

REDC

**Safeguarding
IRELAND**
Promoting the rights of vulnerable adults

Coercive control in Ireland

February 2021

Job No: 499921

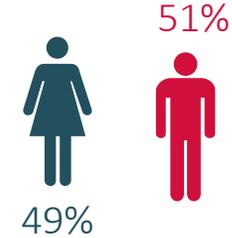


RED Line Methodology

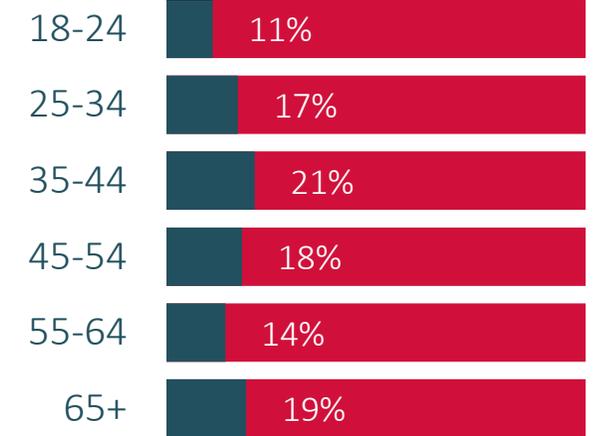
- Online research was conducted with n=1,002 ROI adults aged 18+. Respondents were recruited using RED C Live, RED C's own online panel of over 40,000 members
- Quota controls were used to ensure a nationally representative sample of ROI adults aged 18+, with interlocking quotas to provide extra confidence in sample profile
- Data was weighted across gender, age, region and social class so as to ensure a nationally representative sample based on latest CSO projections
- Fieldwork for this research took place between 4th and 9th February 2021.



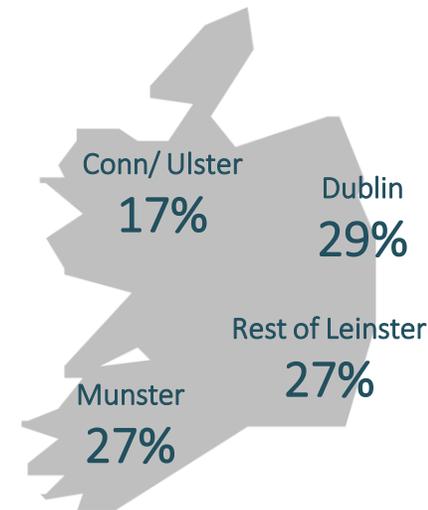
Gender



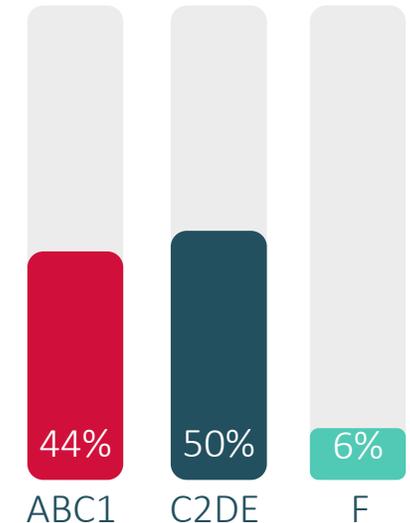
Age



Region



Social Class



Key findings from the research



Need to tackle understanding of coercive control

With 40% of adults aged 18+ in ROI not sure or unaware of the term coercive control, there is clearly a need to educate people on what this encompasses. This also possibly highlights the need for more nuanced terminology to grow awareness.



Many aware of others being victims of coercive control

While only 13% identify as being victims of coercive control, 30% say they know of someone that is a victim. Women seem to be both more at risk of experiencing it and aware of other victims.



Most people want to help, but aren't sure what to do

There is a desire to intervene and help victims of coercive control, but there needs to be greater understanding of what to do and of the supports available to assist people.

