FREE PUBLIC SPACES

Women's empowerment against sexist harassment in public spaces

WP3. Training system for managers

EBOOK – COMMON PROJECT REPORT

Results of the workshops with companies and women organisations

Content

1. General introduction

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, approved by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 48/104 of 20 December 1993, is the first international document to clearly and specifically address this type of violence. Article 1 defines it as any act of violence that is based on the fact that a woman is a member of the female sex, or may result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, as well as threats of such acts, coercion or harassment, whether occurring in private or public spaces.

In 2013, the UN Commission on the Status of Women identified sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence in public spaces as a specific area of concern and urged governments to take preventive measures.

Public space is a field where multiple and diverse scenarios converge; it is a place of encounter and socialisation, where "everyone can enjoy the pleasures of pure sociability, relational life without a concrete object" (Delgado, 2007). It is a place where power relations and the search for and exercise of individual and collective freedoms coincide and confront each other (Fuentes and Peña 2011).

We are referring to the violence and male chauvinist harassment suffered by women in the streets or squares, in leisure or cultural spaces, shopping centres, car parks, airports, train or metro stations, etc.

2. FPS Project – Training System objectives

The FPS project aims to develop and strengthen self-confidence and self-concept through soft skills and Emotional Intelligence in the target group, enabling them to achieve an adequate level of empowerment and coping with situations of male harassment in public spaces.

Following the research work carried out in WP2 "Best Practices in prevention of sexual harassment in public spaces", the partner organisations have conducted national research in the framework of WP3 "Training System for Managers" in order to tackle this situation in one of the spaces where the greatest difference and imposition of power is generated: the workplace.

Workplaces are a place where people spend a third of our working days, so much of our lives are influenced by what happens there, not only professionally, but also personally.

In these scenarios, the possibility of the emergence of macho behaviour, micro or macro machismo, and by extension, situations of sexual harassment (whether in principle of the so-called "low intensity" or more serious kind) is influenced by different elements.

On the one hand, the greater presence of men in management positions means that interactions with female staff take place for the most part in a situation of imbalance in power relations. On the other hand, most of the work is carried out in SMEs (more than 98% of companies in the EU, with more than 60% of the jobs). These are small organisations which, either due to lack of staff or resources, find it

more difficult to set up equality plans than larger companies, where these plans are usually put in place and monitored by the HR department. In addition, the fact that these are small companies where the power relationship with the manager is closer and daily generates more tense situations that can lead to sexual harassment scenarios.

Taking these factors into account, FPS wants to develop a training system so that managers of companies of any type and sector, but especially SMEs, can learn how to develop plans to detect and protect themselves from cases of sexual harassment in their organisations.

3. eBook background and methodology

One of the activities that the project is carrying out in order to achieve this objective is a Training system for managers. As a preliminary step to the Training System, the partners from the 6 participating countries (Lithuania, Spain, Turkey, Austria, Cyprus, and Sweden) have developed an eBook to find out the training needs of managers in ethical and gender-equal leadership style that collects information on gaps, problem identification and solutions.

This eBook has been compiled from a series of National Workshops that aimed at defining the six areas in which work can be done to tackle sexual harassment in the workplace, both from a soft skills and emotional intelligence approach.

For this purpose, partners have conducted research with at least three in companies or women's associations to detect the gap in the training needs of managers and/or leaders (regardless of whether they are men or women).

Thus, a total of 30 different companies and 92 workshop participants have been reached across the 6 countries.

These workshops, which have been held both in person and online, have involved the following profiles: Entrepreneurs, managers or CEOs of companies, Human Resources managers, Career counsellors, Trainers and facilitators, Workers and/or trade union representatives.

