


Volatility as a Legal Challenge: Rethinking Labor Law Responses to Workplace Violence – European Approach

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Abstract: Workplace violence is a growing concern in contemporary labor law, driven by its prevalence and volatile nature. Effective legal analysis requires understanding volatility as the variability, unpredictability, repetition, and context-dependence of violent and abusive conduct. Workplace violence is not isolated or uniform but is shaped by changing social, economic, organizational, and regulatory factors. Its forms, intensity, frequency, and visibility shift over time, across sectors, and among different groups, especially regarding gender and socio-economic status. This volatility exposes the limitations of uniform regulatory models that assume stable risks. Evidence from Europe and Central Asia shows that violence and harassment are often recurrent, disproportionately affect women, and persist despite strong legal frameworks. The frequent occurrence of psychological and sexual harassment, along with underreporting in precarious or low-income settings, highlights gaps between formal legal protections and their practical effectiveness. Volatility impacts not only the occurrence of violence but also access to remedies, reporting, enforcement, and employer compliance. The protective function of labor law depends on its ability to address these volatile patterns. Volatility challenges complaint-based models and underscores the need for preventive, ongoing, and context-sensitive legal duties. This includes gender-sensitive risk assessments, differentiated employer obligations, and recognition of repeated violence as an aggravated violation, as well as greater attention to psychosocial harm. By viewing workplace violence as an evolving risk, the author advocates for a new approach to labor regulation in Europe that prioritizes substantive equality, early intervention, and effective enforcement over formally neutral but insufficient standards.

Keywords: volatility, workplace violence, harassment, psychosocial risks, risk assessment

1. Introduction

Violence in the workplace has become a significant challenge for contemporary labor law, reflecting broader changes in employment relations and workplace organization. “Workplace violence” encompasses a range of unacceptable behaviors, including physical violence, verbal abuse, threats, bullying, psychological harassment, and sexual harassment. These behaviors can cause physical, psychological, sexual, or economic harm to individuals.¹ Previously, workplace violence was viewed mainly as an occupational health or interpersonal issue, but it is now increasingly recognized as a legal problem

¹ International Labour Organization, *Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)*, accessed January 10, 2026, https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=normlexpub:12100:0:0:0::p12100_ilo_code:r206.

requiring systemic regulatory responses.² From a labor law perspective, workplace violence raises fundamental questions concerning the protection of human dignity, equality, and the right to safe and healthy working conditions. In accordance with international legal standards, the most notable of which is the International Labour Organization's Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)³ establishes a broad framework that obliges states to prevent, prohibit, and remedy such conduct across all sectors. This reflects a consensus that labor law must address both physical and psychosocial risks in modern workplaces. Research shows that workplace violence has serious and lasting effects on workers' mental and physical health, including increased risks of anxiety, depression, burnout, and post-traumatic stress disorder. These harms also lead to broader social and economic costs, such as reduced productivity, higher absenteeism, and increased turnover, reinforcing the need for effective legal regulation.⁴ Labor law is critical in defining employer responsibilities, enforcement mechanisms, and access to remedies for affected workers. This article analyzes key variables that determine violence in labor law, including legal definitions and conceptualization. The author argues that violence in labor law is a broad concept, and any behavior intended to cause physical or psychological harm in the workplace is relevant. Such behavior creates a pathological situation that employers must address or minimize.

The volatility of workplace violence is characterized by heterogeneity, manifested in its variability and unpredictability.⁵ The form, intensity, frequency, perpetrators, and groups affected vary depending on the social, economic, organizational, and political context. It is imperative to acknowledge this diversity to formulate effective labor policies and regulations. Primarily, this necessitates establishing regulations that can proactively prevent the emergence of various manifestations of workplace violence. The primary objective of the research question presented is to conceptualize workplace violence as a heterogeneous, context-dependent phenomenon rather than a single, uniform issue. The objective of the present study is to move beyond conventional, simplistic definitions by underscoring heterogeneity across multiple dimensions. Future researchers of workplace violence should set four objectives: identify and categorize forms of workplace violence by examining differences in form, intensity, frequency, types of perpetrators, and groups affected by violence. The following analysis should be carried out: an examination of the contextual conditions, social, economic, organizational, and political factors that shape how workplace violence arises and manifests itself in different environments. The impact of this variability on existing labor policies and regulatory frameworks should

² Valerio De Stefano et al., "Platform Work and the Employment Relationship" (ILO Working Paper 2021), 133–62, <https://econpapers.repec.org/paper/iloilowps/995121493302676.htm>.

³ International Labour Organization, *Violence and Harassment Convention*.

⁴ International Labour Organization, *Recommendation Concerning the Elimination of Violence and Harassment in the World of Work (No. 206)* (2019), accessed March 10, 2026, https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:R206; World Health Organization, *Guidelines on Mental Health at Work* (Geneva: WHO, 2022), <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240053052>.

⁵ See also: Jiwook Jung, Zoltán Lippenyi, and Eunmi Mun, "Workplace Volatility and Gender Inequality: A Comparison of the Netherlands and South Korea," *Socio-Economic Review* 20, no. 4 (2022): 1679–740, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ser/mwab026>.

be assessed, with particular attention to cases where a one-size-fits-all approach is insufficient. Evidence-based policy development should be grounded in a nuanced understanding to support the design of targeted, flexible, and context-specific labor regulations.

This article aims to understand workplace violence as a dynamic, volatile phenomenon rather than a constant or uniform issue from a European⁶ perspective. Interrelated factors, including social elements such as gender relations, migration status, and power imbalances, shape the forms, intensity, frequency, and visibility of workplace violence. Economic conditions, such as labor market insecurity, unemployment, and sectoral competition, also contribute, as do organizational factors, including hierarchies, management practices, employment contracts, and workplace culture. The political and regulatory context, including labor law frameworks and enforcement mechanisms, is also crucial in shaping workplace violence. Given the complexity of the issue, this article focuses on selected variables and literature. The analysis uses the latest statistics from the International Labour Organization (ILO), while recognizing that further research is needed to address the outlined objectives fully.

2. Violence at Work? And Why Do We Care?

In contrast to the analytical approach adopted by Celia M. Geck *et al.*, in the article “Violence at Work,”⁷ a thorough examination of aggressive, violent, and repeatedly violent employees reveals that the decision to investigate workplace aggression and workplace violence as separate constructs is not sufficiently supported on theoretical or empirical grounds. The authors of the study argue for a categorical distinction between these behaviors. However, existing literature in the fields of occupational psychology and forensic psychiatry increasingly conceptualizes aggression and violence as points along a single behavioral continuum.⁸ This is differentiated mainly by severity and immediate consequences rather than by distinct etiological processes. The approach taken in their study, which treats aggression and violence as discrete phenomena, risks fragmenting the analysis of shared risk factors and obscuring pathways to escalation. It is important to note that persistent, low-level aggression may ultimately culminate in overt violence. Consequently, the separation employed by Geck *et al.* may limit the explanatory scope of their findings and reduce the study’s utility for developing comprehensive workplace prevention and intervention strategies. The fundamental argument of this article, and one that is of particular significance from the perspective of labor law, is the observation that the aforementioned distinction is irrelevant to labor law. Within the domain of labor law, the act itself is significant, as dysfunctional behavior engenders pathology in the workplace. Within the domain of labor law, the act itself is significant, as dysfunctional behavior

⁶ And several countries in Central Asia.

⁷ Carter M. Geck *et al.*, “Violence at Work: An Examination of Aggressive, Violent, and Repeatedly Violent Employees,” *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management* 4, no. 4 (2017): 210–29, <https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000091>.

