of you without your agreement	54%	57%	NS
Being sent unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos online	59%	29%	S
Being shown unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos in person	52%	36%	S
<b>Verbal abuse and inappropriate comments:</b>			
Unwanted comments about your physical appearance	83%	66%	S
Street harassment, for example, cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at someone in the street	75%	30%	S
Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes online	54%	40%	S
Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes in person	64%	50%	S
Abuse or threats on social media or via messaging service, for example, Snapchat or Instagram	50%	47%	NS
Verbal abuse or threats in person	60%	69%	S
<b>Unwanted inappropriate attention:</b>			
Someone exposing their sexual body parts to you without your agreement	25%	11%	S
Someone being in your personal space against your wishes	59%	55%	NS
Inappropriate staring	67%	33%	S
Unwanted touching, hugging or kissing	43%	26%	S

Behaviour/Act of violence	Females	Males	Difference
<b>Coercive control:</b>			
Belittling or controlling behaviour by an intimate partner or family member	34%	18%	S
<b>Physical assault:</b>			
Physical assault, for example, being hit, punched, pushed, slapped	46%	59%	S

Note. S indicates a statistically significant difference between males and females and NS indicates that the difference was not statistically significant (Further explanation is provided in [Technical notes](#) in Section 6 of this report).

As shown in Table 2, there were statistically significant differences between males and females' experiences of most types of violent acts and behaviours. Where significant differences were found between males and females, a higher percentage of females compared to males reported experiencing these acts of violence and behaviours, with the exception of verbal abuse or threats in person and physical assault, which were experienced by a higher percentage of males.

Females most commonly reported having experienced (at least once) unwanted comments about their physical appearance (83%), and this was the second most experienced act or behaviour for males (66%). While three quarters of females experienced street harassment, for example, cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at someone, 30% of males experienced this.

Males most commonly reported having experienced (at least once) verbal abuse or threats in person (69%), compared with 60% of females.

While two thirds of females had experienced inappropriate staring, one third of males had experienced this. Just over half of females (52%) had received an unwanted intimate photo/video while one in five males had received this. Around three in five females (59%) had been sent an unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos online, while three in 10 males (29%) had been sent this.

The only types of experiences where males and females did not differ significantly were an intimate photo/video of them being shared without their agreement; someone taking photos of them without their agreement; abuse or threats on social media or via messaging service, for example, Snapchat or Instagram; and someone being in their personal space against their wishes.

### 3.1c Religion

Looking at all acts of violence and behaviours together, the majority of Catholics (93%), Protestants (92%) and those with No/Other religion (95%) reported having experienced at least one of these at some point in their lifetime. These differences were not statistically significant.

**Table 3. Percentage of respondents who have personally experienced violent acts and behaviours at least once in their lifetime by religion**

Behaviour/Act of violence	Catholics	Protestants	No/Other religion	Difference: Catholic v No/Other Religion	Difference: Protestant v No/Other Religion
<b>Receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos:</b>					
Received an unwanted intimate photo/video	34%	38%	44%	S	NS
An intimate photo/video of you being shared without your agreement	8%	11%	10%	NS	NS
Someone requesting or putting pressure on you to share an intimate photo or video	27%	31%	32%	NS	NS
Someone taking photos of you without your agreement	54%	52%	60%	NS	NS
Being sent unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos online	43%	45%	51%	S	NS
Being shown unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos in person	40%	44%	51%	S	NS
<b>Verbal abuse and inappropriate comments:</b>					
Unwanted comments about your physical appearance	75%	70%	79%	NS	S
Street harassment, for example, cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at someone	57%	51%	59%	NS	NS



Behaviour/Act of violence	Catholics	Protestants	No/Other religion	Difference: Catholic v No/Other Religion	Difference: Protestant v No/Other Religion
Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes online	48%	44%	52%	NS	S
Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes in person	57%	53%	63%	NS	S
Abuse or threats on social media or via messaging service, for example, Snapchat or Instagram	49%	45%	52%	NS	NS
Verbal abuse or threats in person	61%	61%	70%	S	S
<b>Unwanted inappropriate attention:</b>					
Someone exposing their sexual body parts to you without your agreement	18%	16%	22%	NS	NS
Someone being in your personal space against your wishes	54%	53%	65%	S	S
Inappropriate staring	53%	48%	55%	NS	NS
Unwanted touching, hugging or kissing	36%	30%	41%	NS	S
<b>Coercive control:</b>					
Belittling or controlling behaviour by an intimate partner or family member	26%	24%	34%	S	S
<b>Physical assault:</b>					
Physical assault, for example, being hit, punched, pushed, slapped	47%	48%	59%	S	S

Note. S indicates a statistically significant difference between the two religious groups and NS indicates that the difference was not statistically significant (Further explanation is provided in [Technical notes](#) in Section 6 of this report). Please note that Catholics and Protestants did not differ from each other significantly on any of the violent acts or behaviours.

Table 3 shows the proportions of Catholics, Protestants and respondents with No/Other religion who experienced each of the 18 different acts of violence or behaviours on at least one occasion. There were no significant differences between Catholics and Protestants on any of the acts of violence or behaviours presented in Table 3.

Catholics and those with No/Other religion differed significantly from each other on seven of the 18 experiences, as shown in Table 3, with a significantly higher proportion of respondents with No/Other religion reporting each of these experiences. The largest differences between the two religious groups were found on physical assault (Catholics: 47%; No/Other religion: 59%), being shown unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos in person (Catholics: 40%; No/Other religion: 51%) and someone being in your personal space against your wishes (Catholics: 54%; No/Other religion: 65%).

Protestants and those with No/Other religion differed significantly from each other on eight of the 18 experiences, as shown in Table 3, with a significantly higher proportion of respondents with No/Other religion reporting these experiences. The acts or behaviours with the biggest percentage points difference were someone being in your personal space against your wishes (Protestants: 53%; No/Other religion: 65%), physical assault (Protestants: 48%; No/Other religion: 59%), and unwanted touching, hugging or kissing (Protestants: 30%; No/Other religion: 41%).

The violent act or behaviour reported by the highest percentage of respondents in each of the religion categories was unwanted comments about their physical appearance (Catholics: 75%, Protestants: 70%; and No/Other Religion: 79%). Verbal abuse or threats in person was the second highest reported, with 61% of Catholics, 61% of Protestants and 70% of respondents with No/Other religion reporting this.

### **3.1d Disability**

Looking at all acts of violence and behaviours together, the majority of respondents with disabilities (94%) as well as those without disabilities (94%) reported having experienced at least one act of violence against them at some point in their lifetime.

**Table 4. Percentage of respondents who have personally experienced violent acts and behaviours at least once in their lifetime by disability**

<b>Behaviour/Act of violence</b>	<b>With disabilities</b>	<b>Without disabilities</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos:</b>			
Received an unwanted intimate photo/video	53%	37%	S
An intimate photo/video of you being shared without your agreement	13%	9%	NS
Someone requesting or putting pressure on you to share an intimate photo or video	44%	28%	S
Someone taking photos of you without your agreement	59%	55%	NS
Being sent unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos online	60%	45%	S
Being shown unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos in person	58%	44%	S
<b>Verbal abuse and inappropriate comments:</b>			
Unwanted comments about your physical appearance	80%	75%	NS
Street harassment, for example, cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at someone	66%	55%	S
Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes online	61%	47%	S
Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes in person	72%	57%	S
Abuse or threats on social media or via messaging service, for example, Snapchat or Instagram	64%	48%	S
Verbal abuse or threats in person	76%	63%	S
<b>Unwanted inappropriate attention:</b>			
Someone exposing their sexual body parts to you without your agreement	40%	16%	S
Someone being in your personal space against your wishes	70%	57%	S
Inappropriate staring	69%	51%	S
Unwanted touching, hugging or kissing	56%	34%	S
<b>Coercive control:</b>			
Belittling or controlling behaviour by an intimate partner or family member	47%	26%	S

Behaviour/Act of violence	With disabilities	Without disabilities	Difference
<b>Physical assault:</b>			
Physical assault, for example, being hit, punched, pushed, slapped	61%	51%	S

Note. S indicates a statistically significant difference between respondents with disabilities and those without. NS indicates that the difference was not statistically significant (Further explanation is provided in [Technical notes](#) in Section 6 of this report).

As shown in Table 4, both respondents with disabilities and without disabilities most commonly reported having experienced (at least once) unwanted comments about their physical appearance (with disabilities: 80%, without disabilities 75%), verbal abuse or threats in person (with disabilities: 76%, without disabilities: 63%), and unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes in person (with disabilities: 72%, without disabilities: 57%).

There were statistically significant differences between respondents with and without disabilities on 15 of the 18 experiences; the two groups did not differ significantly on the following acts and behaviours: an intimate photo/video of them being shared without their agreement, someone taking photos of them without their agreement and unwanted comments about their physical appearance.

For the acts of violence and behaviours where significant differences were found between the two groups, a higher percentage of respondents with disabilities, compared to those without disabilities, reported having experienced these in all cases.

Two in five respondents with disabilities experienced someone exposing their sexual body parts to them compared with 16% of respondents without disabilities. Over half of respondents with disabilities (56%) reported unwanted touching, hugging or kissing compared with a third of respondents without disabilities (34%). Almost half of respondents with disabilities (47%) reported belittling or controlling behaviour by an intimate partner or family member compared with a quarter of those without disabilities (26%).

### 3.1e Sexual orientation

Looking at all acts of violence and behaviours together, the majority of heterosexual respondents (93%) and respondents with other sexual orientation (96%) reported having experienced at least one act of violence against them at some point in their lifetime. This difference was not statistically significant.

**Table 5. Percentage of respondents who have personally experienced violent acts and behaviours at least once in their lifetime by sexual orientation**

Behaviour/Act of violence	Heterosexual	Other sexual orientation	Difference
<b>Receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos:</b>			
Received an unwanted intimate photo/video	35%	50%	S
An intimate photo/video of you being shared without your agreement	8%	14%	S
Someone requesting or putting pressure on you to share an intimate photo or video	26%	41%	S
Someone taking photos of you without your agreement	53%	65%	S
Being sent unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos online	43%	59%	S
Being shown unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos in person	40%	60%	S
<b>Verbal abuse and inappropriate comments:</b>			
Unwanted comments about your physical appearance	73%	83%	S
Street harassment, for example, cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at someone	51%	70%	S
Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes online	44%	61%	S
Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes in person	54%	73%	S
Abuse or threats on social media or via messaging service, for example, Snapchat or Instagram	46%	59%	S
Verbal abuse or threats in person	61%	74%	S
<b>Unwanted inappropriate attention:</b>			
Someone exposing their sexual body parts to you without your agreement	15%	29%	S

Behaviour/Act of violence	Heterosexual	Other sexual orientation	Difference
Someone being in your personal space against your wishes	52%	75%	S
Inappropriate staring	47%	68%	S
Unwanted touching, hugging or kissing	29%	57%	S
<b>Coercive control:</b>			
Belittling or controlling behaviour by an intimate partner or family member	22%	44%	S
<b>Physical assault:</b>			
Physical assault, for example, being hit, punched, pushed, slapped	49%	60%	S

Note. S indicates a statistically significant difference between heterosexual respondents and respondents with other sexual orientation. NS indicates that the difference was not statistically significant (Further explanation is provided in [Technical notes](#) in Section 6 of this report).

As shown in Table 5, there were significant differences between the two groups on all the violent acts and behaviours. A significantly higher proportion of respondents with other sexual orientation experienced these compared to heterosexual respondents.

Unwanted comments about their physical appearance (heterosexual 73%; other sexual orientation: 83%) had the highest proportion of respondents saying they had experienced them at least once. Unwanted touching, hugging or kissing was reported by 57% of respondents with other sexual orientation compared with three in ten heterosexual respondents (29%). Three quarters of respondents with other sexual orientation reported having experienced someone being in their personal space against their wishes, compared with half of heterosexual respondents (52%). Belittling or controlling behaviour by an intimate partner or family member was experienced by 44% of respondents with other sexual orientation, compared with heterosexual respondents (22%).

## 3.2 Experiencing violent acts and behaviours ‘sometimes’ or ‘often’

This section presents the most frequent experiences, as reported by respondents. **Percentages reflect the proportion of respondents who indicated that they have experienced each type of violent act or behaviour ‘sometimes’ or ‘often’.** Respondents who ‘rarely’ or ‘never’ experienced these acts and behaviours are not included in this section.

Considering all the violent acts and behaviours together, 76% of all respondents experienced at least one of these ‘sometimes’ or ‘often’.

