

Violence and harassment at work has affected more than one in five people

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?The first global survey on experiences of violence and harassment at work aims to bring a better understanding and awareness of an issue rooted in complex economic, social and cultural factors.?????

Geneva, December 6 (RHC)-- More than one in five people -- almost 23 per cent -- in employment have experienced violence and harassment at work, whether physical, psychological or sexual, according to a new joint analysis, the first of its kind, by the International Labour Organization (ILO), Lloyd's Register Foundation (LRF) and Gallup.

Experiences of Violence and Harassment at Work: A global first survey provides a sense of the extent of the problem and its different forms. It also looks at the factors that may prevent people from talking about their experiences, including shame, guilt or a lack of trust in institutions, or because such unacceptable behaviours are seen as “normal”.

Violence and harassment at work is difficult to measure. The report found that only half of victims worldwide had disclosed their experiences to someone else, and often only after they had suffered more than one form of violence and harassment. The most common reasons given for non-disclosure were “waste of time” and “fear for their reputation”. Women were more likely to share their experiences than men (60.7 per cent compared to 50.1 per cent).

Globally, 17.9 per cent of employed men and women said they had experienced psychological violence and harassment in their working life, and 8.5 per cent had faced physical violence and harassment, with more men than women experiencing this. Of respondents, 6.3 per cent reported facing sexual violence and harassment, with women being particularly exposed.

The groups most likely to be affected by different types of violence and harassment include youth, migrant workers, and wage and salaried women and men. Young women were twice as likely as young men to have faced sexual violence and harassment, and migrant women were almost twice as likely as non-migrant women to report sexual violence and harassment.

More than three out of five victims said they had experienced violence and harassment at work multiple times, and for the majority, the most recent incident took place within the last five years.

“It’s painful to learn that people face violence and harassment not just once but multiple times in their working lives,” said Manuela Tomei, ILO Assistant Director-General for Governance, Rights and Dialogue. “Psychological violence and harassment is the most prevalent across countries and women are particularly exposed to sexual violence and harassment. The report tells us about the enormity of task ahead to end violence and harassment in the world of work. I hope it will expedite action on the ground and towards the ratification and implementation of ILO Convention 190.”

The ILO’s Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) and Recommendation (No. 206) are the first international labour standards to provide a common framework to prevent, remedy and eliminate violence and harassment in the world of work, including gender-based violence and harassment. The Convention includes the specific recognition, for the first time in international law, of the right of everyone to a world of work free from violence and harassment, and sets out the obligation to respect, promote and realize this.

“Gathering robust data on this highly sensitive issue is challenging but essential. For the first time, this report lifts the veil on this pervasive problem which plagues more than one in five workers globally,” said Andrew Rzepa, Partner, Gallup. “For too long, companies and organizations have been unaware or unwilling to tackle violence and harassment in the workplace. This dataset provides a baseline that we can all use to track much-needed progress on this vital safety issue.”

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