



**Finnish Institute of
Occupational Health**

Emerging psychosocial risks related to OSH

Harassment and violence at work

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Harassment and violence at work

- Harassment, bullying, mobbing, violence. Different words, definitions and classifications are used. Should we have or is it possible to have mutual definitions?
- Is bullying and violence increasing in European countries? Are Finns the worst bullies in Europe? What do other studies show? Do we have explanations for differences between countries?
- The awareness and recognition of bullying in working life and in workplaces. Management of bullying and violence require recognition of the problem. What is the state of readiness to act in different countries and organizations?
- What is going on for the moment. Ongoing research and intervention projects in national levels and international levels.

Work-related violence

- Incidents where persons are abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances related to their work, involving an explicit or implicit challenge to their safety, well-being and health.

(adopted by European Commission 1995)

Classifications

- **Nature of violence**

- threats (verbal, with objects)
- physical violence (kicking, biting, hitting, shooting etc.)
- psychological violence (verbal, non-verbal)

- abuse (all forms of harassment, bullying and mobbing)

Bullying, mobbing, harassment

Third party violence, the aggressor is a client, customer, patient, pupil. Is both psychological or physical by nature.

Bullying, mobbing, harassment; individual differences, language differences, cultural differences

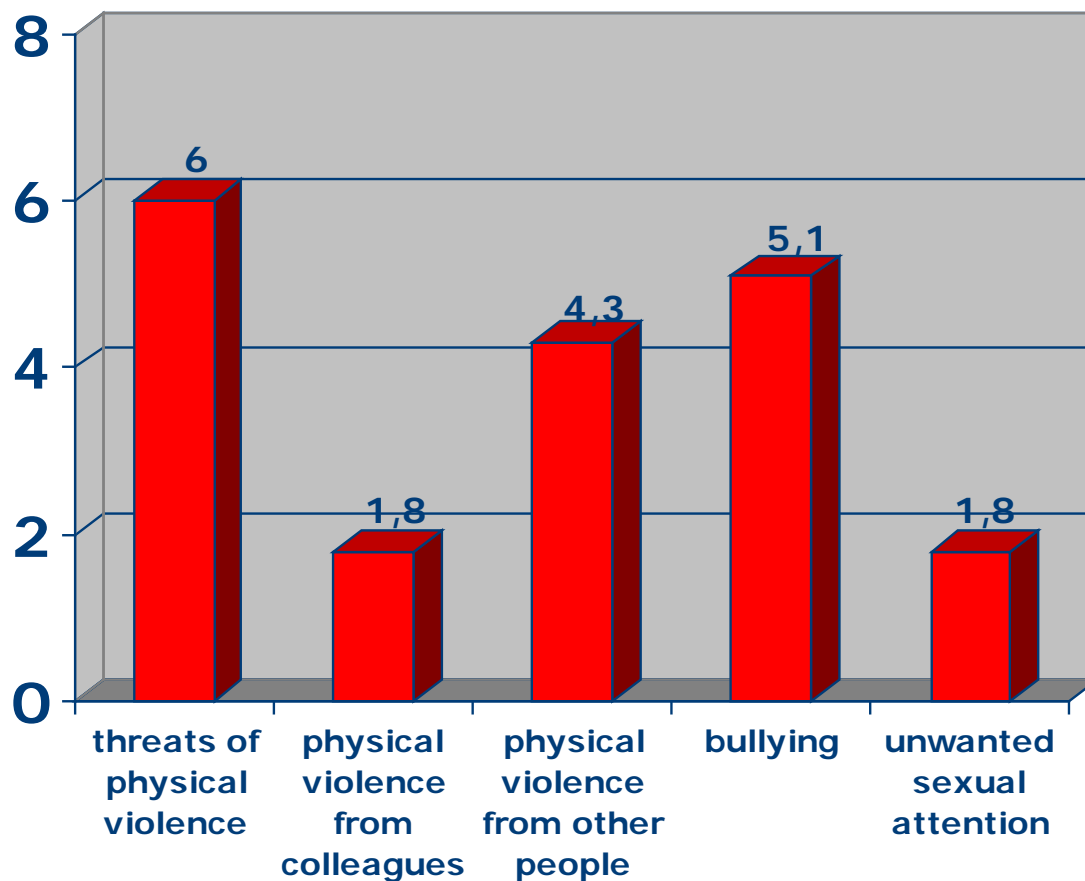
Bullying

is negative, hostile, aggressive behaviours that is recurrent and long-lasting. The target perceives him/herself defenceless. Most often psychological by nature. The perpetrator is a workmate, supervisor or other manager or subordinate. (also a customer/client)

