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Sexual Harassment in the European Union: A Pervasive but Still Hidden Form of Gender-Based Violence

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Abstract

Sexual harassment is recognized as discrimination on the grounds of sex and as a breach of the principle of equal treatment between men and women. The survey of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) on violence against women shows, however, that sexual harassment remains a pervasive and common experience for many women in the European Union. Dependent on the type of incident recorded, an estimated 83 to 102 million women (45%-55% of women) in the 28 EU Member States have experienced at least one form of sexual harassment since the age of 15. It also becomes apparent that many women do not talk with anyone about their experiences of sexual harassment, and very few report the most serious incidents to their hierarchy at work or to a responsible authority. Sexual harassment occurs in various settings and uses different means, such as the Internet. The FRA survey results indicate that sexual harassment against women involves a range of different perpetrators and includes the use of "new" technologies. The survey shows that sexual harassment disproportionately affects younger women, and that it is more commonly perceived and experienced by women with a university degree and women in the highest occupational groups. The article outlines key findings from the FRA Violence Against Women Survey with regard to the extent, forms, and consequences

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of sexual harassment in the European Union. It offers a critical discussion of existing definitions and measurements of sexual harassment, underlines how these significantly influence the reported prevalence rates in official or survey data, and points to relevant factors which explain the observed individual and country differences.

Keywords
sexual harassment, Internet and abuse, reporting/disclosure, sexual assault, in the workplace

Introduction

Sexual harassment has been recognized as discrimination on the grounds of sex and as a breach of the principle of equal treatment between men and women, and its practical realization, in both the law and research. This article builds on the findings of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) Violence Against Women Survey, which show that sexual harassment remains a pervasive and common experience for many women in the European Union. Sexual harassment involves a range of different perpetrators and occurs in various settings using different means, such as the Internet or other "new" technologies.

This contribution is divided into three sections. The article begins with a critical discussion of existing definitions of sexual harassment in legal provisions and research. This discussion is of particular importance as no agreed definition of sexual harassment exists, and varying definitions and measurements of sexual harassment significantly influence the reported prevalence rates in official or survey data. This section also points to relevant factors that help explain observed individual and country differences. It shows that methodological weaknesses in the development of a valid, reliable, and comparable measurement of sexual harassment hinder both the comparability of results across different contexts and the impact of research outcomes on policy developments. The article then outlines the key findings of the FRA European Union–wide survey on violence against women with regard to the extent, forms, consequences, and predictors of sexual harassment in the European Union. It ends with recommendations for policy and research.

Sexual Harassment in Legal Instruments and Research

A number of international and EU legal instruments provide definitions of sexual harassment. Following the adoption of EU law—namely, the Equal

Treatment Directive (Directive 2002/73/EC and its recast Directive 2006/54/EC in the area of employment, vocational training, and promotion), Directive 2004/113/EC (in the area of access to and supply of goods and services), and having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union—sexual harassment today is regarded as constituting a breach of the principle of equal treatment between men and women, and therefore as discrimination on the grounds of sex. Understanding sexual harassment as discrimination based on the grounds of sex implies a direct link with fundamental rights in line with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (2012), which (under Article 21) establishes that discrimination across a range of grounds—including sex—shall be prohibited, and that equality between men and women shall be ensured in all areas, including employment, work, and pay (Article 23). Defining harassment related to sex as discrimination on the grounds of sex, however, is rather new in the European context. For a long time, sexual harassment has been presented in the European legal tradition as a "Dignity Harm Approach," while North America can be characterized as having adopted a "Discriminatory Approach" (Numhauser-Henning & Laulom, 2012, p. 1).

In EU law, the concept of sexual harassment is mainly related to the field of employment and occupation—albeit recognized that it can occur not only in the workplace but also in the context of access to employment, vocational training, and promotion. And although sexual harassment of working women has been a pervasive feature of all European countries since women's entry into the work force, the prohibition of sexual harassment at the workplace did not receive serious attention in EU policy until the mid-1980s (Gomes, Owens, & Morgan, 2004). Similarly, in the United States, Catharine MacKinnon's (1979) seminal argument that sexual harassment constitutes sex discrimination, for which legal remedy should be available, served to influence U.S. law to the extent that the U.S. Supreme Court accepted and adopted MacKinnon's concept of sexual harassment in 1986 under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Two types of harassment are typically identified in legal definitions. On one hand, there is quid pro quo harassment, which relates to pressure to undertake sexual activity in exchange for workplace benefits—such as promotion or a salary increase; on the other hand, there is a *hostile or offensive work environment*, when a perpetrator creates an intimidating environment for the victim (Lengnick-Hall, 1995). While the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) encompasses both types of harassment in its legal definition (EEOC, 2016), Article 2 of the European Union's Equal Treatment Directive 2006/54/EC does not specifically refer to quid pro quo sexual harassment but to a humiliating or an offensive work environment. Legal definitions of sexual harassment rarely list all possible behaviors that

could be considered sexual harassment. Some behaviors, however, although deemed being sexual harassment in theory—as they can be defined as hostile and intimidating to a person for violating that person's dignity—might not be specified as offenses under the terms of the penal code. In contrast, Article 40 of the 2011 Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) establishes that any form of sexual harassment (verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct) has to be subject to criminal or *other* legal sanction (Council of Europe, 2011).

An important aspect of the Istanbul Convention is that "sexual harassment" is declared as a form of gender-based violence that is committed against women because they are women (Council of Europe, 2011). Given that the majority of victims of domestic violence and sexual harassment are women (Ménard, Hall, Phung, Ghebrial, & Martin, 2003; Pryor, 1987; U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board [USMSPB], 1994), violence against women is regarded as part of a wider pattern of discrimination and inequality. This idea is congruent with MacKinnon's (1979) understanding of sexual harassment, which she defines as "the unwanted imposition of sexual requirements in the context of a relationship of unequal power" (p. 1). Another essential characteristic of the Istanbul Convention is that the scope of application of Article 40 (on sexual harassment) is not limited to the field of employment.

As with all legal or regulatory constructions, the definition of sexual harassment as covered in EU law could be considered as an "a priori" definition (Fitzgerald, 1990, p. 22), which consists of a general statement about the nature and effect of the conduct, and therefore provides "boundaries to the construct" (Lengnick-Hall, 1995, p. 843), but does not list any particular behaviors or classes of behavior. This generality, however, could negatively affect the formation of a shared understanding of what sexual harassment actually should mean for lay persons.

Factors Influencing Variations in the Perception of Sexual Harassment

While *sexual harassment* is now a more common term, MacKinnon's (1979) statement from 1979, is still valid today: "[. . .] lacking a term to express it, sexual harassment was literally unspeakable, which made a generalized, shared, and social definition of it inaccessible" (p. 27). Also Uggen and Blackstone (2004) inferred that there is no largely shared social definition that would help persons who are targets of sexual harassment to easily identify such behavior. However, as MacKinnon (1979) put it, "the unnamed should not be mistaken for the non-existent" (p. 28). The lack of a shared social definition is only partly

linked to the abstractness and generality of definitions in legal provisions (or in theoretical statements; see also Fitzgerald, 1990). Previous research has shown that persons differ in their perception of which behaviors constitute sexual harassment (European Commission, 1999). Moreover, individuals' perceptions of sexually harassing behavior will determine whether or not they may decide to file a claim of sexual harassment (Barr, 1993), which in turn is closely related to the overall level of underreporting, and consequently, to the visibility of sexual harassment in the wider society.