1

Understanding of Coercive Control

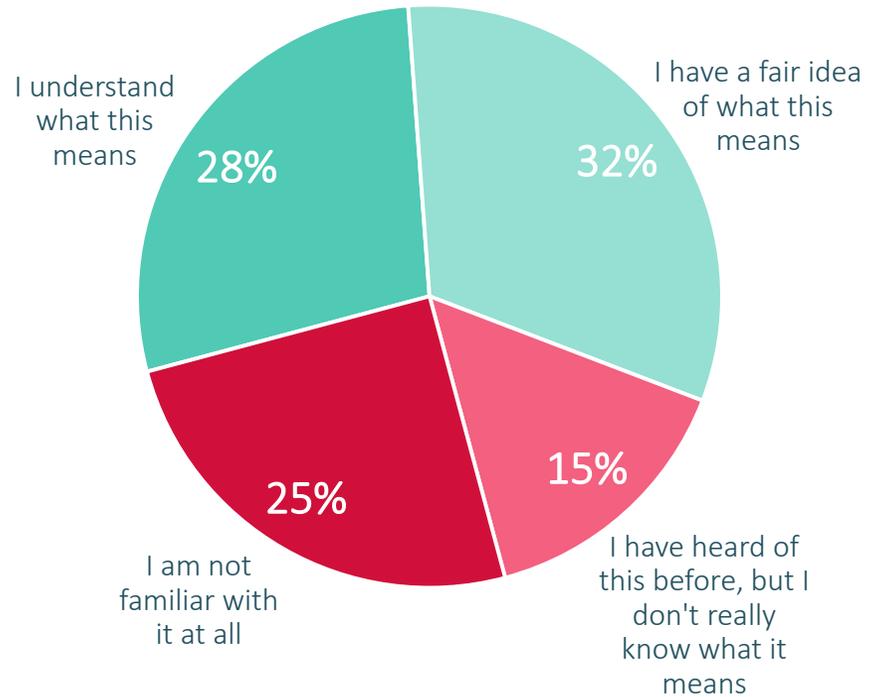
Just over one-in-four say they understand what “coercive control” means



Older people and higher social grades have a better understanding, whilst women under 55 and unemployed people have less understanding of the term.

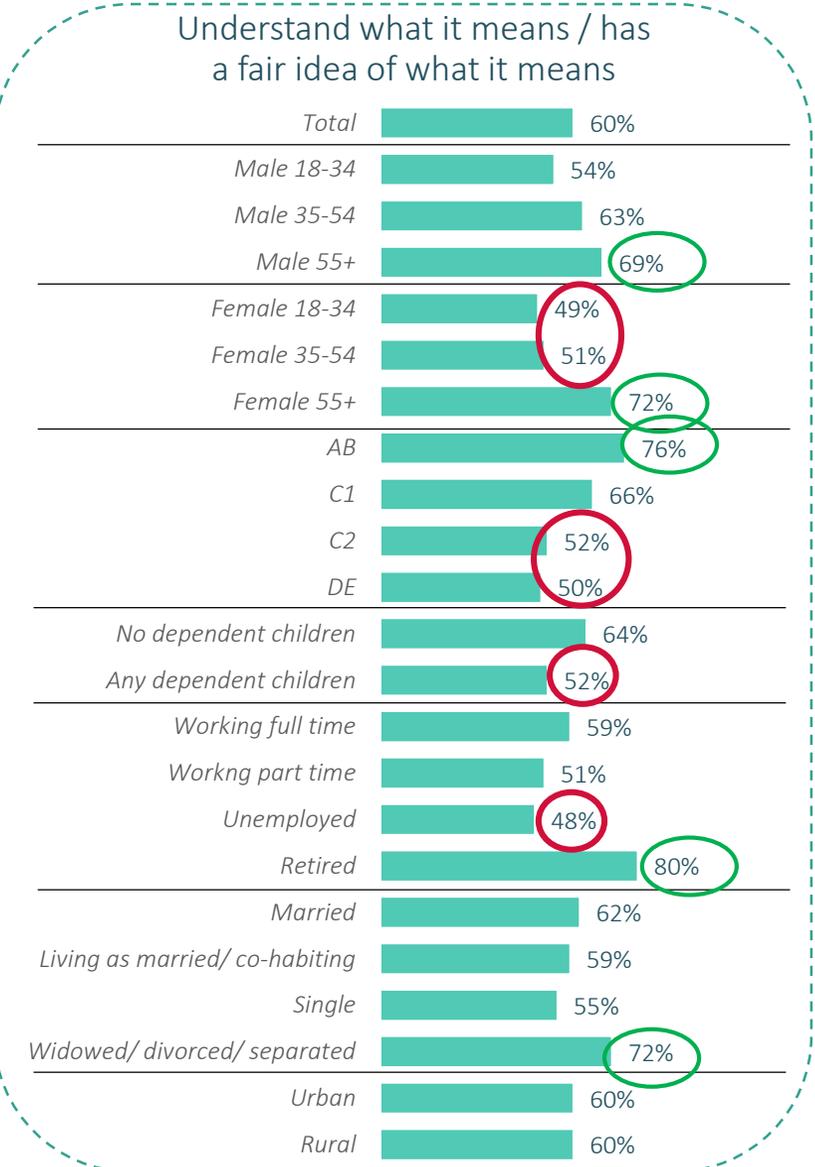
Understanding of the term ‘coercive control’

