

GUIDE

**Financial independence
is a fundamental step
towards self-reliance
and safety.**

ECONOMIC VIOLENCE



what it is



how to prevent it



how to combat it

Violence against women comes in various guises. Some of these, like physical violence, are more apparent, while others, like **economic violence**, are less so.

This guide aims to examine the main characteristics of this form of violence:

what it is, how it manifests itself, how to recognise it, how to prevent it and what tools are useful to combat it.

What is economic violence?



Have you ever asked yourself the following questions?



Do I have an income to support myself or am I restricted in my search for work and financial independence? Do I manage my finances independently?



Am I aware of financial decisions affecting me and my family, such as the purchase of a car or other items (including any paid for by instalments), or kept informed about investment or savings choices?



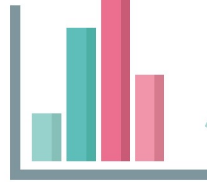
Are amounts paid out on my behalf without me knowing or without my authorisation?



Am I able to make my own independent choices about opportunities for training and professional growth?

Economic violence

Generally speaking, it occurs **within the family** and may be said to take place when behaviour prevents and/or **hinders your financial independence, exerting control over you and causing you harm.**



What can be done to prevent it?

It is essential to gain an awareness of what violence against women actually is and how it takes place, more often than not in the home.

Violence comes in multiple forms. In many instances, women are subjected to a combination of psychological, verbal, physical and sexual aggression. And **economic violence** is just another way to **limit a woman's freedom and rob her of her decision-making powers. Gradually and inexorably all aspects of the woman's life fall under the control of her abuser.** If you think you are experiencing even just one of these forms of violence, you must ask for help. For instance, you could call 1522, the Italian national first-line help which was set up specially for abused women and is free of charge. Special support is required for economic violence and it is essential to pre-empt problems in time. **This guide was specifically written to help you avert economic violence.**

Pay attention when:



You are making a choice

Financial independence is also reliant on having banking services available to you. So, the first thing is to have a bank account made out in your name, or a card which provides all account features so that you can act autonomously and manage your money as you wish.

Evaluate costs and conditions and choose the solution that fits your lifestyle and suits you best.

If you have doubts, get in touch with professionals at the bank and ask for explanations. You have the right to receive the right information.



One banking solution could be a basic account because it is specifically designed for first-time account holders. It will allow you to use essential services. You can have your salary or pension paid into it and make payments or withdrawals without incurring high costs because it was created with low-income brackets in mind. ABI has drawn up a practical guide which might help you gain a better understanding of the services on offer. You can read it at this link:

<https://www.abi.it/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Infografica-Conto-di-Base.pdf>

There are also other solutions: gather information and talk to specialised staff members inside the bank to work out which product would suit you best.

If you have additional financial requirements (if you need to take out a loan or make an investment), contact your bank for information and find a solution that meets your needs.



Financial decisions are made

It is vital to be aware of your own income and that of your family. Plan ahead for expenses and take part in financial decision-making that affects you. Don't delegate.



You are signing documents

Before signing any documents, read through all the details and think about the commitments you are taking on, carefully weighing up the consequences. And if you have any doubts, take your time and talk to someone who is knowledgeable, like a member of the bank staff. If you think you have been the victim of violence, have a chat with someone who can help you. Try calling 1522.



You have important documents

Make a habit of keeping your financial and legal documents in a safe place and always make an extra copy. This will help you to keep your financial situation under control, in the future too.



You have been given some credentials

Keep all your access codes for online services and payment operations in a safe place. For example, your SPID (Italian Public Digital Identity System) code, online-banking credentials, ID cards and PIN numbers for payment cards should all be stored with care.



ABI has developed a guide to help prevent fraud and identity theft, and to make sure you can operate safely online. You can access the guide here:

www.abi.it/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Vademecum-Furto-identita-2022-Ver1142022.pdf

If you require more information, go to www.inavigati.it, set up by CERTFin also in partnership with ABI.

Never forget to:



Keep tabs on your finances

Always take care of your finances yourself. Never delegate responsibility to others and periodically run checks on your income and expenses.

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Ask for professional support

Talk to specialists who will help you to establish suitable financial strategies, plan out budgets and navigate your way through any financial difficulties.

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Protect your savings and assets

Protecting your assets is an essential way to handle unexpected events. Financial independence allows you to protect yourself and your family.

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Build and nurture relationships

Creating and maintaining a social network outside the family environment is a precious fallback that could come in handy if situations deteriorate.

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Keep on learning and specialising

Seize all opportunities to learn and specialise professionally. Hone your skills, increase your agency and unlock greater independence, including financial independence.

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Update your financial knowledge

In order to ward off economic violence, you must be able to recognise it, and that means being as financially savvy as possible.

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www.curaituoisoldi.it

The portal promoted by the FEduF, (Foundation for Financial Literacy and Savings set up in turn by ABI) with the support of Consumer Associations, will help you grow in knowledge in a variety of financial spheres, from creating your household budget to effectively managing your bills. On the first page of the portal you will find a section entitled "*Financial gender inclusion*" that will help you preempt and combat economic violence.