### 3.2a All respondents

#### Receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos

**Figure 2. Percentage of all respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos**

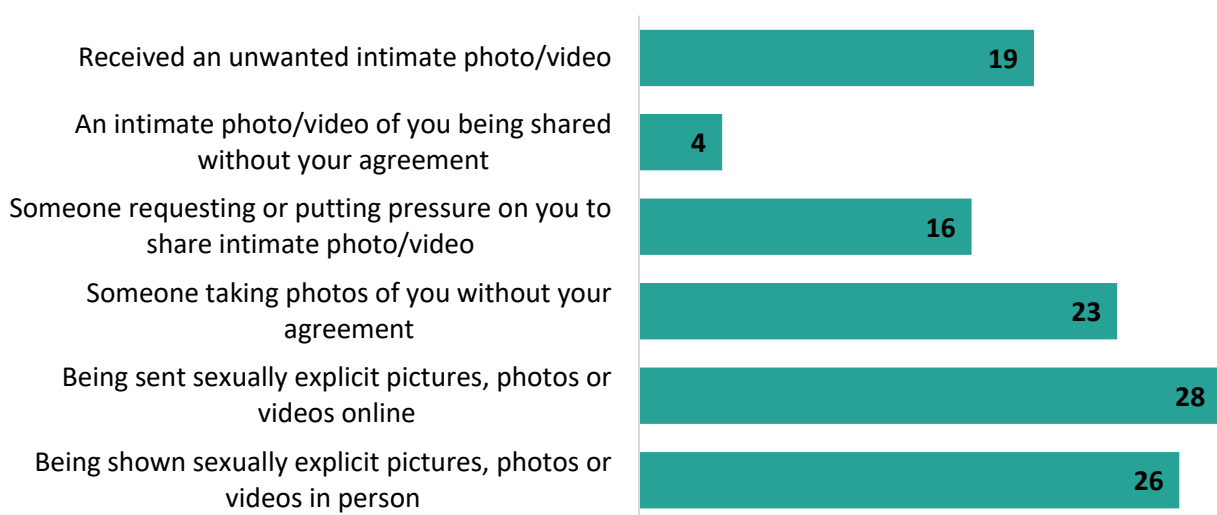


Figure 2 shows that:

- Over a quarter of respondents (28%) have been sent unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos online ‘sometimes’ or ‘often’
- Over a quarter of respondents (26%) have been shown unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos in person ‘sometimes’ or ‘often’

- Almost a quarter of respondents (23%) have experienced someone taking photos of them without their agreement 'sometimes' or 'often'

## Verbal abuse and inappropriate comments

**Figure 3. Percentage of all respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced verbal abuse and inappropriate comments**

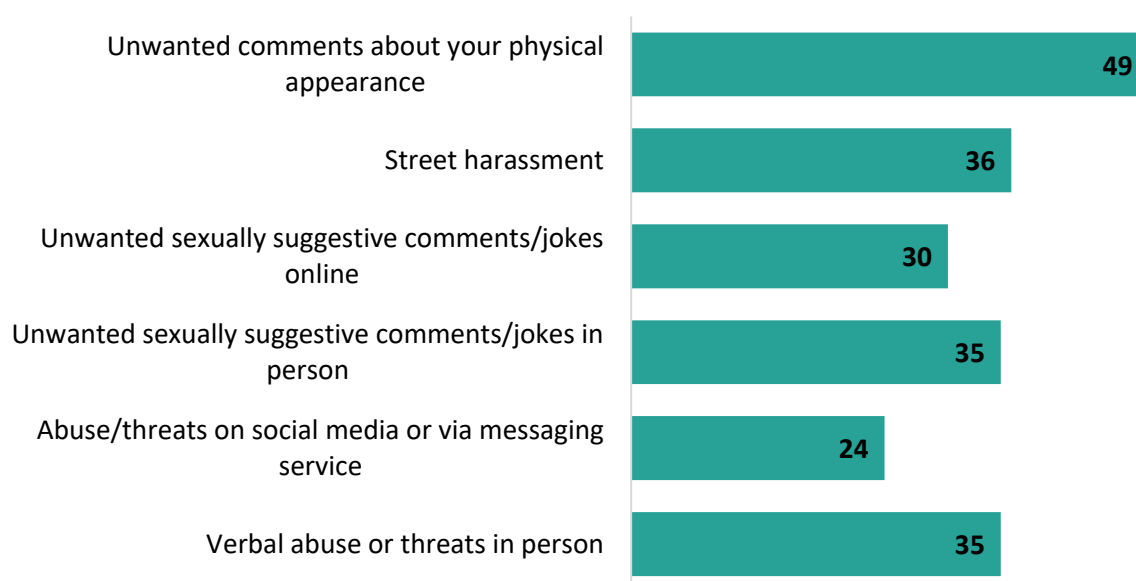


Figure 3 shows that:

- Almost half of respondents (49%) have experienced unwanted comments about their physical appearance 'sometimes' or 'often'
- Over a third of respondents (36%) have experienced street harassment, for example, cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at someone 'sometimes' or 'often'
- Over a third of respondents (35%) have experienced unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes in person 'sometimes' or 'often'
- Over a third of respondents (35%) have experienced verbal abuse or threats in person 'sometimes' or 'often'



## Unwanted inappropriate attention

**Figure 4. Percentage of all respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced unwanted inappropriate attention**

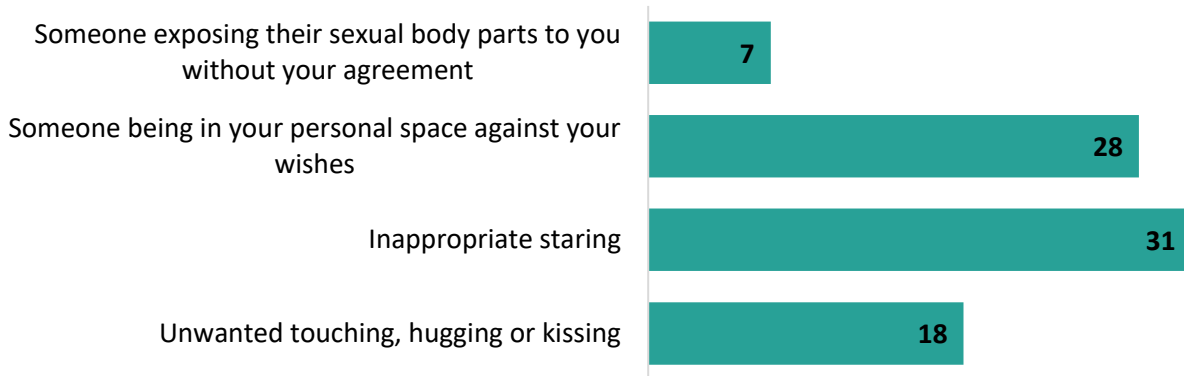


Figure 4 shows that:

- Almost one third of respondents (31%) have experienced inappropriate staring 'sometimes' or 'often'
- Over a quarter of respondents (28%) have experienced someone being in their personal space against their wishes 'sometimes' or 'often'

## Coercive control

- 16% of respondents have experienced belittling or controlling behaviour by an intimate partner or family member 'sometimes' or 'often'

## Physical assault

- More than one in five respondents (22%) have experienced physical assault 'sometimes' or 'often'

## 3.2b Gender

### Receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos

Figure 5. Percentage of respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos by gender

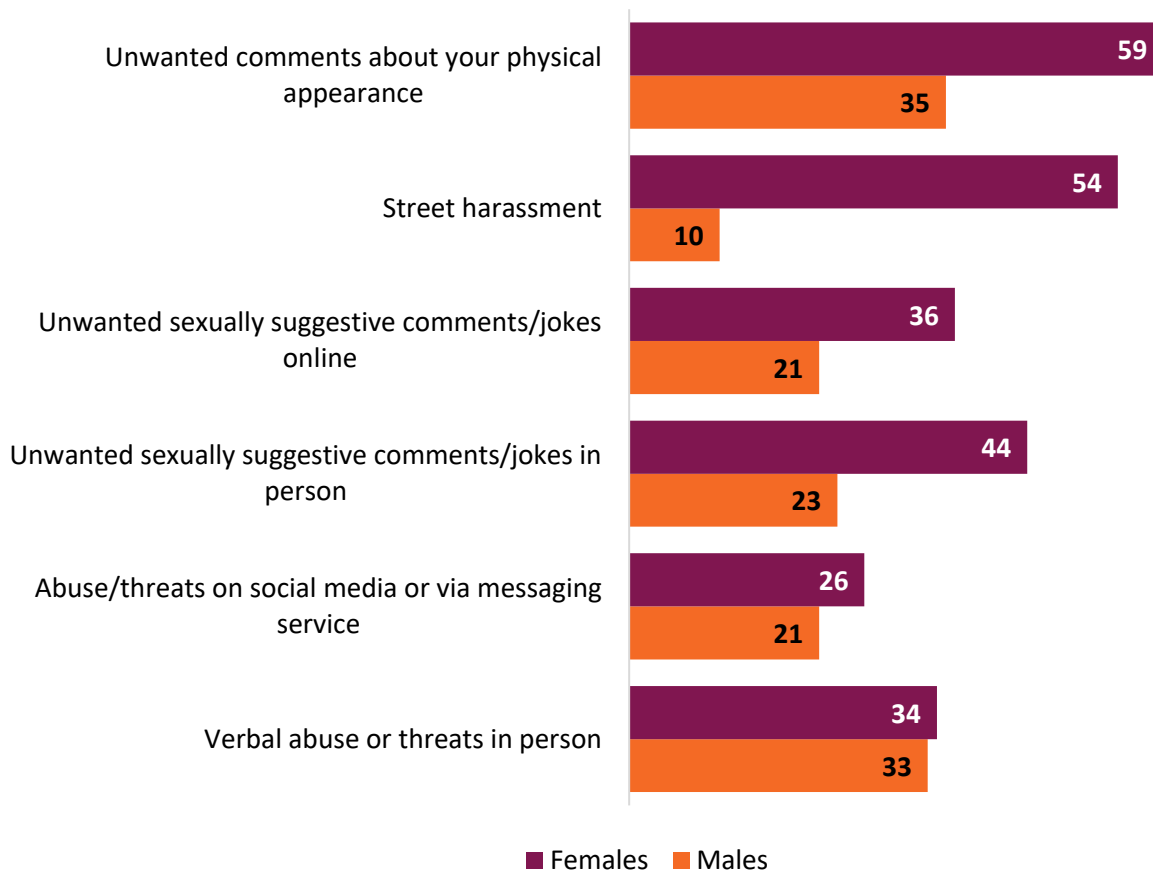


As shown in Figure 5, the most frequently experienced (sometimes or often) acts or behaviours for females were being sent unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos online (females: 38%, males: 13%) and being shown unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos in person (females: 34%, males 15%). The difference between males and females was statistically significant for both of these.

A significantly higher proportion of females than males also reported 'sometimes' or 'often' receiving an unwanted intimate photo/video' (females: 28%, males: 6%) and someone requesting or putting pressure on them to share an intimate photo or video (females: 24%, males: 3%).

## Verbal abuse and inappropriate comments

**Figure 6. Percentage of respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced verbal abuse and inappropriate comments by gender**

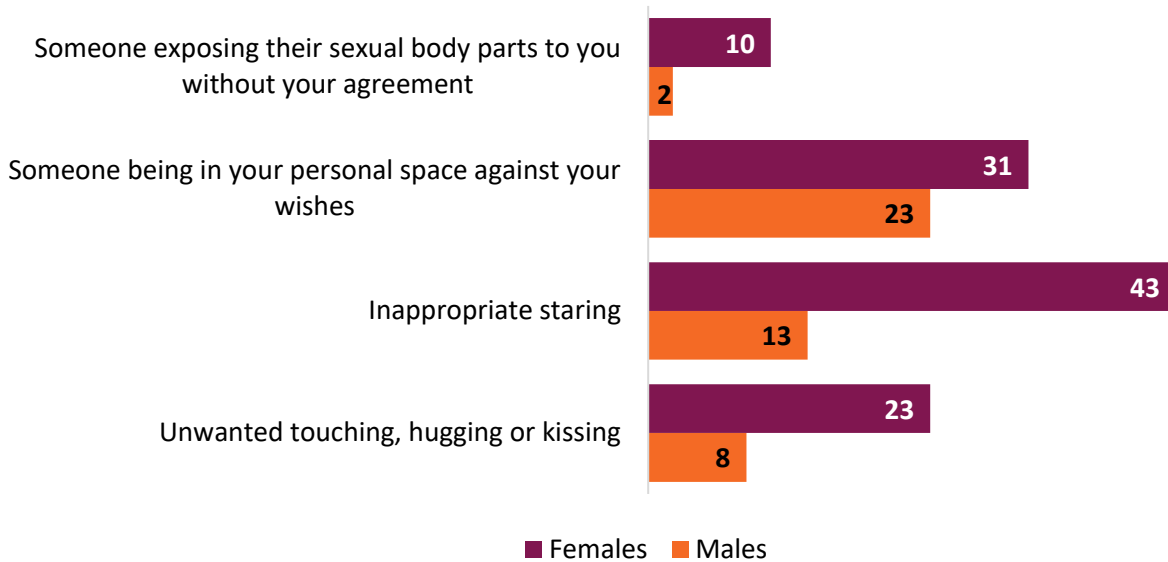


As shown in Figure 6, while both males and females most frequently experienced unwanted comments about their physical appearance, a significantly higher proportion of females reported this (females: 59%; males: 35%). Females also experienced significantly more street harassment, for example, cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at someone (females: 54%; males: 10%).

A significantly higher proportion of females than males 'sometimes' or 'often' also experienced unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes in person (females: 44%; males: 23%) and unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes online (females: 36%; males: 21%).

## Unwanted inappropriate attention

**Figure 7. Percentage of respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced unwanted inappropriate attention by gender**



As shown in Figure 7, females most frequently experienced inappropriate staring (43%), which was significantly higher than for males (13%). A significantly higher proportion of females than males 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced all four violent acts and behaviours presented in Figure 7.

## Coercive control

A significantly higher proportion of females (21%) than males (9%) 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced belittling or controlling behaviour by an intimate partner or family member.