In order to structure the different national sessions, after introducing the objectives of the FPS project and the workshop, the partners held a guided discussion according to the following questions:

1. *What training have you received in the prevention of sexual harassment in the company?*
2. *Do you know what attitudes and behaviours can be considered as sexual harassment?*
3. *What awareness-raising activities have you implemented in the organisation?*
4. *What protocols are in place to detect and manage a hypothetical case?*
5. *What means do you use to communicate a hypothetical case?*
6. *How do you think you could prevent these hypothetical cases before they happen?*
7. *How do you personally perceive this topic?*
8. *What kind of training do you think you need to have more resources in this topic?*

This was followed by a discussion on the 6 training areas that the FPS project should focus on. To start the discussion, a series of soft skills that can be efficient to manage situations of sexual harassment, previously agreed upon by the partnership, were presented. These included the following:

- Empathy
- Emotional management
- Verbal and non-verbal communication
- Cognitive bias management
- Active listening
- Integrity
- Interpersonal skills
- Work ethic
- Assertiveness
- Conflict resolution
- Leadership
- Teamwork and collaboration
- Behavioural and cognitive flexibility
- Empowerment
- Intercultural competences

It should be noted that these skills were intended for guidance only, and that participants were invited to highlight other skills relevant to the project.

National reports were then produced with the results obtained from each country. These results have been compiled collectively in the following sections and show only the opinions and views of the participating organisations at the national level as a representative sample.

4. National workshops' feedback overview

The Summary of national workshops sums up the collective insights gathered from the workshops conducted across Lithuania, Spain, Turkey, Austria, Cyprus, and Sweden within the FPS project framework.

Through these workshops, stakeholders engaged in discussions aimed at understanding training needs, awareness levels, existing protocols, communication strategies, and perceptions regarding sexual harassment in the workplace.

The following summary draws, question by question, the diverse perspectives and experiences shared by participants from each country, providing a comprehensive overview of the prevailing attitudes and challenges surrounding this critical issue.

1. What training have you received in the prevention of sexual harassment in the company?

- In Lithuania, informal training opportunities on various related topics exist within the Erasmus+ program ecosystem. However, sexual harassment is not directly addressed due to the homogeneity of some companies' female-only composition.

- In Spain, ongoing training events and specialized internal sessions mandated by new Spanish government measures underscore the importance of awareness-raising initiatives.

- In Turkey, while some companies lack harassment prevention training, others emphasize traditional gender roles over awareness. Training on harassment is not widely provided, with universities also neglecting it, though some international companies offer related awareness sessions.

- Austria acknowledges a lack of specific training but underscores the necessity and importance of increased awareness surrounding sexual harassment prevention.

- Cyprus notes efforts towards policy formulation and occasional inclusion of relevant information in seminars but lacks dedicated training programs.

- Sweden stresses the importance of comprehensive strategies, including policies, workshops, and online training, although challenges persist in monitoring implementation effectiveness.

2. Do you know what attitudes and behaviours can be considered as sexual harassment?

- In Lithuania, a broad spectrum of behaviours was identified, including mansplaining, unwanted physical contact, and stereotypical gender-based tasks, revealing evolving perceptions across generations.

- Spain highlights street harassment, objectification, and digital sphere violations as prevalent forms, emphasizing the importance of recognizing and reporting such behaviours.

- In Turkey, behaviours extend beyond physical acts to include psychological attrition, gender-based criticism, and interference in personal life.

- Austria underscores an understanding of inappropriate jokes, verbal comments, and misuse of power dynamics, emphasizing continuous learning and cultural awareness.

- Cyprus unanimously identifies verbal and physical actions, including comments on appearance and physical touches, as constituting sexual harassment.

- Sweden emphasizes the importance of recognizing unwelcome behaviours of a sexual nature, including verbal, non-verbal, and cyber harassment, promoting respectful and inclusive environments to combat such behaviours.

3. What awareness-raising activities have you implemented in the organisation?

- In Lithuania, workshops, seminars, and training sessions focusing on diversity, gender equality, and respectful workplace behaviour have been conducted, alongside guest speaker events and expert talks to enhance awareness.

- Spain has undertaken awareness campaigns, workshops, and training sessions specifically addressing sexual harassment prevention, diversity, and inclusion, complemented by open discussions and the provision of educational resources like brochures and online materials.

- Turkey has organized training sessions, seminars, and awareness campaigns targeting sexual harassment prevention, gender equality, and fostering respectful workplace behaviour, with a strong emphasis on cultivating a culture of zero tolerance towards harassment.

