



SDG REPORT CARD

End Gender-Based Violence

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US GRADE

F

Regression

In 2015, the international community adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), each with measurable targets, to guide global development through 2030. SDG 16 calls for peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, and **Target 16.1 commits UN member states to “significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere”** (United Nations 2026). The UN Statistics Division spelled that target out as “a 50% reduction in the global homicide rate” between 2015 and 2030 (UN Statistics Division 2026).

The United States agreed to that goal, but it is moving away from, not toward, its Target 16.1 commitment. **The rate at which women are killed by a male intimate partner in the US has risen 27% since its 2013 low** (Violence Policy Center 2026). More urgently, the federal systems for preventing, responding to, and even measuring that violence are actively being dismantled: violence prevention funding and independence are under direct threat, over \$800 million in victim-service grants have been cancelled, shelter funding continues to collapse, and federal race/ethnicity data disaggregation has been rolled back. The United States is not advancing towards its 2030 commitments on reducing violence; it is regressing.

Tracking Violence

The Sustainable Development Goals track progress on Target 16.1 through Indicator 16.1.1 (the intentional homicide rate) and Indicator 16.1.3 (the share of the population subjected to physical, psychological, or sexual violence in the previous 12 months); this report draws on both kinds of data for the United States.

A key source for tracking violence against women in the US is the **National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS)**, a nationally-representative survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The most recent survey found that **over 1 in 3 women** in the US (34%, over 43 million) have experienced contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime (CDC 2026). **45.1% of US women have experienced contact sexual violence** of any kind, including 21% attempted or completed rape (CDC 2025a).

Another important source of data on violence against women in the US is the **National Crime Victimization Survey** conducted annually by the US Bureau of Justice Statistics and the US Census Bureau. In 2024, it recorded **782,900 domestic violence and 1,110,040 intimate partner violence victimizations**. Survey participants stated that roughly 6 in 10 victimizations were reported to police - meaning that 40% did not report (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2025).

Stalking

22.5% of US women (28.8 million) have experienced stalking in their lifetime compared to 9.7% of men. 85.2% of female victims suffered mental or emotional harm as a direct result (CDC 2025b).

Promoting gender equality is key to ending gender-based violence and achieving SDG 16 (Altiock 2022).

2,381 women were murdered by men

in the US in 2024.
87% knew their killer.
63% were killed with a gun.

Violence Policy Center 2026

Over half of female homicide victims

in the US are killed by a current or former male partner.

CDC 2026

30% of female homicide victims are Black

though just 14% of the population - - more than twice the homicide rate for white women

Violence Policy Center 2026

1.65 million ER visits

due to intimate partner violence in the US over 9 years
83% were female

Journal of the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons 2020

Federal Cutbacks on Funding for Violence Prevention

The US Department of Justice's budget for FY 2026 proposed a 29% cut in funding for the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) and sought to strip it of its independent, statutory status (Roll Call 2025). Despite threats, the OVW is intact but the Department of Justice is dispersing its functions to other divisions, weakening the federal focus on violence prevention. Funding from the Victims of Crime Act for domestic violence shelters continues to shrink, straining services nationwide (Brennan Center for Justice).

Data Gaps

At the same time that federal funding for violence prevention is shrinking, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention dropped race and ethnicity breakdowns for its 2023/2024 NISVS survey, weakening the very data this SDG Report Card and Target 17.18 (capacity building for reliable data) depend on (KFF 2025). In addition, the National Strategy to End Gender-Based Violence, developed by the Biden White House in 2023, has been dropped from the White House website and relegated to the archives, a troubling indication that federal efforts to end violence against women have retreated (White House 2023).

Transgender people

experience violence at 4 times the rate of non-LGBT people. 86% of transgender homicide victims are women of color. UCLA School of Law 2026

\$820 million cut

in victim-service grants by US Department of Justice for survivor housing, hotline interpretation, and law enforcement training. Brennan Center for Justice 2025

US Women's Caucus Recommendations

Protect the DOJ Office on Violence Against Women

Preserve its independence and funding and restore the \$800+ million in victim-service grants. Identify permanent, stable funding for domestic violence shelters.

Pass the DEFIANCE Act

that helps victims of non-consensual deepfakes and intimate-image abuse. The US Senate passed it unanimously in January 2026; the US House of Representatives must act.

Close firearms gaps

for those with a history of violence. Strengthen enforcement of federal firearm laws in cases of active protective orders and domestic violence or stalking convictions.

Reduce women's economic independence, a key barrier to leaving abusive relationships

Adopt social policies such as publicly provided childcare, paid parental leave, and equal-pay enforcement that expand women's access to education, employment, and political participation. Structural barriers rooted in the gendered division of unpaid care work should be treated as part of violence prevention, not just economic policy.

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