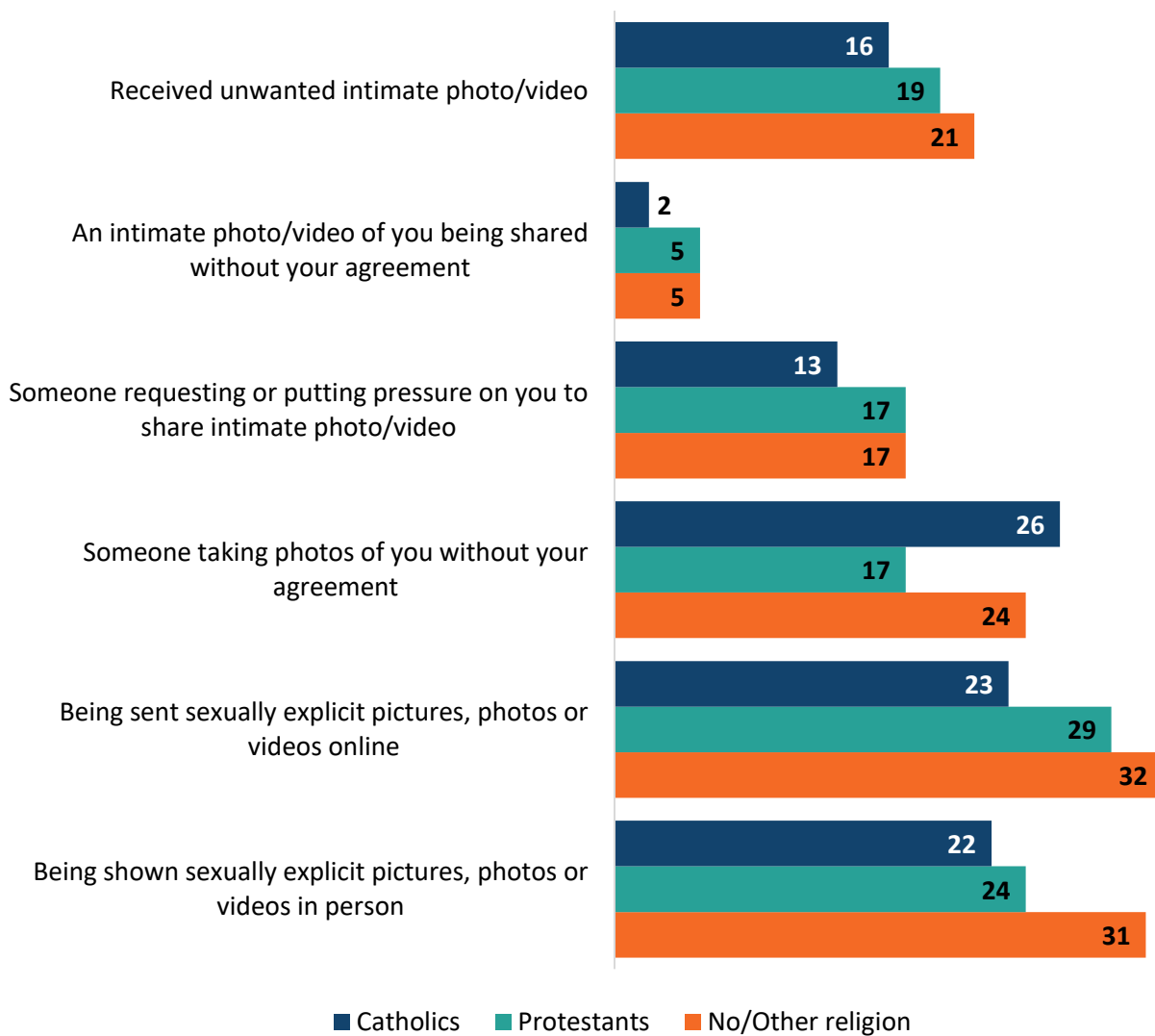
## Physical assault

A significantly higher proportion of males (24%) than females (18%) 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced physical assault.

### 3.2c Religion

#### Receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos

Figure 8. Percentage of respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos by religion



As shown in Figure 8, Catholics most frequently experienced someone taking photos of them without their agreement (26%). For Protestant respondents and those with No/Other Religion the most frequently experienced behaviour was being sent unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos online (Protestants: 29%; No/Other Religion: 32%), while this was the second most frequently experienced behaviour by Catholics (23%).

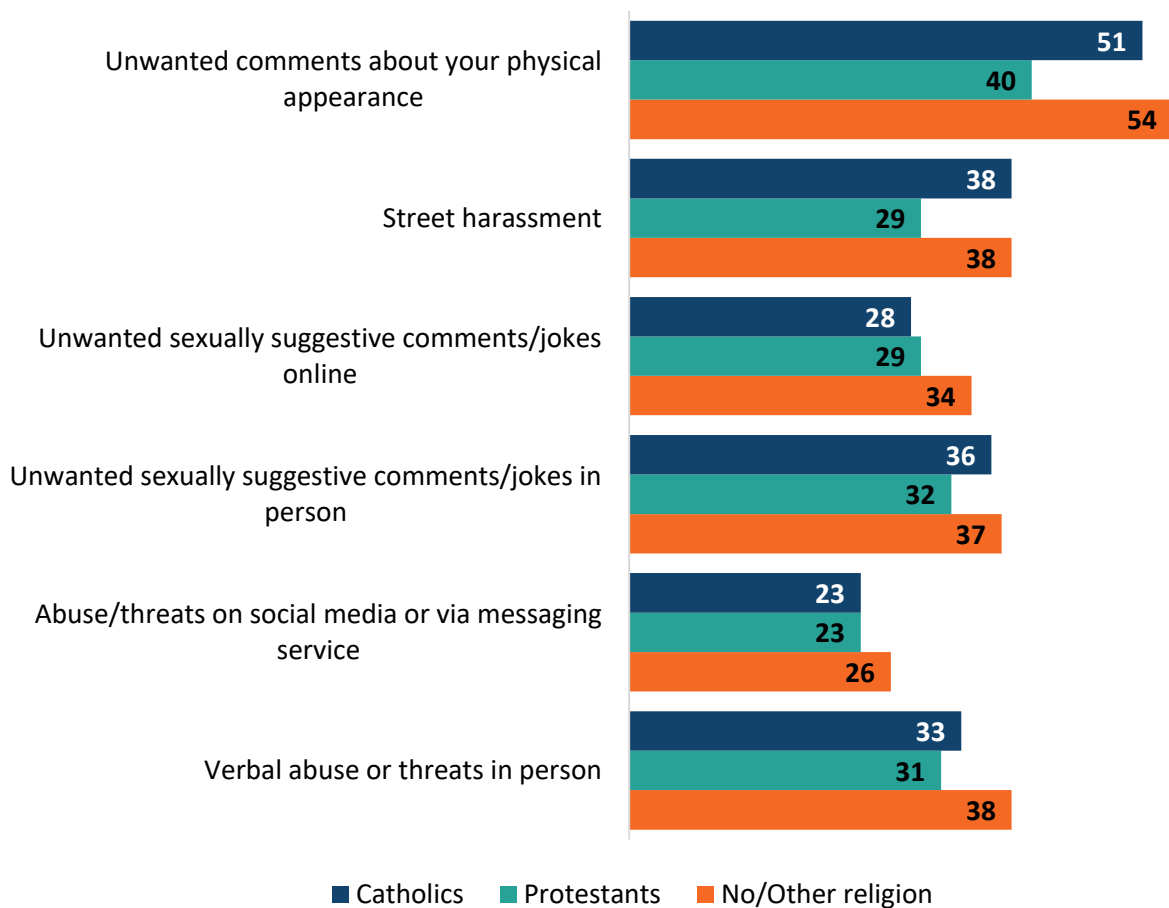
Catholics and Protestants differed significantly on one out of the six presented violent acts and behaviours. Specifically, a higher proportion of Catholics (26%) than Protestants (17%) 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced someone taking photos of them without their agreement. This act or behaviour was also the only one which was significantly different between Protestants (17%) and respondents with No/Other religion (24%).

Catholics and respondents with No/Other religion differed significantly on two out of the six presented violent acts and behaviours. A significantly higher proportion of respondents with No/Other religion 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced:

- Being shown unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos in person (Catholics: 22%, No/Other religion: 31%)
- Being sent unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos online (Catholics: 23%, No/Other religion: 32%).

## Verbal abuse and inappropriate comments

**Figure 9. Percentage of respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced verbal abuse and inappropriate comments by religion**



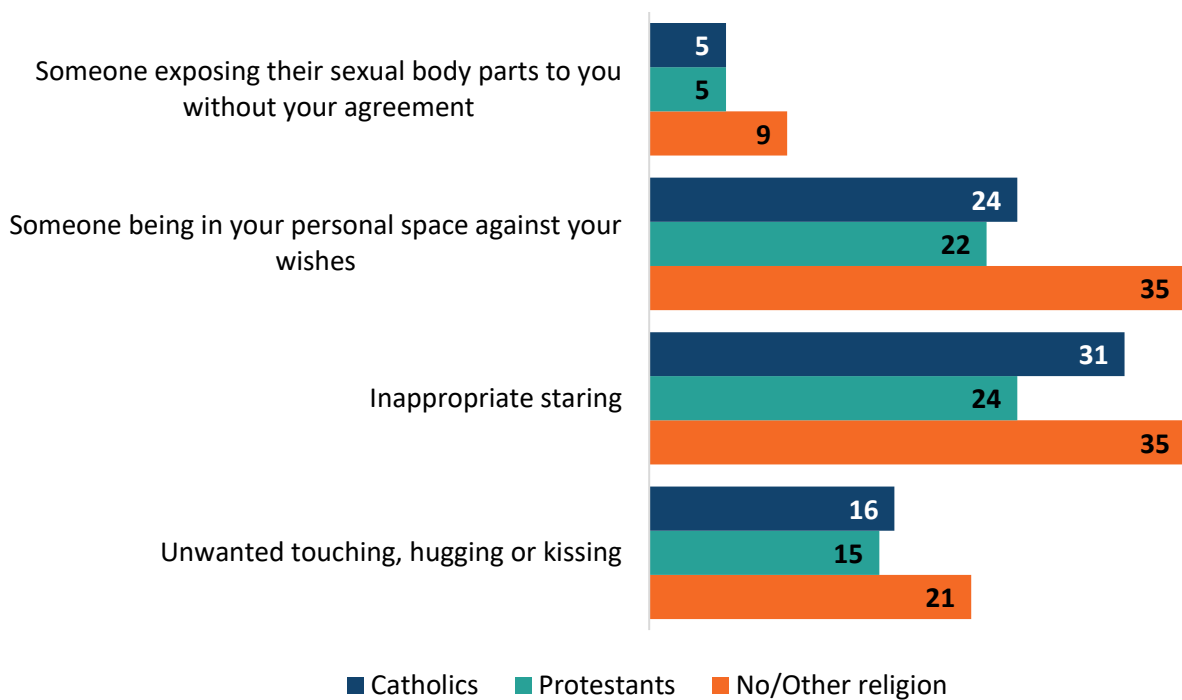
As shown in Figure 9, unwanted comments about their physical appearance was the most frequently experienced act or behaviour by each religious background (Catholics: 51%; Protestants: 40%; No/Other religion: 54%).

Catholics and Protestants differed significantly from each other on two out of the six presented violent acts and behaviours. Protestants and respondents with No/Other religion differed significantly from each other on three out of the six presented violent acts and behaviours. Specifically, a significantly higher proportion of Catholics (38%) and those with No/Other religion (38%) than Protestants (29%) 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced street harassment, for example, cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at someone and unwanted comments about their physical appearance (Catholics: 51%; Protestants: 40%; No/Other religion: 54%).

A significantly higher proportion of respondents with No/Other religion (38%) than Protestants (31%) also ‘sometimes’ or ‘often’ experienced verbal abuse or threats in person. Catholics and respondents with No/Other religion did not differ significantly from each other on any of the six presented acts and behaviours.

### Unwanted inappropriate attention

**Figure 10. Percentage of respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced unwanted inappropriate attention by religion**



Catholics and Protestants did not differ significantly from each other on any of the four presented violent acts and behaviours.

A significantly higher proportion of respondents with No/Other religion (35%) than both Catholics (24%) and Protestant (22%) experienced someone being in their personal space against their wishes. A significantly higher proportion of respondents with No/Other religion (35%) than Protestants (24%) ‘sometimes’ or ‘often’ experienced inappropriate staring.



### Coercive control

Similar proportions of Catholics (16%), Protestants (14%) and respondents with No/Other religion (19%) 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced belittling or controlling behaviour by an intimate partner or family member. These differences were not statistically significant.