The variation in the ascribed subjective meaning is shown to be affected not only by gender cultures at work (e.g., the recognition of gender equality and nondiscrimination on the grounds of sex at the workplace vs. a culture that "permits" or "rewards" harassment in an organization), but is powerfully influenced by gender role socialization and the prevalent social and cultural values, norms, and attitudes in a society (Barr, 1993; MacKinnon, 1979). In addition, perceptions of sexually harassing behaviors also vary by persons' overall level of awareness and information about their legal rights in general (legal consciousness), and existing laws and policies in particular (USMSPB, 1994; Zippel, 2009). Training and information campaigns related to gender equality legislation and policies, in general, or to sexual harassment, in particular, raise people's sensitivity for recognizing and classifying acts as potentially sexually harassing (USMSPB, 1994). By means of an experimental design, Tinkler (2013) showed, however, that the implementation of sexual harassment policies can negatively strengthen unequal gender beliefs of both men and women who are most committed to traditional gender interaction norms. With this in mind, the design and messaging of campaigns need to be informed by evidence about their impact.

Research findings indicate furthermore that perceptions of sexual harassment vary in terms of the perceived severity of the behavior (Barr, 1993; Corr & Jackson, 2001; USMSPB, 1994), albeit Corr and Jackson (2001) showed that the perceived seriousness of sexually oriented acts is complicated by the level of likability of the boss (the behavior of liked bosses is more likely to be seen as less serious compared with the behavior of disliked bosses) and by the status of the perpetrator (boss, subordinate, colleague).

Importantly, it has been shown that the subjective definition of sexual harassment might expand over time, meaning that more persons interpret more kinds of behavior as sexual harassment (USMSPB, 1994). In its 1994 Report on Sexual Harassment in the Federal Workplace, the USMSPB notes that the proportion of respondents—both men and women—who classified the six behaviors ranging from sexual comments to pressure for sexual favors as sexual harassment, rose between 1980 and 1987 and had increased again by 1994 (USMSPB, 1994).

Research that has been looking into gender differences in the perception of sexual harassment has yielded varying results. Based on two surveys of university students, Barr (1993) has found no evidence of gender differences in the individual perceptions of sexually harassing behavior, which has been explained by the effect of higher education on more enlightened gender role beliefs. In contrast, Corr and Jackson (2001) found differences between men's and women's perceptions of the severity of specific sexually harassing behaviors. Based on two experimental studies of undergraduate university students and the working population, they conclude that "[. . .] for unwanted sexual attention, males and females did not differ in their ratings of seriousness, but for gender harassment males took a more tolerant view than females" (Corr & Jackson, 2001, p. 535). As Corr and Jackson further note, this "disagreement" between men and women on the gravity of "everyday" acts of gender harassment indicates that men tend to underestimate the seriousness of their behavior (Corr & Jackson, 2001). This has been confirmed also in research conducted by Barbara Gutek (1992), in which the consensus between the sexes is higher for quid pro quo harassment but varies strongly for other forms of sexual harassment such as *sexual touching* or *sexual comments at work*.

Nevertheless, observed differences between the sexes in the perception of what constitutes sexual harassment should not be confounded with differences in males' and females' actual experiences of sexual harassment, where research has reached broader consensus. Although both men and women can be involved in sexually harassing behavior, previous findings convincingly indicate that men are more likely to harass than women (Ménard et al., 2003; Uggen & Blackstone, 2004; USMSPB, 1994). Moreover, observed differences relate strongly to the type and severity of different sexually harassing behaviors (as for example sexual coercion vs. sexual harassment[1]). According to Ménard et al. (2003), men are twice as likely to be sexually harassing and 3 times more likely to be sexually coercive than women. Significant gender differences have been observed in the fifth European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) regarding unwanted sexual attention: Women are twice as likely as men to have received unwanted sexual attention in the month preceding the interview, and almost 3 times as likely to be subjected to sexual harassment as men (Eurofound, 2012).

As preconceived notions of what "sexual harassment" is and is not, and the understanding and the use of law are likely to vary—over time, across social categories (such as gender and age categories), social groups, ethnic origin, and across countries or other sociocultural contexts within a country—it is vital for both legal and substantive research to take these differences into account with respect to the understanding, definitions of, and responses to sexual harassment (Lengnick-Hall, 1995, pp. 843-845; Uggen & Blackstone, 2004, p. 65).

The Multidimensionality of Sexual Harassment

Until the 1980s, few efforts were made to map and classify the conceptual domains of sexual harassment (Fitzgerald, Gelfand, & Drasgow, 1995). In a study on harassment of college students, Till (1980) advanced a victim-based definition of sexual harassment by differentiating five types of activity on a rough hierarchical continuum of severity—ranging from generalized sexist remarks or behavior, through to sexual imposition or assault. Faced with gaps between research and legal conceptualizations of sexual harassment, and more specifically with the fact that existing research on sexual harassment uses categories that are neither mutually exclusive nor exhaustive, Gruber (1992) categorized 11 distinctive types of harassment under three more general forms on the basis of a severity continuum: (a) verbal requests, (b) verbal remarks, and (c) nonverbal displays. In this approach, the gravity of a harassment experience increases as the content of the perpetrator's behavior becomes more personally and sexually focused on the recipient (Gruber, 1992). Based on Till's categorization, Fitzgerald and colleagues developed the so-called Sexual Experiences Questionnaire (SEQ)—a self-report inventory designed to assess the prevalence of sexual harassment in both work and educational settings (Fitzgerald et al., 1995; Gelfand, Fitzgerald, & Drasgow, 1995). Analysis of this inventory yielded three dimensions of the concept: gender harassment, sexual harassment, and sexual coercion. However, the SEQ has been criticized by Gutek, Murphy, and Douma (2004) for lacking the advantages of standardization, having weak psychometric properties and for having the effect of distorting findings about sexual harassment as it is not clear what or whose definition of sexual harassment the SEQ assesses. In contrast, Corr and Jackson (2001) differentiated just two dimensions of sexual harassment—*unwanted sexual attention* (involving various forms of physical contact and requesting sexual favors) and *gender harassment* (involving rude and sexist remarks) —where acts related to the first dimension tend to be rated as more serious compared with those linked to the second dimension.[2]

To conclude, the absence of a widely agreed upon definition in social survey research has led to the development and implementation of different, in many ways incomparable, research designs, methodologies, and construct measurements, yielding inconsistent estimates of prevalence and incidence rates of sexual harassment. This has also raised challenges for the impact of social research on policy development in this area (Fitzgerald, 1990). An agreed upon *operational* definition of sexual harassment for research (Fitzgerald, 1990)—no matter from which perspective it is developed (objective vs. subjective)—could ease the development of instruments that are valid, reliable, and comparable across different contexts and in various situations.

The remainder of this article looks at key findings of the FRA *Violence Against Women Survey* (FRA, 2014b) with regard to the measurement, extent, forms and consequences, and determinants of sexual harassment in the European Union.

The FRA Survey on Violence Against Women

In 2014, the FRA published the results of its European Union–wide survey,[3] the first comparative survey to date at the level of the European Union on women's diverse experiences of violence.[4] Data were collected from a stratified random sample of 42,000 women aged 18 to 74 years in the general female population throughout the 28 Member States of the European Union, making the results generalizable to that target population.[5] The total number of interviews per country ranged from a minimum of 1,500 interviews in Estonia to 1,620 in the Czech Republic (with the exception of Luxembourg where 908 women have been interviewed). Interviews were carried out face-to-face by trained female interviewers (a short self-completion questionnaire was added at the end of the interview for some of the most sensitive questions on sexual violence). According to the survey and women's own perception of their situation, the majority (51.5%) of the respondents are in paid work, almost one fifth (18.0%) are retired or unable to work, and 13.1% are home makers or in unpaid or voluntary work. Overall, 8.6% are unemployed and 7.2% are students. The highest level of education that 42.9% of respondents have achieved is secondary education, 20.3% have completed tertiary education, and 36.3% have not completed more than primary education (FRA, 2014b).