European Risk Observatory

"OSH in figures", 2005

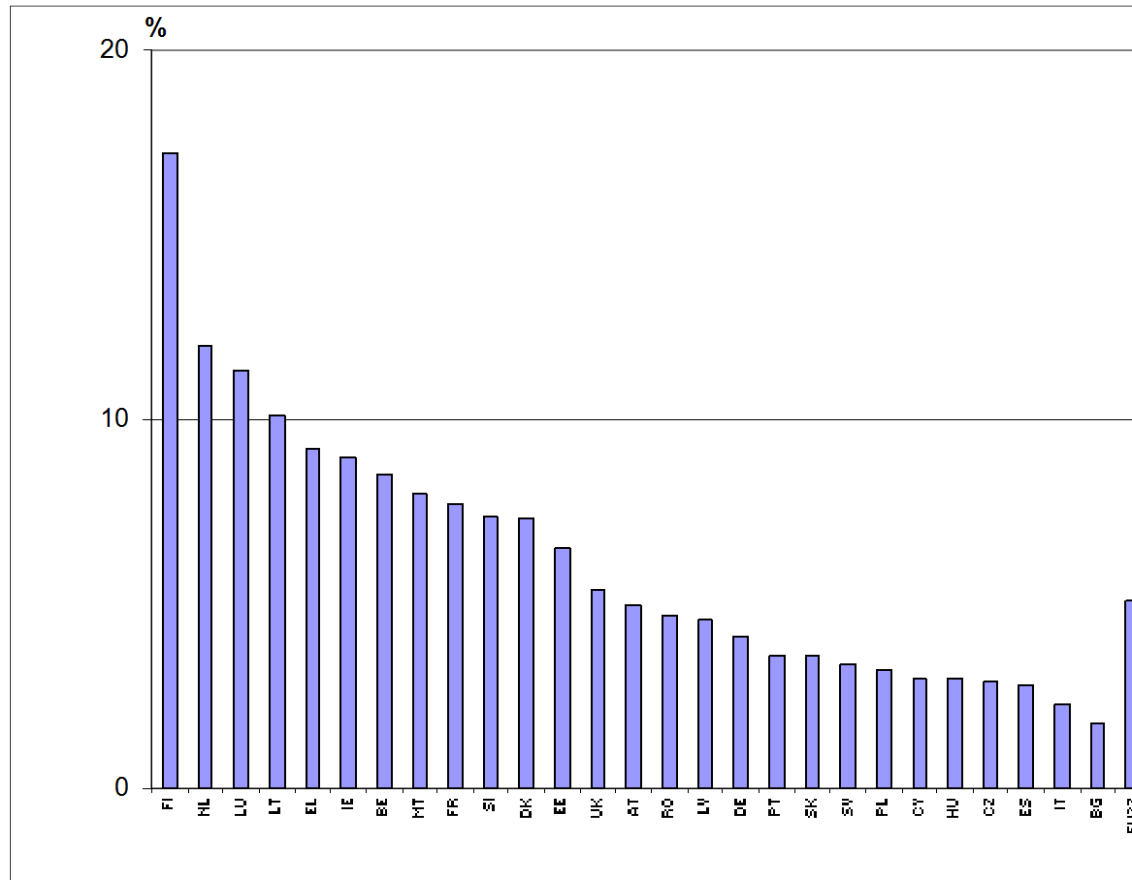
- Violence and bullying at work, EU-27 (% yes)*



*European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. Fourth European Working Conditions Survey (2006).

Bullying/harassment EU member States

- Bullying/harassment in EU Member States (2005)



Work and health interview survey (FIOH)

Perceived bullying (current victim)

Year	1997 (n=1832)	2000 (n=1785)	2003 (n=2047)	2006 (n=2154)
All	3.6	4.3	2.9	5
Women	4.3	5.4	4.0	6
Men	2.8	3.4	1.8	3
Employer sector				
Municipal	4.4	7.1	5.1	7
Government	6.3	3.4	2.3	4
Private	3.1	3.8	2.5	4
Branch				
Education	5.5	6.3	6.4	6
Health & social work	4.1	6.7	5.6	7

Prevalence of bullying in Finland and Poland measured with WPI (Psychosocial Workplace Inventory) (heavy industry companies) (Spain: municipal sector)

<u>%</u>	<u>Finland</u>	<u>Poland</u>	<u>(Spain)</u>
Self-experienced bullying			
Level I	10	20	12
Level II	4	1	
Level III	3	0	
Observed bullying			
Level I	25	26	
Level II	8	8	
Level III	2	3	

(Varhama & Björkqvist 2004)