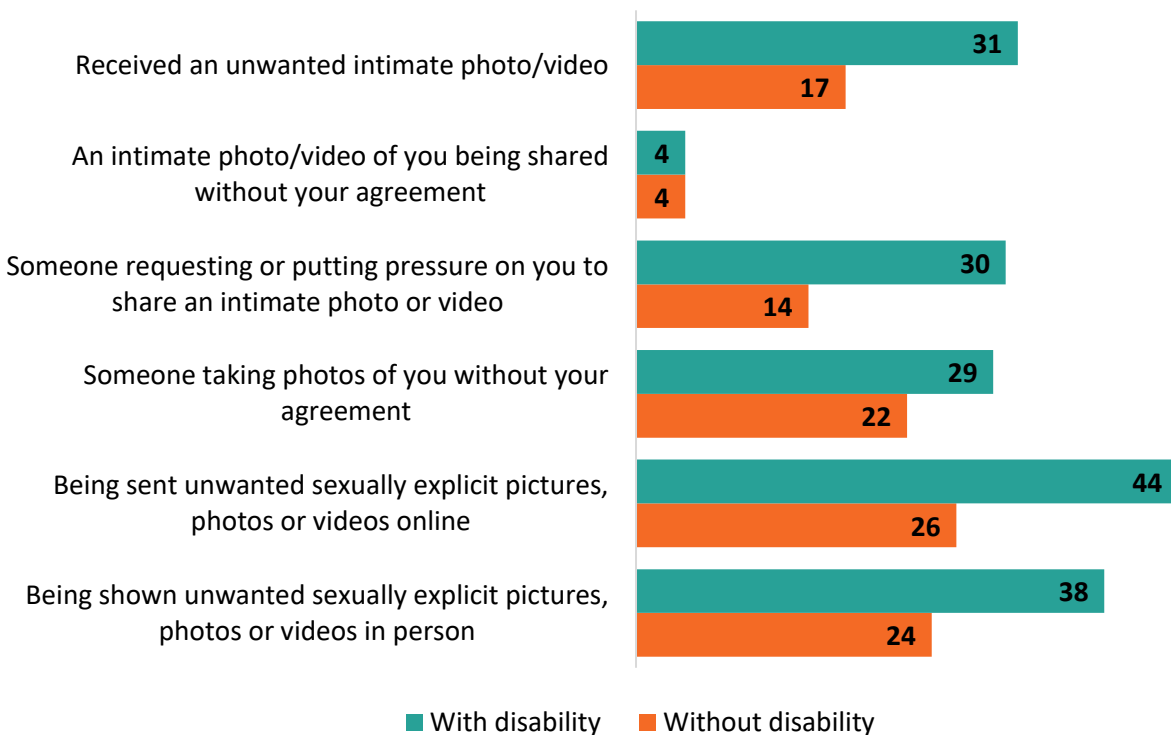
### Physical assault

There were 17% of Catholics, 23% of Protestants and 25% of respondents with No/Other religion who 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced physical assault. This difference was significant between Catholics and respondents with No/Other religion.

## 3.2d Disability

### Receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos

**Figure 11. Percentage of respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos by disability**



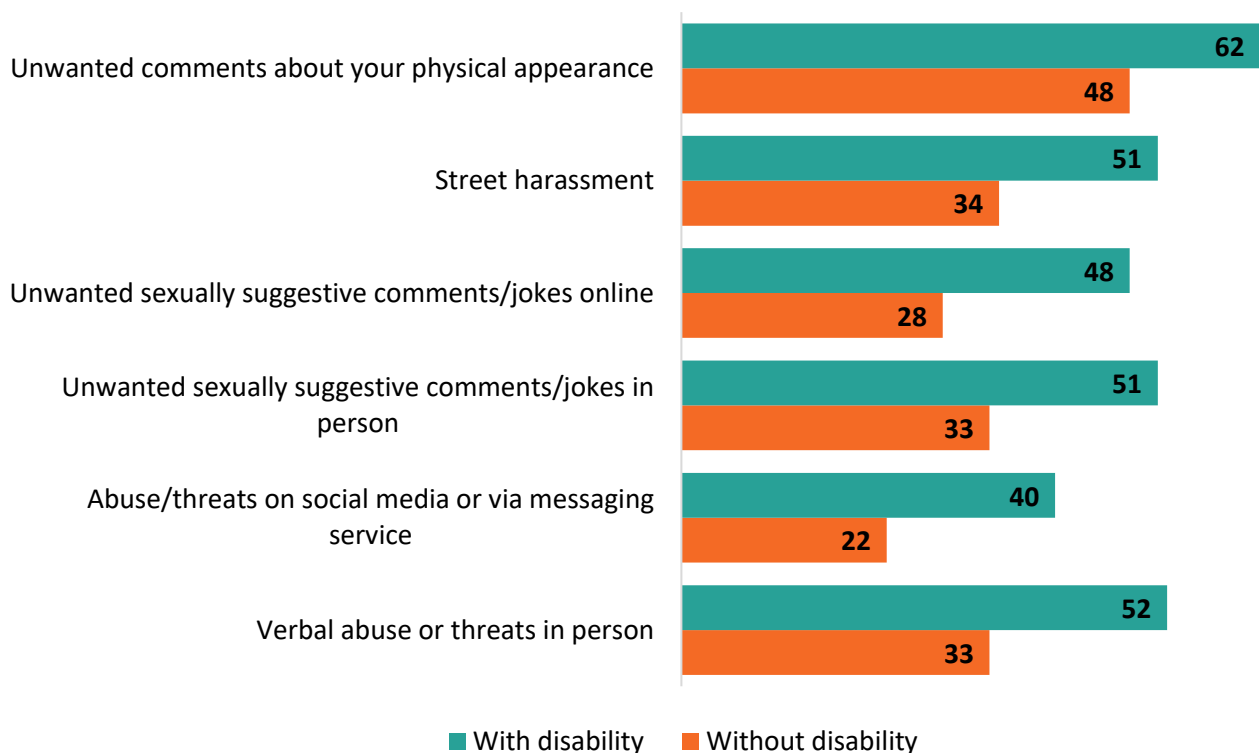
A significantly higher proportion of respondents with disabilities, than those without, ‘sometimes’ or ‘often’ experienced four out of the six presented violent acts and behaviours.

Respondents with disability experienced the following significantly more frequently than those without disability:

- Being sent unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos online (with disability 44%; without disability: 26%)
- Someone requesting or putting pressure on them to share an intimate photo or video (with disability: 30%; without disability: 14%)
- Being shown unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos in person’ (with disability 38%; without disability: 24%)
- Receiving an unwanted intimate photo/video’ (with disability 31%; without disability: 17%)

### Verbal abuse and inappropriate comments

**Figure 12. Percentage of respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced verbal abuse and inappropriate comments by disability**

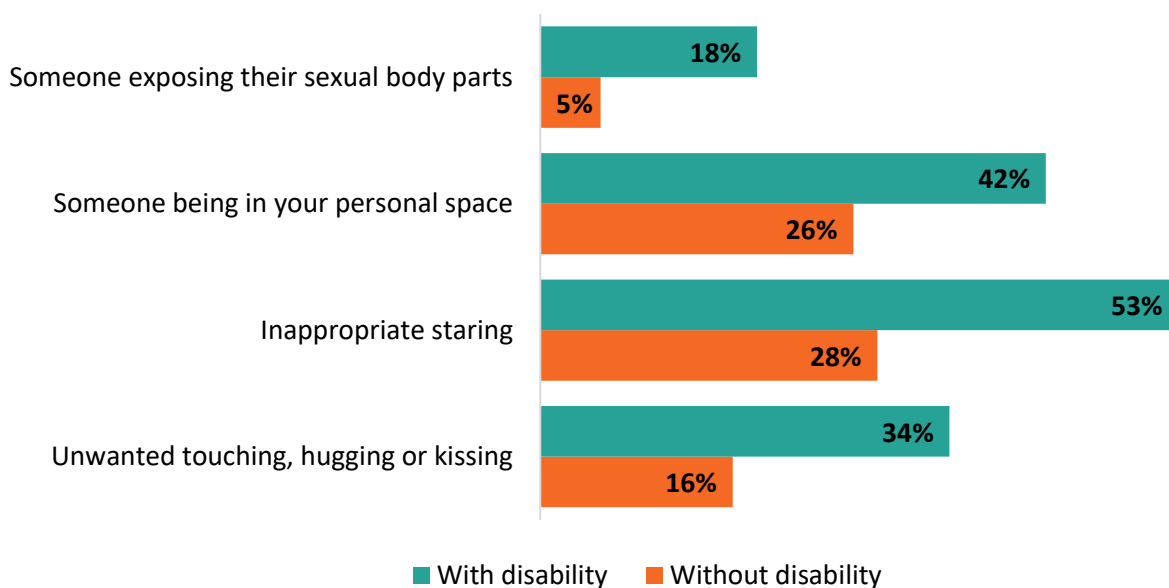


As shown in Figure 12, both respondents with disabilities and those without disabilities most frequently experienced unwanted comments about their physical appearance (with disability: 62%; without disabilities: 48%).

A significantly higher proportion of respondents with disabilities than those without 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced all six of the presented violent acts and behaviours, with the biggest difference in frequency of reporting being in unwanted sexually suggestive comments/jokes online (with disability: 48%; without disability: 28%).

### Unwanted inappropriate attention

**Figure 13. Percentage of respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced unwanted inappropriate attention by disability**



As shown in Figure 13, respondents with disabilities most frequently experienced inappropriate staring (53%), which was a much higher proportion than those without disabilities (28%).

Respondents with disabilities also more frequently experienced someone being in their personal space against their wishes (with disability: 42%; without disability: 26%), and unwanted touching, hugging or kissing (with disability 34%: without disability: 16%).

A significantly higher proportion of respondents with disabilities than those without, 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced all four of the presented violent acts and behaviours.

### **Coercive control**

A significantly higher proportion of respondents with disabilities (31%) than those without disabilities (14%) 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced belittling or controlling behaviour by an intimate partner or family member.

### **Physical assault**

A significantly higher proportion of respondents with disabilities (33%) than those without disabilities (20%) 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced physical assault.

### 3.2e Sexual orientation

#### Receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos

**Figure 14. Percentage of respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced receiving and sharing intimate photos/videos by sexual orientation**

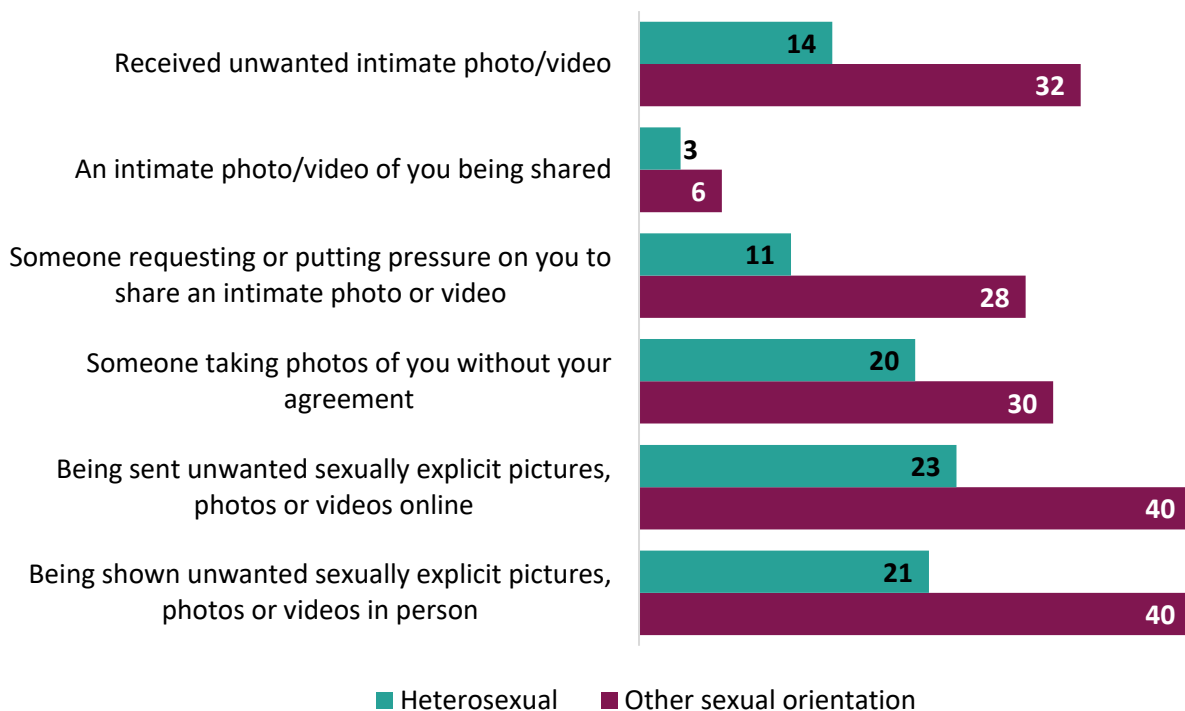
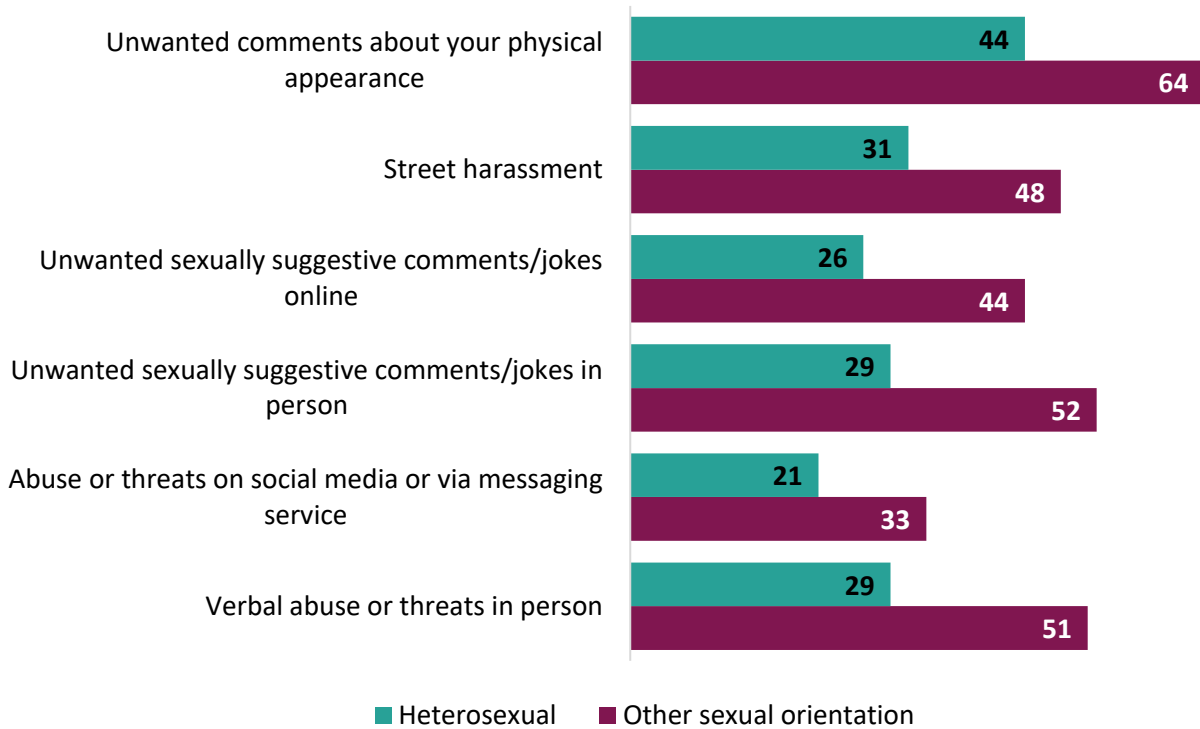


Figure 14 shows that being sent unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos online (heterosexual: 23%; other sexual orientation: 40%) and being shown unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos in person (heterosexual: 21%; other sexual orientation: 40%) were the most frequently reported acts or behaviours by both heterosexual respondents and respondents with other sexual orientation, but those with other sexual orientation experienced these significantly more often.