Sexual Harassment in the FRA Survey on Violence Against Women

As mentioned in the previous section, existing studies about sexual harassment are mostly focused on working life or educational environments (European Commission, 1999; McDonald, 2012). The FRA survey adopted a broader scope by taking account of the fact that verbal, nonverbal, and physical behaviors constituting sexual harassment are also common outside of work and educational environments. Consequently, the survey expands the set of possible perpetrators, which allows to distinguish incidents which are linked to various situations, not only in the context of employment. This is of particular relevance as the calculated prevalence and incidence rates are dependent on the scope of the questions asked, which extend to areas currently not covered by some legal instruments.

To minimize culturally determined variations in the subjective interpretations of sexual harassment, the FRA survey did not ask the respondents about "sexual harassment" as an issue; rather, it asked about experiencing specific unwanted and offensive acts. The survey applied therefore the *behavioral experiences method* (Lengnick-Hall, 1995) for measuring sexual harassment, which asks respondents whether they have experienced any of a number of unwanted sexual harassment behaviors. According to Lengnick-Hall, this method assumes that those behaviors typically presumed to be illegal can be identified. Following the definition of harassment adopted in Article 2 of the European Union's Equal Treatment Directive 2006/54/EC, the survey questionnaire specified sexual harassment as acts that respondents felt to be *unwanted* and which they experienced as *offensive* or *intimidating*. Accordingly, the survey definition focuses on situations in which a perpetrator creates an intimidating environment for the victim. It does not specifically refer to sexual harassment with respect to receiving favors at work—such as promotion (quid pro quo). An explicit focus only on *quid pro quo harassment* would unnecessarily restrict the possible areas of sexual harassment to that of employment.

As with other forms of violence covered in the survey, victimization was measured using two reference periods—since the age of 15 years and during the 12 months before the interview—and differentiated between incidents committed by different perpetrators.

The survey covered 11 possible acts of sexual harassment (Table 1). To assess the (content) validity of the listed behaviors, in 2011—one year before the main survey was fielded—FRA conducted a mixed method pretest study, which combined quantitative and qualitative methodologies such as interviews, cognitive protocols, behavior coding, and focus group discussions. This list incorporates the findings of the pretest.

The extent of sexual harassment measured by the survey depends on the scope of the applied study definition and consequently on the number of items used to measure it. The prevalence rates have therefore been calculated first on the basis of the full set of 11 items asked about in the survey, and then based on a set of six items. The selection of six items from 11 asked about in the survey includes only those incidents that have been interpreted as potentially the most serious and threatening for the respondent, namely "Unwelcome touching, hugging, or kissing"; "Sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended"; "Somebody sending or showing you sexually explicit pictures, photos, or gifts that made you feel offended"; "Somebody indecently exposing themselves to you"; "Somebody made you watch or look at pornographic material against your wishes"; and "Unwanted sexually explicit emails or SMS messages that offended you."

Table 1. What the Survey Asked—Sexual Harassment.

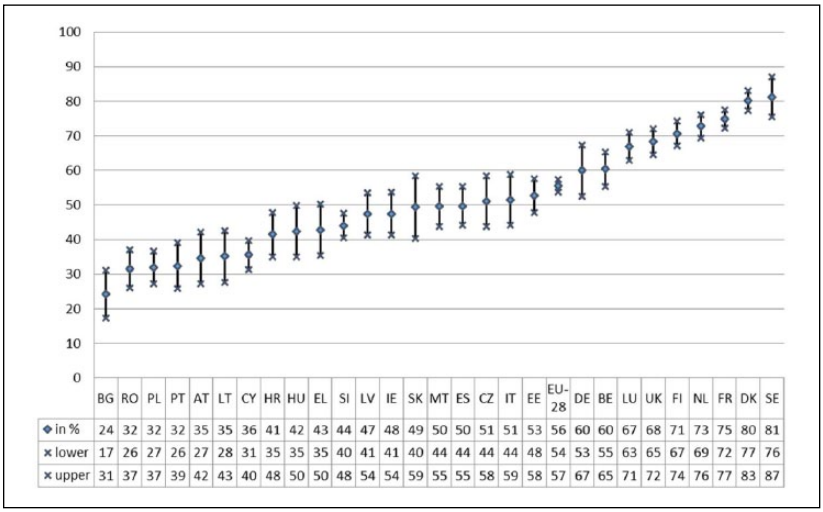
Now some questions about experiences that women may have. At times you may have experienced people acting toward you in a way that you felt was unwanted and offensive. How often have you experienced any of the following? How often has this happened to you in the past 12 months?

- Unwelcome touching, hugging, or kissing?
- Sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended?
- Inappropriate invitations to go out on dates?
- Intrusive questions about your private life that made you feel offended?
- Intrusive comments about your physical appearance that made you feel offended?
- Inappropriate staring or leering that made you feel intimidated?
- Somebody sending or showing you sexually explicit pictures, photos, or gifts that made you feel offended?
- Somebody indecently exposing themselves to you?
- Somebody made you watch or look at pornographic material against your wishes?
- Unwanted sexually explicit emails or SMS messages that offended you?
- Inappropriate advances that offended you on social networking websites such as Facebook, or in Internet chat rooms?

Note. SMS = Short Message Service.

Prevalence of Sexual Harassment in the European Union

Based on the full set of 11 items asked about in the survey, every second woman (55%) in the European Union has experienced sexual harassment at least once since the age of 15 years, and one woman in five (21%) in the year before the survey.[6] When looking only at the six specific forms of sexual harassment, which have been identified in the survey as more threatening and serious for the respondent, 45% of women in the European Union have experienced one of these forms of sexual harassment at least once in their lifetime, and 13% in the 12 months before the interview. Figure 1 shows the prevalence rates of sexual harassment across EU Member States since the age of 15 years including the 95% confidence intervals.[7] The rates range from 81% to 71% prevalence in Sweden, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, and Finland, to 32%–24% in Portugal, Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria.[8] There are only minimal changes in the positioning of the countries for the prevalence rates produced with the full set of items and the short set. Based on the short set of sexual harassment items, the prevalence ranges from 74% to 60% in Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Finland, and France, to 25% to 19% in Poland, Romania, Portugal, and Bulgaria. Although the rates for women's experiences of sexual harassment in the year before the interview are generally lower than the lifetime prevalence, they follow, to a great extent, the same trend.



	BG	RO	PL	PT	AT	LT	CY	HR	HU	EL	SI	LV	IE	SK	MT	ES	CZ	IT	EE	EU-28	DE	BE	LU	UK	FI	NL	FR	DK	SE
◆ in %	24	32	32	32	35	35	36	41	42	43	44	47	48	49	50	50	51	51	53	56	60	60	67	68	71	73	75	80	81
× lower	17	26	27	26	27	28	31	35	35	35	40	41	41	40	44	44	44	44	48	54	53	55	63	65	67	69	72	77	76
× upper	31	37	37	39	42	43	40	48	50	50	48	54	54	59	55	55	58	59	58	57	67	65	71	72	74	76	77	83	87

Figure 1. The 95% confidence intervals of any sexual harassment since the age of 15 across EU Member States (in %; full set of 11 items).
Source. FRA Violence Against Women Survey dataset, 2012.
Note. Confidence intervals: 95%, out of all respondents, aged 18 to 64. Estimates are based on the adjusted survey weights by education. FRA = European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. Please refer to the Appendix for an explanation of the EU Country Codes.

