



Webinar on
“Protection and compensation of victims and
sanctions against
perpetrators of violence and harassment”

„BEST PRACTICE FROM BULGARIA – LOBBYING
THE GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE THE
CRIMINALISATION OF HARASSMENT AGAINST
TEACHERS“

4 March 2022

The Trade Union of Bulgarian Teachers (SEB)



- The Trade Union of Bulgarian Teachers (SEB) is the main initiator of the reforms in the educational sector.
 - It represents nearly 90 % of the pedagogical and non-pedagogical staff in the education in Bulgaria.
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- We are part of the tripartite social dialogue on national level, and we are representing the workers in the Tripartite Council for Social Dialogue to the Ministry of Education.
 - Part of the main tasks of SEB is to lobby government, parliament, and public authorities for change in the legislation to improve the education system in Bulgaria.

Lobbying efforts

In 2013 the lobbying efforts of SEB have led to a change in the Penal Code where texts were introduced for protection of the teachers against violence.

Penal Code, Article 131 (2) For bodily injury inflicted on a judge, a prosecutor, an examining magistrate, a police body, an investigating officer, a public enforcement agent, a private enforcement agent or an assistant private enforcement agent, as well as on a customs officer, a revenue officer, an officer of the Executive Forestry Agency, or an officer of the Ministry of Environment and Waters performing a control activity or a medical specialist, **a teacher (tutor)** in the course of or in relation to carrying out his/her duties or functions, the punishment shall be imprisonment:

1. from five to fifteen years in the case of severe bodily injury;
2. from three to ten years in the case of medium bodily injury;
3. from one to five years in the case of trivial bodily injury;
4. up to three years in the case of trivial bodily injury.

How it works?

For these entries in the Assessment Code to be included in the victim's action, an application must be made. Crimes such as minor bodily injury are prosecuted in the presence of an application filed by the victim, called a private complaint.

The private complaint is filed in the district court when the crime is committed, and written evidence is presented (medical certificate of the victim).

For crimes such as moderate or serious bodily injury, criminal prosecution of a general nature is instituted on the complaint of the victim to the prosecutor's office.

In 2013 there are already cases of people prosecuted by Article 131 of the Penal Code.

Why have we demand this change

From 1994 until today, the Bulgarian Teachers' Union has held numerous conferences to see what are the factors that provoke violence.

We want to understand what makes a person not think and do things that are cruel.

In a study, we found that 65% of teachers suffer mental violence and 2.5% suffer physical violence - whether from children, parents or relatives of children.

Cases of aggression and violence

- Physical aggression between students - 1 662 cases;
- verbal aggression - 1 603 cases;
- unaddressed aggression (vandalism) - 256 cases;
- psychological harassment - 497 cases;
- virtual bullying - 51 cases
- A total of aggression between students reaches 4117 cases.
- In addition to these, there are registered cases of aggression by students and parents against teachers - 310 cases and aggression by teachers or parents against children - 92 cases.

What the trade union is doing

- ▶ Research
- ▶ Trainings
- ▶ Campaigns
 - ▶ “No to violence”
 - ▶ “For kindness in the education”
- ▶ Conferences
- ▶ Convention 190

How to solve the problem

- ▶ Increase of school psychologists
- ▶ More than 11 000 teachers trained for working in risky situations and prevention of aggression
- ▶ long-term and sustainable prevention of aggression at school through a variety of extracurricular activities
- ▶ pedagogical advisors and educational mediators
- ▶ trainings for teachers on social and emotional skills



Thank you for your attention!

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