With the exception of an intimate photo/video of them being shared without their agreement, where the two groups did not differ from each other significantly, a significantly higher proportion of respondents with other sexual orientation, than heterosexual respondents, 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced the violent acts and behaviours presented in Figure 14.

## Verbal abuse and inappropriate comments

**Figure 15. Percentage of respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced verbal abuse and inappropriate comments by sexual orientation**



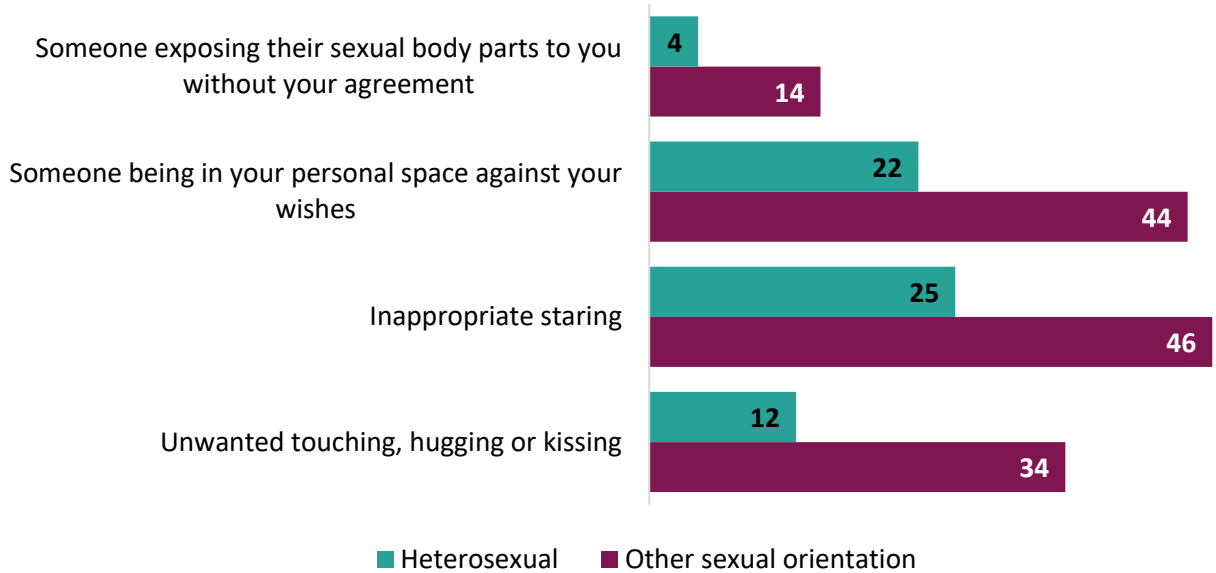
A significantly higher proportion of respondents with other sexual orientation than the heterosexual respondents 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced all six of the presented violent acts and behaviours.

Unwanted comments about their physical appearance were experienced most frequently by heterosexual respondents (44%) and those with other sexual orientation (64%).

There were also large differences in the reported level of frequency in sexually suggestive comments/jokes in person (heterosexual: 29%; other sexual orientation: 52%) and verbal abuse or threats in person (heterosexual: 29%; other sexual orientation: 51%).

## Unwanted inappropriate attention

**Figure 16. Percentage of respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced unwanted inappropriate attention by sexual orientation**



A significantly higher proportion of respondents with other sexual orientation than heterosexual respondents 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced all four of the presented violent acts and behaviours.

As shown in Figure 16, the largest differences were found in those who reported at least sometimes experiencing someone being in your personal space against your wishes (heterosexual: 22%; other sexual orientation: 44%) and unwanted touching, hugging or kissing (heterosexual: 12%; other sexual orientation: 34%). Inappropriate staring was the most frequently reported experience by both heterosexual respondents (25%) and those with other sexual orientation (46%).

**Coercive control**

A significantly higher proportion of respondents with other sexual orientation (29%) than heterosexual respondents (11%) 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced belittling or controlling behaviour by an intimate partner or family member.

**Physical assault**

A significantly higher proportion of respondents with other sexual orientation (30%) than heterosexual respondents (19%) 'sometimes' or 'often' experienced physical assault.



## 4. Perceived acceptability of violent acts and behaviours

Social norms are culturally constructed phenomena that prescribe behaviours in specific circumstances. They dictate what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour in specific groups. Social norms are collectively shared beliefs that are usually not written down anywhere but are picked up on through our social interactions with others. They are maintained by social approval or disapproval. This section presents findings in relation to respondents' perceived acceptability of violent acts and behaviours and as such, it helps to quantify social norms in the area of VAWG.

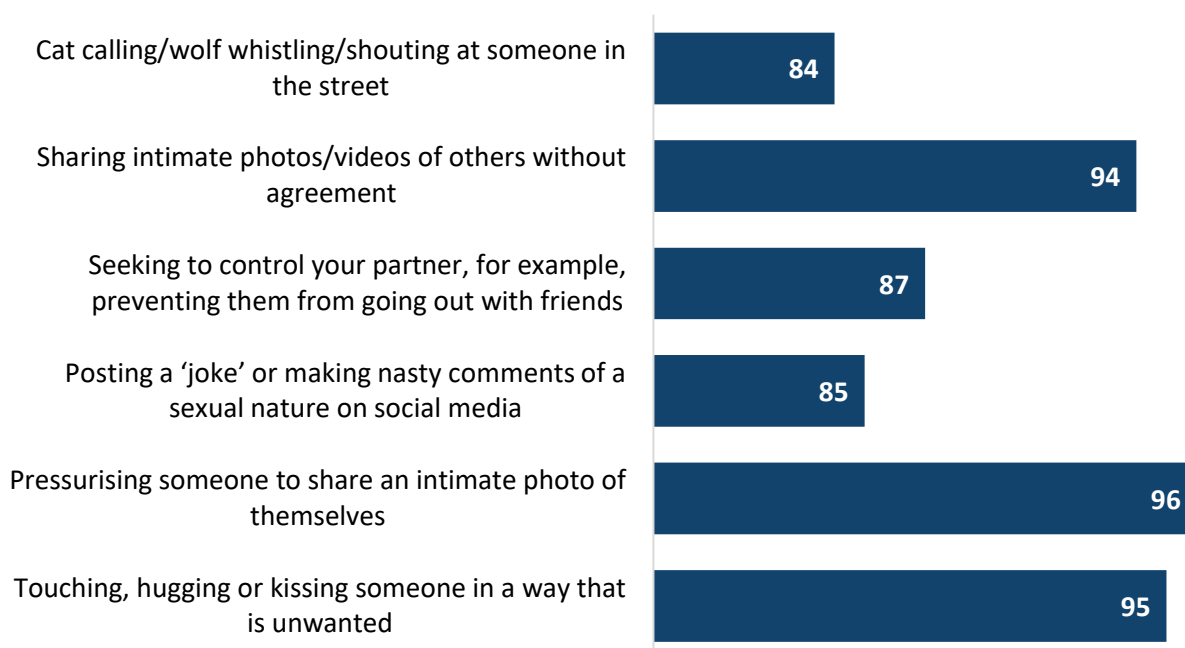
**Survey question:** *"How acceptable or unacceptable do you think the following behaviours are?"* (Six different behaviours were presented to respondents)

**Response options:** Always acceptable/Sometimes acceptable/Never acceptable/Don't know

## 4.1 All respondents

### 4.1a Never acceptable violent acts or behaviours

**Figure 17. Percentage of all respondents who think that the following acts and behaviours are never acceptable**



Note. Response options 'sometimes acceptable', 'always acceptable', and 'don't know' are not presented in the figure due to small numbers.

Of all respondents, 67% reported that none of the six presented violent acts or behaviours are ever acceptable.

Figure 17 shows that over 9 in 10 respondents believe that the following acts and behaviours are 'never acceptable':

- Pressurising someone to share an intimate photo of themselves (96%)
- Touching, hugging or kissing someone in a way that is unwanted (95%)
- Sharing intimate photos/videos of others without agreement (94%)

## 4.1b Sometimes or Always acceptable violent acts and behaviours

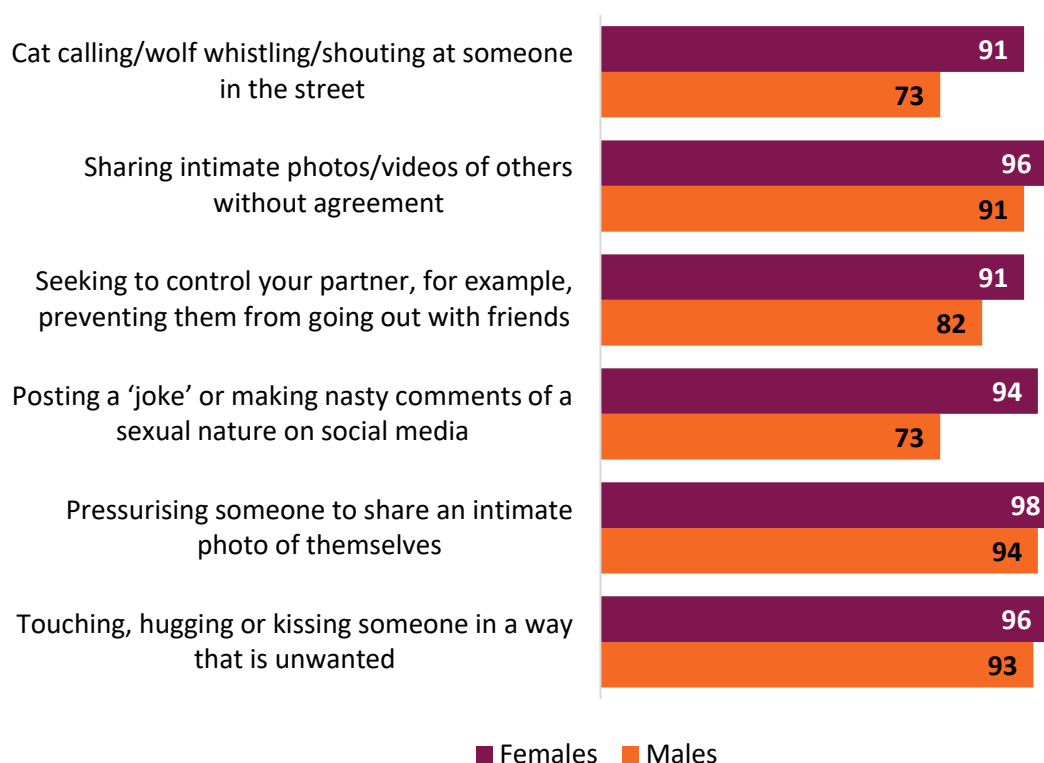
One in ten respondents believed that the following behaviours are 'sometimes' or 'always' acceptable:

- Cat calling/wolf whistling/shouting at someone in the street (10%)
- Seeking to control your partner, for example, prevent them from going out with friends (10%)
- Posting a 'joke' or making nasty comments of a sexual nature on social media (10%)

## 4.2 Gender

### 4.2a Never acceptable violent acts or behaviours

Figure 18. Percentage of respondents who think that the following acts and behaviours are never acceptable by gender



Note. Response options 'sometimes acceptable', 'always acceptable', and 'don't know' are not presented in the figure due to small numbers.

Looking at all six violent acts or behaviours together, 79% of females and 49% of males thought that none of these were ever acceptable and this was a significant difference.

Figure 18 shows that a higher percentage of females than males believe that the presented violent acts and behaviours are 'never acceptable'. These differences between males and females are statistically significant for all acts and behaviours. For each of the presented acts and behaviours, the proportion of females which believed that the act was 'never acceptable' was over 90%. In contrast, around 7 in 10 males believe that cat calling/wolf whistling/shouting at someone in the

street and posting a joke or making nasty comments of a sexual nature on social media are 'never acceptable' behaviours.