Q. Coercive control is a crime in Ireland, but may be difficult to detect. Which of the following best describes your understanding of the term coercive control?



60% Understands or has a fair idea what coercive control means

40% Don't really know what coercive control means or is not familiar with it at all



2

Experience of coercive control

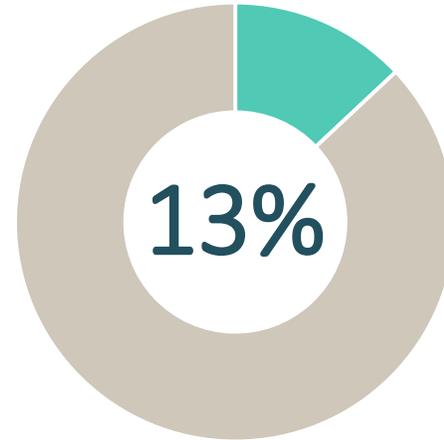
3 in ten people know someone who has experienced coercive control



More than 1 in 8 people say they have experienced coercive control themselves – women are more likely to have experienced it than men. Women are also more likely to know of someone that has experienced it.

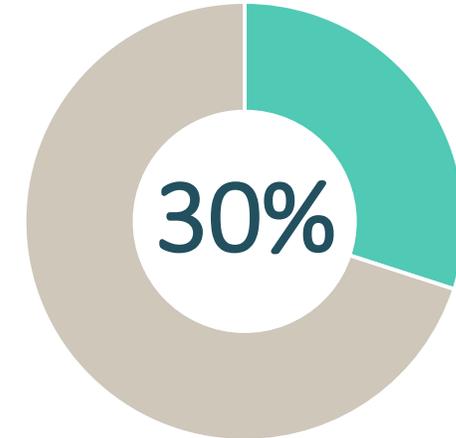
Experience of 'coercive control'

Q. Coercive control is the use of threats, humiliation, intimidation or assault to make a person dependent and isolate them in order to exploit them, deprive them of their independence and to exercise control over their behaviour and choices. It can include some or all forms of domestic abuse (emotional, physical, financial and sexual) between two adults, who are in close contact with each other. This can have a serious impact and damage a person's physical and emotional well-being, and cause them to lose contact with family and friends and to change their routine behaviours.



% of adults aged 18+ in Republic of Ireland that have personally experienced coercive control

Also higher for people widowed, divorced or separated (26%) and women aged 35-54 (19%)



% of adults aged 18+ in Republic of Ireland that know someone that has personally experienced coercive control

Also higher for women aged 35-54 (41%)



