



## The role of social partners in preventing third-party violence and harassment

### Project research findings

Oslo, 7 March 2023  
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1

## Background to the project

- Employers and unions in 7 sectors participated in the project (2021-2023)
- They include EPSU affiliates in **health, local and regional government, and central government**
- Updating of the 2010 Multi-Sectoral Guidelines on TPV
- Make relevant to the changing world of work
- Align with new legal and international developments e.g. ILO C190 and R206
- For the unions: to move from voluntary to binding approaches to prevent TPV

2

## Sectors covered

**Local and regional government: front desk**

**Health: hospitals**

**Central government: prisons & employment services**

Telecoms

Education

Urban public transport

3

## Project activities

- Five webinars covering:
  - Setting the scene on TPVH
  - Gender-based violence and harassment
  - Prevention of TPVH: OSH and risk assessment
  - Digitalisation
  - Remedies and compensation
- Policy advocacy e.g. submission to the European Commission on draft Directive on violence against women
- Final European conference: Madrid, 25 November 2022
- Final report with project findings and recommendations
- Agreed social partner Action Plan
- Presentation of research findings by sector and adoption of Action Plan at European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committees

4

## Research element of the project



Literature and data review



Project survey



Interviews



Participation in project webinars



Collection over 50 of examples and good practices

5

## The research found that the Multi-Sectoral Guidelines have been poorly implemented

- General low level of awareness
- Few unions have adopted the guidelines in CBAs, including in sectoral agreements / not on union agendas
- However, many recent initiatives and good practices
  - jointly between unions-employers
  - union-led awareness raising and negotiations
- Strong commitment amongst project partners to update and refresh the guidelines

6

## ILO Violence and harassment Convention (C190) and Recommendation (R206)

- A human rights issue
- Integrated and comprehensive approach:
  - All forms of violence and harassment including GBVH, TPVH, digital/cyber violence and harassment
  - In the world of work
  - GBVH includes sexual harassment and domestic violence as a workplace issue
- Addressed to governments (25 have ratified so far)
  - Comprehensive laws
  - Duties on employers (workplace policies, prevention programmes etc.)
  - Inclusion of domestic violence and government/employer measures to mitigate the effects
  - Strong focus on prevention, OSH and risk assessment
  - Emphasis on social dialogue

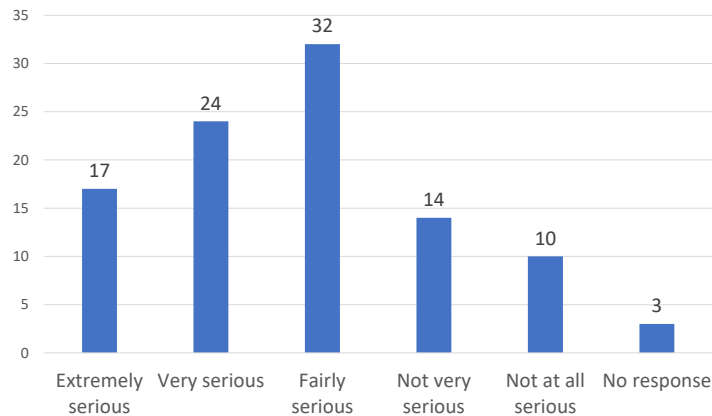
7

## Review of literature and data

- Women and customer-facing/frontline workers are most exposed to the risks of adverse social behaviour at work, resulting in burnout, exhaustion, anxiety and depression (Eurofound, Working Conditions Survey, Telephone survey 2023)
- Although an absence of sector specific data, data available in health and prisons sectors shows a significant and worrying increase in all forms of violence and harassment and TPVH
- COVID-19 led to a big increase in TPVH in essential services, as well as domestic violence
- Generally, consistent findings across Europe that TPVH is now a much greater problem than internal violence, harassment and sexual harassment
- Some good practices but generally TPVH is not dealt with systematically or effectively

8

## How serious is TPVH? (all sectors, %)



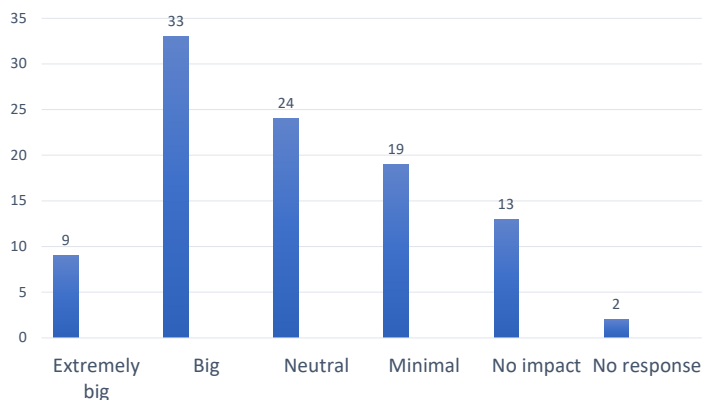
**Extremely / very serious:** most prevalent in prisons, hospitals and local government