Next to pointing to the precision of the estimates of sexual harassment in each EU Member State,[9] Figure 1 makes visible that not all EU Member States differ significantly from the EU average and from each other.[10] Rather, a north–south divide could be observed, with Sweden and Denmark at one end and Bulgaria and Romania at the other.

Although not directly comparable, a similar distribution pattern across EU Member States has been observed in the fifth EWCS. The EWCS survey (Eurofound, 2012) contains six questions on various types of adverse social behavior relating to verbal abuse, unwanted sexual attention, threats and humiliating behavior, physical violence, bullying and harassment, and sexual harassment (Eurofound, 2012). EWCS findings, but also research conducted in 2010 by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA; see, EU-OSHA and Milczarek, 2010) indicate that higher prevalence rates with respect to the above are generally found in northern Member States than in southern Member States. Eurofound indicates three reasons for the observed differences between Member States concerning the exposure to adverse social behavior: (a) variations in the actual prevalence of adverse social behavior; (b) cultural differences with regard to the type of behavior

that is considered adverse; (c) country differences in the likelihood of people reporting that they were subjected to any of these types of behavior (although people might recognize that they are being harassed, they could feel that reporting it is less socially desirable).

As discussed in the previous section, the observed variations between EU Member States in the prevalence rates of sexual harassment can be explained by a number of factors looked at in combination. For example, the different level of acknowledgment of sexual harassment in national legislation and its prioritization in specific policies (at national or organizational level) and political debates might be reflected in women's overall level of awareness of sexual harassment as a (fundamental rights) abuse, and their disclosure of such experiences in the survey. At the same time,

> estimates on the extent of sexual harassment are, therefore, partly dependent upon accustomed ways of perceiving, defining and disclosing acts of violence against women, including sexual harassment. In parallel, in some Member States domestic violence is still considered a private matter, which is rarely shared with friends and colleagues and much less reported to the authorities. This may also affect women's likelihood to disclose other experiences which may be perceived as embarrassing or shameful, such as sexual harassment. (FRA, 2014b, p. 101)

Figure 2, which illustrates a positive linear association between the prevalence rates of physical and/or sexual partner and nonpartner violence and the prevalence rates of sexual harassment since the age of 15 across EU Member States, supports this line of argumentation. The observed prevalence rates of sexual harassment and the prevalence rates of other forms of gender-based violence are strongly related. The prevalence rates of sexual harassment tend to be higher in EU Member States in which the prevalence rates of sexual violence are also high.

Forms of Sexual Harassment

Table 2 outlines the various forms of sexual harassment that women have been exposed to since the age of 15 years. Inappropriate staring or leering that made women feel intimidated (30%) and unwelcome touching, hugging, or kissing (29%) are the forms of sexual harassment women have experienced most frequently since the age of 15. Inappropriate staring or leering that made women feel intimidated is the form of sexual harassment experienced most frequently in the 12 months before the survey (10%). Of the 11 items designed to measure sexual harassment in the FRA survey, "unwelcome touching, hugging, or

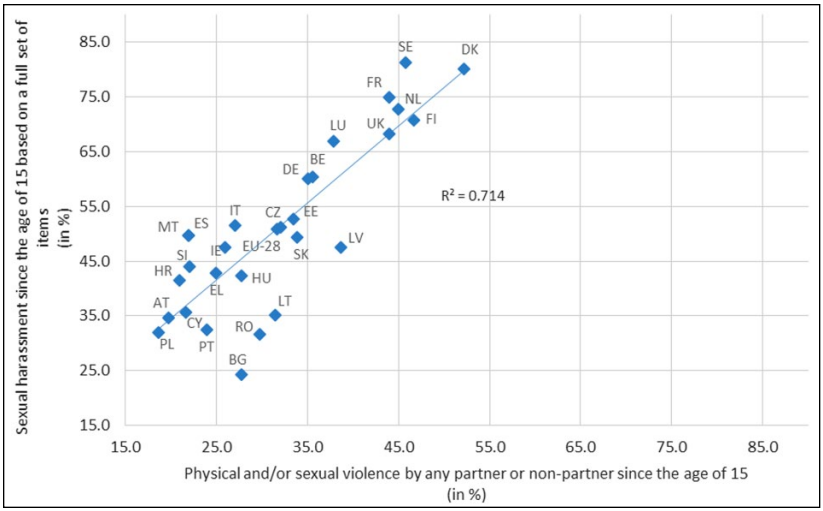


Figure 2. Relationship between average prevalence rate of physical and/or sexual partner and nonpartner violence since the age of 15 and the average rate of sexual harassment across EU Member States (%).
Source. FRA Violence Against Women Survey dataset, 2012.
Note. $R2 = .714$ (based on aggregate level data, significance level $p < .01$). FRA = European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. Please refer to the Appendix for an explanation of the EU Country Codes.

kissing" describes a distinctly physical act of harassment, as it involves a breach of physical integrity. It can therefore be considered more threatening when presented on a continuum from verbal harassment to physical assault. Almost one third of women in the European Union have experienced this type of physical sexual harassment since the age of 15.

Cyberharassment. To assess the extent to which new technologies have been used to sexually harass women, two items from the survey—"unwanted sexually explicit emails or SMS messages" and "inappropriate advances on social networking websites"—were considered to measure forms of "cyberharassment." The results show that one woman in 10 (11%) has faced at least one of the two forms of cyberharassment since the age of 15, and one in 20 (5%) in the 12 months before the survey.[11] When looking at the level of the EU Member States, countries cluster at the upper and lower ends of the scale in close accord with the distribution of the overall lifetime prevalence of sexual harassment. Notably, acts of cyberharassment are more common in

Table 2. Forms and Frequency of Sexual Harassment Since the Age of 15 (%).

	6 or More Times	2-5 Times	Once	Total
Inappropriate staring or leering that made you feel intimidated	10	14	6	30
Unwelcome touching, hugging, or kissing	6	13	9	29
Sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended	8	11	5	24
Intrusive comments about your physical appearance that made you feel offended	7	9	4	20
Intrusive questions about your private life that made you feel offended	4	8	5	16
Somebody indecently exposing themselves to you	1	5	10	16
Inappropriate invitations to go out on dates	2	7	6	16
Unwanted sexually explicit emails or SMS messages that offended you	2	3	2	7
Inappropriate advances that offended you on social networking websites such as Facebook, or in Internet chat rooms	1	3	2	6
Somebody sending or showing sexually explicit pictures, photos, or gifts that made you feel offended	1	2	3	5
Someone made you watch or look at pornographic material against your wishes	0	0	1	2

Source. FRA Violence Against Women Survey dataset, 2012.
Note. Out of all respondents (N = 42,002). Respondents were able to give more than one answer, so categories may total to more than 100%. SMS = Short Message Service; FRA = European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

countries with high rates of Internet access, such as Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Finland, and less marked in those with low rates of Internet access, such as Romania, Lithuania, and Portugal.

The results show that the risk of becoming a target of threatening or offensive advances on the Internet is twice as high for women aged between 18 and 29 years (20%) as for women aged between 40 and 49 years (11%), and more than 3 times as high as for women aged between 50 and 59 years (6%). The observed differences in the prevalence of cyberharassment across age groups is likely to be at least partly related to the fact that younger women and their male peers use the Internet more actively than older women

do.[12] The rapid expansion in access to new technologies and their increased use make the above result of particular policy relevance. There is potential for cyberharassment to increase and for perpetrators to act with impunity because they can be anonymous and victims have, at present, inadequate legal recourse.