⁸ Sharon M. Boles and Karen Miotto, “Substance Abuse and Violence: A Review of the Literature,” *Aggression and Violent Behavior: A Review Journal* 8, no. 2 (2003): 155–74, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S1359-1789\(01\)00057-X](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S1359-1789(01)00057-X).

engenders pathology in the workplace. Workplace safety is frequently called into question when highly visible and severe incidents, such as workplace homicides or mass killings, dominate media coverage. However, it should be noted that nonphysical forms of aggression, including harassment and bullying, occur far more frequently than acts of physical violence, including assaults and homicides. Nevertheless, both direct exposure to and witnessing of such behaviors have been demonstrated to be associated with substantial adverse outcomes. The consequences of such incidents can be manifold, including heightened fear of future violent incidents, reduced employee morale and job performance, and negative effects on workers' physical, emotional, and psychological well-being.⁹ There has been substantial progress in the theoretical and empirical examination of aggressive and violent behavior in the workplace. A significant proportion of this progress has been dedicated to identifying and analyzing risk factors associated with aggressive behavior in a broader context.¹⁰

I have to admit that significant advances have been made in theoretical and empirical domains, providing a solid foundation for understanding workplace aggression. However, addressing the ongoing conceptual challenges, particularly the distinction between aggression and violence, remains a pivotal area for future research.¹¹ In accordance with this perspective, a number of scholars contend that workplace aggression and violence should be regarded as distinct conceptual phenomena, necessitating their separate examination. This standpoint asserts that an analysis of aggressive and violent behavior in the workplace is imperative. A significant proportion of this progress has

⁹ Nathan A. Bowling and Terry A. Beehr, "Workplace Harassment from the Victim's Perspective: A Theoretical Model and Meta-Analysis," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 91, no. 5 (2006): 998–1012, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.91.5.998>; Robert A. Baron and Joel H. Neuman, "Workplace Aggression – The Iceberg beneath the Tip of Workplace Violence: Evidence on Its Forms, Frequency, and Targets," *Public Administration Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (1998): 446, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40861725>.

¹⁰ Bowling and Beehr, "Workplace Harassment from the Victim's Perspective"; James Bonta and D.A. Andrews, "Risk-Need-Responsivity Model for Offender Assessment and Rehabilitation," *Rehabilitation*, no. 6 (2007): 1–22.

¹¹ Lynne M. Andersson and Christine M. Pearson, "Tit for Tat? The Spiralling Effect of Incivility in the Workplace," *Academy of Management Review* 24, no. 3 (1999): 452–71, <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1999.2202131>; Baron and Neuman, "Workplace Aggression," 446–62; Bowling and Beehr, "Workplace Harassment from the Victim's Perspective"; Ståle V. Einarsen et al., eds., *Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace: Developments in Theory, Research, and Practice*, 2nd ed. (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2011); M. Sandy Hershcovis and Julian Barling, "Towards a Multi-Foci Approach to Workplace Aggression: A Meta-Analytic Review of Outcomes from Different Perpetrators," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 31, no. 1 (2010): 24–44, <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.621>; Lorealeigh Keashly and Karen Jagatic, "North American Perspectives on Hostile Behaviors and Bullying at Work," in *Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace*, eds. Ståle Einarsen et al. (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2011), 41–71; Paul Linsley, *Violence and Aggression in the Workplace* (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2018); Joel H. Neuman and Robert A. Baron, "Aggression in the Workplace: A Social-Psychological Perspective," in *Counterproductive Work Behavior: Investigations of Actors and Targets*, eds. Suzy Fox and Paul E. Spector (Washington: American Psychological Association, 2005), 13–40; Paul E. Spector and Suzy Fox, "The Stressor–Emotion Model of Counterproductive Work Behavior," in *Counterproductive Work Behavior: Investigations of Actors and Targets*, eds. Suzy Fox and Paul E. Spector (Washington: American Psychological Association, 2005), 151–74; Dieter Zapf and Ståle Einarsen, "Bullying in the Workplace: Recent Trends in Research and Practice – An Introduction," *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology* 10, no. 4 (2001): 369–73, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13594320143000807>; M. Sandy Hershcovis et al., "Predicting Workplace Aggression: A Meta-Analysis," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 92, no. 1 (2007): 228–38, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.1.228>.

been dedicated to identifying and analyzing risk factors associated with aggressive behavior in a broader context.¹²

Therefore, this paper treats workplace aggression and workplace violence as a single concept, which does not, however, preclude the identification of many forms of violence not covered in this article due to the multifaceted nature of violence. For linguistic systematization only, I will distinguish between them, although, as I emphasize, violence can be aggression in labor law. The term “workplace aggression” is defined as intentional behavior by an employee that is directed towards harming another employee or results in such harm, with primary emphasis on psychological rather than physical injury.¹³ Examples of such behaviors include verbal abuse, intimidation, humiliation, bullying, harassment, and deliberate property damage. In contrast, the term “workplace violence” refers to behaviors that result in or are intended to result in physical harm to another employee. Such behaviors may include physical assault, attempted assault, unwanted sexual contact, or confrontations involving weapons or improvised instruments. Although instances of workplace violence are not particularly prevalent, the most extreme manifestations of such behavior include workplace homicides and mass murder events. The latter are defined as incidents in which at least four employees are killed during a single episode.¹⁴

The categorization of workplace aggression and violence is a complex undertaking, and it is imperative to recognize the significance of the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim when conducting such analyses. Offenders in category I possess no legitimate relationship to the organization or its employees. They enter the workplace with the intent to commit a crime, such as robbery or theft. Workplace homicides frequently fall into this category. Type II occurs when the perpetrator, typically a client or student, has a legitimate relationship with the organization and engages in aggression or violence during service interactions. It has been determined that approximately 60% of workplace aggression incidents are classified as Type II. Type III refers to incidents in which both the perpetrator and the victim are current or former employees. The following factors may contribute to the occurrence of such incidents: individual characteristics (e.g., personality traits or prior aggression); organizational factors (e.g., perceived injustice); and supervisory practices. Type IV encompasses perpetrators who are not affiliated with the organization, yet have previously maintained, or continue to maintain, a close personal relationship with an employee.¹⁵

The most recent approach, proposed by Paul Linsley, highlights that one of the main challenges in addressing violence and aggression is the difficulty of clearly defining them.¹⁶ The concepts of violence and aggression are subjective in nature and are interpreted differently by different individuals and groups. Consequently, the impact of

¹² Bonta and Andrews, “Risk-Need-Responsivity Model.”

¹³ Aaron C.H. Schat and E. Kevin Kelloway, “Workplace Aggression,” in *Handbook of Work Stress*, eds. Julian Barling, E. Kevin Kelloway, and Michael R. Frone (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2005), 189–218.

¹⁴ James Alan Fox and Jack Levin, *Extreme Killing: Understanding Serial and Mass Murder*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2014).

¹⁵ Julian Barling, Kathryn E. Dupré, and E. Kevin Kelloway, “Predicting Workplace Aggression and Violence,” *Annual Review of Psychology* 60 (2009): 671–92, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163629>.

¹⁶ Paul Linsley dismisses medical workers (Linsley, *Violence and Aggression in the Workplace*).

violence varies depending on the individual's experience. Consequently, healthcare organizations and professional groups have developed multiple definitions of violence and aggression, each serving a distinct purpose. Nevertheless, for healthcare personnel to competently identify, respond to, and prevent violence and aggression, they must possess a clear and thorough understanding of these concepts. This necessitates a description that encompasses the manifold forms of violence and aggression, while still allowing room for personal interpretation and understanding. This approach has been shown to engender a sense of responsibility among staff members regarding the issue at hand, thereby offering a modicum of validation of their concerns.

In addressing this issue, Paul Linsley employs a range of established institutional definitions to conceptualize workplace violence and aggression.¹⁷ In particular, he cites the definition proposed by the Department of Health, which characterizes violence and aggression as any work-related incident in which staff are abused, threatened, intimidated, or assaulted, thereby posing either an explicit or implicit risk to their safety, well-being, or health. Paul Linsley observes that this understanding closely aligns with the definition adopted by the Health Development Agency, which similarly defines such incidents as those in which individuals employed within the healthcare sector are insulted, threatened, or attacked by patients or members of the public in circumstances connected to their work.

