



Co-funded by
the European Union

YOUTH VS WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Bakuriani, Georgia

AUTHORS

This booklet is created within the scope of the "Youth vs Workplace Violence" project by the participating youth.

The partner organisations are:



Umbrella

Promising Youth



Stichting Bright Future

AEQUALITAS



JCI YOUTH

ACPELIA



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use, which may be made of the information contained therein.

T A B L E O F C O N T E N T



About the Project



Mental Health at Workplace



Rights at work



Digital Tools



Non-Violent Communication



Prevention Policy



Team-Building at Workplace



Conclusion

WHAT

This booklet has been carried out in the scope of the youth exchange “Youth vs Workplace Violence” funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission. The project took place in Bakuriani, Georgia. Applicant – Dutch organisation Stichting Bright Future; host – Georgian youth organisation Umbrella.

WHY

The project aims to address workplace harassment among young people, recognizing its detrimental effects on mental health and career development. By raising awareness and exchanging best practices, the project seeks to empower 48 young people from 6 countries with the knowledge and skills to prevent and respond to harassment effectively.

The objectives of the project are:

- To raise awareness among youth about the different forms of workplace harassment and its impact on mental health, increased stress, anxiety, depression, and motivation;
- Exchange the best practices for fighting against workplace violence/bullying/harassment at national/international levels;
- To equip youth with the competencies (knowledge, skills, confidence) to recognize, prevent, and respond effectively to workplace harassment, including those competencies that relate to mental health resilience;
- To create informative & visually engaging outcomes/ tools for the dissemination of the practices developed during the exchange (video tutorials and brochures with youth-friendly educational content about workplace harassment and its prevention);
- To promote the E+ & EU values among the participants, beneficiaries and beyond;
- To promote interculturality & tolerance among the youths.

MENTAL HEALTH AT WORKPLACE

Young people, often aged 18-30, are particularly vulnerable as they navigate early career stages, facing challenges. Work violence—ranging from physical aggression to verbal abuse can lead to anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress, and burnout. According to the International Labour Organization, over 20% of workers globally report experiencing workplace violence or harassment. What can you do besides official suggestions (know your rights, set boundaries, seek support, reporting and so on)?

Here we would like to provide 10 simple tips and tricks on how to care about your mental health at your workplace:

- ★ **Listen to music.** Take your breaks to play calm music that reduces stress and create a personal moment of peace. Some from [Youtube](#)
- ★ **Take a walk under the sun.** Step outside for a 5-10 minute walk to clear your mind and release tension from difficult workplace interactions.
- ★ **Deep breathing.** Practice 1-2 minutes of slow, deep breaths (inhale for 4, exhale for 4) to calm anxiety after a stressful encounter. Simple exercise [video](#)
- ★ **Listen to or share funny stories/jokes.** Share a silly anecdote with a colleague or listen to a comedy podcast to spark laughter and diffuse tension. No, ideas? Here it is [Youtube](#)
- ★ **Drink water.** Sipping water throughout the day is a way to stay hydrated, supports focus and reduces physical stress symptoms.
- ★ **Eat fresh fruits.** Snack on an apple or another healthy fruit will boost energy and stabilize mood during a challenging workday.
- ★ **Chat/talk with friends/colleagues.** Text or call a trusted friend/colleague during a break to share feelings and feel supported outside the workplace.
- ★ **Write a journal.** Call your childhood and jot down thoughts or feelings in a notebook to process emotions and gain perspective on workplace issues.
- ★ **Stretching exercises.** Do simple desk stretches like shoulder rolls or wrist circles for 2-3 minutes to release physical tension. Check the [link](#) for ideas.
- ★ **Practice gratitude.** Write down one positive thing each day, like a kind gesture, to shift focus from workplace negativity.

RIGHTS AT WORK

Your Rights at Work: Let's See What the EU and the Council of Europe Say



If you're a young person working, you've got some solid rights that protect you from unfair treatment, harassment, or unsafe conditions.