Repeat victimization. Looking at repeat victimization, one in five women (19%) has experienced unwelcome touching, hugging, or kissing at least twice since the age of 15, and 6% of women have been subjected to this physical form of harassment more than 6 times since the age of 15 (Table 2). In addition, 5% of women have experienced indecent exposure 2 to 5 times since the age of 15. Considering the number of incidents across the 11 different forms of sexual harassment, the majority of victimized women have experienced more than one type of sexual harassment in their lifetime (median = 3[13]). Some 37% of all victimized women have been confronted with two or three different forms of sexual harassment since the age of 15, 27% with four to six different forms, and 8% with seven or more different forms. Analysis of the frequency of the 11 different forms of sexual harassment by the number of perpetrators shows that women have been subjected to both repeat victimization by the same perpetrator and repeat victimization by different perpetrators, which shows the burden imposed on some women by the persistent nature of many abusive acts.

Sexual Harassment by Selected Sociodemographic Characteristics

The next paragraphs explore the survey's results on the basis of selected socioeconomic variables that were collected for all respondents.

Age. The extent of sexual harassment differs considerably across age groups and seems to follow a linear trend across age cohorts, for prevalence of sexual harassment since the age of 15 as well as in the past 12 months. Overall, the prevalence rates for women aged 18 to 39 are above average. Figure 3 shows that more than one in three women (38%) aged between 18 and 29 years experienced sexual harassment in the 12 months before the survey, as well as nearly one in five women (24%) between 30 and 39 years of age.

This general trend can be observed equally when looking at the results at the country level or across different forms of sexual harassment. In all EU Member States (except Luxembourg), young women aged between 18 and 29 years represent the group most vulnerable to almost all 11 forms of sexual harassment (Table 3). The exception is the behavior "forced to watch pornographic

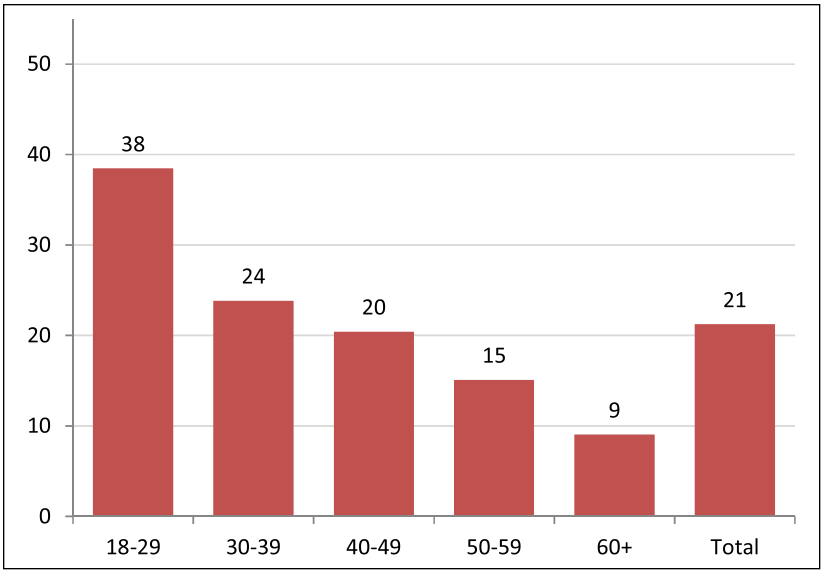


Figure 3. Sexual harassment in the 12 months before the interview, by age groups (%).
Source. FRA Violence Against Women Survey dataset, 2012.
Note. Out of all women whose age was recorded (n = 41,895); information on age was missing for 107 cases. FRA = European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

material," which has been most frequently experienced by women between 40 and 49 years of age (30%) and between 30 and 39 years of age (27%).

Education. Although sexual harassment is common across all educational groups, the distribution of the overall prevalence rates across educational levels suggests that women with higher educational qualifications indicate that they are sexually harassed more frequently than women with lower educational attainment (Figure 4). More than two thirds of all women who have acquired a university degree (69%) have been subjected to sexual harassment since the age of 15, whereas 46% of all women who have completed primary education have experienced sexual harassment at least once since the age of 15.

Although existing research is not conclusive about the distribution of prevalence rates across levels of education, there is some evidence that women with a university degree may not tolerate incidents of sexual harassment (such as sexually suggestive remarks) or may regard them as more severe than women with lower levels of educational attainment (Barr, 1993). Women with a higher level of education are more likely to be in higher

Table 3. Types of Harassment in the 12 Months Before the Interview Across Age Groups in the European Union (%).

	Respondent's Age Group				
Acts of Sexual Harassment	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Unwelcome, touching, hugging, or kissing	43	18	18	13	8
Inappropriate staring or leering	47	23	16	9	6
Sexually suggestive comments or jokes	39	24	18	13	6
Sending sexually explicit pictures, photos, or gifts	27	26	22	15	11
Inappropriate invitations to go out on dates	38	23	22	9	7
Intrusive questions about private life	37	24	20	13	7
Intrusive comments about physical appearance	43	21	18	11	7
Sexually explicit emails or SMS messages	34	24	22	12	8
Inappropriate advances on social networking sites	53	19	17	7	5
Indecent exposure	28	20	20	14	17
Forced to watch pornographic material	(13)	27	30	(17)	(13)

Source. FRA Violence Against Women Survey dataset, 2012.
Note. Out of all women who have been sexually harassed at least once in the 12 months before the interview (n = 7,724). Respondents were able to give more than one answer, so categories may total to more than 100%. Results based on a small number of responses are statistically less reliable, so observations based on fewer than 30 responses are put in brackets. SMS = Short Message Service; FRA = European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

occupational positions, better informed about legal provisions in this regard, and therefore perhaps less likely to tolerate such forms of behavior from colleagues and supervisors (European Commission, 1999).

Professional women at risk of harassment. Scrutinizing the distribution of the prevalence rates of sexual harassment across respondents' employment status shows that women's labor market participation is reflected in their experiences of sexual harassment. Women in employment indicate more often having been sexually harassed in the past 12 months than those who had never done paid work. According to the survey, sexual harassment is more commonly experienced by women in the highest occupational groups: 75% of women in the top management

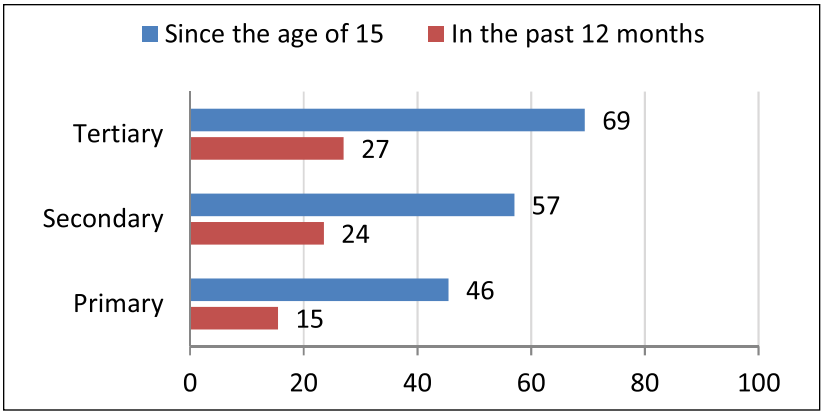


Figure 4. Overall sexual harassment across educational groups in the European Union (%).
Source. FRA Violence Against Women Survey dataset, 2012.
Note. Out of all women who gave details of education (n = 41,831); information on education was missing for 171 cases. FRA = European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

category and 74% of those in the professional occupational category have experienced sexual harassment in their lifetime (Table 4). More than one in four women employed in one of these two occupational categories (25% and 29%, respectively) has been confronted with sexual harassment in the last 12 months alone. As ascertained in other studies, women with irregular or precarious employment contracts, which are common for many jobs in the service sector, are also more susceptible to sexual harassment (McDonald, 2012). More than half (61%) of the female respondents employed in the service sector have been subjected to sexual harassment at least once in their lifetime. Women in this employment category also show high prevalence in the 12 months before the interview (24%). There are also some discernible variations in the results by country. Although the prevalence in "western European" EU Member States corresponds to the EU average, according to which women located in higher professional categories or in the service sector experience sexual harassment more frequently, women in mobile jobs (e.g., salespersons, drivers) are more at risk in central and eastern EU Member States.