- Austria's initiatives include various awareness-raising activities such as training sessions, reflective exercises among peers, and regular discussions on pertinent topics, emphasizing communication, training, and creating an open and aware organizational culture.

- Cyprus has utilized email communications, comprehensive guide development, and workshops dedicated to sexual harassment prevention, emphasizing the importance of management commitment and swift intervention in addressing such issues.

- Sweden's efforts involve participation in workshops, training sessions, and seminars centered on diversity, inclusion, sexual harassment prevention, and maintaining respectful workplace behaviour, supplemented by guest speaker engagements and expert insights to promote awareness among employees.

4. What protocols are in place to detect and manage a hypothetical case?

- Lithuania has established reporting procedures and designated personnel or HR teams to handle cases of sexual harassment, prioritizing confidentiality, empathy, and professionalism throughout the process.

- Spain implements formal investigation procedures and protective measures to address cases of sexual harassment, conducting interviews with relevant parties and documenting findings for a thorough and fair resolution.

- Turkey has clear protocols for detecting and managing cases of sexual harassment, including formal investigations and disciplinary actions against perpetrators, prioritizing the well-being and rights of victims throughout.

- Austria, while lacking specific protocols, emphasizes creating a culture of openness and awareness, encouraging employees to report incidents and providing support and assistance to those involved.

- Cyprus has well-defined protocols for addressing instances of sexual harassment, including protective measures and comprehensive steps, prioritizing confidentiality and discretion in communication and documentation.

- Sweden has established reporting procedures and formal investigation processes, with trained personnel or HR teams conducting interviews and reviewing evidence to ensure a fair and thorough resolution.

5. What means do you use to communicate a hypothetical case?

- Lithuania utilizes private meetings, email communication, and written updates to discuss hypothetical cases of sexual harassment, prioritizing discretion and professionalism to safeguard the rights and well-being of all involved individuals.

- Spain employs various communication channels such as private meetings, email updates, and online resources to address hypothetical cases of sexual harassment, emphasizing confidentiality and empathy throughout the communication process.

- Turkey communicates about hypothetical cases through private meetings, email correspondence, and written updates, ensuring confidentiality and discretion to protect the privacy and well-being of individuals involved.

- Austria uses face-to-face discussions, email communication, and anonymous reporting channels to communicate about hypothetical cases of sexual harassment, stressing open communication and providing support to those affected.

- Cyprus communicates about hypothetical cases through private meetings, email updates, and documented diaries, prioritizing confidentiality, and discretion to ensure the privacy and well-being of individuals affected.

- Sweden employs private meetings, email communication, and written updates to communicate about hypothetical cases of sexual harassment, emphasizing professionalism, empathy, and confidentiality throughout the process.

6. How do you think you could prevent these hypothetical cases before they happen?

- Lithuania focuses on fostering environments of respect, inclusivity, and open communication to prevent cases of sexual harassment. They offer regular training on sexual harassment prevention, diversity, and inclusion, urging employees to intervene in inappropriate behaviour.

- Spain emphasizes education, awareness campaigns, and training sessions to prevent cases of sexual harassment. They advocate for a zero-tolerance culture towards harassment, encouraging reporting and intervention.

- Turkey prioritizes education, awareness-raising campaigns, and training sessions to prevent cases of sexual harassment. They promote respect, gender equality, and provide resources for understanding and addressing inappropriate behaviour.

- Austria underscores effective communication, reporting processes, and training to prevent cases of sexual harassment. They nurture awareness, respect, and encourage employees to speak up and report incidents.

- Cyprus focuses on establishing robust legal frameworks, disseminating information, and fostering respect to prevent cases of sexual harassment. They offer training, resources, and advocate for a zero-tolerance approach.

- Sweden creates environments of respect, inclusivity, and open communication to prevent cases of sexual harassment. They provide regular training on diversity, inclusion, and respectful workplace behaviour, empowering employees to intervene and report inappropriate behaviour.