Paul Linsley draws on these definitions to emphasize that workplace violence should not be narrowly understood as physical assault alone. It is important to note that the concept under discussion also encompasses non-physical behaviors. These include, but are not limited to, verbal abuse, gestures, and other conduct that may induce fear, a sense of threat, or humiliation in the recipient. Threats may be perceived or actual, and physical injury is not a necessary criterion for an incident to constitute violence within the workplace. Furthermore, Linsley refers to the broader conceptualization offered by the International Labour Organization, which defines workplace violence as any form of behavior that results in harmful physical or emotional consequences for workers in the course of their employment. It is important to note that this definition acknowledges the potential for unintentional harm. Such harm could be attributed to factors such as cultural differences or individual preferences regarding interpersonal interaction and treatment in professional contexts.¹⁸ Additionally, Linsley alludes to the definition promulgated by the Counter Fraud and Security Management Service, a specialist body within the National Health Service that wields overarching responsibility for the management of violence and aggression in healthcare contexts. This definition is narrow in scope, delineating violence as the deliberate application of force against another individual without lawful justification, thereby resulting in physical injury or personal discomfort. However, Linsley notes that such a definition excludes unintentional violence, for instance, that arising from a patient's cognitive impairment following head trauma sustained in a road traffic accident. Linsley's position is that, irrespective of the definition ultimately adopted, it must be meaningful to those who apply it in practice and enable clear recognition of the problem.

¹⁷ Based in the UK.

¹⁸ International Labour Organization, *Violence and Harassment Convention*.

Furthermore, he contends that the promotion of awareness of violence and aggression within healthcare environments is at least as important as the definition of these phenomena. He also emphasizes that, irrespective of definitional boundaries, violence and aggression in professional life may manifest in a wide variety of forms, necessitating consideration and examination of the diverse ways in which such behaviors can occur. In conclusion, a singular descriptive definition is put forward, as per which, as P. Linsley contends, aggressive or violent behavior may be comprehended as encompassing: uncivil conduct, distinguished by an absence of respect for others; physical or verbal aggression, entailing an intention to inflict harm; and assault, delineated as the deliberate intent to injure another person. He proposes a classification system in which aggression is characterized as a combination of physical or verbal, active or passive, and direct or indirect forms:

- A. Physical, active, direct aggression includes isolated, acute incidents that typically involve physical violence, such as a drunken fight, an assault, or an attack by a confused patient, as well as routine or chronic acts like ongoing physical or sexual abuse or bullying;
 - I. The following typology of aggression has been proposed:
 - II. Physical, active, indirect aggression: the persuading of another person to inflict harm, for example, by endorsing physical punishment as a disciplinary method.
 - III. Physical, passive, direct aggression: the physical prevention of someone from achieving a desired goal, such as when a senior colleague deliberately blocks access to a workstation.
 - IV. Physical, passive, indirect aggression: the refusal to carry out necessary tasks.
 - V. Verbal, active, direct aggression: the insulting or humiliating of another person, such as through name-calling or racial or sexual slurs.
 - VI. Verbal, active, indirect aggression: the spreading of malicious rumors or the undermining of others' self-confidence by belittling their abilities or appearance.
 - VII. Verbal, passive, direct aggression: the refusal to speak or respond to questions.
 - VIII. Verbal, passive, indirect aggression: the avoidance of responsibility for expressing one's views, for instance, by failing to defend someone who is being unfairly criticized.¹⁹

Within this theoretical framework, aggression can be defined as any behavior intentionally directed at causing harm or injury to another individual. However, as previously mentioned, aggressive acts may also be unintentional. Nevertheless, as previously mentioned, aggressive acts may also be unintentional. Furthermore, aggression may be directed either externally, towards others, or internally, towards oneself, as evidenced by instances of self-harm. Property damage constitutes a form of violence, albeit one that does not directly threaten the safety of staff. Nevertheless, it can be distressing and unsettling for witnesses. Consequently, aggression should be understood as a continuum of behaviors ranging from verbal or emotional acts to severe physical injury. It is imperative to acknowledge that manifestations of aggression can be expressed in written form, via email or telephone. This renders such behaviors more accessible to staff than ever before.²⁰

¹⁹ Based on research by Arnold H. Buss, *The Psychology of Aggression* (New York: Wiley, 1961).

²⁰ Linsley, *Violence and Aggression in the Workplace*.

It is also crucial to emphasize that violence and aggression are inextricably linked, and, from a labor law perspective, any conceptual distinction between these terms is legally inconsequential. Labor law does not attribute normative consequences to the semantic distinction between “aggression” and “violence,” treating both notions as functionally equivalent forms of conduct that infringe legally protected interests. From the perspective of labor law, the decisive element is the occurrence of violent behavior itself, irrespective of its classification or terminology, together with the volatility in which it arose. Legal relevance is therefore attributed primarily to the existence of violence within the employment relationship and to the causal and contextual factors underlying such conduct, rather than to theoretical or definitional distinctions between aggression and violence.

3. Volatility and Why Does It Matter?

In common language, the term “volatility” is used to denote the degree to which a situation fluctuates or lacks stability. When applied to the context of violence in the workplace, this concept can be used to describe the changing intensity, frequency, or forms of harmful behavior experienced by employees over time. Behavior of this nature may manifest in a variety of forms, ranging from isolated incidents to recurring patterns of aggression, harassment, or intimidation. Such behavior has the potential to engender an unstable and unpredictable work environment.²¹ From an analytical perspective relevant to labor law and occupational safety, this variability may concern a single aspect of workplace violence, such as the escalation or de-escalation of hostile conduct towards an employee, or the interaction between multiple factors, including power imbalance, organizational culture, workload, and management response. These elements may fluctuate in tandem, reinforcing one another, thereby shaping the overall risk profile faced by workers. Conventionally, the assessment of workplace violence is conducted over defined reference periods, such as reporting cycles, employment durations, or statutory monitoring intervals. However, it can also be meaningfully examined over very short timeframes, capturing immediate or momentary changes in behavior that may trigger legal duties to intervene. This approach is consistent with contemporary labor law frameworks that emphasize employers’ ongoing responsibility to prevent, identify, and respond promptly to psychosocial risks in the workplace.

In this article, aggression and violence in the workplace are examined within the framework of employment law. The focus is on legally relevant factors for the identification, assessment, and prevention of prohibited conduct, including unlawful interpersonal violence in the workplace. As demonstrated in the International Labour Organization’s *Experiences of Violence and Harassment at Work* survey in Europe and Central Asia, violence and harassment in the workplace persist as a substantial problem, impacting

²¹ Torben G. Andersen and Tim Bollerslev, *Volatility* (Northampton: Edward Elgar, 2018), https://public.econ.duke.edu/~boller/Published_Papers/AB_Volatility_Introduction_18.pdf; Fabio Rumler and Johann Scharler, “Labor Market Institutions and Macroeconomic Volatility in a Panel of OECD Countries” (European Central Bank Working Paper No. 1005, 2008), <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/pub/pdf/scpwp/ ECBWP1005.pdf>.

25.5% of employed individuals throughout their professional careers.²² This places the region among the highest-prevalence regions globally, second only to the Americas. A significant proportion of those affected reported that their most recent experience occurred within the five years preceding the survey, indicating that the problem is not only historical but ongoing. The magnitude of gender disparities in Europe and Central Asia is especially pronounced. The gender gap in terms of violence and harassment at work was found to be one of the most significant observed worldwide. Specifically, it was determined that women were 8.0 percentage points more likely than men to have experienced violence or harassment at work during their working lives. This finding indicates that workplace violence and harassment in the region affect women to a greater extent than in other global regions. The European data demonstrate that violence and harassment in the workplace are prevalent and entrenched issues, accompanied by a discernible gender imbalance, necessitating sustained policy focus and targeted preventive interventions.

For the purposes of this article, due to the limitations of the publication format, we will focus on three common and culturally neutral types of workplace violence. These are physical violence and harassment, such as hitting, restraining or spitting, psychological violence and harassment, such as insults, threats, bullying or intimidation, sexual harassment and violence, such as unwanted sexual touching, comments, pictures, emails or sexual requests.²³

In Europe and Central Asia, 25.5% of respondents reported having personally experienced workplace violence or harassment at least once during their working lives. This figure exceeds the global average, thereby indicating a comparatively elevated incidence or disclosure rate within the region. From a regulatory standpoint, this prevalence indicates that workplace violence and harassment are not merely isolated incidents but rather part of a systemic occupational risk. The data demonstrate a marked gender disparity: women constitute 30.0% of the sample and men 22.0%. This discrepancy of approximately eight percentage points signifies a disproportionate impact on women, aligning with prevailing research findings on gender-based violence and harassment in employment settings. The persistence of this gap indicates that current legal safeguards and equality frameworks have not yet fully mitigated gender-specific exposure to harm. The predominance of recent incidents suggests that workplace violence and harassment in Europe and Central Asia are current and ongoing violations (18.3% of incidents within the past five years), rather than residual effects of past workplace norms. This temporal concentration raises concerns about the effectiveness of enforcement mechanisms, compliance oversight, and the preventive obligations imposed on employers. The data indicate that incidents of workplace violence and harassment in Europe and Central Asia persist at high levels, exhibiting gender-based differences and a contemporary pattern. The high incidence and recent occurrence of reported incidents indicate that existing legal and institutional frameworks, while robust in formal terms, require strengthened

²² *Experiences of Violence and Harassment at Work: A Global First Survey* (Geneva: International Labour Organization and Lloyd's Register Foundation, 2022), https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_863095.pdf.

