

Sexism at work

Under-reporting of sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is under-reported, with one UK survey finding that **79 % of targets of sexual harassment in the workplace did not report it**^[1].

The reasons given for not reporting included:

- fear that relationships at work would be negatively affected;
- fear that the report would not be believed or taken seriously;
- embarrassment;
- fear of a negative impact on career^[2].

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) also found that a lack of public discussion on sexual harassment, as well as high societal tolerance of such violence, lead to under-reporting^[3].

Most of the time women and girls are afraid to denounce violence. They may feel ashamed or are afraid they will be blamed or, as much sexual harassment happens in the workplace, are afraid of losing their job or being penalised.

Source: European Parliament^[4].

Footnotes

[1] TUC, Still just a bit of banter? Sexual harassment in the workplace in 2016, TUC, London, 2016 (<https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/SexualHarassmentreport2016.pdf>).

[2] TUC, 2016, p. 21.

[3] Eurofound, Violence and harassment in European workplaces: extent, impacts and policies, Eurofound, Dublin, 2015, p. 52 (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331175890_Violence_and_harassment_in_European_workplaces_Extent_impacts_and_policies).

[4] European Parliament resolution of 26 October 2017 on combating sexual harassment and abuse in the EU (2017/2897(RSP)) (https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2017-0417_EN.pdf).