

Joint Statement on the 10th anniversary of the Multi-sectoral guidelines to tackle third-party violence and harassment related to work



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(Brussels, 16 July 2020) A decade ago, the European Sectoral Social Partners, EPSU, UNI EUROPA, ETUCE, HOSPEEM, CEMR, EFEE, EuroCommerce, CoESS identified third-party violence and harassment at the workplace as one of the key health and safety challenges to face within the European Economic Area and signed the [Multi-sectoral guidelines to tackle third-party violence \(TPV\) and harassment related to work](#). In 2018, EUPAE and TUNED joined these organisations in their work to tackle this pressing issue.

Since then, we have seen a progressive increase of awareness and procedures available against harassment and violence as well as to widespread availability of

data related to physical violence, sexual harassment, and bullying/harassment at workplaces.

With the Guidelines, the EU social partners supported the creation of a multi-sectoral level playing field, contributing to a result-oriented policy at workplaces, and where practical steps are set up and can be taken by employers, workers, and their representatives.

The signatories acknowledged that, although there are sectoral and organisational differences concerning third-party violence faced by workers in different occupational sectors and workplaces, the key common elements of good practice and steps to tackle it include a social partnership approach, precise definitions, prevention through risk assessment in consultation with workers and their representatives, awareness-raising, training, clear reporting and follow-up, and appropriate evaluation processes.

The Guidelines are a crucial instrument to support workers' right to a safe and healthy workplace, a fundamental principle of the [OSH "Framework Directive" \[1\]](#) and the [European Pillar of Social Rights\[2\]](#) calling for a healthy, safe and well-adapted work environment. Furthermore, they supplement the recently adopted ILO Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment[\[3\]](#).

The Guidelines were elaborated through a bottom-up approach, by equally involving the national social partners from the various sectors, throughout the process. This approach created ownership among the national social partners that supported an effective adoption and implementation of the principles within the European Economic Area.

In the past years, national social partners have been actively making use of and promoting the Guidelines. This shows once again the ownership they have of the Guidelines and their commitment to creating a suitable policy framework that includes:

- On-going information and consultation with stakeholders;
- Clear definition of third-party violence and harassment;
- Policy based on risk assessment;
- Appropriate information directed to customers or users on anti-harassment and violence policy as well as follow-up measures;
- Appropriate training for management and employees;

- Clear procedures to monitor, investigate and respond to allegations of TPV;
- Policies on the support to employees who are exposed to TPV;
- Requirements regarding the reporting of incidents by employees and on the measures taken to protect these employees;
- Policies on when it is appropriate to file complaints;
- A transparent and effective procedure for recording facts and figures for monitoring.

The signatories primarily conducted follow-up activities in the framework of their respective European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committees; a joint follow-up was then conducted in 2013 to analyse the use of the multi-sectoral guidelines by national social partners as well as to learn about the possible recommendation for revisions.

Despite the progress over the past years, however, an increase of TPV and harassment has been reported in some sectors and EU Member States. Several signatory organisations and other interested sectoral social partners are currently drafting EU-funded project proposals, among others intending to assess the Guidelines with a view further to draw further recommendations.

To this date, the Guidelines remain the only instrument signed by multiple European sectoral Social Dialogue Committees and are considered one of the significant achievements of the European Sectoral Social Dialogue.

Today, the Guidelines' signatories reaffirm that their respective sectors continue to **address third-party violence and all forms of harassment related to work, ensuring that**, in the upcoming years, **each workplace has a targeted results-oriented policy**, also in the context of initiatives of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

Signatories

Jan Willem Goudriaan, General Secretary, European Federation of Public Service Unions

Oliver Roethig, Regional Secretary, UNI europa

Susan Flocken, European Director, European Trade Union Committee for Education

Marta Branca, Vice-Secretary General, European Hospital and Healthcare

Employers' Association

Frédéric Vallier, Secretary General, Council of European Municipalities and Region

Daniel Wisniewski, General Secretary, European Federation of Education Employers

Christian Verschueren, Director-General, EuroCommerce

Catherine Piana, Director General, Confederation of European Security Services

Jacques Druart, Chair, European Public Administration Employers

Trade Unions' National and European Administration Delegation [represented by Jan Willem Goudriaan, General Secretary, EPSU and Klaus Heeger, Secretary General, CESI]

[1] Council Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work. 183 vol. OJ L (1989).

[2] European Commission & Secretariat-General. European pillar of social rights. (Publications Office of the European Union, 2017).

[3] International Labour Organization (ILO). C190 - Violence and Harassment Convention. (2019).

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