### Impacts on:

- **The quality of services provided** (33% identified a big impact: resulting in less personalised service, followed by services withdrawn or shifted on line)
- **Quality of working life** (stress, anxiety and other mental and physical effects)

9

## Impact of COVID-19 (all sectors, %)

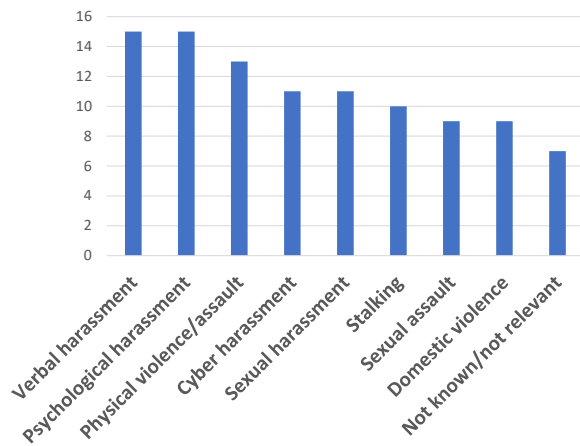


### Confirmed by other sectoral data:

- COVID-19 marks a trend of heightened levels of TPVH
- Led to significant increase in TPVH, including domestic violence
- Digitalisation and provision of essential services

10

## Main types of TPVH (all sectors, %)

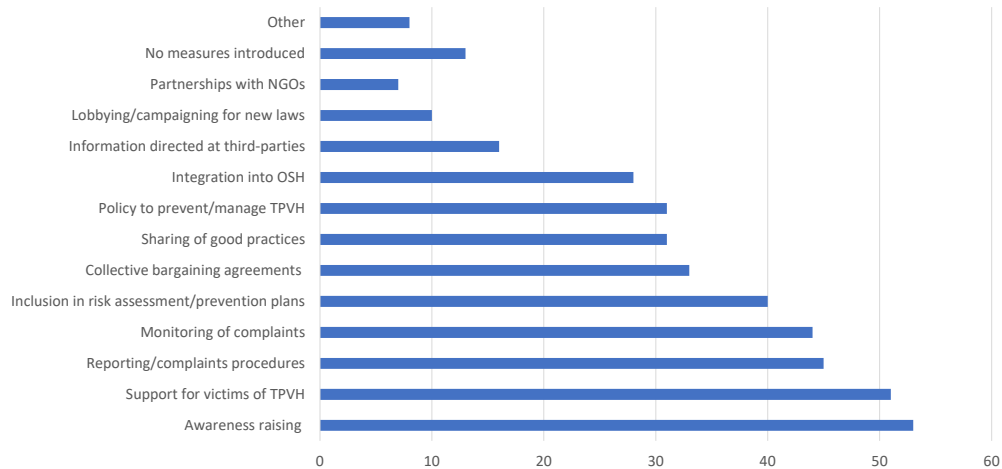


### Some differences across sectors:

- Physical violence highest in prisons, hospital and transport
- Verbal, psychological and sexual forms of violence and harassment are ranked similar across all sectors.

