Why should you care?

By using cyber violence, abusive men

- seem omnipotent and omnipresent to their partner,
- control every aspect of their partner's life,
- have constant access to their victims,
- make it increasingly difficult for survivors to leave the abuse behind,
- continue abusing their victims after the end of the relationship, and
- ruin victims' livelihoods, reputations and steal their sense of safety.

Online violence is just as harmful as offline violence! Victims start questioning their sanity; they have headaches, depression, stomachaches, and chronic pain. In cases of financial abuse, they are unable to find an apartment, get a mobile phone contract or open a bank account.

What can you do?

- Call out friends who share intimate pictures of their girlfriends.
- If you witness online bullying, call out the abuser and ask the victim if they need support.
- Lobby your government to ensure that police take victims of cyberviolence seriously.
- Donate your used mobile phones or laptops to women's support services who can pass them on to victims of cyberstalking.
- Have conversations with your friends about respect online.
- If you are controlling towards your girlfriend, seek support to stop your behaviour.

Cyber violence in relationships

When nowhere is safe

If you are in an abusive relationship, please reach out for support. You can live a life without violence!

Are you controlling your partner? She deserves a better life. Reach out to us for support on **changing your behaviour!**

European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence – WWP EN

info@work-with-perpetrators.eu

Leunaer Straße 7
D-12681 Berlin

www.work-with-perpetrators.eu
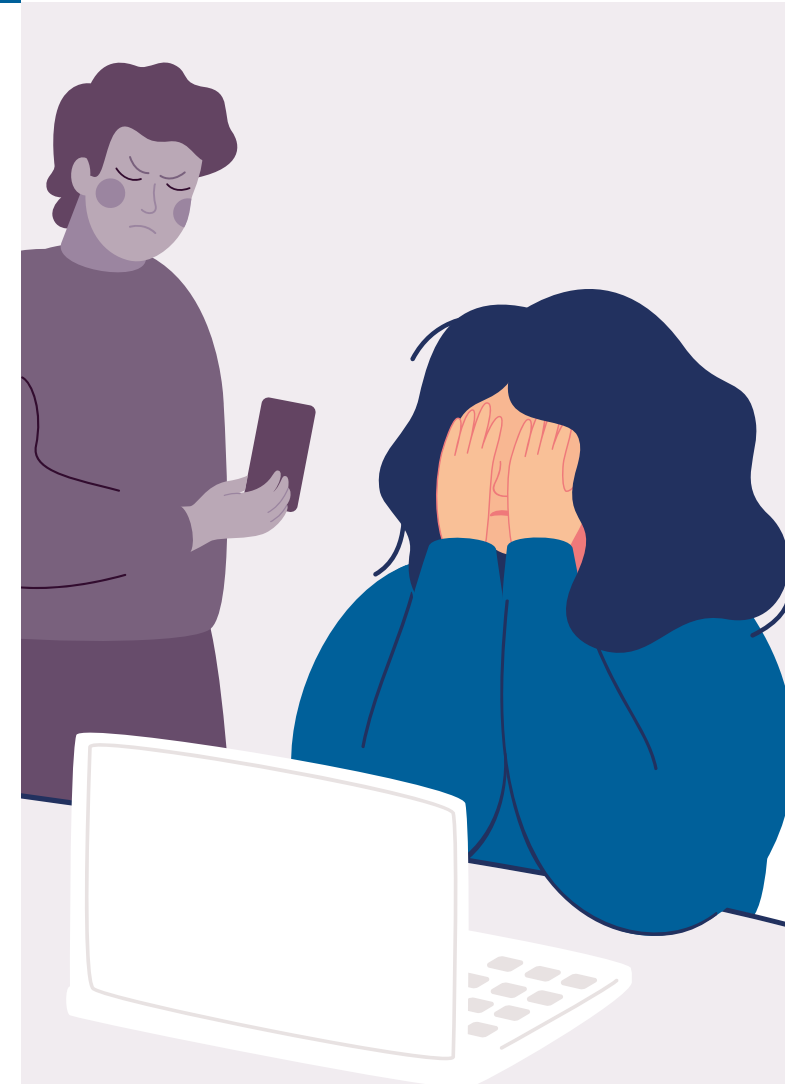
 WwpEuropeanNetwork

 european_network_wwp

 wwp_en

WWP | EUROPEAN NETWORK

Funded by the European Union

What is cyber violence in relationships?