Here's the scoop:

- **No discrimination:** You can't be treated unfairly because of your gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, or anything else. Everyone gets equal pay and opportunities.
- **Safe work environment:** Your workplace must be safe, with no risks to your health. This includes protection from violence or harassment.
- **Fair pay and hours:** You're entitled to at least the minimum wage (if your country has one) for your work, including internships or apprenticeships in many cases. Limit weekly hours (e.g., 40–48 hours) and require breaks, rest days, and time off. Young workers under 18 often have stricter limits (e.g., no night shifts).
- **Freedom to move:** If you're an EU citizen, you can work in any EU country without a permit and get the same rights as locals.
- **Social protections:** You're covered for things like sick leave, parental leave, or unemployment benefits, based on the country you work in.
- **Protection from Exploitation:** You can't be forced to do dangerous tasks, work without pay, or take on roles beyond your training, especially if you're under 18.
- **Access to justice:** If your rights are violated, you can take your case to national courts. If that doesn't work, you might even reach the European Court of Human Rights.


Starting out in the job world can be tough, especially if you're young and new to the game. You might face pushy bosses, unfair pay, or even harassment, and it's easy to feel like you can't speak up. The CoE's rules are like a safety net to make sure you're not stuck in a bad situation. They're there to help you feel confident, safe, and respected at work, whether you're in a big city in Portugal or a small town in Ukraine.

What to do if your rights are violated?



*Check Your Workplace Policies
Know Your Country's Laws
Report Safely
Seek Legal Help
Connect with Support (like local NGOs)*

Useful links: 

Council of Europe – European Social Charter: Learn about your rights to fair pay, safe work, and more. [Click](#) 

European Convention on Human Rights: Check out the core human rights protecting you at work and beyond. [Click](#)

DIGITAL TOOLS

Balancing productivity and a safe workplace is key, especially when dealing with issues like harassment or violence. Digital tools can help you stay focused, manage stress, and address workplace harassment effectively.

Here are some top digital tools that can help you work smarter:

Project management:



Trello & **Click Up** – These tools help you organize tasks, set deadlines, and collaborate with your team, reducing workplace stress that can worsen harassment situations. Clear task assignments and transparent workflows reduce misunderstandings that can lead to bullying or unfair blame.

Communication:

Slack – platform centralize team chats, file sharing, and video calls, keeping you connected and productive. It offers transparent communication channels, reducing the risk of private, inappropriate messages.



Mental Health Support:

Woebot – An AI-powered chatbot using cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) to help manage stress and anxiety. Woebot helps you cope with the emotional toll of harassment, building resilience.



Time Tracking:

RescueTime. Tracks how you spend time on your devices, categorizing activities (e.g., productive vs. distracting) to optimize focus and productivity. By identifying overwork patterns, RescueTime helps you set boundaries, reducing burnout from excessive demands.



Productivity:

Focus@Will. Provides scientifically curated music to boost concentration, tailored to your personality type, helping you stay in the zone during work. Besides, Music reduces stress from toxic workplace dynamics, supporting your right to mental health.

NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION

Navigating the workplace can be tricky, especially when tensions rise or conflicts spark. Non-Violent Communication (NVC) is a super useful approach to talk and listen in a way that builds understanding, reduces conflict, and creates a positive vibe.

NVC is a communication method that helps you share your needs and feelings without blaming or judging others, while also understanding their perspective. It's like a superpower for resolving conflicts peacefully.

It's based on four key steps:

1. **Observations:** Gently share what you've experienced without judgment (e.g., "There were a few times during the meeting when we both started talking at once" instead of "You always interrupt me").
2. **Feelings:** Share how you feel about it (e.g., "I felt a bit overwhelmed and unsure if my thoughts were being heard").
3. **Needs:** Explain what you need or value (e.g., "I'd like to feel more connected and heard in our team conversations").
4. **Requests:** Ask for a specific, doable action (e.g., "Would you be open to checking in with me before jumping in?").

How to use NVC in the workplace?

Here's how young workers can apply NVC to tackle harassment or conflicts:

Imagine scenario: A coworker often speaks over you during team discussions, making you feel less engaged.

- **Observation:** "Sometimes during meetings, we talk at the same time."
- **Feeling:** "I feel a bit overlooked and disconnected."
- **Need:** "I value collaboration and really want to contribute fully."
- **Request:** "Could we try taking turns or checking in to make sure everyone gets a chance to speak?"