Coercive control occurs overwhelmingly within intimate relationships

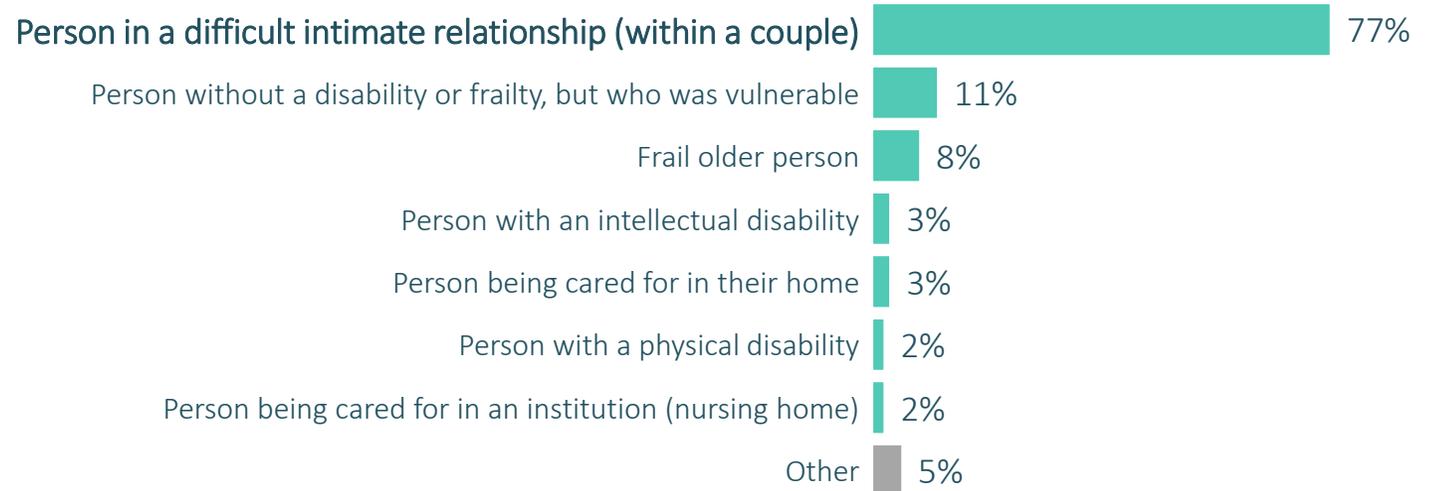
More than 3 in 4 cases of coercive control involve a person in a difficult relationship being controlled by their partner.

Q3B. You said that you know someone that has been the victim of coercive control. Can you identify the type of person who was affected?

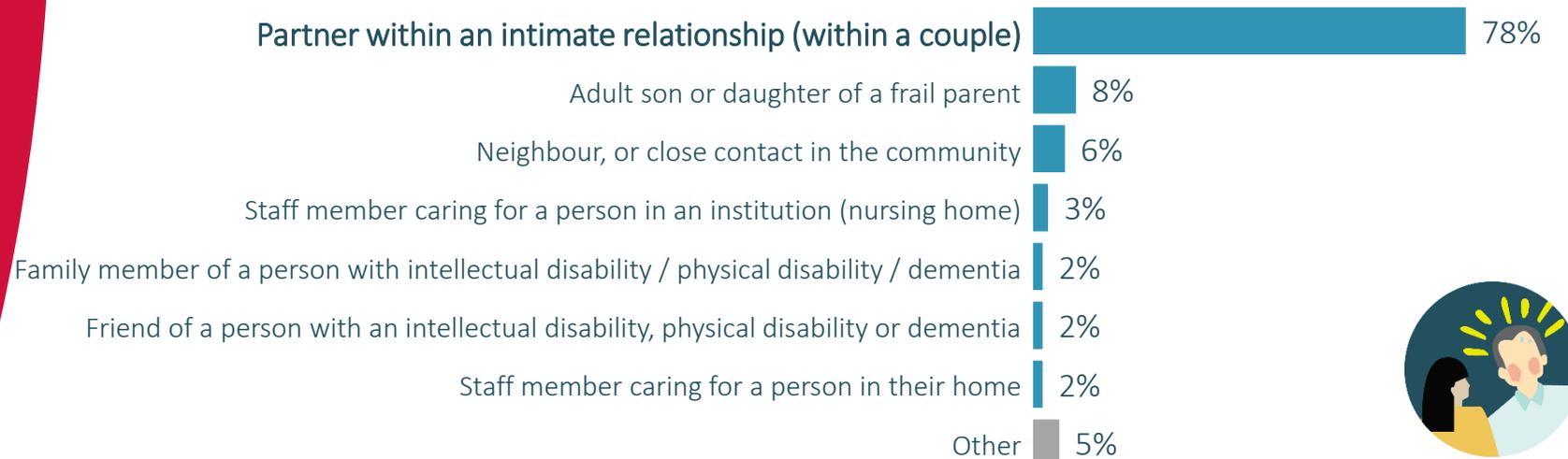
Q3C. And can you identify the type of person who was applying the control?

