

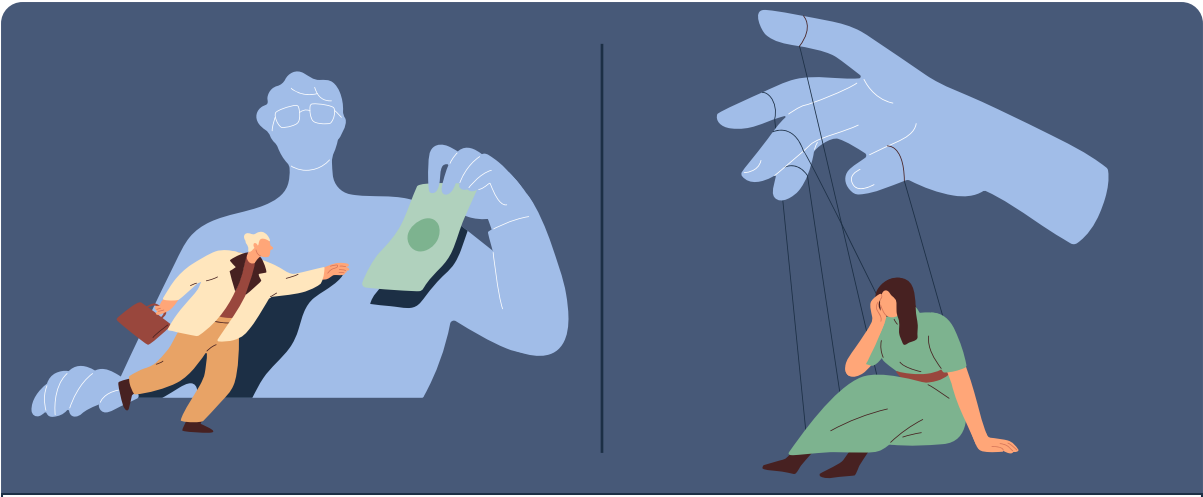
A look at the effects of economic abuse

Economic abuse is a type of domestic violence that has long been overlooked, but in recent years its significance is becoming increasingly acknowledged. This form of psychological and financial control often goes undetected as it can be difficult to define and identify.

According to the Banking & Payments Federation Ireland, **20% of Irish adults have experience of financial abuse.**

Many survivors **suffer in silence**, telling no one about the economic abuse they are experiencing. Specialist services are vital to help survivors not only identify the abuse they've experienced, but to assist them in rebuilding their lives and finances after leaving a perpetrator.

If left unchecked, economic abuse can devastate individuals by taking away personal autonomy - making them feel they have no choice but to comply with their abuser's demands about money decisions. We'll explain what constitutes economic abuse, the signs and symptoms to look out for and provide advice on how you can seek help if you feel you are being subjected to such behaviour.



What is economic abuse, and what are some signs that you or someone you know may be experiencing it?

Economic abuse is a form of manipulation that can limit an individual's autonomy and security in the long run. It often involves controlling or coercive behaviour, from cutting individuals off financially to making them dependent on their abuser for basic needs like money, transportation and utilities. The devastating effects leave victims feeling trapped with little hope of safety without economic independence.

Have you or someone close to you experienced intimidation, manipulation and control when it comes to money matters? There are several warning signs - such as one person having excessive power over the family's finances; preventing access to welfare support; limiting educational opportunities, transport options, phone use and food supply. Other tell-tale signs include checking receipts excessively and debt accumulation.

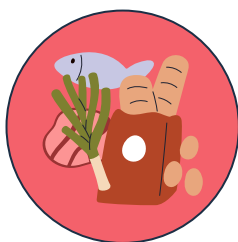
Is economic abuse a crime?



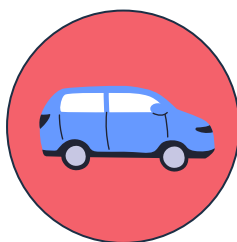
The Domestic Violence Act 2018 took a stand against economic abuse, introducing it as an official form of domestic violence and making it punishable by law. This bold move sends the message that this crime won't be tolerated any longer.

How can economic abuse impact a person's life both emotionally and physically, and how can it affect relationships and families?

It would be very rare to see economic abuse in isolation, which often runs alongside many forms of abuse. This can include emotional, psychological, physical, coercive control and sexual abuse, all of which have devastating effects on relationships and families. Economic abuse, in turn, often isolates victims and their children. A lack of access to family income creates barriers to resources such as:



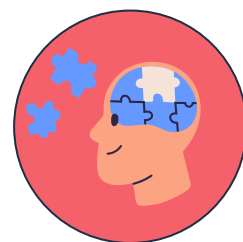
Food



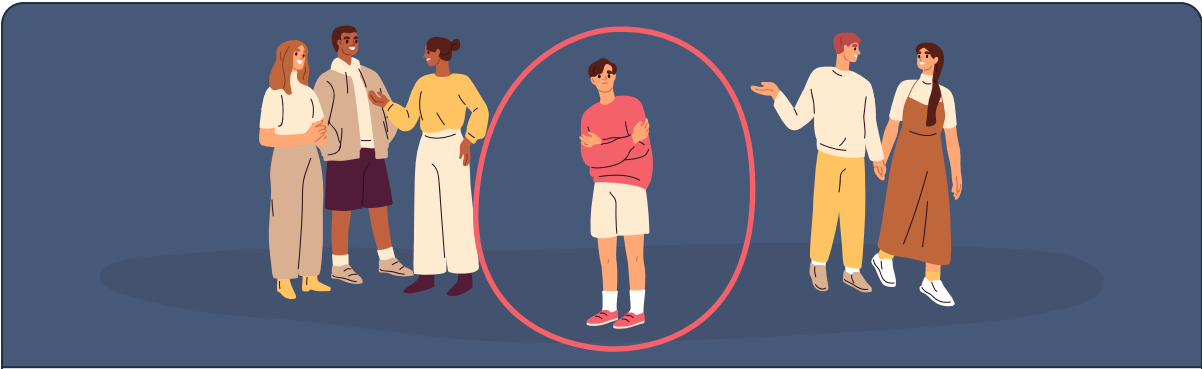
Utilities & transport



Physical health




Mental health



What are some ways to get help if you're experiencing economic abuse or think someone you know is being abused in this way?

If you've experienced economic abuse, know that help is available.



 Reach out to the **Women's Aid** national helpline on **1800 341 900** or **Men's Aid** national helpline on **015543811**

You can localize services even further by doing a simple area search on Google too. Don't wait; reach out now and explore all your options for support.

What steps can we take as a society to prevent economic abuse from happening in the first place and support victims of this type of abuse?

It's critical to spread the word about economic abuse so that everyone - from students to adults and policymakers alike- can understand how it permeates our society. Proactive education is essential in order for all people to receive appropriate help if needed, as well as take steps towards preventing further instances of this damaging form of cruelty.

Our experts are here to help. Contact your HealthHero or Validium service for more advice on where to go for support with dealing with economic abuse.