#### **4.2b Sometimes or Always acceptable violent acts and behaviours**

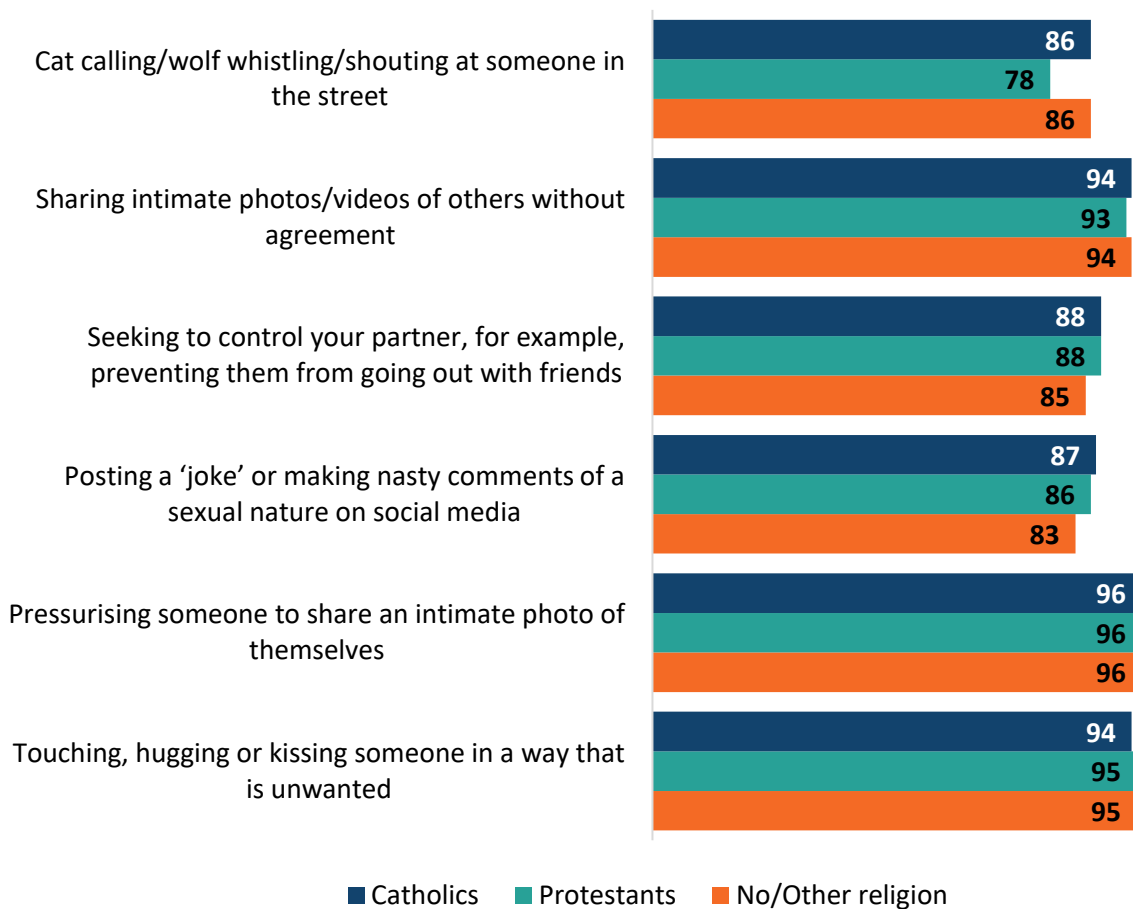
Levels of acceptability were low overall, but one in five males found posting a 'joke' or making nasty comments of a sexual nature on social media (19%) or cat calling/wolf whistling/shouting at someone in the street (18%) 'sometimes or always' acceptable, while a significantly lower proportion of females, fewer than 1 in 10, found either of these behaviours acceptable.

Seeking to control your partner, for example, preventing them from going out with friends had the highest proportion of females reporting it to be at least sometimes acceptable (7%), but this was still significantly lower than males (13%). The difference in males (4%) and females (2%) reporting sharing intimate photos/videos of others without agreement was at least sometimes acceptable was also significant.

## 4.3 Religion

### 4.3a Never acceptable violent acts or behaviours

Figure 19. Percentage of respondents who think that the following acts and behaviours are never acceptable by religion



Note. Response options 'sometimes acceptable', 'always acceptable', and 'don't know' are not presented in the figure due to small numbers.

Similar proportions of Catholics (69%), Protestants (64%) and respondents with No/other religion (66%) thought that none of the six violent acts or behaviours are ever acceptable.

Figure 19 shows that overall, there are comparable proportions of Catholics, Protestants and respondents with No/Other religion, who believe that the presented acts and behaviours are 'never

acceptable'. The only differences are in relation to cat calling/wolf whistling/shouting at someone in the street, where a significantly lower proportion of Protestants (78%), than Catholics (86%) and respondents with No/Other religion (86%), believe that it is 'never acceptable'.

#### **4.3b Sometimes or Always acceptable violent acts and behaviours**

Findings for respondents from across the three religious categories were similar, with the top three violent acts and behaviours most frequently reported as being at least 'sometimes' acceptable, being the same for each:

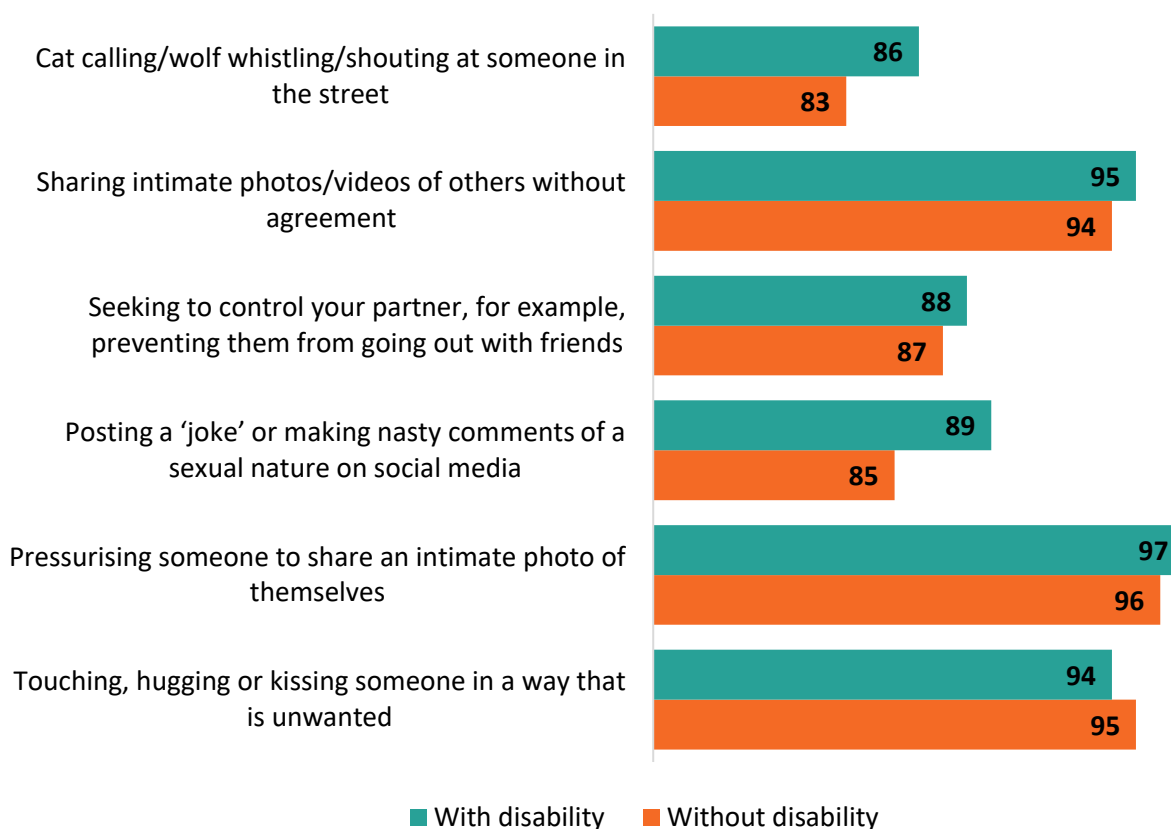
- Cat calling/wolf whistling/shouting at someone in the street (Catholics: 9%; Protestants: 14%; No/Other Religion: 10%)
- Seeking to control your partner, for example, preventing them from going out with friends (Catholics: 9%; Protestants: 9%; No/Other Religion: 11%)
- Posting a 'joke' or making nasty comments of a sexual nature on social media (Catholics: 7%; Protestants: 11%; No/Other Religion: 13%)

There was only one significant difference between the religious groups, and this was on posting a 'joke' or making nasty comments of a sexual nature on social media, where a significantly higher proportion of respondents with No/Other religion (13%) compared to Catholics (7%) thought that this behaviour was 'sometimes' or 'always' acceptable.

## 4.4 Disability

### 4.4a Never acceptable violent acts or behaviours

Figure 20. Percentage of respondents who think that the following acts and behaviours are never acceptable by disability



Note. Response options 'sometimes acceptable', 'always acceptable', and 'don't know' are not presented in the figure due to small numbers.

Looking at all six violent acts or behaviours together, 70% of respondents with disabilities and 66% of those without thought that none of these were ever acceptable.

Figure 20 shows that similar proportions of respondents with and without disabilities believe that the presented acts and behaviours are 'never acceptable'.



## 4.4b Sometimes or Always acceptable violent acts and behaviours

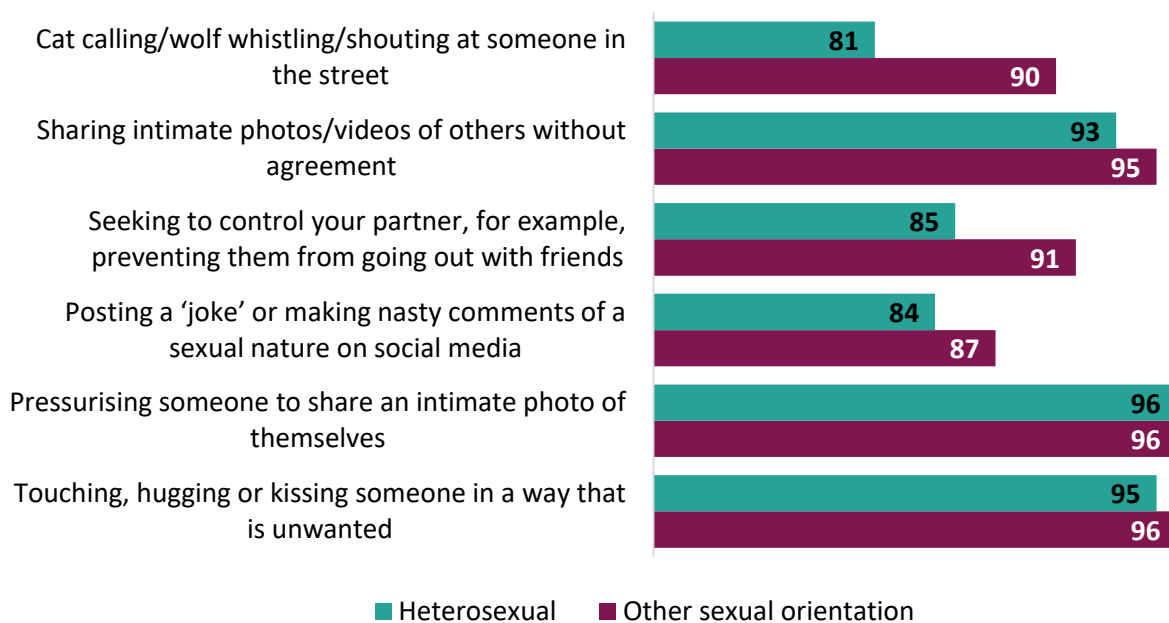
There were no significant differences between respondents with and without disabilities on any of the six acceptability questions; similar proportions found the acts and behaviours 'sometimes/always' acceptable.

Cat calling/wolf whistling/shouting at someone in the street had the highest proportion of those both with disabilities (9%) and without (10%) who thought it was at least sometimes acceptable, although it was still low overall.

## 4.5 Sexual orientation

### 4.5a Never acceptable violent acts or behaviours

**Figure 21. Percentage of respondents who think that the following acts and behaviours are never acceptable by sexual orientation**



Note. Response options 'sometimes acceptable', 'always acceptable', and 'don't know' are not presented in the figure due to small numbers.

Taking all six violent acts or behaviours together, 63% of heterosexual respondents and 76% of respondents with other sexual orientation thought that none of these were ever acceptable.

Figure 21 shows that compared to heterosexual respondents, a higher proportion of respondents with other sexual orientation believe that cat calling/wolf whistling/shouting at someone in the street and seeking to control your partner, for example, preventing them from going out with friends are 'never acceptable' behaviours. These differences were statistically significant.

#### **4.5b Sometimes or Always acceptable violent acts and behaviours**

A significantly higher proportion of heterosexual respondents reported that both cat calling/wolf whistling/shouting at someone in the street (heterosexual: 12%; other sexual orientation: 6%) and seeking to control your partner, for example, preventing them from going out with friends (heterosexual: 11%; other sexual orientation: 6%) are at least sometimes acceptable. These two, along with posting a 'joke' or making nasty comments of a sexual nature on social media (11%) were the highest reported by heterosexual respondents as being at least sometimes acceptable. Posting a 'joke' or making nasty comments of a sexual nature on social media was the highest reported by those with other sexual orientation (9%).

## 5. Personally knowing someone who has done violent acts and behaviours

This section looks at the proportion of respondents who personally know someone who has done violent acts and behaviours.

**Survey question:** *“Has anyone you know personally ever done any of the following?”* (Seven different violent acts and behaviours were presented to respondents)

**Response options:** Yes/No

The number of respondents who completed this section was substantially lower compared to the previous sections, as many respondents decided to skip these questions. The numbers of those who answered each question are provided in the accompanying data tables.

This section does not contain a breakdown by disability, as the number of respondents with disabilities who answered these questions was too low to provide robust estimates.