Tips for NVC

Stay neutral with observations. Describe what's happening without judging.

- ★ Own your feelings: Share how you feel using "I" statements;
- ★ Name your needs clearly: Explain what you value;
- ★ Make doable requests: Ask for specific actions;
- ★ Listen with empathy: When someone responds, listen to understand their feelings and needs;
- ★ Practice before tough talks: Rehearse NVC steps;
- ★ Stay calm with deep breathing: Before an NVC conversation, do a quick breathing exercise.

PREVENTION POLICY

A workplace violence prevention policy is a set of rules and actions your employer uses to stop violence before it happens, handle incidents fairly, and support you if things go wrong. This one-page guide explains what these policies are, why they're crucial for young workers, how they connect to your rights, and how to use them.

Key elements of a strong policy include:

- Definition of violence: Clear examples of violent behaviors, from physical attacks to verbal threats or hostile gestures.
- Zero-tolerance commitment: A promise that violence is unacceptable, with consequences like suspension or termination.
- Risk assessments: Regular checks to identify violence risks (e.g., high-stress roles, isolated work areas).
- Reporting channels: Safe, confidential ways to report incidents, like anonymous hotlines, HR, or online forms.
- Investigation procedures: Fair, prompt processes to investigate complaints, protecting you from retaliation.
- Training and awareness: Workshops to teach employees how to recognize, prevent, and respond to violence.
- Support resources: Access to counseling (e.g., Employee Assistance Programs) or legal aid for victims.

These policies are mandated in many countries, especially in the EU and CoE member states (European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8 for personal security), ensuring your right to a safe workplace.

A violence prevention policy is your backup, supporting your rights by:

- Stopping violence early;
- Safe reporting;
- Mental health support;
- Fair treatment.

How to use it?



[Check template here](#)

- ★ Ask HR for a copy (often in employee handbooks or company intranets) and read up on reporting steps.
- ★ Recognize behaviors like constant criticism, inappropriate messages, or exclusion, which violate your right to a safe workplace.
- ★ Use anonymous hotlines, email HR, or talk to a trusted manager.
- ★ Access legal resources listed in the policy if you're stressed or unsure what to do.

TEAM-BUILDING AT WORKPLACE

Team-building activities are fun, engaging ways to build trust, improve communication, and prevent workplace violence by fostering a positive culture.

How to make these activities work?

- **Set ground rules.** Start with a no-judgment policy to ensure safety and respect.
- **Use NVC.** Encourage NVC (observation, feeling, need, request) during activities to model respectful communication.
- **Involve everyone.** Ensure young workers have a voice to build confidence and inclusion.
- **Tie to policy.** Link activities to your workplace violence prevention policy to reinforce zero-tolerance for aggression.

How to choose activities correctly?

- ★ **Focus on violence prevention goals.** Choose activities that teach empathy, de-escalation, and respectful communication to reduce aggression.
- ★ **Match activities to team needs.** Assess your team's dynamics.
- ★ **Ensure inclusivity and safety.** Select activities that welcome everyone, regardless of age, role, or background, to prevent exclusion-based bullying.
- ★ **Blend in-person and virtual options.** Choose activities that work for hybrid teams.
- ★ **Incorporate NVC and training elements.** Pick activities that encourage NVC.
- ★ **Keep it fun and engaging.** Select activities that are enjoyable to boost participation.
- ★ **Evaluate and follow up.** Choose activities with measurable outcomes.

Check some links for ideas:



Short team-building activities for groups - [Click](#) 

Virtual team-building activities - [Click](#) 

The team-building company - [Click](#) 

Youtube suggestions - [Click](#) 

CONCLUSION

As a result of the youth exchange participants raise awareness, improve their competencies regarding workplace harassment, finding ways to address it timely and effective. Promoted start-talk and discussion about work-related abuse and share related experiences. Strengthened their connections and collaboration with local communities.

Last but not least, they developed resources and materials that provide accessible information on harassment of young employees.



[Check more info about the project here](#)