Prevalence of sexual harassment by women's self-declared sexual orientation. Based on the information about women's self-declared sexual orientation, it is possible to examine the survey results differentiating between experiences of women who indicated that they are heterosexual/straight and women who selected a nonheterosexual answer category (lesbian, bisexual or other). Given

that only 526 respondents out of the survey's 42,000 respondents indicated being lesbian, bisexual, or other, the results are considered only at the EU level. There are notable differences in the levels of experienced sexual harassment among heterosexual and nonheterosexual women (for differences between heterosexual and lesbian women workers in consciousness about sexual harassment, see Schneider, 1982). While on average 55% of all heterosexual women indicate having experienced at least one form of sexual harassment since the age of 15 years, the prevalence rate for nonheterosexual women is 78% (FRA, 2014b)—a finding that warrants further research.[14]

Prevalence of sexual harassment among women with disabilities or health problems. Respondents were also asked to assess (a) their health in general, followed by a question concerning (b) complaints, injuries, or diseases that limit their everyday activities, and (c) a question about whether they are disabled or not. At the end of the survey, women could also indicate if they consider themselves part of any particular minority in their country; being a part of a minority in terms of disability was one of the answer categories.[15] Considering all these items together, 16% of women indicate in the FRA survey that their health is bad or very bad, that their everyday activities are limited by their health or that they consider themselves as disabled or belonging to a minority in their country in terms of disability (n = 7,493). The survey results show that women who have health problems or a disability indicate a higher lifetime prevalence of sexual harassment (61%) compared with women who do not have similar health problems or a disability (54%; FRA, 2014b).

Perpetrators of Sexual Harassment

While in cases of *sexual violence* the perpetrator is most often somebody familiar to the victim (such as partner, a friend, or a date), perpetrators of *sexual harassment* are very often people whom the person does not know. Table 6.4 in the FRA main results report (FRA, 2014b, p. 113) presents a detailed account of the forms of sexual harassment since the age of 15 by different perpetrator groups covered in the survey. In most cases of sexual harassment faced by women since they were 15 years old, the perpetrator is an unknown person (68%),[16] followed by somebody the respondent knows (without specifying it further; 35%), or somebody from the employment context such as a colleague, supervisor, or a client (32%). In 31% of cases, the victim reported a friend or an acquaintance as the perpetrator. This pattern is also apparent from the results about the perpetrators of sexual harassment in the 12 months before the interview.

The most common forms of sexual harassment committed by an unknown perpetrator since the age of 15 are indecent exposure (83% of victims

Table 4. Overall Sexual Harassment Since the Age of 15 and in the 12 Months Before the Interview Across Occupational Groups in the European Union (%).

Occupational Groups	Since the Age of 15	In the Last 12 Months Before the Interview
General management, director, or top management (managing director, other director)	75	25
Professional (lawyer, doctor, accountant, architect, etc.)	74	29
Middle management (department head, technician, teacher)	67	22
Business owner, owner (full or partner) of a company	64	26
Supervisor	63	24
Employed position, not at a desk, but in a service job (hospital, restaurant, police, fire brigade, etc.)	61	24
Employed position, not at a desk but traveling (salesmen, driver, etc.)	58	23
Employed position, working mainly at a desk	57	19
Shop owner, artisan, other self-employed person	56	18
Other (unskilled manual worker/ servant)	51	22
Skilled manual worker	44	17
Never done paid work	41	22
Farmer, Fisher	31	12
EU-28 average	55	21

Source. FRA Violence Against Women Survey dataset, 2012.
Note. Out of all women who gave details of occupation (n = 41,676; information on occupation was missing for 326 cases). FRA = European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

indicated that the perpetrator was unknown) and cyberharassment (73% of women who have received inappropriate advances on social networking sites and 46% of those who have received sexually explicit emails or SMS messages have been subjected to the experience by an unknown person). Whereas intrusive and offensive questions about a woman's private life are most commonly posed by persons in the workplace (33% of the victims locate the perpetrator in the employment context), a person who forces a woman to watch pornographic material against her will is often a previous partner (in 35% of cases). The latter was the only form of sexual harassment where the perpetrator was most likely to be a partner, compared with other perpetrator groups.

Victims of sexual harassment typically name perpetrators from more than one perpetrator category. That is, they have experienced either incidents where multiple perpetrators were involved or multiple incidents by different perpetrators. When asked whether the perpetrator of sexual harassment was male or female, 71% of victims indicated that the perpetrator of an incident since the age of 15 was a man, 2% indicated a female perpetrator and 21% pointed to both male and female harassers. The results reflect that, although the gender of some perpetrators is unknown because of the nature of harassment—such as through the Internet—sexual harassment against women is perpetrated mostly by men.

The Most Serious Incident of Sexual Harassment

Women who have experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15 were asked to focus on one of these incidents, the one that was most serious to them. The most serious incident refers to the case that has had the biggest impact on the respondent either physically or psychologically. Respondents were asked to provide further details about the impact of the incident on them and any follow-up actions, such as talking about the incident or reporting it to some authority or organization. Of all women who have experienced some form of sexual harassment since the age of 15, 33% indicate that the most serious incident involved unwelcomed touching, hugging, or kissing. In the majority of cases, the women refer to an incident which took place in the year up to the survey.[17] The vast majority of the perpetrators of the most serious incident of sexual harassment across all perpetrator groups are men and most cases involve a single perpetrator acting alone (85%)—while the remaining 15% of incidents involved two or more perpetrators.

Reporting the most serious incident of sexual harassment. Among women who described the most serious incident of sexual harassment, 35% kept the incident to themselves and did not speak about it to anyone; while 28% talked to a friend, 24% spoke to a family member or a relative and 14% informed their partner. Only 4% of women reported to the police, 4% talked to an employer or boss at their workplace, and less than 1% consulted a lawyer, a victim support organization, or a trade union representative. In all, 52% of those women who have not talked to anyone about the incident reasoned their silence with the fact that they dealt with the harassment themselves. The findings seem to indicate that few incidents of sexual harassment are considered worth bringing to the attention of any authority, although the incidents are serious enough that women discuss them with friends and family. At the same time, the results show that women experience many more incidents of sexual harassment in addition to the one that they describe as the most serious, and it can be assumed that reporting to the authorities is even less frequent for incidents

that respondents perceive as less serious, but nonetheless are unwanted and offensive. There might also be an overall tendency by women to downplay the seriousness of incidents, particularly if the cultural context suggests that sexual harassment is "normal" or something that women should consider as—at best—"welcomed" rather than unwanted attention in the course of everyday gender relations.

Consequences of Sexual Harassment for the Victim

Victims were also asked to name the feelings that resulted from the most serious incident. Anger, annoyance, and embarrassment were the most common emotional responses. Close to one woman in three (29%) who had experienced sexual harassment said that she felt fearful as a result of the most serious incident, while one in five (20%) victims said that the most serious incident made her feel ashamed of what had taken place. Subsequently, feelings of vulnerability, anxiety, and loss of self-confidence are mentioned as consequences of a sexually harassing experience.

