



Violence and harassment at work


An introduction to the Lloyd's Register Foundation World Risk Poll

Launched in 2020, the World Risk Poll, the first global study of its kind, set a benchmark for insight, giving a voice to people from all walks of life and painting a picture of universal experiences of risk across the world.

Surveying over 150,000 people in 142 countries, including people in remote regions frequently excluded from comparative polls, the research provided a more accurate picture of global attitudes toward risk and safety than has ever been achieved before.

In many countries around the world, official data sources do not collate certain information as records are not kept or are not reliable or informative. The World Risk Poll fills many data gaps and gathers data from countries across the world to understand more about the risks people worry about, fear they will experience or have experienced themselves.



 150,000+ people surveyed in 142 countries



Lloyd's Register
Foundation

Experience of violence and harassment at work: a global issue

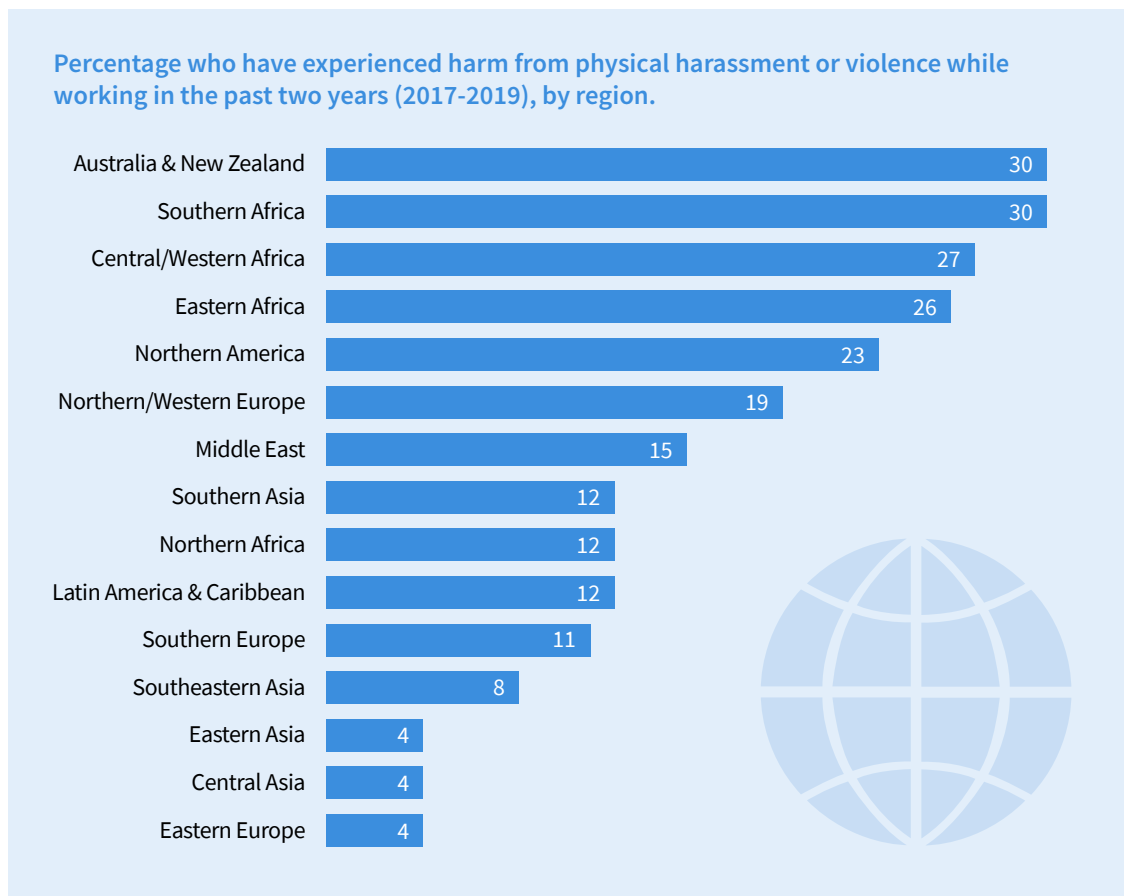
The World Risk Poll revealed that people across the world have experienced violence and harassment at work.

Globally, 12% of workers said they, or someone they have worked with, experienced injury or harm from physical harassment or violence in the past two years.

In several regions, this rate stands at over 20%, including Australia/New Zealand and Southern Africa at 30%, Central/Western Africa at 27%, Eastern Africa at 26% and Northern America at 23%.