Base: if aware of someone that has been a victim of coercive control n=304

Victims of coercive control



Perpetrators of coercive control



3

Views on issues around coercive control

People overwhelmingly agree laws against coercive control should be expanded

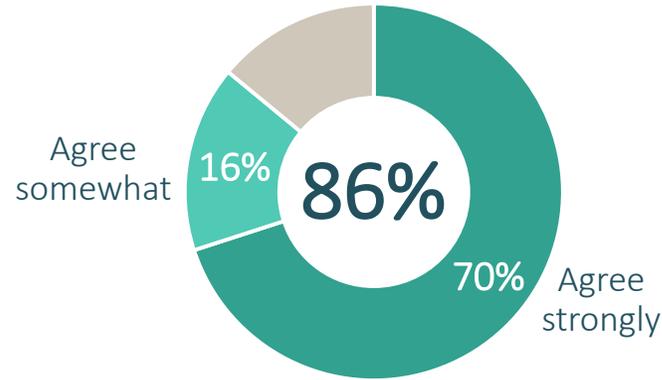


A strong majority also agree that COVID-19 has revealed the importance of coercive control as a common and serious crime.

Views on Coercive Control

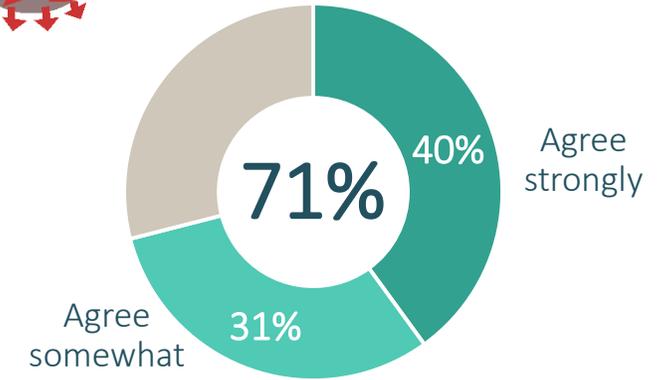
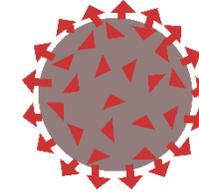
Q. Currently laws to identify coercive control as a crime only apply when it occurs among couples, who are described as in or having been in an 'intimate' relationship.

Do you agree or disagree with the following?



% of adults aged 18+ in Republic of Ireland that agree laws to identify coercive control as a crime should be expanded to also cover any relevant adult relationship or who are vulnerable

Agree strongly is higher for women (76%) and people aged 55+ (77%)



% of adults aged 18+ in Republic of Ireland that agree COVID-19 has brought coercive control more to light as a common and serious crime

Agree is higher for women (75%), people aged 55+ (77%) and ABC1s (75%)

Mixed attitudes about people's own ability to take action against coercive action

