

Sexual harassment and sexual blackmail at work

Years 2015-2016

This note presents the results, referred to the years 2015-2016, of the estimate of sexual harassment suffered by women and men and of women victims of sexual blackmail at work.

It is estimated that 8,816,000 women between 14 and 65 years of age (43.6%) were victims of sexual harassment in the course of their lives. In the last three years they were 3,118,000 (15.4%).

Considering only the same sexual harassment forms detected in the 2008-2009 survey, data showed a significant decline. The percentage of women victims of sexual harassment decreased from 18.7% in the three years prior to 2008-2009 to 12.8% in the three years prior to 2015-2016.

Men victims of sexual harassment were 3,754,000 (18.8%) in the course of their life, 1,274,000 (6.4%) in the last three years.

Perpetrators of sexual harassment were mostly men: they were for 97% of the victims women and for the 85.4% of the victims men.

Verbal harassment is the most common form both of sexual harassment suffered during life (24% for women and 8.2% for men), followed by unwanted touching (15.9% of women and by 3.6% of men).

60% of unwanted touching were made by strangers, 15.8% by people who know each other only by sight; the most frequent places where they occurred were the public transport (27.9%) for women while for men were clubs such as pubs, nightclubs, bars (29.2% in the course of life).

The perception of the severity of physical harassment was very different considering men and women: 76.4% of women considered them very or fairly serious against 47.2% of men.

Other forms of harassment were those perpetrated through the Web: 6.8% of women had inappropriate proposals or obscene or malicious comments on their account through social networks and to 1.5% of women happened that someone used their accounts (identity theft) to send embarrassing or threatening or offensive messages to other people. In this case, data regarding men are not particularly different (respectively 2.2% and 1.9%).

5% of the population (7.8% of women and 2.2% of men) suffered sexual acts against their will when they were under 18. 62.1% of men and 42.7% of women did not speak to any of these facts at the time they occurred.

Perpetrators were prevalently strangers or acquaintances (in 36.4% and 22.4% of cases), but for 14.8% of women's victims and 7.4% of men the author was a family member or a relative.

8.9% of women suffered unwanted touching at work or sexual blackmail at workplace; 2.7% over the past three years previous to the survey.

7.5% of women aged 15-65 that worked or had worked in the past were victims of sexual blackmail in the workplace, to get the job or to maintain their work or to gain progress in their career; 1.1% in the last three years (1.1%) before the survey.

11.3% of female victims were blackmailed by the same person and in 32.4% of cases blackmail was repeated daily or several times a week.

The majority of victims (69.6%) perceived the blackmail as very or quite serious. Nonetheless, in 80.9% of cases they did not tell anyone in their workplace. Almost none reported the case to the police.

TABLES 1. WOMEN AND MEN (14 - 65 YEARS OLD) WHO SUFFERED SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE LIFE COURSE AND IN THE LAST 3 YEARS, LAST 12 MONTHS, BY HARASSMENT FORM AND SEX OF THE VICTIM. YEARS 2015-2016, ABSOLUTE VALUE AND PER 100 WOMEN AND PER 100 MEN AGED 14-65.

Harassment	Female					
	Life course		Last 3 years		Last 12 months	
	thousand	%	thousand	%	thousand	%
Verbal harassment	4.839	24,0	1.503	7,4	683	3,5
Shadowing	4.093	20,3	1.098	5,4	356	1,8
Exhibitionism	3.098	15,3	326	1,6	88	0,4
Unwanted touching	3.217	15,9	481	2,4	236	1,2
Obscene calls/messages	2.117	10,5	436	2,2	217	1,1
Shown/Sent porno materials/pictures	653	3,2	273	1,4	161	0,8
Harassment through social network	1.087	6,8	773	4,8	340	2,1
Identity theft on social network with the aim to offend other people	241	1,5	165	1,0	37	0,2
At least one harassment form	8.816	43,6	3.118	15,4	1.437	7,0

Harassment	Male					
	Life course		Last 3 years		Last 12 months	
	thousand	%	thousand	%	thousand	%
Verbal harassment	1.644	8,2	374	1,9	190	1,0
Shadowing	1.354	6,8	299	1,5	106	0,5
Exhibitionism	696	3,5	118	0,6	58	0,3
Unwanted touching	723	3,6	131	0,7	78	0,4
Obscene calls/messages	489	2,5	149	0,8	74	0,4
Shown/Sent porno materials/pictures	200	1,0	120	0,6	74	0,4
Harassment through social network	378	2,2	318	1,9	150	0,9
Identity theft on social network with the aim to offend other people	330	1,9	215	1,3	126	0,8
At least one harassment form	3.754	18,8	1.274	6,4	610	3,1

For more details please refer to the Italian version

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