



MANIFESTO

#NOVIOLENCEATWORK

A decade ago, European social partners identified third-party violence and harassment in the workplace as key challenges for health and safety in the European Union; with their effects being generally harmful for the psychological and/or physical well-being of workers. In the light of the European Pillar of Social Rights, and in particular of workers' right to a high level of protection of health and safety at work (Principle 10), third-party violence at work (TPV) must remain high on the social agenda, both at European and national level, also against the background of ILO Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment.

More specifically, in the public sector, a large number of professions involve coming into contact with the public, meaning that the risk of workers being victims of violent behaviour from third parties is very high*. Third-party violence can take many forms: verbal, physical or psychological aggression, incivility against a worker, a person, when carrying out his or her duties.

Certain sectors are particularly exposed to this type of risk: public transport, law enforcement, health and education personnel, to name but a few.

In addition, research reports on the theme of third-party violence at work highlight that women are also more vulnerable as they are also more likely to fall prey to sexual violence or harassment (whether verbal or physical).

The phenomenon of third-party violence had already been exacerbated by the effects of the financial and economic crisis of 2007 and the initial impact of restructuring, with a consequent downsizing of public service, staff reduction measures and budgetary cuts. Until

recent years, the public administration had been under pressure to deliver on two contradicting expectations: on the one hand, the desire for better services, while on the other hand, the expectation placed upon public services to use fewer financial resources. This lack of appropriate resources made it increasingly difficult

to guarantee services in line with public expectations. Public services, and its workforce in particular, have seemingly become the target of dissatisfaction due to rising social inequalities and frustration for which the State and governments are held responsible. Sadly enough, the situation is worsening due to the health, social and economic crisis caused by the Covid19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown measures. The immediate consequences of increasing social tensions and people's mounting frustration can

be seen in the rise in aggressive behaviour towards public service workers. It appears that the pandemic has brought an additional source of stress to the work of public services, hindering the prevention of violence in the workplace.

Now more than ever, trade-unions can and must play a central role in the fight against third-party violence, namely by:

- keeping the phenomenon in the spotlight and strongly condemning third-party violence through awareness-raising campaigns of zero-tolerance against violence;
- bringing together workers and managers around a common goal;
- including this issue in collective agreement negotiations and advocacy at national level;
- accompanying victims by offering psychological support and assistance in legal proceedings, and by facilitating access to information and possible remedies.

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Trade-Unions for zero
tolerance towards third-party
violence at work:
Protect public sector
workers in Europe!
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* See the European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks (ESENER), 2014 and 2019 editions: <https://visualisation.osha.europa.eu/esener#/en>.

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PROTECT
those who
protect!



PROTECT
those who
serve!



RESPECT
those who
serve!



CARE
for those who
care!

Independent trade-unions speak with one voice against violence in the #NOVIOLENCEATWORK campaign. They call strongly upon governments, politicians, media and the society as a whole to protect public sector workers. This means, first and foremost, preventing workers on the ground from being victims of growing public anger and frustration towards the State.

This all begins with:

- investing in people;
- restoring the image of public sector workers and rewarding their work;
- avoiding understaffing.

OUR DEMANDS AND POSSIBLE TOOLS:

- Zero-tolerance policy towards violence against public sector workers and oppose the issue being trivialised;
- Greater responsibility on employers and governments to tackle the issue and protect their workers;
- Specific training to provide workers with the opportunities and the tools to know how act when encountering violent behaviour;
- Obligation of reporting of violent acts (also to overcome the lack of data problem);
- Enhanced social dialogue among the actors concerned to find common solutions;
- Greater involvement of trade-unions as 'reliable partners' both for governments and for workers on the issue of third-party violence;
- Establishment of internal and external reporting channels;
- Prevention through risk assessment;
- Exchanging best practices and capacity-building;
- Awareness-raising and communication campaigns;
- Training of specific prosecutors to deal with cases of third-party violence in the public sector;
- Establishing clear incriminations, severe and dissuasive sanctions in cases of third-party violence;
- Accompanying the victim of violence throughout the process (support and follow-up).

OUR SLOGANS/MESSAGES:

- **@Governments&decision-makers:**
Protect those who protect!
Protect those who serve!
Respect those who serve!
Care for those who care.
- **@Workers&Victims:**
You are not alone! Trade-unions are by your side.

Independent Trade-Unions gather
for zero tolerance against violence

WE CAN DRAW THE LINE:

let's end third-party violence at work!

European Confederation of Independent Trade-Unions • Confédération Européenne des Syndicats Indépendants • Europäische Union unabhängiger Gewerkschaften • Confederazione Europea dei Sindacati Indipendenti • Confederación Europea de Sindicatos Independientes



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