By contrast, fewer than 5% of workers in Eastern Asia, Central Asia and Eastern Europe said they (or someone they worked with) experienced injury or harm from physical harassment or violence.

In comparison to workers experiencing other harms at work, workers who experienced physical violence and harassment were the most likely to say they had experienced mental health issues.



A 'top of mind' risk

17%

People's perceptions of risks differed from the likelihood of experiencing them, and the poll asked about both perception and experience of violence and harassment. Around one in six workers (**17%**) named **physical harassment or violence as a main source of risk to their safety** – indicating that globally the issue is a major source of worry.

Working men and women in low-income economies **were more than twice as likely** to identify violence and harassment as a risk than the global average, with nearly four in 10 men (39%) and women (36%) in these countries saying this was a risk for them.

In higher-income economies, violence and harassment were generally **a more common top of mind risk** in the workplace than physical risks despite strong regulation of workplace safety. Workers in Northern/Western Europe and Australia/New Zealand were most likely to name physical violence and harassment as a top risk to their safety at work, with France being the highest (32%).

The gender gap

While the World Risk Poll found that nearly **11% of female workers** have experienced workplace violence and harassment – **similar levels to men at 12%** – there was a significant gender gap in some countries both in terms of perception and experience.

Perception

Men vs women: Countries with the largest gender gap where more men named violence and harassment as a risk in the workplace than women were Morocco (twice as many men as women), Saudi Arabia (1.6 x as many men), Jordan and Venezuela (both 1.5 x) and Libya (1.4 x).

Women vs men: Countries in Scandinavia and Northern Europe showed the largest gender gaps with more women naming violence and harassment as a risk than men. In Finland, three times as many women as men cited it as a risk, Denmark (2.4x), Norway (2.25x), Germany (2x) and Sweden (1.9x).

Experience

Men vs women: Countries with the largest gender gap, where more men experienced violence and harassment in the workplace than women were Palestine (7.5x as many men than women), Jamaica (2.9x), Columbia (2.8x), Jordan (2.7x) and Yemen (2.6x).

Women vs men: Countries which showed the largest gender gaps with more women experiencing violence and harassment at work than men were Norway (2.4x), Sweden (2.14x), Finland (2.1), Slovenia (2x) and both Portugal and Denmark (1.9x).

Women and risk

At the time of the survey, 27% of women around the world felt less safe generally than they did five years previously.

27% 
Felt less safe

Top ten countries where women have *experienced* violence and harassment at work

1. Zambia	47%
2. Malawi	45%
3. Uganda	41%
4. Congo Brazzaville	40%
5. Swaziland	39%
6. Australia	39%
7. Namibia	35%
8. Liberia	35%
9. Togo	34%
10. Tanzania	34%

Top ten countries where women *worry about* violence and harassment at work

1. Malawi	75%
2. Swaziland	72%
3. Nepal	70%
4. Mauritius	58%
5. Mali	53%
6. Afghanistan	51%
7. Uganda	51%
8. Congo	51%
9. Gabon	51%
10. Zambia	51%



The 2021 World Risk Poll: a focus on violence and harassment at work

The World Risk Poll 2021 is now underway with polling being undertaken by Gallup in around 125 countries. As part of this Poll, Lloyd's Register Foundation and the International Labour Organization have joined forces to further understand peoples' experiences of violence and harassment at work on a global scale.

This module of the Poll will seek to understand the prevalence of different forms of violence and harassment at work – and explore issues around reporting.



Statistics on violence and harassment in the world of work are sporadic and scarce. Comparability of data is problematic because different terminologies, concepts, definitions and methods are used, and under-reporting remains a global problem. As a worldwide study, the ILO-Lloyd's Register Foundation World Risk Poll 2021 module on violence and harassment will shed some light on its prevalence and people's own experiences with it. We hope that the results of this joint study will provide a better-informed impetus for action by the international community and relevant national institutions.

Manuela Tomei

Director of the Conditions of Work and Equality Department,
International Labour Organization



Data from the World Risk Poll 2021 will provide information which can be used to support the formulation of targeted policy measures to prevent violence and harassment at work, and provide the necessary evidence to inform decisions made by country leaders to ratify Convention 190.

Sarah Cumbers

Director of Evidence and Insight, Lloyd's Register Foundation

For more information, please view the [World Risk Poll website](#) or [email the team](#).