Cyber violence in relationships: when a current or former partner uses new technologies (smartphones, social media, etc.) to, e.g.

- control or spy on their partner,
- blackmail them with the threat of releasing intimate pictures or videos,
- release intimate pictures or videos,
- steal their identity, make debts in their partner's name, or
- send them threatening and insulting messages.

Cyber violence in relationships is abuse continuing online – in addition to a violent offline relationship or after separation.

With the help of social media and smartphones, abusive men can make their partners feel paranoid and instil them with a constant sense of fear.

Several forms of cyber violence occur more often as part of intimate partner violence:

- Cyber stalking and surveillance
- Sextortion and non-consensual pornography
- Financial cyber violence
- Cyber harassment
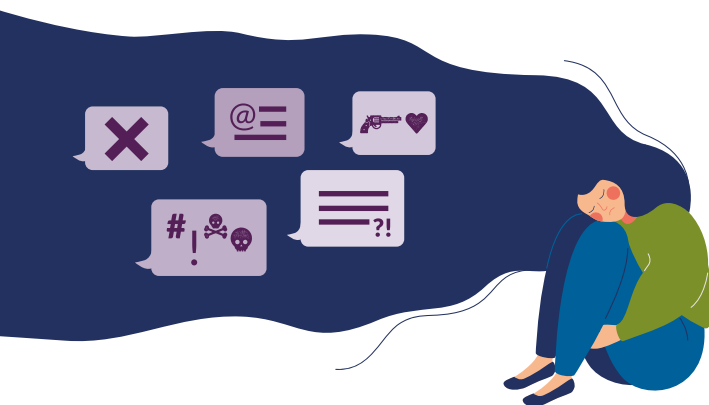
Cyber stalking and surveillance

Cyber stalking: stalking using technology, e.g. email, text (or online) messages or the internet. It involves repeated incidents, which cause the victim to feel unsafe and stressed.

Cyber surveillance/control: using technology to monitor the activities, social interactions and movements of one's partner.

Abusers demand access to their partner's mobile phone, force her to be reachable at all times, punish her if she isn't available or pressure her to send pictures to prove where she is and with whom.

Sextortion and image-based abuse

Sextortion: blackmailing somebody into, e.g. having sex or staying in a relationship by threatening to release intimate pictures or videos.

Image-based abuse: posting intimate pictures or videos (even recordings of rape) online or sharing them, e.g. in a WhatsApp group.

Abusers may use pictures and videos that they took secretly or under threat of violence. Sometimes they fake or manipulate pictures to look like the (ex-)partner.

Once the abuser shares the images, they are public. Anybody can pass them on or download them. Intimate pictures can show up years later and destroy the reputation and livelihood of victims.

Financial cyber violence

Financial cyber violence: controlling a partner's finances and ensuring she doesn't have any private financial resources.

Abusers can commit identity theft and use personal information to impersonate their victim to, e.g. make credit card debts. This makes the victim financially dependent on the abusive partner, preventing her from leaving or finding an apartment.

In other cases, the abusive partner might have total control over bank accounts and steal money. Aditionally, he might make himself the contact for all companies, e.g. internet, electricity to ensure any back payments go to him.

Cyber harassment

Cyber harassment: harassing somebody with the help of the internet or technology. This can take many forms. The abuser might send unwanted sexually explicit e-mails or messages; he might send death or rape threats, or insults. Additionally, he might start leaving bad reviews online for his (ex-)partners workplace or start spreading harmful rumours to make her seem crazy or hurt her reputation.

Some abusers have even used smart home devices to manipulate the heating and increase the bills or terrorise their (ex-)partners by randomly playing loud music.

With this harassment he humiliates, frightens and controls his (ex-)partner.