## 5.1 All Respondents

**Figure 22. Percentage of all respondents who personally know someone who has done violent acts and behaviours**

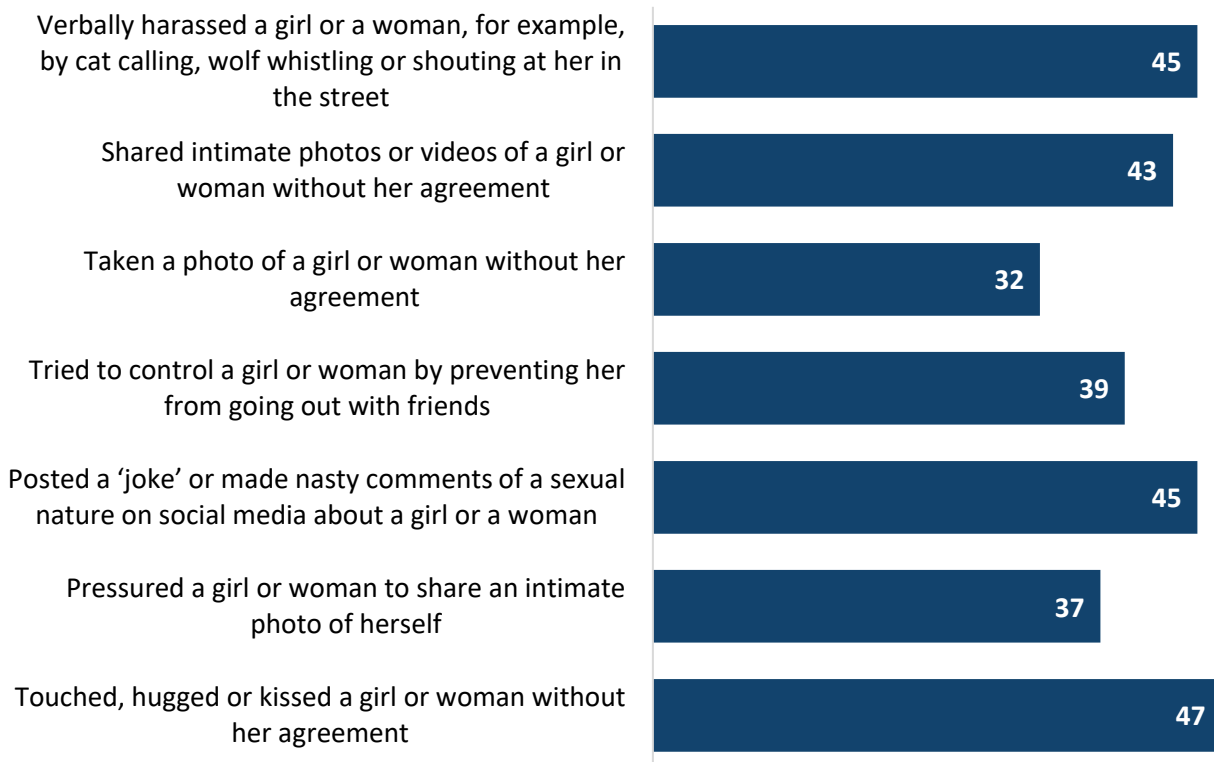
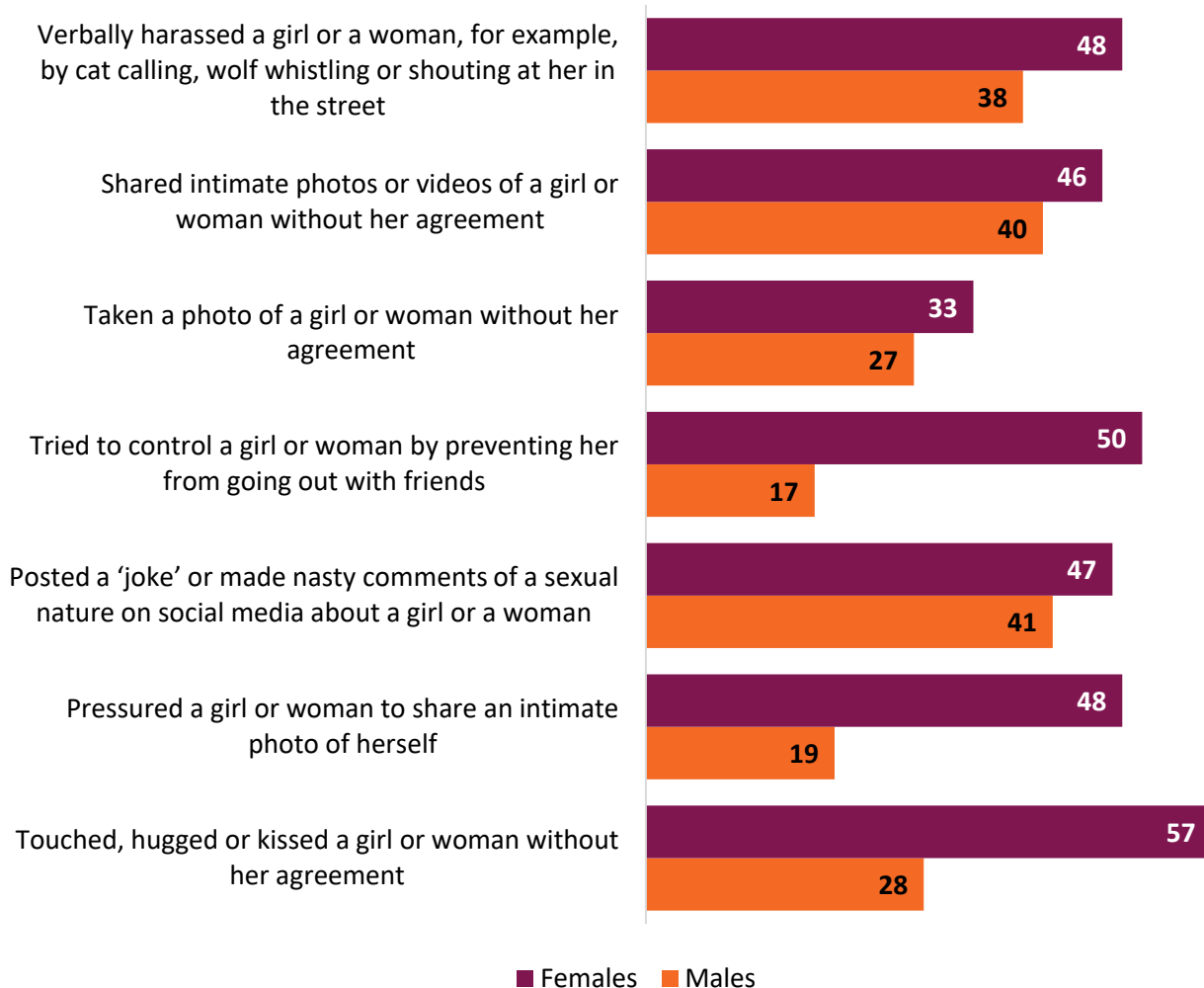


Figure 22 shows that:

- For each of the seven acts and behaviours, at least one third of respondents (32%) knew someone who has done it
- Almost one in two respondents know someone who has touched, hugged or kissed a girl or woman without her agreement (47%)
- Forty-five percent of respondents know someone who has verbally harassed a girl or a woman, for example, by cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at her in the street (45%)
- Forty-five percent of respondents know someone who has posted a 'joke' or made nasty comments of a sexual nature on social media about a girl or a woman (45%)

## 5.2 Gender

**Figure 23. Percentage of respondents who personally know someone who has done violent acts and behaviours by gender**



As shown in Figure 23, the experiences of males and females were quite different for some of the presented acts and behaviours.

- Fifty-seven percent of females reported knowing someone who has touched, hugged or kissed a girl or a woman without her agreement, compared to 28% of males.

Around half of female respondents knew someone who had:

- Tried to control a girl or woman by preventing her from going out with friends (50%)
- Verbally harassed a girl or a woman, for example, by cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at her in the street (48%)

- Pressured a girl or woman to share an intimate photo of herself (48%)

In contrast, males most frequently reported knowing someone who had posted a 'joke' or made nasty comments of a sexual nature on social media about a girl or a woman (41%), followed by:

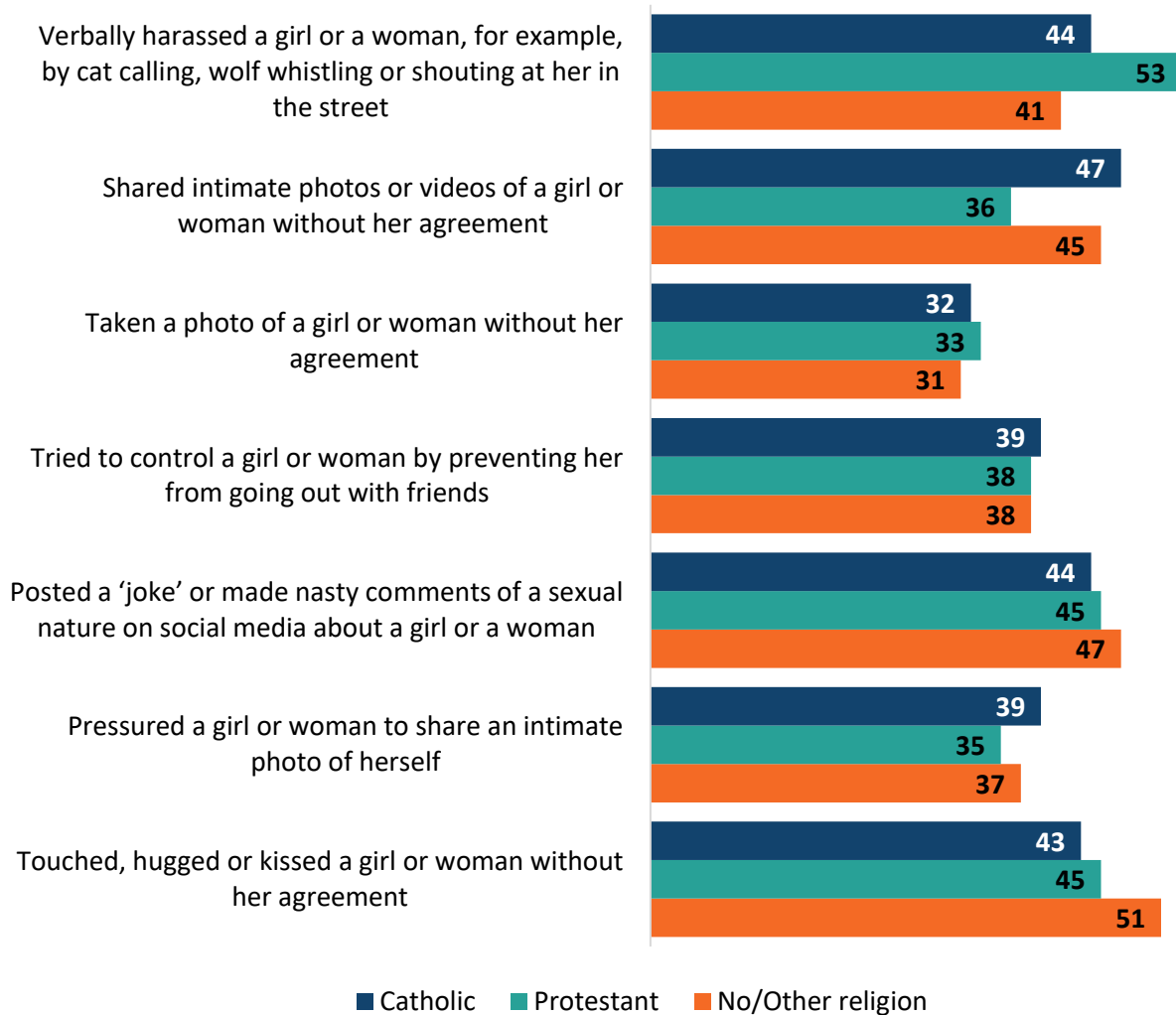
- Shared intimate photos or videos of a girl or woman without her agreement (40%)
- Verbally harassed a girl or a woman, for example, by cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at her in the street (38%)

There were significant differences between males and females on four of the seven acts or behaviours. The biggest difference was in personally knowing someone who tried to control a girl or woman by preventing her from going out with friends (females: 50%; males 17%), followed by:

- Pressured a girl or woman to share an intimate photo of herself (females: 48%; males 19%)
- Touched, hugged or kissed a girl or a woman without her agreement (females: 57%; males 28%)
- Verbally harassed a girl or a woman, for example, by cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at her in the street (females: 48%; males 38%)

## 5.3 Religion

**Figure 24. Percentage of respondents who personally know someone who has done violent acts and behaviours by religion**