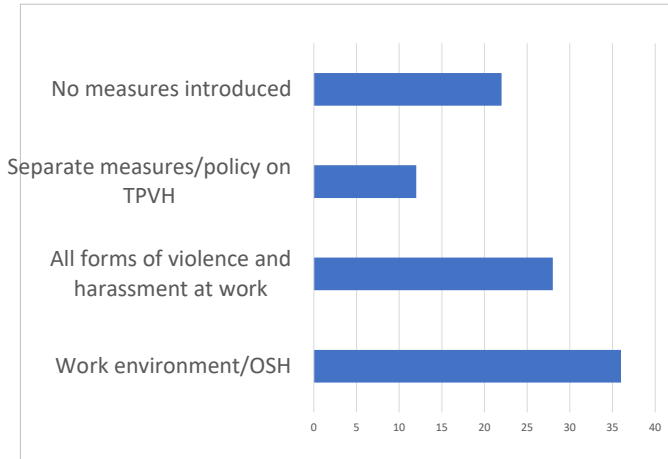
11

## Measures introduced on TPVH (%)



12

## Type of policy measure introduced (%)



**Reflects a trend towards:**

- An integrated approach
- Important element of work environment / OSH policy

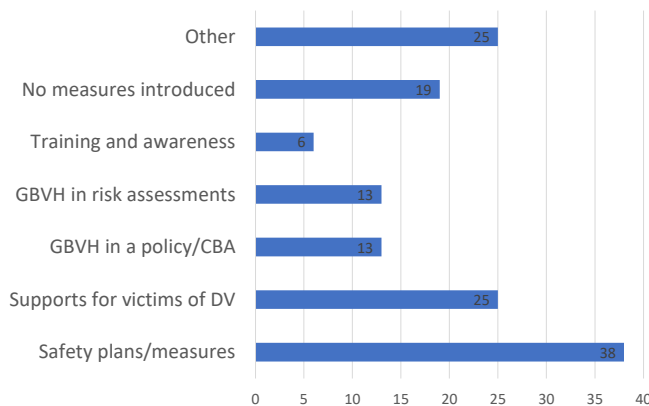
**but**

10 (20%) of unions and 14 (17%) of employers report that there is no policy.

**Where measures had been agreed:**

- 60% said some measures were jointly agreed
- 13% were all measures were jointly agreed
- 7% by the employer only
- 13% by the trade union only

## Measures introduced on gender-based TPVH (all sectors, %)



- Data/research shows women, particularly younger women, are disproportionately affected by gender-based TPVH.

- Women are predominate in many of the sectors providing face-to-face services.

**In the survey:**

- 38% report safety plans/measures.
- 19% report that no measures have been introduced.

## Over 50 examples of social partner initiatives

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Integrated and stand-alone policies or agreements

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Gender-based violence and harassment

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Domestic violence

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OSH, prevention and risk assessment

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Security measures and threat management

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Digitalisation

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Remedies, protection and compensation

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15

## Selected examples

Sector	Example
Central government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spain: Protocols in public administration, covering TPVH, sexual harassment and domestic violence / TPVH an occupational risk</li> <li>Denmark: Agreements in state sector cover prevention of TPVH</li> </ul>
Local & regional government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Denmark: Agreements in local &amp; regional government; Tripartite agreement on sexual harassment (internal and external)</li> <li>Italy: Municipal level agreements on protection for social services/social workers</li> <li>Netherlands: Agreements in local government includes TPVH and “persons of confidence”</li> </ul>
Prisons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sweden: Introduction of security measures and staff choice about rehabilitation or surveillance roles</li> <li>Spain: Protocols in public administration and prisons</li> <li>Belgium: Research and pilots in prison sector for innovative actions</li> </ul>
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bulgaria: TPVH in sectoral health CBAs</li> <li>Netherlands: Safe Healthcare initiative and agreements in hospitals</li> <li>Ireland: Prevention of TPV in national policy, addressed as OSH risk</li> </ul>

16



## At the European level...

Sector	Example
<b>Transport</b>	ETF/UITP guidelines cover internal and external violence / ETF Campaign "Get me home safely" and ETF guidance on preventing GBVH
<b>Public Administration</b>	Agreement on digitalisation, including cyber violence and harassment, domestic violence (2022)
<b>Local government</b>	EPSU-CEMR social partner project - TPVH one of three pillars
<b>Hospitals</b>	Guidelines referred to in HOSPEM-EPUSU updated agreement on hospital recruitment and retention (2022)
<b>Education</b>	Various initiatives, including OiRA risk assessment tool
<b>Telecoms</b>	Joint Statement by ETNO, GSMA and ENI-Europa (2020) to end 5G related assaults and threats

