

Safe at home, safe at work

Trade unions erasing violence against women and workplace harassment

ETUC

**Ending Gender-Based Violence in Europe
Implementing Strategies for Protection and Prevention**

May 2017



Representing European workers

Established 1973

89 member organisations in 39 countries

10 European Trade Union Federations

Eurocadres (professional & managerial staff)
FERPA (retired & older people)

A Women's Committee

60 million workers ($\pm 44\%$ women)

Violence: a trade union issue

Gender based violence at work, including the effect of domestic violence at work, are core trade union issues

- Violence affects the safety, health and wellbeing of workers
- A major and persistent barrier to achieving equality at work and in society
- It impacts negatively on job performance and productivity, retention of workers, absenteeism, as well as the overall climate of workplace relations and the working environment
- Rising levels of violence and harassment are directly related to the growth in non-standard forms of employment e.g. casual work, temporary work, involuntary part-time work, zero hours contracts etc. particularly affecting sectors where women and young people work

Combating sexual harassment and violence at work is one of five objectives in the ETUC Action Programme on Gender Equality (2016-2019)

The impact of domestic violence and abuse at work

Domestic violence and abuse has devastating effects for victims. At work it can lead to:

- High levels of sick leave, absenteeism and being forced to leave work
- Reduced work performance, difficulties in concentration and isolation from work colleagues
- Difficulties in access to work because of coercive control of money, clothing, transport to and from work, socialising with work colleagues, participating in training events etc.
- Harassment, violence and stalking by abusers in the workplace
- A wider negative impact on the working environment, team working and workplace relations

For employers and the economy

- Domestic abuse costs the UK economy £1.9 billion (€2.2 billion) in lost economic output every year and leads to decreased productivity, increased absenteeism and increased employee turnover
(There are similar estimates from other countries)

Safe at home, Safe at work



ERASING
VIOLENCE

Trade unions erasing violence against women
and workplace harassment



with the support
of the EU Commission

Safe at home, safe at work project: aims & outputs

- ✓ Improve trade union knowledge, collective negotiations and involvement in social partner initiatives to address and prevent gender-based violence at work
- ✓ Integrate a gender perspective into trade union actions to address and prevent violence at work
- ✓ Make recommendations for affiliates, for the ETUC and European institutions, including for the proposed ILO standard on violence at work

Eleven country case studies
Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France,
Germany, Italy, Ireland, Netherlands,
Slovenia, Spain, UK

EU Event
(Madrid Nov. 2016)

**Final stock-taking
Conference**
(Brussels June 2017)

Final Study
(to be released in
June 2017)

Findings

A patchy legal system

Lack of data on domestic violence at work

Unions not involved in the development of government policies and strategies on VAW

