

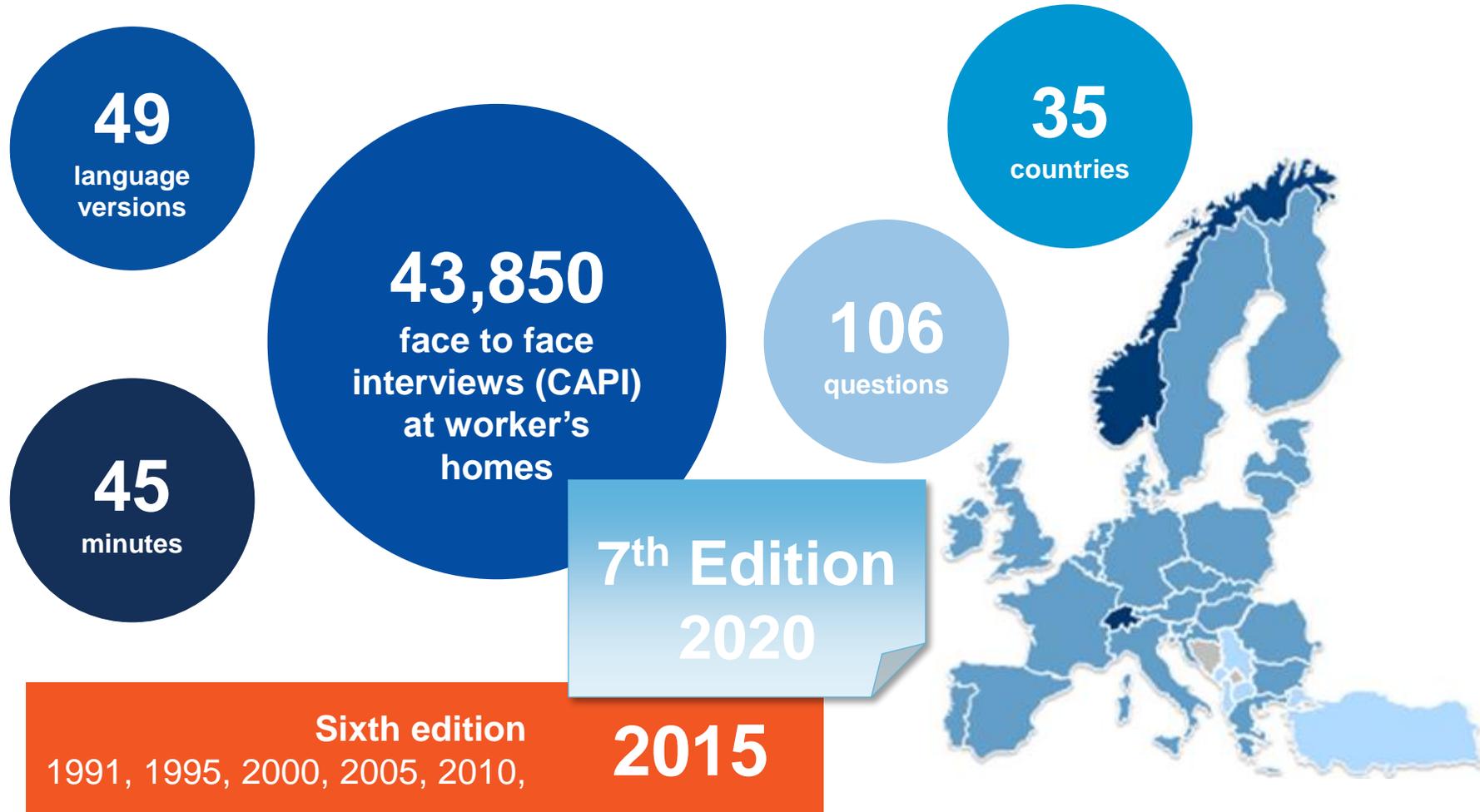
Emotional harassment and conflicts at work: *The companies' costs*