²³ *Ibid.*

implementation, accountability mechanisms, and preventive obligations to ensure the effective protection of workers’ dignity, safety, and fundamental rights.

Survey question: Have you, personally, ever experienced [physical/psychological/sexual] violence and/or harassment at work, such as [hitting, restraining, or spitting/insults, threats, bullying, or intimidation/unwanted sexual touching, comments, pictures, emails or sexual requests while at work]?

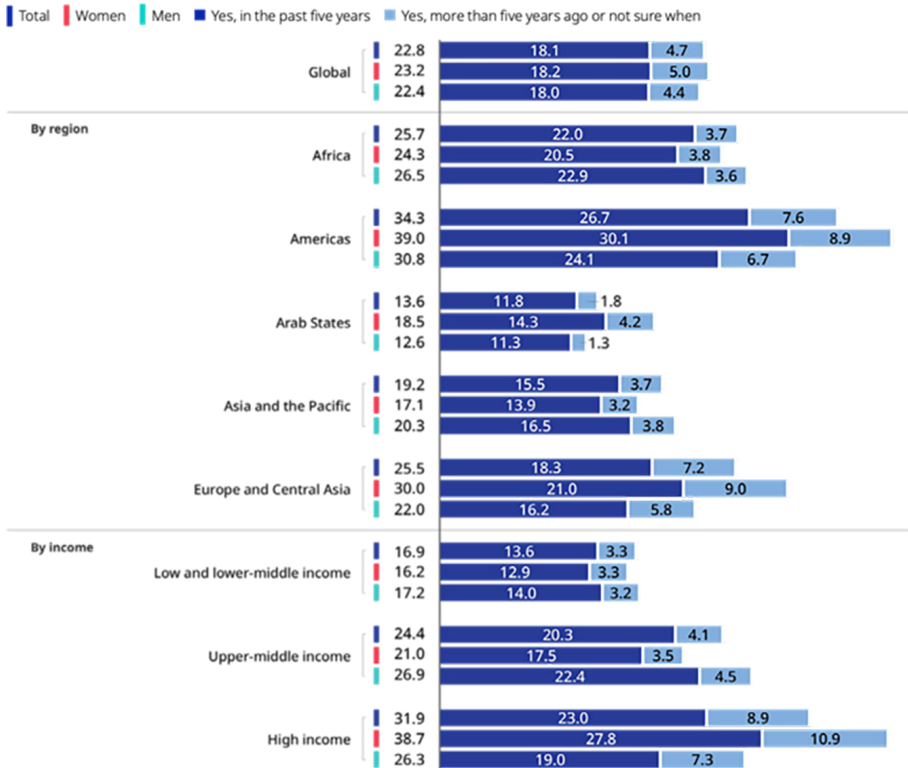


Fig. 1. (ILO, *Experiences of Violence and Harassment at Work: A Global First Survey* [Geneva: International Labour Organization and Lloyd’s Register Foundation, 2022])

The data reveals a clear, income-based volatility in the prevalence of workplace violence and harassment. As national income levels increase, reported prevalence rises across all genders and time frames. This pattern suggests differential exposure, reporting capacity, and regulatory effectiveness across income groups. For instance, Low- and Lower-Middle-Income Economies (total prevalence: 16.9%, women: 16.2%, men: 17.2%) have the lowest reported prevalence in this income category, with minimal gender differentiation. While this could suggest a lower incidence, it more plausibly reflects underreporting, driven by weaker enforcement mechanisms, limited access to complaint procedures, precarious employment conditions, and fear of retaliation. The relatively low proportion of historical reports further supports the inference of structural barriers to disclosure.

4. Physical Violence and Harassment

It is evident that Europe and Central Asia demonstrate comparatively low incidences of reported workplace violence and harassment, exhibiting minimal gender disparity. The correlation between income level and prevalence is not straightforward; high-income countries do not necessarily have higher prevalence. It is hypothesized that reporting culture and legal awareness may inflate observed rates in high-income contexts, particularly for women. The persistence of non-zero rates across all groups underscores the conclusion that workplace violence and harassment are systemic, global issues, not confined to poorer regions.

Survey question: Have you, personally, ever experienced physical violence and/or harassment at work, such as hitting, restraining, or spitting?

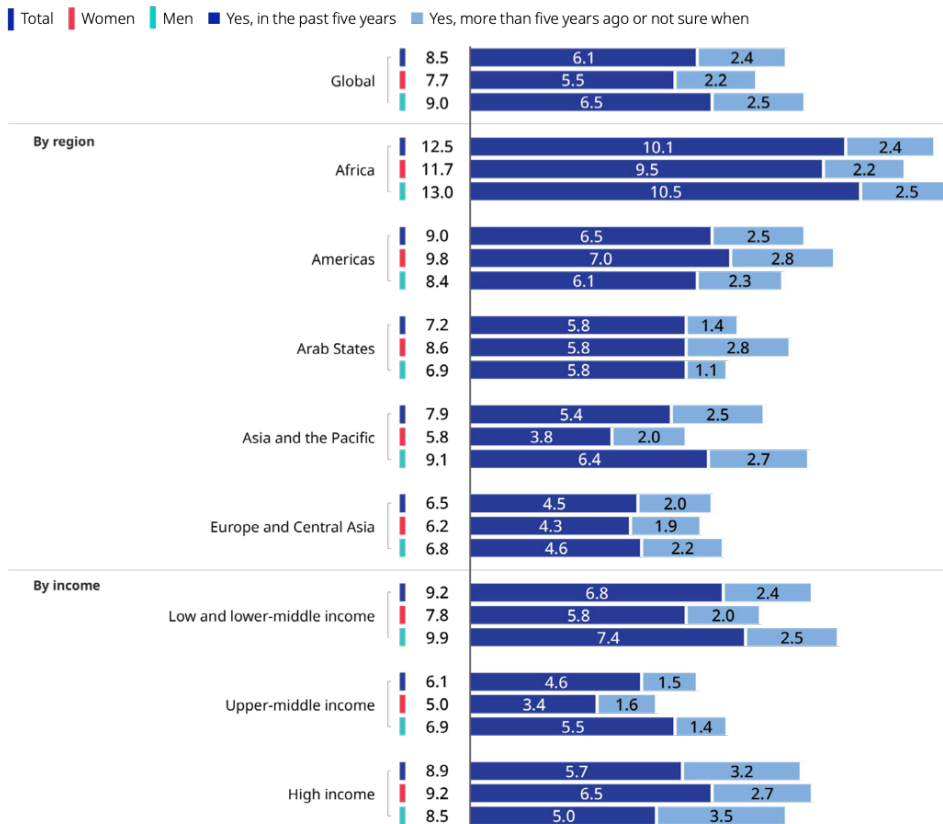


Fig. 2. (ILO, *Experiences of Violence and Harassment at Work*)

Europe and Central Asia report approximately 50% of the prevalence observed in Africa. In comparison with the Americas, Europe's rate is approximately 30% lower. This positions Europe as one of the lowest-risk regions globally in terms of reported workplace physical violence and harassment. European women report substantially lower exposure than women in both Africa and the Americas. The question, therefore, arises: why

does Europe achieve superior outcomes? This phenomenon can be attributed to a number of factors, including the implementation of more robust labor inspection regimes, higher levels of formal employment, clearer legal definitions accompanied by effective enforcement mechanisms, and well-established institutional procedures for addressing workplace grievances.