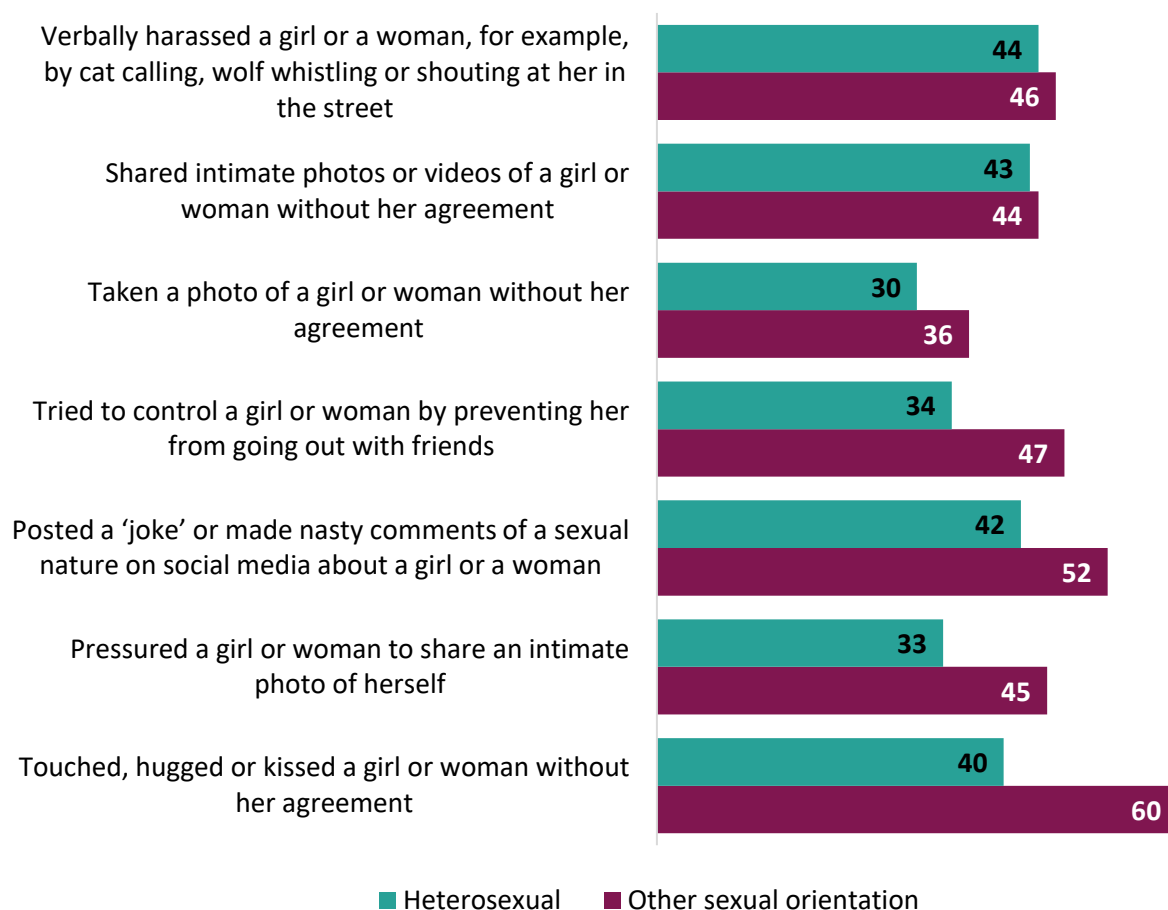
As shown in Figure 24, Catholics most frequently reported knowing someone who has shared intimate photos or videos of a girl or woman without her agreement (47%). Protestants most frequently reported knowing someone who has verbally harassed a girl or a woman, for example, by cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at her in the street (53%). Respondents with No/Other religion most frequently reported knowing someone who has 'touched, hugged or kissed a girl or a woman without her agreement (51%).

There were minimal differences between the religious groups in terms of whether the respondents know someone who has done the above behaviours. The only significant difference was in respondents knowing someone who has verbally harassed a girl or a woman, for example, by cat

calling, wolf whistling or shouting at her in the street, where a significantly higher proportion of Protestants (53%) than those with No/Other religion (41%) reported knowing someone who has done this.

## 5.4 Sexual orientation

**Figure 25. Percentage of respondents who personally know someone who has done violent acts and behaviours by sexual orientation**



A significantly higher proportion of respondents with other sexual orientation than heterosexual respondents reported knowing someone who has ‘touched, hugged or kissed a girl or woman without her agreement (heterosexual: 40%; other sexual orientation: 60%), and this was the highest reported by those with other sexual orientation. A significantly higher proportion of those with other sexual orientation also reported knowing someone who has:



- Tried to control a girl or woman by preventing her from going out with friends (heterosexual: 34%; other sexual orientation: 47%)
- Pressured a girl or woman to share an intimate photo of herself (heterosexual: 33%; other sexual orientation: 45%)
- Posted a 'joke' or made nasty comments of a sexual nature on social media about a girl or a woman (heterosexual: 42%; other sexual orientation: 52%)

## 6. Technical notes

### 6.1 Sample

The selected sample for the 2022 survey was 5,000 young people living in Northern Ireland, drawn randomly from the Child Benefit Register, who had their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday between January and March 2022. Potential respondents received a postal invitation, in the week beginning 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022, to participate in the survey. A reminder letter was sent out in the third week of April. The survey was administered online and all those who completed it received a £10 gift voucher. In 2022, after the removal of incomplete and incorrect addresses and those who opted out of the survey, a total of 4,899 16-year-olds formed the respondent sample for the full 2022 survey. Of these, 2,073 completed the survey, which is a response rate of 42.3%. In 2022, due to the demand for questions in the YLT Survey, the survey was split into two versions; the VAWG module and some other questions were included in only one version of the survey, which was offered to 1,055 respondents, and 1,034 completed at least one VAWG item.

### 6.2 YLT questions and variable coding

All data for this report came from the YLT 2022 survey, which is run annually by ARK.

#### Gender

In YLT 2022, respondents were asked: “What is your gender identity?”

The response options were: Male, Female, Male to female transgender, Female to male transgender, Other.

The analyses by gender in this report include respondents who identified as Male or Female. The numbers in the remaining response categories were too small to enable production of meaningful statistics (even if combined) and they were therefore excluded from the analyses that focused on gender.

## Religion

In YLT 2022, respondents were asked the following question: “Do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion?”

The response options were: Yes, No.

Respondents who selected ‘No’ were coded as No religion.

Respondents who selected ‘Yes’ were subsequently asked: “If yes, which?”

The response options were: Church of Ireland (Anglican), Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Free Presbyterian, Brethren, Muslim, Other (Please type in).

ARK categorised the responses, including the free responses in the Other response option, into the following categories:

- Catholic
- Protestant
- No religion
- Other religion

The Other religion category included a low number of respondents. For disclosure purposes, this category was merged with the No religion category. Statistics in this report are presented for the following religion categories:

- Catholics
- Protestants
- No/Other religion

## Disability

In YLT 2022, respondents were asked: “Do you have any physical, mental or developmental/sensory health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more?”

The response options were: Yes, No.

Respondents who selected 'Yes' were subsequently asked: "Does your condition or illness/do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?"

The response options were: Yes a lot, Yes a little, No not at all.

Respondents who selected 'Yes a lot' or 'Yes a little' were categorised as having disabilities. Those who selected 'No not at all' and those who answered No to the first question, were categorised as not having disabilities.

### **Sexual orientation**

YLT 2022 did not ask a question about sexual orientation. However, respondents were asked about their gender (see above) and sexual attraction: "Which of the following statements applies best to you? I have felt sexually attracted to:"

The response options were:

- ... only to females and never to males
- ... more often to females and at least once to a male
- ... about equally often to females and males
- ... more often to males and at least once to a female
- ... only to males and never to females
- I have never felt sexually attracted to anyone at all

Based on these, and the gender categories above, we created seven sexual orientation categories (Heterosexual, heterosexual-leaning bisexual, Bisexual, Homosexual-leaning bisexual, Homosexual, Asexual, Other) as follows:

- Respondents identifying as Male and those identifying as Female to male transgender, and who selected:
  - "... only to females and never to males" – were coded as Heterosexual
  - ... more often to females and at least once to a male – were coded as Heterosexual-leaning bisexual
  - ... about equally often to females and males – were coded as bisexual

- ... more often to males and at least once to a female – were coded as Homosexual-leaning bisexual
- ... only to males and never to females – were coded as Homosexual
- I have never felt sexually attracted to anyone at all – were coded as Asexual
- Respondents identifying as Female and those identifying as Male to female transgender, and who selected:
  - “... only to females and never to males” – were coded as Homosexual
  - ... more often to females and at least once to a male – were coded as Homosexual-leaning bisexual
  - ... about equally often to females and males – were coded as bisexual
  - ... more often to males and at least once to a female – were coded as Heterosexual-leaning bisexual
  - ... only to males and never to females – were coded as Heterosexual
  - I have never felt sexually attracted to anyone at all – were coded as Asexual
- Respondents who identified their gender identity as Other, were coded as Other, regardless of who they felt attracted to

Due to small numbers in some categories of the recoded variable, the categories were merged as follows:

- Heterosexual (this included only the Heterosexual category)
- Other sexual orientation (this included Heterosexual-leaning bisexual, Bisexual, Homosexual-leaning bisexual, Homosexual, Asexual, Other)

Please note that sexual orientation is a complex issue and is likely to be still developing at the age of 16. The results reflect the current attitudes and experiences of 16-year-old boys and girls and should not be used to make generalisations about the population as a whole.

## 6.3 Statistics

When interpreting the findings in this report, please note the following:

- Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
- Due to missing values, the total number of respondents varies from question to question. This number is reported in the accompanying data tables. Missing values were due to respondents refusing to answer the question or accidentally omitting it. A small number of respondents did not answer any questions in the VAWG section of the survey.
- To protect anonymity, and in line with good practice, statistical disclosure control is applied to the accompanying data tables. This applies largely to breakdowns for responses across different Section 75 categories. In case of cell counts of less than (<) 5, response options were merged and/or cell numbers and percentages suppressed.
- Comparison of percentages should be considered with caution when base numbers (the number of valid responses to a particular question) are small. For the purposes of this report, a base number is considered small if it is less than 100. To enable comparison, base numbers are included in the accompanying data tables.
- Significant difference refers to statistical significance between two groups. If two groups are significantly different from each other, it means that the difference between the two groups is unlikely to have occurred by chance. All tests were conducted at .05 significance level. This means that if a difference between two groups is reported as significant, there is less than (<) 5% chance that the result was due to chance.
- Tests of significant differences (Z tests) were conducted where appropriate. Each test compared two groups. Four variables were of particular interest: gender (male; female), religion (Catholics; Protestants; No/Other religion), Disability (with disabilities; without disabilities) and sexual orientation (heterosexual; other sexual orientation). Statistically significant results are reported for the most relevant response categories, which are:
  - For personal experience questions, we compared:
    - Having experienced the behaviour at least once. This included 'Rarely', 'Sometimes' and 'Often' response options merged into one and compared across gender, religion, disability and sexual orientation categories.

- Having experienced the behaviour at least Sometimes. This included Sometimes and Often response options merged into one and compared across gender, religion, disability and sexual orientation categories.
- For acceptability questions, we compared:
  - Feeling that a behaviour is ‘Never acceptable’. The proportion reporting this was compared across gender, religion, disability and sexual orientation categories.
  - Feeling that a behaviour is at least ‘Sometimes acceptable’. This included ‘Sometimes’ and ‘Always’ response options merged into one and compared across gender, religion, disability and sexual orientation categories.
- For questions related to respondents personally knowing someone who has done violent acts and behaviours, we compared:
  - The percentage of respondents who reported knowing someone across gender, religion, disability and sexual orientation categories.

The YLT dataset is available online: [YLT Datasets | ARK - Access Research Knowledge](#)

## 6.3 Questionnaire

The next few questions are about your understanding of gender-based violence, especially, but not only, violence against women and girls. By ‘acts of violence’ we mean any criminal offences or any words or behaviours which hurt or cause fear or anxiety to a victim or which humiliate or belittle them.

**Regardless of your gender, have you ever personally experienced any of the following?**

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Physical assault (for example, being hit, punched, pushed, slapped)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Verbal abuse or threats in person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Abuse or threats on social media or via messaging service, for example, Snapchat or Instagram	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Belittling or controlling behaviour by an intimate partner or family member	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being shown unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos in person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being sent unwanted sexually explicit pictures, photos or videos online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes in person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unwanted touching, hugging or kissing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inappropriate staring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Someone being in your personal space against your wishes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Someone taking photos of you without your agreement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Street harassment, for example, cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unwanted comments about your physical appearance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Someone exposing their sexual body parts to you without your agreement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Someone requesting or putting pressure on you to share an intimate photo or video	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An intimate photo/video of you being shared without your agreement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Received an unwanted intimate photo/video	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**How acceptable or unacceptable do you think the following behaviours are?**

	<b>Always Acceptable</b>	<b>Sometimes Acceptable</b>	<b>Never Acceptable</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
Cat calling/wolf whistling/shouting at someone in the street	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sharing intimate photos/videos of others without agreement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seeking to control your partner, for example, preventing them from going out with friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Posting a 'joke' or making nasty comments of a sexual nature on social media	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pressurising someone to share an intimate photo of themselves	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Touching, hugging or kissing someone in a way that is unwanted

**Has anyone you know personally ever done any of the following? (Please choose all that apply)**

Verbally harassed a girl or a woman, for example, by cat calling, wolf whistling or shouting at her in the street

Shared intimate photos or videos of a girl or woman without her agreement

Taken a photo of a girl or woman without her agreement

Tried to control a girl or woman by preventing her from going out with friends

Posted a 'joke' or made nasty comments of a sexual nature on social media about a girl or a woman

Pressured a girl or woman to share an intimate photo of herself

Touched, hugged or kissed a girl or woman without her agreement

## Reader Information

Purpose:	To inform the development of The Equally Safe Strategy: A Strategy to Tackle Violence Against Women and Girls.
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Coverage:	Northern Ireland
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Theme:	Violence against women and girls
Reporting period:	Data are from April/May 2022
Data:	The data are drawn from a publicly available resource
Statistical quality:	Information detailed in this publication has been quality assured prior to release. The Background Quality Report is available <a href="#">online</a> .
Target audience:	The Executive Office (TEO), other government departments, members of violence against women and girls interest groups, educational professionals, academics, media and the public.
Web page:	<a href="#">The Executive Office</a>
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Feedback:	Feedback on the report is welcome. Please fill in our <a href="#">readership survey</a> or contact us using the details provided below.

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