17

## Implementation of the Multi-Sectoral Guidelines and Recommendations



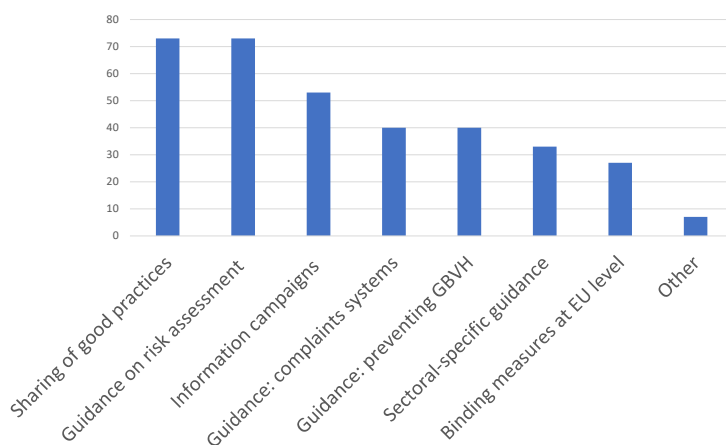
18

## Implementation

- Generally, a low levels of awareness about the Guidelines amongst social partners
  - In the survey, 70% of respondents had no knowledge of the Guidelines
  - Higher awareness amongst employers compared to unions
  - Highest level of awareness in the education sector, lowest in telecoms
- The only multi-sector social partner policy document/guidance addressing TPVH
- Limited formal implementation through national or sectoral agreements:
  - exception of agreements in Denmark in public administration and local & regional government
  - informative rather than regulatory/binding impact
- Project activities and webinars have helped to raise awareness about the Guidelines

19

## What would help the social partners? (%)



In the survey respondents recognise the need to do more.

- Highest: sharing of good practices and guidance on risk assessment
- One of the project's webinars discussed the updating of the Guidelines and next steps.

20

## Recommendations: Updating of Guidelines

### 1. The starting point is consensus amongst social partners

- Guidelines need updating
- Inform the progressive implementation of an integrated approach

**Dedicated Guidelines could be linked to European, national, sectoral or workplace CBAs and workplace policies on all forms of violence and harassment.**

21

## Recommendations: Updating of Guidelines contd.

### 2. Importance of reflecting good practices

- Collective bargaining – sectoral workplace agreements
- Effective systems for prevention and risk assessment, inclu. psychosocial risks
- Improved survivor-centred complaints systems
- Effective security and safety systems
- Protection from retaliation for victims, witnesses, whistle-blowers
- Better data collection and learning from incidents
- Victim/survivor support and counselling
- Confidential information and support from workplace advisors/advocates/persons of trust

22

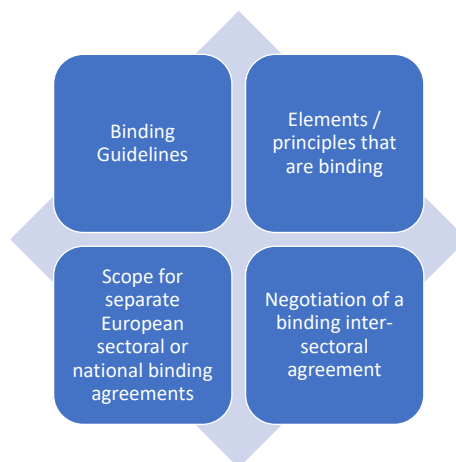
## Recommendations: Updating of Guidelines contd.

### 3. Themes and issues to include in updating

- Third-party gender-based violence and harassment
  - Domestic violence as a workplace issue
  - Digitalisation and cyber harassment and violence
  - Occupational safety and health, risk assessment and prevention
  - Support, protection and compensation
  - Improved data, tracking and learning from cases of TPVH
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- Updating of language and definitions, and make relevant to the challenges in the rapidly changing world of work.

23

## Recommendations: Options for the implementation of the Guidelines



24

## Recommendations: Implementation and dissemination of the Guidelines

### 1. Discuss updating and options in Sectoral Social Dialogue Committees

- Binding or non-binding? Some elements / principles binding?
- Negotiations for a binding EU-level agreement on all forms of violence and harassment
- Updated sector specific guidance

### 2. Communications and dissemination of updated Guidelines

- Dissemination and communications plan
- High-level launch
- Dedicate website and accessible communications materials, posters, visual tools
- Secure high-level support for the implementation of the Guidelines

25

## Project Action Plan: agreed after Madrid Conference

- Dissemination of the project research report and web page with examples
- Updating of guidelines in 2023
- Adoption of updated guidelines in Sectoral Social Dialogue Committees
- Launch and dissemination / make guidelines more effective
- Adopt through binding national / sectoral agreements
- Promote an integrated approach, aligned to C190/R206
- Inclusion of TPVH in a new updated social partner agreement on violence and harassment (updating the 2007 agreement)

26

## Further information

TPVH project webinars and other relevant information:

<https://www.epsu.org/article/multi-sectoral-project-role-social-partners-preventing-third-party-violence-and-harassment>

Madrid Conference, 25 November 2022: reports and presentations

<https://www.epsu.org/article/violence-and-harassment-work-third-parties-social-dialogue-matter>

Project Action plan:

[https://www.epsu.org/sites/default/files/article/files/TPV%20Action%20Plan%20adopted%2025.11.22%20Final 0.pdf](https://www.epsu.org/sites/default/files/article/files/TPV%20Action%20Plan%20adopted%2025.11.22%20Final%200.pdf)

**Thank you!**