ABI Associazione Bancarie Italiane
Fondazione del Consiglio delle Aziende
Opportunità per il pieno impiego
FEduF
5 GENDER EQUALITY
Looking towards the 2030 Agenda
Gender equality and empowerment for women and girls for sustainable development
TOGETHER ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
1522 VIOLENCE & STALKING HELPLINE
free of charge, in various languages and active 24 hours a day
Remember that you are never alone.

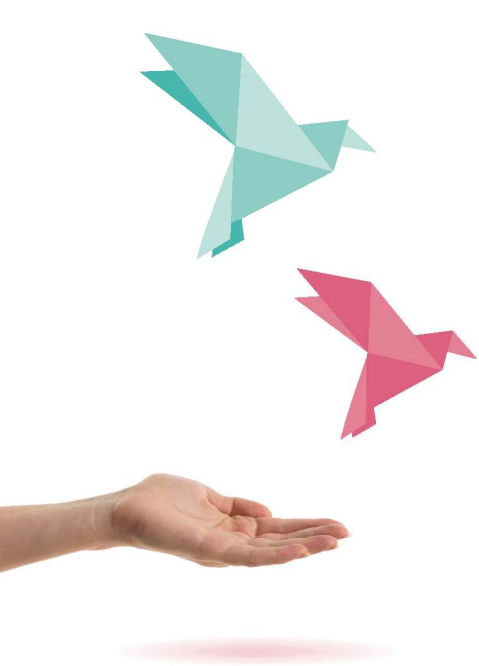


Do you need help?

The violence and stalking helpline is open from Monday to Sunday 24 hours a day in several languages and free from landlines and mobile phones. It can also be accessed from a dedicated app (the "1522" app). You can also chat to a female operator directly on the website www.1522.eu.

The service is staffed by expert female practitioners who will lend a listening ear, provide useful information and guide you towards public and private social and healthcare systems across Italy.

If you're in trouble, don't delay. Take care of yourself.



Together for gender equality! What instruments has ABI put in place with the banks?

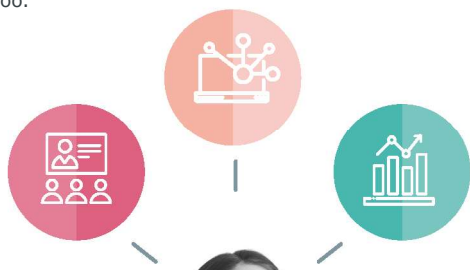
ABI and the banks, also in conjunction with the FEduF, promote initiatives to raise financial-knowledge awareness amongst the general public and to bolster gender equality in the economic sector too.

The main ones are:

The ABI-Equal Opportunities Department Memorandum for the elimination of gender-based violence, Preventing and combatting violence against women, providing support for financial inclusion and overcoming gender-based differences.

In signing the Memorandum of Understanding between ABI and the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Council of Ministers, the commitment to the gender-equality project was reinforced through a variety of tools, **including literacy and awareness activities addressed to the population.** And there are also numerous initiatives aimed at combatting violence (including economic violence) organised by banks for the general public and their employees. Find out more and check to see whether there is anything on in your local area:

<https://www.abi.it/mercati/donne-in-banca-valorizzare-le-diversita-di-genere/>





Facilitate repayment of credits to female victims of gender-based violence

Microloans for Freedom

The Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family, ABI, Federcasse, the National Institute for Microloans (ENM) and Caritas Italy have signed a **Memorandum of understanding entitled “Microcredito di Libertà (Microloans for Freedom)” to facilitate the loan-taking process (in the form of small social and business loans) for women who are victims of gender-based violence** and who want to set up or develop small businesses on their own, or who are unable to cope with their own financial commitments or those of their families.

The project promotes the social and financial inclusion of abused women who are particularly vulnerable in financial or social terms and who are assisted by Gender-Based-Violence Rescue Centres or Shelters. For further information about this project, please consult the following website: www.microcreditoliberta.it

The Memorandum of understanding facilitates repayment of credits to female victims and is promoted by ABI and Trade Union Organisations for the industry. The Memorandum requires participating banks and financial intermediaries to suspend payment of the principal amount on mortgages and loans for a maximum period of 18 months, extending the repayment schedule accordingly. It is available to female victims of violence or women belonging to protection schemes who are in financial difficulty.

The memorandum that facilitates suspension of mortgage and loan payments for victims of gender-based violence was extended to the end of November 2025 alongside signature of the Agreement to renew the Italian national Collective Contract of 23th November 2023. You can find out more and view the list of participating banks on the ABI website:

www.abi.it/lavoro/donne-in-banca-valorizzare-le-diversita-di-genere/rimborso-crediti-alle-donne-vittime-di-violenza-di-genere/



THE 2030 AGENDA

The initiatives contribute to the implementation of the **sustainable-development** commitments promoted by the UN's **2030 Agenda**, and in particular, **Goal 5 on gender equality and empowerment for all women and girls**.



Looking towards the 2030 Agenda
and its sustainability goals
For gender equality and
empowerment for women and girls

Consumer Associations share and support the initiative