Predicting Sexual Harassment in the Last 12 Months Before the Survey

Drawing on previous research and the findings discussed in previous sections of this article, a binomial logistic regression was performed to ascertain the effects of a number of factors that influence significantly the likelihood of being sexually harassed.[18] The model in Table 5 predicts women's likelihood of experiencing any form of sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to the survey (outcome variable) for a number of sociodemographic predictor variables—such as age; level of education; main activity and occupational status; self-defined ethnic, religious, or immigrant minority status; and living in an urban/rural area. In addition, the effects of having experienced any form of physical[19] and/or sexual violence by any partner (current or previous) or nonpartner in the past 12 months, and in childhood (see article by Till-Tentschert in this special issue), are assessed next to an attitudinal variable asked in the survey to measure women's perceptions of how common violence against women is in their countries. To control for variations in the outcome variable across all 28 EU Member States, the variable "country" is included as a control variable in the model; however, it is not shown in Table 5. As the model looks into assessing significant explanatory factors across countries and does not look into explaining country differences in the outcome variable, country differences are held constant. Table 5 shows regression coefficients (*B*), standard errors (*SE*), statistical significance (sig.), odds ratios (Exp(B)), and 95% confidence intervals for odds ratios for each of the nine predictors.

Almost all variables in the model in Table 5 significantly predict the outcome variable.[20] The results show, however, that the most powerful predictors of sexual harassment among the 10 predictors examined are being young (18-28 years) and having experienced any form of physical or sexual violence in the same period. The odds of having been sexually harassed in the past 12 months are 4.020 times higher for women who have experienced any physical (excluding threats) and/or sexual violence by any (current or previous) partner or nonpartner as opposed to women who have not been victimized in this period. In addition, the odds of being sexually harassed are 2.268 times greater for women who have been victimized during childhood than for women who have not experienced any violence before the age of 15.

The results of the logistic regression model confirm the descriptive findings about the high vulnerability of young women. The odds of exposure to sexual harassment are 4.556 times higher for women aged between 18 and 29 years compared with women over 60 years of age. The odds of experiencing sexual harassment for women aged between 30 and 39 years are 2.359 times higher than for women aged over 60. Moreover, the odds for women who were in education at the time of the interview are 2.495 times greater compared with those of women who have never done paid work.

According to the model, sexual harassment is more likely to be experienced by women with tertiary and secondary education (the odds increase by 41.8% and 29.4%, respectively) than by women with primary education. The predictive power of higher levels of education is also reflected in the likelihood of the highest occupational groups experiencing sexual harassment. Compared with retired women, the likelihood for experiencing sexual harassment is significantly higher for professional women and women in top or middle management positions (63.9% and 21.6%, respectively). This result confirms predictions derived from the sociocultural model in previous research (Tangri, Burt, & Johnson, 1982), according to which women who are breaking into traditional male occupational fields—where the sex-ratio is expected to be highly skewed—are more likely to be harassed than other women. In these cases, sexual harassment generally functions to keep women in a subordinate role as they can be perceived as having "invaded" male territory (FRA, 2014b, p. 118). Acts of harassment could therefore be interpreted as having a discriminatory motivation, which would be of particular importance in legal procedures (Dearing, 2014).

The odds of being sexually harassed for women who consider themselves as being a member of an ethnic, religious, or immigrant minority in comparison with those who do not differ only marginally. Likewise, the odds of experiencing sexual harassment are slightly higher for women living in urban areas than for those living in the countryside. Finally, women who believe violence against women to be very common in their country have 2.251 times greater odds of experiencing sexual harassment in the year prior to the survey

Table 5. Logistic Regression Estimates Predicting Sexual Harassment in the Last 12 Months Before the Interview (Full Set).

					95% CI for Exp(*B*)	
	B	*SE*	Sig.	Exp(*B*)	Lower	Upper
Physical (excluding threats) and/or sexual violence by any partner (current or previous) or nonpartner in the past 12 months	1.391	.043	.000	4.020	3.698	4.370
Any form of violence during childhood	0.819	.028	.000	2.268	2.146	2.398
Age [60+]			.000			
18-29	1.517	.067	.000	4.556	3.994	5.198
30-39	0.858	.065	.000	2.359	2.075	2.681
40-49	0.632	.065	.000	1.881	1.657	2.135
50-59	0.308	.065	.000	1.361	1.198	1.546
Highest level of education [Primary]			.000			
Secondary	0.257	.035	.000	1.294	1.207	1.387
Tertiary	0.349	.045	.000	1.418	1.299	1.547
Main activity status [Never done paid work]			.000			
Employed	0.349	.070	.000	1.418	1.236	1.628
Home maker	−0.015	.079	.854	0.986	0.843	1.151
Unemployed	0.445	.081	.000	1.560	1.330	1.829
In education	0.914	.090	.000	2.495	2.093	2.975
Other	0.636	.098	.000	1.889	1.558	2.291
Occupation [retired]			.000			
Shop owner, artisan, other self-employed person, farmer, fisher	0.032	.087	.714	1.032	0.870	1.225
Professional (lawyer, doctor, etc.), business owner	0.494	.080	.000	1.639	1.401	1.916
Top and middle management (director, department head, technician, teacher)	0.196	.073	.007	1.216	1.055	1.402
Employed position, working mainly at a desk	0.044	.065	.500	1.045	0.920	1.187
Employed position, not at a desk but traveling (salesmen, driver, etc.)	0.158	.086	.066	1.172	0.989	1.387

(continued)

Table 5. (continued)

					95% CI for Exp(*B*)	
	B	*SE*	Sig.	Exp(*B*)	Lower	Upper
Employed position, not at a desk, but in a service job (hospital, restaurant, police, fire brigade, etc.)	0.139	.064	.029	1.149	1.014	1.302
Skilled manual worker, including supervisor	0.180	.068	.009	1.197	1.047	1.369
Other (unskilled manual worker/servant)	0.122	.064	.057	1.130	0.996	1.282
Considering oneself of an ethnic, religious or immigrant minority	0.229	.052	.000	1.257	1.136	1.391
Living in urban/rural area [countryside, country village]			.000			
Big city	0.299	.041	.000	1.348	1.245	1.460
Suburban	0.358	.048	.000	1.431	1.303	1.571
Small city or town	0.222	.035	.000	1.249	1.166	1.336
How common is violence against women in this country? [Not at all common]			.000			
Not very common	0.372	.144	.010	1.451	1.095	1.922
Fairly common	0.517	.141	.000	1.676	1.272	2.209
Very common	0.811	.142	.000	2.251	1.704	2.973
Constant	−4.352	.198	.000	0.013		

Source. FRA Violence Against Women Survey dataset, 2012.
Note. Included in the analysis (n = 38,740); missing cases: 3,262. "Country" is included in the model as a control variable but suppressed in the table. For categorical predictor variables: [baseline]. Model summary: Cox and Snell R^2 = .157, adjusted McFadden R^2 = .162; Nagelkerke R^2 = .241. CI = confidence interval; FRA = European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

than women who think that it is not at all common. To conclude, the likelihood of experiencing sexual harassment is higher for victims of any form of violence during childhood or who have experienced violence in the 12 months before the survey, and it is also greater for young, well-educated, and professional women, and for women currently in education or employment.

Conclusion

Sexual harassment is a pervasive and common experience for many women in the European Union. The FRA survey on gender-based violence shows

that, depending on the number of different forms of sexual harassment that were asked about in the survey, an estimated 83 million to 102 million women (45%-55% of women) in the EU-28 have experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15. An estimated 24 million to 39 million women (13%-21%) in the EU-28 have experienced sexual harassment in the 12 months before the survey interview. However, many women do not talk about their experiences of sexual harassment with anyone and very few report the most serious incidents to their hierarchy or a responsible authority. Given this, EU Member States, and employers' organizations and trade unions—which have a duty to protect workers—should make efforts to promote awareness of sexual harassment and to encourage women to report abuse.