7. How do you personally perceive this topic?

- In Lithuania, individuals view sexual harassment as a serious issue necessitating proactive measures like education, awareness, and cultural change. They stress the importance of fostering respectful and inclusive environments to combat harassment.

- In Spain, individuals regard sexual harassment as a violation of fundamental rights and stress the importance of education, awareness, and legal frameworks to prevent and address such behaviour. They advocate for a culture of zero tolerance towards harassment.

- In Turkey, individuals acknowledge sexual harassment as a pervasive issue requiring comprehensive measures such as education, awareness campaigns, and legal enforcement. They emphasize the importance of creating a culture of respect and gender equality to prevent harassment.

- In Austria, individuals perceive sexual harassment as a significant concern and highlight the importance of communication, reporting processes, and training to address and prevent such behaviour. They advocate for fostering a culture of awareness and respect in the workplace.

- In Cyprus, individuals perceive sexual harassment as a serious issue warranting legal frameworks, education, and cultural change. They emphasize the importance of management commitment and employee awareness in preventing and addressing harassment.

- In Sweden, individuals see sexual harassment as a societal problem necessitating education, awareness, and cultural change. They emphasize the importance of creating environments of respect and inclusivity to prevent harassment and promote gender equality.

8. What kind of training do you think you need to have more resources in this topic?

- In Lithuania, there's a need for training focused on diversity, inclusion, and respectful workplace behaviour, spanning from early education to adulthood. Advocates call for comprehensive programs to effectively address sexual harassment.

- In Spain, emphasis is placed on training for sexual harassment prevention, legal understanding, and reporting protocols. Regular education and awareness initiatives are advocated to establish a zero-tolerance culture.

- Turkey stresses training on gender equality, respectful conduct, and legal knowledge. Comprehensive programs are sought to address cultural norms and foster workplace respect and equality.

- Austria sees the necessity for training in communication skills, reporting protocols, and cultural sensitivity. Regular sessions and open dialogues are suggested to enhance awareness and prevent sexual harassment.

- Cyprus highlights the importance of training on legal aspects, reporting procedures, and cultural awareness. Advocates call for ongoing education to empower employees and foster a culture of respect.

- Sweden advocates for training on diversity, inclusion, and respectful behaviour. Regular sessions and awareness campaigns are recommended to prevent sexual harassment and promote a respectful workplace.

5. Conclusions of National workshops

The national workshops conducted within the framework of the FPS project provided valuable insights and conclusions regarding sexual harassment prevention in the workplace across Lithuania, Spain, Turkey, Austria, Cyprus, and Sweden. The collective discussions and exchanges among stakeholders enlightened key areas of focus and identified strategies to address challenges effectively. The following conclusions summarise the overarching themes and recommendations derived from these workshops:

- **Need for Comprehensive Training**: Participants emphasized the need for comprehensive training programs on sexual harassment prevention, encompassing topics such as diversity, inclusion, legal frameworks, and reporting procedures. There was consensus on the importance of providing ongoing education and awareness initiatives to empower employees and foster a culture of respect and accountability.

- **Importance of Awareness-Raising Initiatives**: Workshop participants underscored the significance of awareness-raising campaigns, workshops, and training sessions to enhance understanding and recognition of sexual harassment behaviours. It was recognized that creating a zero-tolerance culture towards harassment requires proactive measures to educate employees and promote open dialogue within organizations.

- **Establishment of Clear Protocols**: Clear protocols for detecting, managing, and reporting cases of sexual harassment were deemed essential by workshop participants. They emphasized the importance of establishing formal investigation procedures, designated personnel or HR teams, and protective measures to ensure a fair and thorough resolution of harassment cases.

- **Effective Communication Strategies**: Communication emerged as a critical aspect in addressing sexual harassment, with participants advocating for transparent and confidential communication channels to report hypothetical cases. Using various communication channels, such as private meetings, email correspondence, and written updates, was deemed vital to ensure confidentiality and support for individuals affected by harassment.