An emerging issue for several unions

How trade unions approach domestic violence at work

Training of shop stewards

Awareness raising of union members, officers and women workers

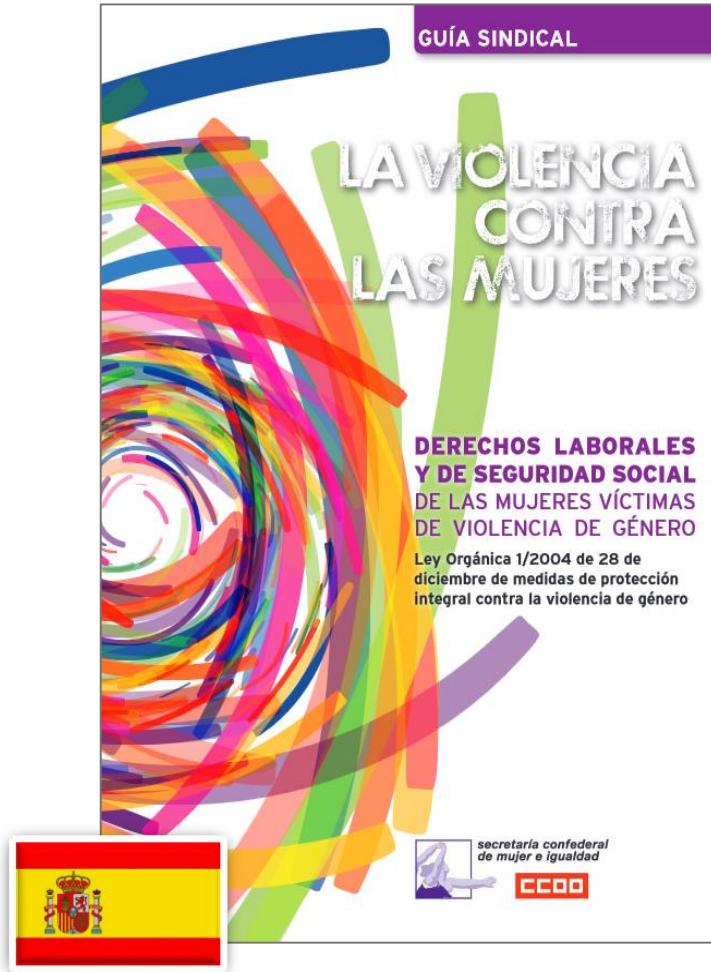
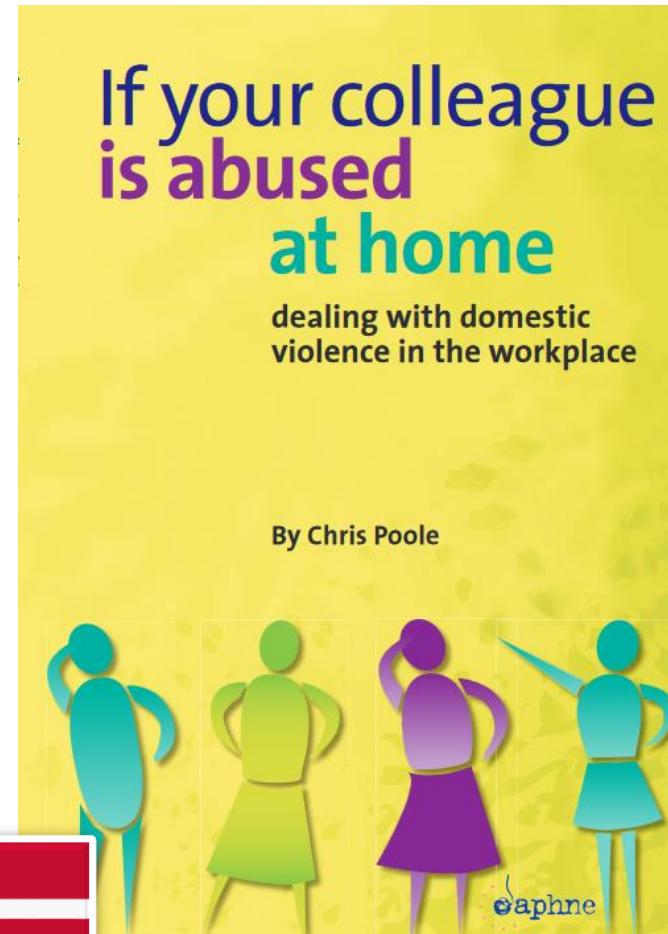
Union's campaigns

Collection of evidence of the impact of domestic violence at work

Working in partnership with domestic violence organisations

Lobbying for a legal framework on gender-based violence at work

Union's awareness raising activities



Union's campaigns



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Negotiation of workplace policies and clauses in agreements

Inclusion of domestic violence clauses in company equality plans

Collective agreements and workplace policies

40 examples of CBAs and workplace policies on domestic violence at work were identified

- Information about domestic violence at work
- Paid leave
- Protection from dismissal
- Safety and security in the workplace
- Change in job location or work scheduling
- Legal and/or financial support
- Information about local NGOs providing specialist support
- Training and awareness raising for the workforce
- Training for shop stewards and line managers

Challenges

Unions in Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands speak of the difficulties in bringing '**private**' and 'family' issues into the workplace

Some unions (and employers) do **not** see the issue as a **priority**, at a time of many different competing demands

Low level of awareness of the problem / resistance to recognising it as a trade union issue

Austerity measures have impacted on social services and NGO support services for victims of domestic violence

Conclusions: critical success factors

- ✓ Importance of an enabling legal framework with clear duties on employers and governments
- ✓ Making a strong business case of the economic impact of gender-based violence at work
- ✓ Linking violence at work to wider gender equality policies and actions, including gender mainstreaming and health and safety at work
- ✓ Strengthening collaboration amongst stakeholders fighting against domestic violence
- ✓ Ensuring presence of women in senior and negotiating roles
- ✓ Ratifying Istanbul Convention & Ensuring a level playing field in the EU

European
Trade Union
Confederation

Confédération
européenne
des syndicats

The Voice of European Workers