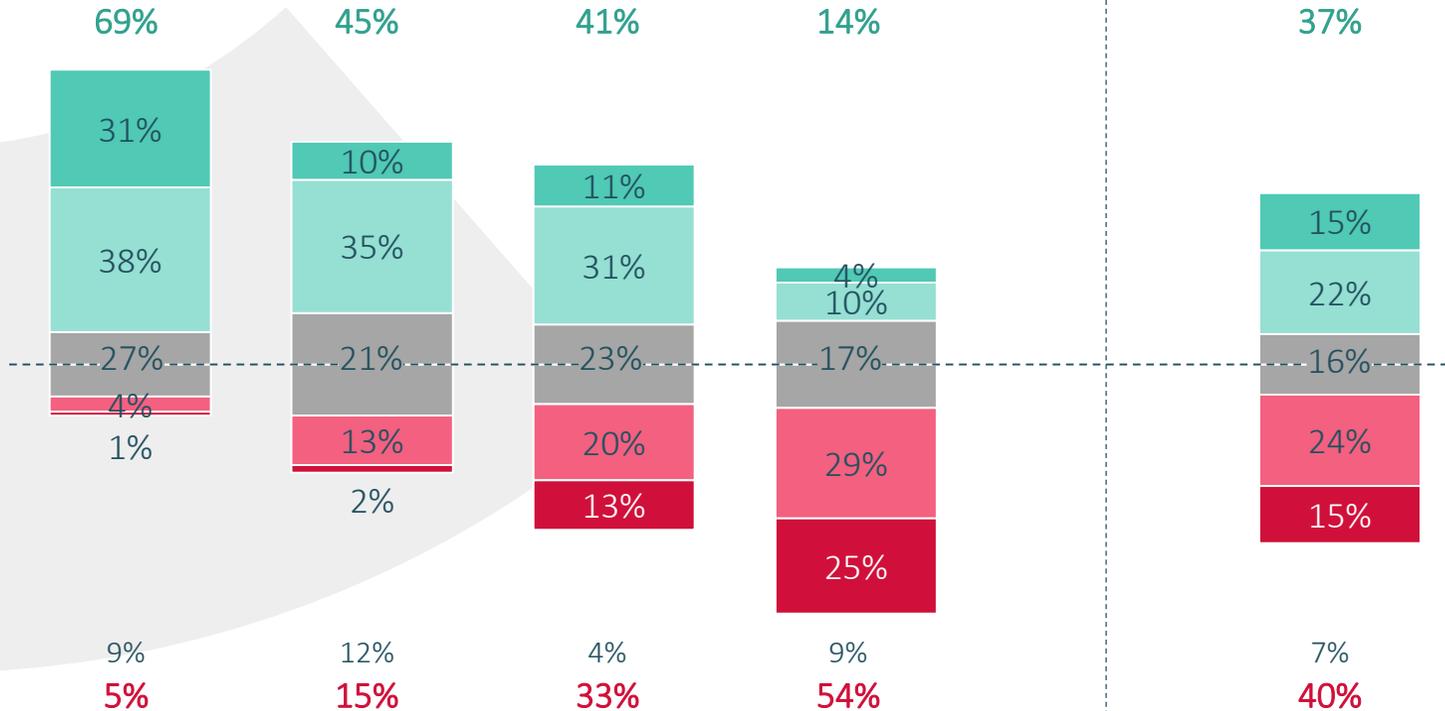
Whilst more than two-thirds of people say they would take steps to stop it if someone they knew was a victim, less than half believe they could spot the signs or would know who to contact if it did happen.

Views on Coercive Control

If someone I knew well was a victim of coercive control ...

... I would take steps to stop it ... I think I would be able to spot that this was taking place ... I would not know what to do ... it would be unlikely I would get involved

Agree somewhat / strongly



Disagree somewhat / strongly

Q4. Do you agree or disagree with the following?
Base: All adults aged 18+, n=1,002

Younger people less likely to know who to contact for advice on coercive control



Women and under 35s are also more likely to say they would not what to do if someone they knew was a victim of coercive control.

Demographic breakdown of views on issues around 'coercive control' **AGREE SOMEWHAT / STRONGLY**

 Indicates significant difference vs. total

	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	ABC1	C2DE	Married	Living as married/ co-habiting	Single	Widowed/ divorced/ separated
If someone I knew well was a victim of coercive control, I would take steps to stop it	69%	69%	69%	71%	69%	68%	74%	66%	70%	72%	69%	67%
If someone I knew well was a victim of coercive control, I think I would be able to spot that this was taking place	45%	43%	48%	40%	45%	51%	47%	44%	47%	50%	41%	54%
If someone I knew well was a victim of coercive control, I would not know what to do	41%	37%	46%	51%	37%	39%	46%	39%	42%	45%	41%	36%
If someone I knew well was a victim of coercive control, it would be unlikely I would get involved	14%	16%	12%	14%	13%	14%	13%	14%	13%	17%	13%	17%
I would know who to contact if I needed advice about helping someone who was experiencing coercive control	37%	37%	38%	30%	39%	42%	39%	37%	40%	37%	34%	41%

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