Some explanations for the differences

- Awareness and recognition of the problem/issue differ between countries.
- Different image of the words, difficulties with the words
- The general conception/way of thinking of the phenomenon differ (antecedents of bullying: work environmental view/personality view)
- Different kinds of behaviours is perceived as insulting, violent, aggressive in different cultures

Third party violence at work in Finland in 1980-2006

(National Research Institute of Legal Policy, 2007)

%	1980	1988	1993	1997	2003	2006
Men	1.9	1.7	1.6	2.3	2.6	2.2
Women	1.0	1.6	2.0	2.8	4.4	3.8

- The increase results mainly from the changes that has happened in violence against women; increase in third party violence in health care, in social work, commerce

Are organizations ready to take action – stage of readiness

- Readiness for change is an important prerequisite for successful interventions
- Readiness of organizations/companies and employees means the extent to which they are prepared to implement new things like violence management programs
- If changes are carried out prematurely they may cause negative reactions or they do not lead to any real actions.

From awareness of the issue to best practice interventions to prevent and manage bullying in the workplaces

- Awareness of the phenomenon raise
- Need for a term and definition
- Media is very interested
- Need for national research; on prevalence, forms of bullying (negative acts), status of bullies etc.
- Discussions on the antecedents of bullying (personality view, work environment view)
- Active dissemination of knowledge (training, media)
- It is admitted that bullying may exist in workplaces
- It is recognized that bullying is an occupational health and safety problem, and that something has to be done
- Need for regulations emerge
- Safety personnel, trade unions and occupational health care become active
- Active dissemination of knowledge (training, media)
- Preventive measures to tackle bullying in organizations; anti-bullying policies, guidelines, training
- Secondary level interventions.

For how long does this take?

Violence and bullying at work; European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, Topic Centre - Risk Observatory 2008.

The aims of the project are to:

- Scrutinise differences in EU Member States in terms of the level of occurrence of different forms of violence and bullying at work (key statistics from international and national sources), as well as examples of preventive measures which are employed.
- Review the methodology and data sources used in different countries to assess the risk, prevalence and consequences of both workplace violence and bullying.
- Examine cultural differences - definitions and norms - related to both violence and bullying at work.
- Give policy makers and researchers a comprehensive overview of the level of awareness of the problem with violence and bullying at work in EU Member States.
- Give policy makers and researchers an overview of the current state of control, including some background information on legislative and non-legislative measures (e.g. codes of practice) related to different kinds of violence and bullying at work.

- **Data collection**

- Collecting scientific and statistical data
- Reviewing relevant literature in different European countries
- A survey for Focal Points to collect information on violence and bullying at national level. (Sent to Focal Points on 3 April)

Participants: FIOH, BAuA, BGIA, CIOP, INRS, INSHT, PREVENT

The project is led by FIOH. Report by 31 January 2009.

PRIMA-EF (Psychosocial Risk Management – European Framework),

- EU funded policy project that focus on work-related stress and violence, including harassment, bullying, mobbing.
- The objectives of the project are to: a. develop existing knowledge in reviewing available methodologies to evaluate the prevalence and impact of psychosocial risks at work and work-related stress, including physical and psychological workplace violence, harassment, bullying and mobbing; b. identify appropriate means of collecting sensitive data in relation to these issues; c. develop international standards and indicators on stress and violence at work; d. develop detailed recommendations and evidence-based best-practice guidance on the management of these issues at the workplace; and e. disseminate the results of the project to stakeholders and social partners including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
- Participants of the consortium: IWHO (UK), BAuA (Germany), ISPESL (Italy), TNO (the Netherlands), FIOH (Finland), CIOP (Poland), Advisors in-kind WHO and ILO
- The work will be finished by 30 November 2008.

Ongoing research and intervention projects in the Nordic countries

- Bergen Bullying Research Group
- A wide ranging research and intervention project in Denmark in the National Research Institute
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Bullying – migrant workers from different countries and Finns (%)

	Finland (n=571)	All migrants (n=184)	Russia (n=26)	Estonia (n=75)	Sub-Saharan Africa and Horn of Africa (n=35)	Other countries (n=48)
Bullied	10.1	17.6	17.2	6.3	20.5	33.3
Daily or almost daily	2.3	2.2	3.8	1.3	-	4.2
A few times a month	5.3	7.1	3.8	1.3	11.4	14.6
More seldom	4.4	14.1	7.7	8.0	25.7	18.8

Northern Africa + Middle East + former Yugoslavia almost 40%

A lot is happening in the field of harassment and violence

- Framework agreement of harassment and violence at work, signed on 26 April 2007 by ETUC, BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME and CEEP.

Trade union implementation report January 2008

Thank you!