5. How Often?

A survey of respondents in Europe and Central Asia reveals that more than 48% of them report having experienced workplace violence or harassment on at least three occasions. This finding suggests that such incidents are frequently systemic or recurring rather than isolated events. In contrast, Europe and Central Asia are characterized by persistent exposure to violence, affecting both women and men. It has been reported that female subjects indicated experiencing harassment on a slightly more frequent basis (at least three times).

Survey question: How many times have you experienced [physical violence and/or harassment at work]? Once or twice, three to five times, or more than five times?

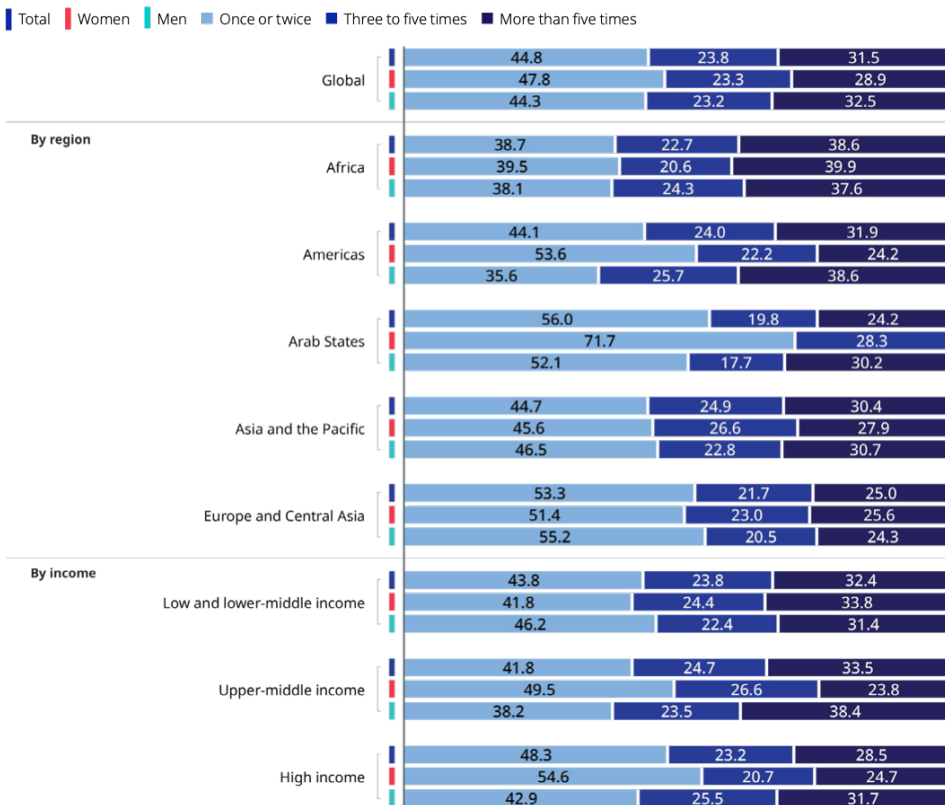


Fig. 3. (ILO, *Experiences of Violence and Harassment at Work*)

The male demographic is predominantly represented in the “once or twice” category. The observed disparity is less pronounced than that observed in regions such as the Arab States or the Americas. This observation may indicate the presence of more effective reporting mechanisms for both genders, or of more comparable exposure patterns across genders in European workplaces. Furthermore, Europe exhibits a lower incidence of single or rare incidents, yet a higher prevalence of repeated exposure, particularly within the “more than five times” category. This phenomenon can be attributed to organizational tolerance or ineffective enforcement, in which incidents of harassment are not addressed after initial occurrences, victims remain exposed for extended periods, and perpetrators face limited consequences. The data suggest that formal protections alone are insufficient without robust internal reporting, accountability mechanisms, and organizational-level cultural change.

6. Psychological Violence and Harassment at Work

In comparison with the global average, Europe and Central Asia demonstrate comparatively elevated levels of psychological violence and/or harassment. The combined prevalence for women and men in the region stands at 19.8%, exceeding the global mean of 17.9%. This indicates that psychological violence constitutes a significant and widespread problem rather than a marginal phenomenon.

This elevated prevalence positions the region at a global premium, underscoring the issue’s significance from both social and policy perspectives. A marked gender disparity is evident in the data. The present study found that women reported experiencing psychological violence at a substantially higher rate (22.7%) than men (17.4%), resulting in a gender gap of approximately 5.3 percentage points. This finding is one of the largest observed across all regions and indicates that women in Europe and Central Asia encounter psychological violence with greater frequency than men. However, this discrepancy may also be due to a higher level of awareness, recognition, and willingness to report such experiences among the female population. It is noteworthy that this gender gap is considerably larger than those observed in Africa or the Asia-Pacific region and is broadly comparable to patterns seen in the Americas. The temporal dimension of the data further underscores the urgency of the problem. A considerable proportion of the documented cases transpired within the preceding half-decade, signifying that psychological violence is not merely a matter of historical legacy but a present and continuous concern. It has been reported that women, in particular, have higher levels of recent exposure than men, thus serving to reinforce concerns about the existence of persistent gendered risks in contemporary work and social environments. Compared with Europe and Central Asia, prevalence levels in the Americas are higher than those observed in Africa, the Asia-Pacific region, and the Arab States, but lower than those in Europe and Central Asia. The regional pattern closely aligns with those observed in upper-middle and high-income countries, suggesting that economic development and higher income levels do not, in themselves, eliminate the risk of psychological violence. A salient nuance pertains to the socio-economic context of reporting.

Survey question: Have you, personally, ever experienced psychological violence and/or harassment, such as insults, threats, bullying, or intimidation at work?

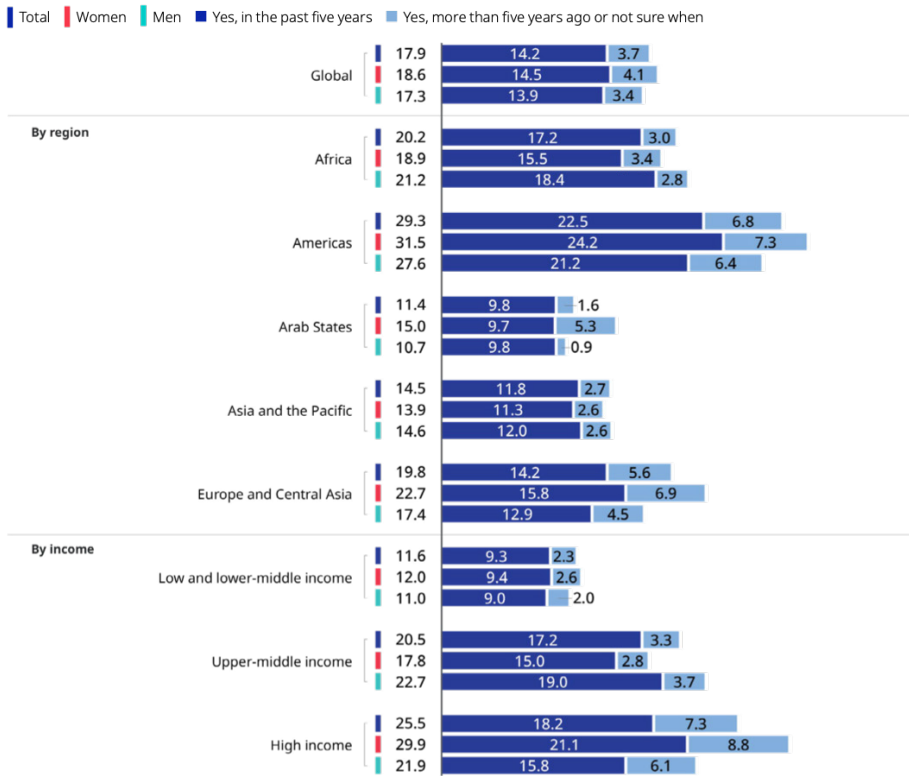


Fig. 4. (ILO, *Experiences of Violence and Harassment at Work*)

The fundamental issue is that Europe and Central Asia exhibit considerable overlap with higher-income groups, which have been shown, globally, to report at higher rates. This may be indicative of a heightened awareness of psychological violence, a reduction in stigma associated with disclosure, and an enhancement in the recognition of non-physical forms of abuse within survey instruments. Nevertheless, it is important to note that increased reporting levels do not necessarily lead to a diminution in the perceived severity of the problem. Instead, they serve to underscore the persistent prevalence of psychological violence, even within more economically developed contexts. The evidence indicates that psychological violence in Europe and Central Asia is more prevalent than the global average, disproportionately affects women, and frequently occurs in the recent past. The findings demonstrate that economic development alone is insufficient as a protective factor and point to the need for gender-sensitive, contemporary prevention strategies and policy interventions.