- **Creation of Respectful Work Environments**: Creating environments of respect, inclusivity, and open communication was identified as a fundamental strategy to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. Participants emphasized the importance of fostering a culture that values diversity, promotes gender equality, and encourages employees to intervene and report inappropriate behaviour.

- **Continuous Improvement and Evaluation**: Finally, participants stressed the importance of continuous improvement and evaluation of existing policies and practices related to sexual harassment prevention. Regular assessments of training effectiveness, communication strategies, and protocol implementation were recommended to identify areas for improvement and ensure ongoing commitment to combating harassment.

In conclusion, the national workshops provided a platform for stakeholders to exchange knowledge, share best practices, and collaborate on strategies to prevent and address sexual harassment in the workplace. By prioritizing comprehensive training, awareness-raising initiatives, clear protocols, effective communication, and the creation of respectful work environments, organizations can take proactive steps towards fostering safer and more inclusive workplaces for all employees.

6. FPS Training Skills

The selection of training skills for the Free Public Spaces (FPS) project was informed by feedback from the 30 organizations participating in this study across Lithuania, Spain, Turkey, Austria, Cyprus, and Sweden. Through collaborative discussions and exchanges, six key skills emerged as paramount in addressing sexual harassment in the workplace, reflecting a consensus among participants. The following 6 skills were identified, ordered by preference based on the number of votes received:

1. **Emotional Management**: Recognized as essential for handling emotions effectively, both personally and in professional interactions. Participants emphasized the importance of developing strategies to manage stress, anxiety, and conflict in diverse settings.

2. **Verbal and Non-verbal Communication**: Highlighted for its role in fostering clear and effective communication in the workplace. Participants emphasized the need for enhancing communication skills to convey messages accurately and respectfully.

3. **Empathy**: Acknowledged as a foundational skill to understand and address the diverse challenges faced by individuals, particularly in the context of gender-based issues. Participants stressed the importance of cultivating empathy to create supportive and inclusive environments.

4. **Work Ethic**: Deemed crucial for promoting integrity, professionalism, and commitment in all aspects of work. Participants emphasized the significance of upholding ethical standards and demonstrating diligence in the workplace.

5. **Conflict Resolution**: Identified as a key skill to navigate personal and professional conflicts effectively. Participants emphasized the importance of developing strategies to resolve disagreements and promote harmony in the workplace.

6. **Active Listening**: Recognized as essential for creating a supportive environment and fostering open communication. Participants emphasized the need for attentive listening to understand others' perspectives and concerns.

Feedback from participating organizations provided valuable insights into the contextual factors shaping the selection of these skills. The consensus on these skills underscores a shared commitment to creating safer, more respectful, and inclusive work environments.

The integration of these skills into the FPS Training System will equip managers, individuals and organizations with the knowledge and skills needed to prevent, recognize, and address instances of sexual harassment in the workplace effectively. Thus, creating inclusive and respectful workplaces, while empowering managers to foster a culture of respect, equity, and accountability within their organizations.

7. Final conclusions and remarks

The FPS project has been a collaborative endeavour aimed at addressing sexual harassment in public spaces, with a particular focus on the workplace. Through the participation of 30 organizations across six countries, valuable insights have been gained into the challenges women face and the strategies needed to promote gender equity and prevent harassment.

The selection of six key training skills - emotional management, verbal and non-verbal communication, empathy, work ethic, conflict resolution, and active listening - reflects a consensus among participants on the essential components of creating safer and more respectful work environments. These skills will form the foundation of the Training System for Managers, which aims to equip individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to address instances of sexual harassment effectively.

Furthermore, the feedback provided by participating organizations has underscored the importance of ongoing training, awareness initiatives, and the establishment of clear reporting and communication protocols. By fostering a culture of respect, integrity, and gender equality, the FPS project seeks to effect positive societal change and contribute to the empowerment of individuals in both personal and professional spheres.

In conclusion, the FPS project represents a significant step towards creating safer and more inclusive public spaces. By addressing the root causes of harassment and empowering individuals with the necessary tools and skills, the project aims to foster a culture of respect, integrity, and gender equality, ultimately contributing to positive societal change.