It should be recognized that sexual harassment can occur in various settings and can use different mediums, such as the Internet. The survey results indicate that sexual harassment against women involves a range of different perpetrators and can include the use of "new" technologies, which disproportionately affect younger women. Therefore, the scope of current policy responses to sexual harassment at both the level of the EU and the level of the Member States could be considered too narrow with respect to their focus on workplace and educational settings. In turn, it should be recognized that this type of conduct can also take place in formal and informal educational settings, and in relation to health care and leisure facilities, as illustrated by the survey findings.

Finally, the results suggest that definitions and interpretations of sexual harassment in existing legislation (e.g., employment legislation, criminal law, antidiscrimination law) need to be assessed and, where necessary, reviewed. In parallel, there is a need to revisit relevant codes of conduct or guidelines that encompass sexual harassment with regard to—for example—the extent to which they explicitly deal with sexual harassment, and the type of harassment covered (verbal, nonverbal, physical).

The survey shows that sexual harassment is more commonly perceived and experienced by women with a university degree and women in the highest occupational groups. In this regard, a common impression of the nature of sexual harassment in the workplace—which conjures up the image of a male manager as the perpetrator and female subordinates as victims—needs also to acknowledge the potential vulnerabilities of women in top positions. Professional women may be exposed to risk situations in occupations where they frequently come into contact with men or in work environments whose cultures fail to address sexual harassment (which is also likely to be the case for women in some other areas of work). At the same time, professional women may be more alert to what constitutes sexual harassment. In this regard, more could be done to inform employers and employees of their duty to address sexual harassment at all levels.

In sum, sexual harassment is a diverse and pervasive phenomenon, on which the results of the FRA's survey have shed new light, but which requires further analysis and targeted responses based on evidence of what women experience. There is a need for both comparable data on violence against women in general and sexual harassment in particular[21] and for additional methodologically sound research with valid and reliable measurement of sexual harassment.

Appendix

List taken from http://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-370100.htm, countries in alphabetical order.

Austria	AT
Belgium	BE
Bulgaria	BG
Croatia	HR
Cyprus	CY
Czech Republic	CZ
Denmark	DK
Estonia	EE
Finland	FI
France	FR
Germany	DE
Greece	EL
Hungary	HU
Ireland	IE
Italy	IT
Latvia	LV
Lithuania	LT
Luxembourg	LU
Malta	MT
Netherlands	NL
Poland	PL
Portugal	PT
Romania	RO
Slovakia	SK
Slovenia	SI
Spain	ES
Sweden	SE
United Kingdom	UK

Author's Note

Researchers are encouraged to work with FRA's violence against women survey dataset, which can be accessed as follows: https://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/catalogue/?sn=7730&type=Data%20catalogue – or by contacting the Fundamental Rights Agency at statistics&surveys@fra.europa.eu.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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Disclaimer

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Notes

1. The difference between sexual coercion and sexual harassment is exemplified with the following operationalizations: attempting to have sexual contact with someone by getting them drunk or stoned versus offering better treatment to someone if they were sexually cooperative (Ménard, Hall, Phung, Ghebrial, & Martin, 2003).
2. The severity of 20 different sexually harassing behaviors has been rated by male and female respondents in two settings (educational vs. work-related).
3. European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights' (FRA) main results report is available at http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-vaw-survey-main-results-apr14_en.pdf; the interactive online data explorer is available at http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-and-maps/survey-data-explorer-violence-against-women-survey
4. FRA started to develop the survey through desk research and stakeholder and survey expert consultations in 2010 to identify the key policy needs and expectations in this area, followed by a pretest study (including cognitive interviews and focus group discussions) in six EU Member States in 2011 to test a draft questionnaire. The full-scale survey in the EU-28 was carried out in 2012.
5. The survey in each EU Member State covered all women aged 18 to 74 years who were living in the Member State in question, and who spoke at least one of the official languages of the country. In total, less than 1% of people contacted were unable to take part because they did not speak one of the official languages. As with most other household surveys, certain populations, such as persons living in institutions and homeless people, were excluded. Questions that apply to specific groups in the population, such as women who have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM), were not included because the number of women in the general population who could answer such questions would have been extremely low. The data of the FRA survey have been weighted to adjust for respondents' age and type of area where they live (urban/rural). Sensitivity analysis examined whether changes in the data—such as small differences between the sociodemographic composition of the sample and the total population—can have an effect

on the survey results. For more details on sampling, response rates and methodology of the FRA survey, see FRA (2014c), available at http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-vaw-survey-technical-report-1_en.pdf and the section on "Building a robust dataset to inform policy" by Goodey in this special issue.

6. Analyses are based on valid information for all cases. For example, the calculations of prevalence rates have been based on all respondents (including those who chose one of the following response categories: "don't know," "refused," "not applicable"). Missing information for breakdown variables included in specific analysis (e.g., age) is always mentioned in the notes below the relevant tables or graphs.
7. Confidence intervals present a range within which there is a given probability that the true value lies. In this case, the 95% probability level has been selected, meaning that 95% of all possible random samples would produce an estimate within that range. It can be assumed that the true value of sexual harassment can be found with a 95% probability between the lower and upper bounds of the confidence interval.
8. The prevalence results for sexual harassment in Figure 1 differ on average by 1% from the results presented elsewhere in this article, which is due to an additional adjustment of the FRA survey's standard and design weights by education. To be able to use data from the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) to assess the effect of education for the weighting of the results, the analysis was limited to data from respondents who are 18 to 64 years of age, while elsewhere in this article, the results have been calculated based on all FRA survey respondents, who were 18 to 74 years of age (for further details, see FRA, 2014b).
9. The narrower the interval between lower and upper bound of the confidence interval, the higher the precision of the estimate.
10. Significant differences between the countries can be discerned when there are no overlaps of the confidence intervals across EU Member States.
11. The estimates of the prevalence of cyberharassment have been calculated based on respondents who have access to or use tools such as email, SMS, and social networking websites (around 86% of the whole sample).
12. Eurostat, the statistical office of the Euroepan Union, (2012), "Community Survey on ICT Usage in Households and by Individuals: Information Society Statistics," data for the period 2010 and 2011, Luxembourg, available at http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do .
13. The median is another value to represent the average. It is the value that divides the distribution into two equal parts with 50% of cases below and 50% of cases above it.
14. According to the FRA EU LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) survey, lesbian women and transgender respondents are most likely to have experienced hate-motivated harassment in the year preceding the survey in comparison with gay and bisexual respondents (FRA, 2014a).
15. The survey found that migrant women experience violence to a similar extent compared with nonmigrant women (FRA, 2014b).

16. Out of all women who have been sexually harassed at least once in their lifetime (n = 21,180).
17. Out of all women who described the most serious incident of sexual harassment that has happened to them since the age of 15 (n = 17,335).
18. Analyses are performed using IBM SPSS Statistics, Version 22.
19. Threats have been excluded.
20. A test of the full model with all 10 predictors against a constant-only model is statistically significant, indicating that the predictors as a set reliably distinguish between women who have experienced any form of sexual harassment and women who have not been victimized in the last 12 months. The model explains 24.1% of the variance in sexual harassment and correctly classifies 80.3% of the cases.
21. Both the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament, in addition to several international organizations such as the Council of Europe, have highlighted the need for comparable data on violence against women as a basis for developing evidence-based policy responses (see also article by Goodey in this special issue).

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