7. How Many Times? How Often?

Europe and Central Asia demonstrate a distinct pattern in the frequency of reported experiences, one that is driven less by isolated incidents and more by repeated exposure. In this region, 36.9% of respondents report experiencing the issue once or twice, 21.0% report it three to five times, and 42.1% report more than five occurrences. This distribution is proximate to the global mean in the lowest frequency category (36.8% globally), but it diverges distinctly in the higher frequencies.

Survey question: How many times have you experienced [psychological violence and/or harassment at work]? Once or twice, three to five times, or more than five times?

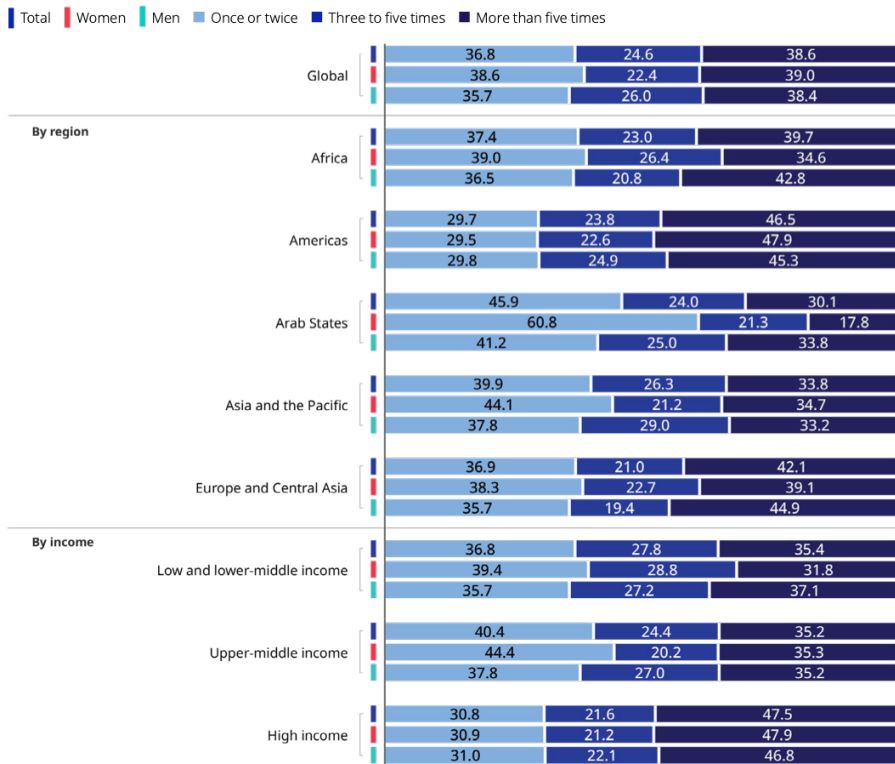


Fig. 5. (ILO, *Experiences of Violence and Harassment at Work*)

Europe has a smaller share of mid-frequency cases (24.6% globally versus 21.0% in Europe) and a larger share of high-frequency cases (38.6% globally versus 42.1% in Europe). In percentage-point terms, Europe is essentially identical to the global level for one-off incidents; however, a shift away from the “3–5 times” category is evident, indicating a tendency towards chronic or recurrent exposure. In other words, Europe’s higher figures are not driven by more people experiencing a single incident, but by more people experiencing repeated incidents. This pattern is reinforced by

Europe’s position in the regional comparison for the most severe frequency category. With 42.1% of respondents reporting more than five occurrences, Europe and Central Asia rank second-highest among all regions, behind the Americas (46.5%) and ahead of Africa (39.7%), Asia and the Pacific (33.8%), and the Arab States (30.1%). This places Europe near the top globally in terms of persistent, repeated experiences rather than sporadic ones.

The evidence presented here suggests that gender differences within Europe and Central Asia further refine this picture. Amongst female respondents, 38.3% report experiencing the issue once or twice, 22.7% report three to five instances, and 39.1% report more than five instances. For men, the corresponding figures are 35.7%, 19.4%, and 44.9%. A comparison of the data reveals that, unlike women, men are under-represented in the lower- and mid-frequency categories and over-represented in the highest category. The proportion of men reporting more than five occurrences is 5.8 percentage points higher than that of women.

Survey question: Have you, personally, ever experienced any type of sexual violence and/or harassment at work, such as unwanted sexual touching, comments, pictures, emails or sexual requests while at work?

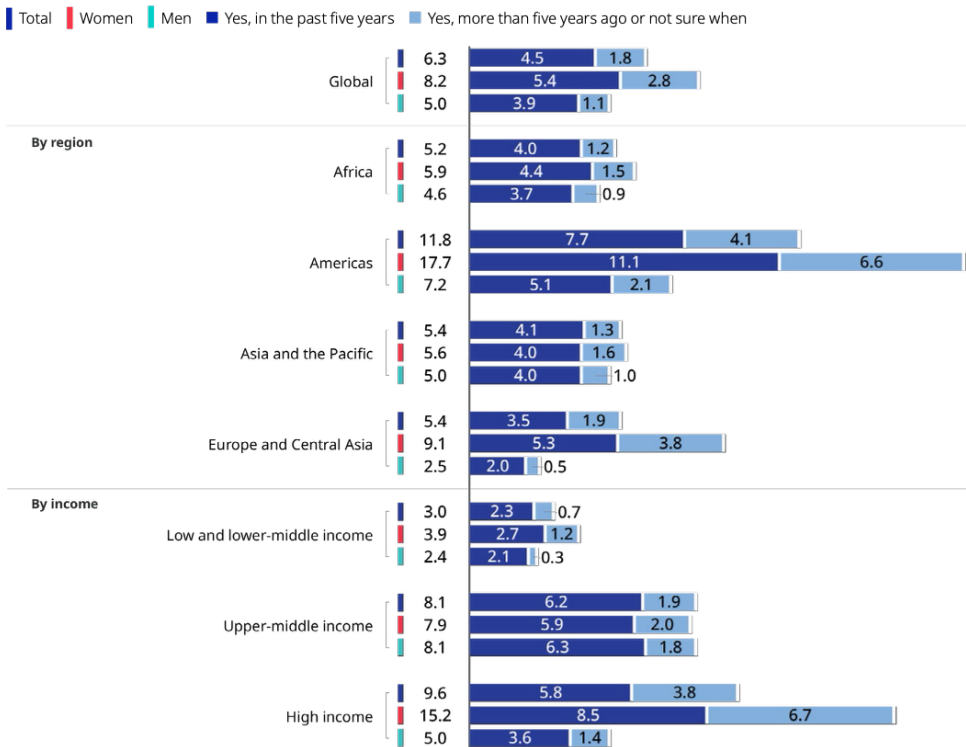


Fig. 6. (ILO, *Experiences of Violence and Harassment at Work*)

This finding indicates that, among individuals who report experiencing harassment in Europe and Central Asia, males are more inclined to categorize the harassment

as highly repetitive. At the same time, females are comparatively more concentrated in the lower-frequency categories. When considered as a whole, the distribution suggests a degree of polarization within Europe. The proportion of one-off incidents closely mirrors the global average, yet the proportion of very frequent incidents is higher, and the mid-range category is smaller. This pattern is consistent with situations that, once they occur, are more likely to persist rather than remain limited. When interpreted in terms of workplace risk, Europe's profile appears less as a series of isolated incidents and more as a series of ongoing situations, such as repeated exposure, unresolved conflicts, or repeat perpetrators within specific teams or roles.

The findings of this paper indicate that Europe and Central Asia exhibit a prevalence of sexual violence and harassment at work that is closely aligned with the global average. This observation suggests that such issues are not anomalous occurrences in the region but rather reflect broader societal challenges. However, the frequency distribution indicates that persistence and repetition remain a significant concern, thereby emphasizing the gravity of the issue rather than diminishing it.

8. Gender Differences

The gender disparity in experiences of sexual violence and harassment in the workplace is particularly evident in Europe and Central Asia. The prevalence of workplace sexual harassment and violence against women is a matter of concern, with approximately 9.1% of women reporting such experiences, in contrast to the approximately 2.5% of men who have experienced similar incidents. This indicates that women are reporting such experiences at a rate more than three times that of men. This disparity is among the widest observed globally and is comparable to the gender gap in the Americas. The data indicates that workplace sexual misconduct in Europe disproportionately affects women, despite the region's generally stronger legal and institutional frameworks. When compared with other regions, Europe and Central Asia display a mixed profile. The overall prevalence rates are lower than those observed in the Americas, especially in women, but are broadly similar to those observed in the Asia-Pacific region. Nevertheless, Europe is distinguished by its pronounced gender divide. Concurrently, a higher prevalence of such behavior has been reported among European men compared to their African counterparts. This discrepancy may be indicative of heightened awareness of the definition of harassment, reduced stigma around reporting such incidents, and more extensive or inclusive conceptualizations of workplace misconduct. It is hypothesized that several structural factors shape these patterns. A heightened propensity to disclose may also be a contributing factor, as enhanced labor protections, institutional mechanisms, and social norms can promote disclosure, particularly among female respondents. Concurrently, entrenched power imbalances within the workplace perpetuate gender disparities, despite explicit commitments to gender equality. Hierarchical structures continue to render women susceptible to elevated levels of risk. Furthermore, the category "Europe and Central Asia" comprises a highly diverse set of countries, suggesting that national prevalence rates likely vary considerably beneath the regional average. The findings indicate that instances of sexual violence and harassment in the European

and Central Asian workplace are not as infrequent as might be presumed. It is estimated that approximately one in eleven women has experienced this phenomenon directly, thereby highlighting the magnitude of the problem. The analysis indicates that gender inequality emerges as the predominant driver, superseding considerations of overall economic development or institutional capacity. While legal frameworks are relatively robust, they are insufficient in isolation. To be effective, robust enforcement mechanisms, meaningful organizational culture change, and effective prevention measures must accompany them.

In conclusion, Europe and Central Asia present a clear paradox: moderate overall prevalence combined with strong gender polarization. This finding suggests that, while general workplace standards may be comparatively high, women continue to bear a disproportionate burden of sexual harassment and violence at work. It is, therefore, imperative that targeted, gender-specific interventions be implemented to address this issue, rather than broad, generic policy approaches. Sexual violence or harassment at work.

9. How Often? How Many Times?

Approximately 50% of respondents in Europe and Central Asia report having been subjected to sexual violence and/or harassment at work on more than one occasion. The most prevalent response was “once or twice,” with “more than five times” ranking second. This suggests that repeated exposure is pervasive rather than exceptional. When broken down by gender, women report the highest prevalence across all frequency categories. It is evident that a considerable proportion of women have indicated that they have experienced the phenomenon on multiple occasions, with a significant number reporting three to five instances or more, suggesting chronic exposure rather than isolated incidents. Men report a lower overall prevalence, and their experiences are more heavily concentrated in the “once or twice” category. This suggests that when incidents occur, they tend not to be repeated. The pattern for the total population closely mirrors that of women, reflecting women’s heavier weighting in reported cases. In comparison with other regions, Europe and Central Asia largely follow the global pattern in which women consistently report higher frequency and repetition than men, and repeated harassment (three or more times) is a substantial issue rather than an outlier. Concurrently, there are significant regional variations.

Compared with regions such as Africa and Asia, and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia show a marginally higher proportion of experiences reported to occur “more than five times” and a concomitant reduction in the prevalence of incidents reported only once. This finding suggests the presence of systemic or ongoing workplace issues rather than sporadic events.

Survey question: How many times have you experienced [any type of sexual violence and/or harassment at work]? Once or twice, three to five times, or more than five times?

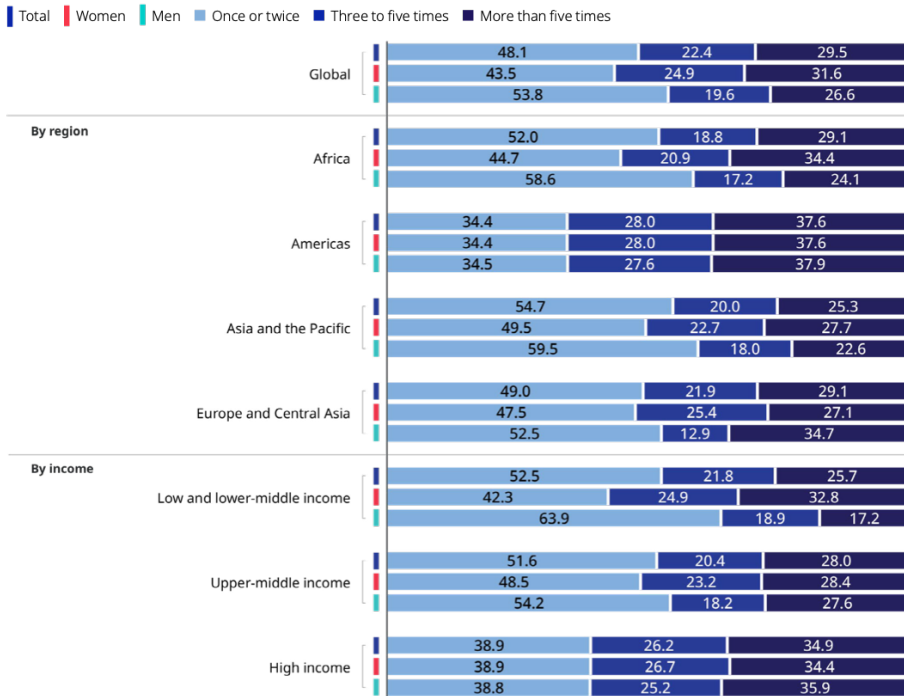


Fig. 7. (ILO, *Experiences of Violence and Harassment at Work*)

When evaluated in its entirety, the data indicate that, in Europe and Central Asia, occurrences of sexual harassment and violence in the workplace are more prevalent as a recurring phenomenon rather than as isolated incidents. The markedly elevated incidence of reporting by women, notably with regard to repeated experiences, underscores gendered power imbalances and the potential inadequacies of prevention and reporting mechanisms. Despite relatively robust legal frameworks in many European countries, the recurrence of incidents suggests deficiencies in enforcement, workplace culture, or the effectiveness of internal reporting systems. The key conclusion is that sexual violence and harassment in the workplace in Europe and Central Asia are widespread, frequently recurring, and disproportionately affecting women. This finding suggests that these issues are not merely the result of isolated misconduct but rather reflect entrenched workplace dynamics. Consequently, more robust prevention measures, enhanced accountability frameworks, and organizational follow-through mechanisms that extend beyond formal policies are imperative.

10. Volatilities and Their Impact on Protection against Violence in the Workplace

The empirical data presented in the analyzed material reveal several legally significant volatilities in the occurrence, reporting, and persistence of workplace violence and harassment, which directly affect the effectiveness of the protection afforded under labor law. It is evident from the evidence presented that workplace violence cannot be regarded as a uniform or incidental risk. Rather, it should be considered a structurally differentiated phenomenon, which highlights the limitations of formally robust legal frameworks when confronted with unequal social and institutional conditions.²⁴

Firstly, a marked gender-based volatility is evident across all forms of workplace violence and harassment that have been examined. It has been reported that women consistently indicate a higher lifetime prevalence of exposure, as well as a greater repetition of harmful conduct, particularly within specific categories. This discrepancy is especially pronounced in cases of sexual violence and harassment, where women report experiencing these behaviors at a rate that is more than three times higher than men. From a labor law perspective, this volatility underscores the inadequacy of formally gender-neutral protective norms. While general duties to safeguard dignity, health, and safety apply equally to all workers, the neutral formulation of these duties fails to account for gendered power asymmetries inherent in many employment relationships. Consequently, extant legal protections do not operate with equal effectiveness in practice. This necessitates the incorporation of gender-sensitive preventive duties, differentiated risk assessment obligations, and enhanced procedural safeguards to ensure substantive equality.²⁵

Secondly, the data reveal a marked, income-based volatility in reported prevalence, with lower rates observed in low- and lower-middle-income economies and higher rates recorded in upper-middle- and high-income contexts. This variation cannot be interpreted as reflecting actual differences in incidence alone. Instead, it highlights variations in reporting capacity, legal awareness, institutional accessibility, and enforcement effectiveness. In lower-income settings, structural barriers such as insecure employment, limited labor inspection, and fear of retaliation significantly constrain the exercise of legal rights. Consequently, the protection afforded by labor law against violence in these contexts is often formal rather than effective, underscoring the reliance on institutional capacity and procedural accessibility rather than on legislative norms alone.

A further legally relevant dimension of workplace violence concerns its temporal dimension. The concentration of reported incidents within the past five years indicates that violence and harassment are not merely residual phenomena associated with outdated workplace norms, but rather ongoing violations of workers' rights. This temporal

²⁴ See also: Louise F. Fitzgerald and Lilia M. Cortina, "Sexual Harassment in Work Organizations: A View from the 21st Century," in *APA Handbook of the Psychology of Women*, eds. Cheryl B. Travis et al., vol. 2, *Perspectives on Women's Private and Public Lives* (American Psychological Association, 2018), 215–34, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000060-012>; Einarsen et al., eds., *Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace*, 3–24, 87–110, 381–98.

²⁵ Vincent J. Roscigno, "Social Movement Struggle and Race, Gender, Class Inequality," *Race, Sex & Class* 2, no. 1 (1994): 109–26, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41680099>; Dieter Zapf and Ståle Einarsen, "Mobbing at Work: Escalated Conflicts in Organisations," in *Counterproductive Work Behavior: Investigations of Actors and Targets*, eds. Suzy Fox and Paul E. Spector (Washington: American Psychological Association, 2005), 575–99.

volatility raises significant concerns about the adequacy of enforcement mechanisms and employer compliance with preventive obligations. From a regulatory standpoint, it is suggested that *ex post* remedies based on individual complaints are insufficient, and that labor law should place greater emphasis on continuous preventive duties, monitoring requirements, and employer accountability for failing to intervene at an early stage. A close association with this temporal aspect is evident in the volatility of frequency, which is characterized by a high proportion of workers reporting repeated and chronic exposure rather than isolated incidents. The preponderance of harassment, defined as instances of victimization that have occurred at least three times, and frequently more than five times, signifies organizational tolerance or a systemic failure to rectify misconduct once it has come to light. From a legal standpoint, this phenomenon highlights a fundamental weakness in the enforcement of labor laws. The absence of effective escalation mechanisms enables the perpetration of harmful conduct despite formal prohibitions. The ongoing exposure workers face has a detrimental effect on the protective function of labor law. This exposure necessitates the recognition of repeated violence and harassment as aggravated violations, thereby triggering heightened employer liability.

Finally, the data reveal that different forms of violence exhibit varying degrees of volatility, with psychological violence emerging as particularly prevalent despite being less visible and more challenging to substantiate than physical violence. This disparity highlights an imbalance in labor law, which has traditionally prioritized physical safety while providing weaker and more ambiguous protection against psychological harm. The high prevalence and persistence of psychological harassment highlight the need for clearer legal definitions and evidentiary adaptations, as well as proactive employer duties that address non-physical forms of abuse. Taken together, these volatilities reveal that the effectiveness of labor law protection against workplace violence depends not only on the existence of formal legal norms, but also on their ability to address differentiated risks, power imbalances and institutional constraints. Without addressing gendered exposure, socio-economic disparities, temporal persistence and the repetitive nature of harm, labor law risks offering nominal rather than substantive protection. Effective regulation, therefore, requires a shift from abstract, uniform standards towards differentiated, preventive and enforcement-oriented approaches, capable of ensuring the real and equal protection of workers' dignity, safety and fundamental rights.

11. Conclusions

Despite the extensive empirical material presented, the analysis is deficient from a labor law perspective because it fails to incorporate several legally and normatively indispensable variables for assessing the effectiveness of protection against workplace violence and harassment. Omitting these variables significantly limits the ability to draw well-founded conclusions regarding risk allocation, regulatory sufficiency, and the scope of employer obligations.

Firstly, the lack of systematic disaggregation by economic sector and occupational category represents a substantial analytical shortcoming. From a labor law perspective, exposure to violence and harassment varies significantly across sectors and professions.

Heightened risks tend to prevail in contexts involving intensive interpersonal interaction, structural subordination, or sustained engagement with third parties. Examples of such contexts include healthcare, education, social services, hospitality, and security. Without sector-specific differentiation, it is impossible to ascertain whether the legal duties imposed on employers accurately reflect the varying risk profiles or whether heightened, sector-specific preventive obligations are necessary. This omission undermines the assessment of the proportionality and suitability of regulatory measures. Secondly, the analysis does not sufficiently consider employment status and contractual form, including the distinction between open-ended and fixed-term contracts, temporary agency work, platform-mediated labor, informal employment and economically dependent self-employment. This omission is of direct legal relevance, as workers in non-standard or precarious employment relationships frequently experience diminished levels of effective protection and face structural barriers to reporting misconduct. They are also more vulnerable to retaliatory practices. A comprehensive evaluation of labor-law protection against workplace violence must consider the accessibility and enforceability of safeguards across different contractual arrangements. Thirdly, the absence of variables relating to organizational size and workplace structure limits the scope of the legal analysis. The existence and effectiveness of internal compliance mechanisms, reporting procedures, and preventive policies vary substantially between large enterprises and small or micro-employers. Without disaggregated data by organizational size, it is impossible to assess the realizability of statutory duties, particularly those concerning prevention, internal procedures, and monitoring, across different categories of employers, or whether differentiated regulatory techniques are warranted. Fourthly, the analysis does not consider variables relating to migrant status, ethnicity, disability, age, or other intersecting grounds of vulnerability. From a contemporary labor and equality law perspective, this omission is particularly consequential. Violence and harassment often occur at the intersection of multiple vulnerability factors, so failing to capture these dimensions risks concealing compounded and systemic forms of harm. Without such data, legal responses will remain insufficiently targeted and may fail to meet the requirements of substantive equality and non-discrimination. Fifthly, insufficient attention is paid to workplace power relations, including hierarchical position, managerial authority, and dependency linked to performance evaluation or job security.

Whether the offender is a supervisor, co-worker, or third party, such as a client or customer, has substantial legal implications, particularly regarding employer liability, preventive obligations, and the allocation of responsibility. Without this information, it is difficult to assess whether existing legal frameworks adequately address vertical violence and abuses of authority, which are key concerns in modern labor law. Furthermore, a critical deficiency is the lack of data on the availability, accessibility, and effectiveness of internal and external complaint mechanisms. While the material provides information on prevalence and frequency, it does not systematically address reporting behavior, employer responses, or the provision of remedies. From a legal standpoint, protection against violence and harassment is inseparable from procedural effectiveness. Without information on reporting pathways, outcomes, and protection against retaliation, it is impossible to evaluate whether labor law guarantees meet the fundamental right

to an effective remedy. Finally, the analysis omits variables relating to legal awareness and training among both workers and employers. Awareness of rights, understanding of prohibited conduct and knowledge of available remedies can greatly influence reporting practices and preventive compliance. Without this dimension, it is impossible to distinguish between high prevalence resulting from increased exposure to risk and that resulting from greater legal literacy and awareness, which is essential for evaluating regulatory effectiveness.

In conclusion, although the existing data provide valuable insights into the prevalence, gender differences, and persistence of workplace violence and harassment, the omission of variables relating to sectoral context, employment status, organizational structure, intersectional vulnerability, workplace power relations, complaint mechanisms, and legal awareness substantially limits labor law analysis. Without these elements, evaluating the efficacy, accessibility, and enforceability of labor-law protection in practice remains an abstract concept.

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