Isabella Biletta, Eurofound

STATE LABOUR INSPECTORATE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA CONFERENCE - Riga 20-21.11.2019

Emotional Harassment and Conflicts at Work – Bad for Workers, Bad for Businesses

European Working Conditions Survey



Eurofound Job quality framework

Physical environment

- Posture-related
- Ambient
- Biological and chemical

Social environment

- **Adverse social behaviour**
- Social support
- Management quality

Work intensity

- Quantitative demands
- Pace determinants and interdependency
- **Emotional demands**

Skills and discretion

- Cognitive dimension inc. computer use
- Decision latitude
- Organisational participation
- Training

Working time quality

- Duration
- Atypical working time
- Working time arrangements
- Flexibility

Prospects

- Career prospects
- Employment status
- Job security
- Downsizing

Earnings



Emotional harassment and conflicts at work

Emotional demands

- ✓ Handling angry clients, pupils, patients, etc.
- ✓ Hiding feelings
- ✓ Being in emotionally disturbing situations

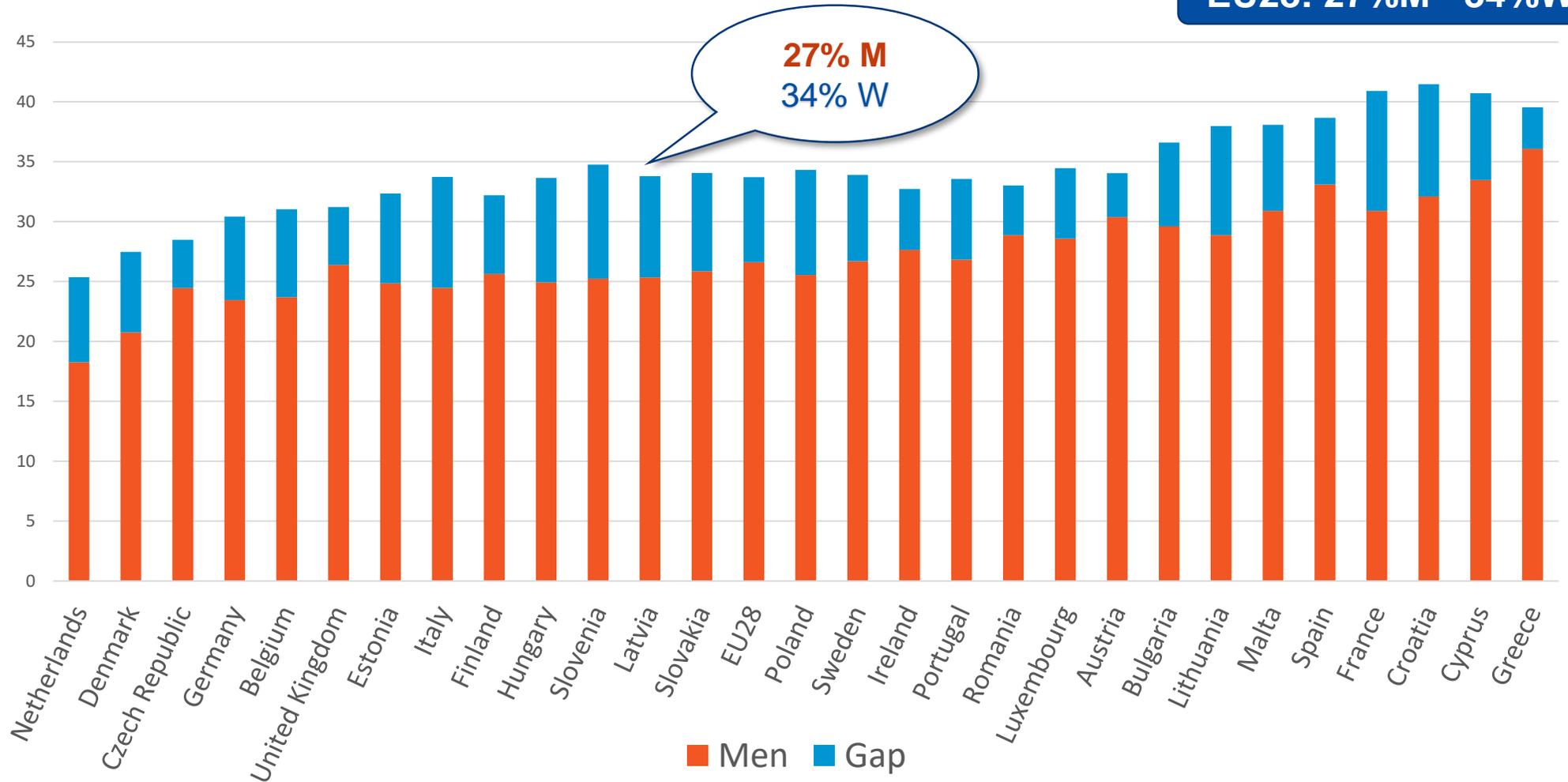
Adverse social behaviour

- ✓ Verbal abuse
- ✓ Unwanted sexual attention
- ✓ Threats
- ✓ Humiliating behaviours
- ✓ Physical violence
- ✓ Sexual harassment
- ✓ Bullying/Harassment

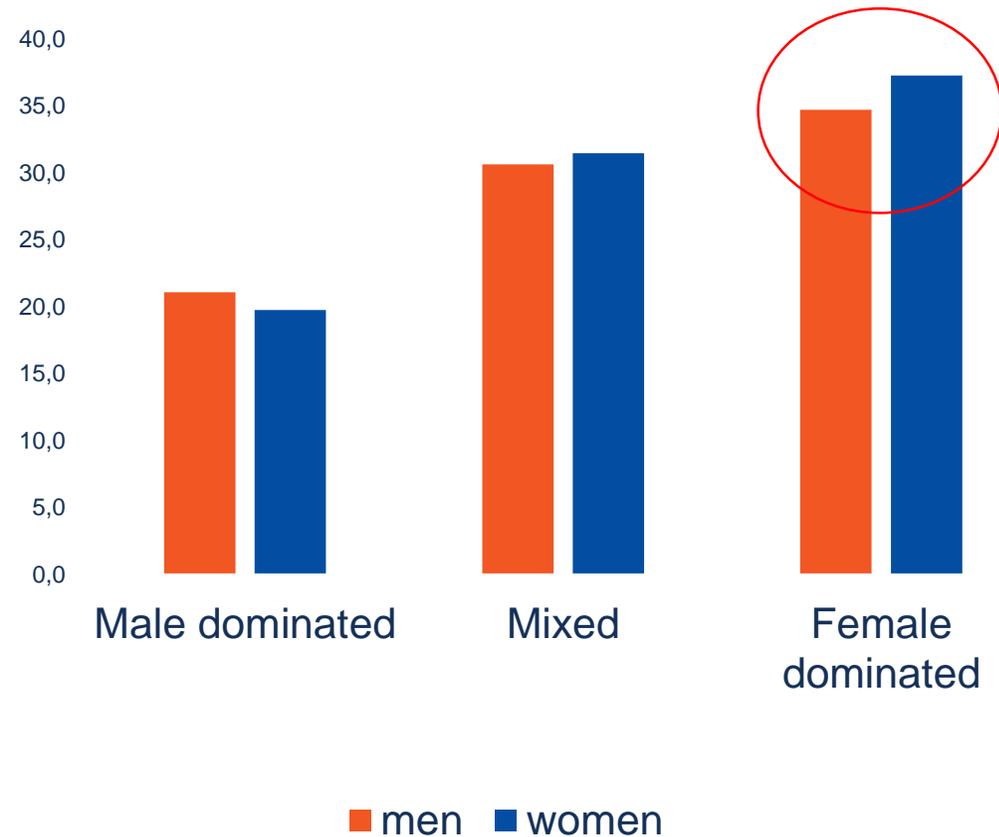
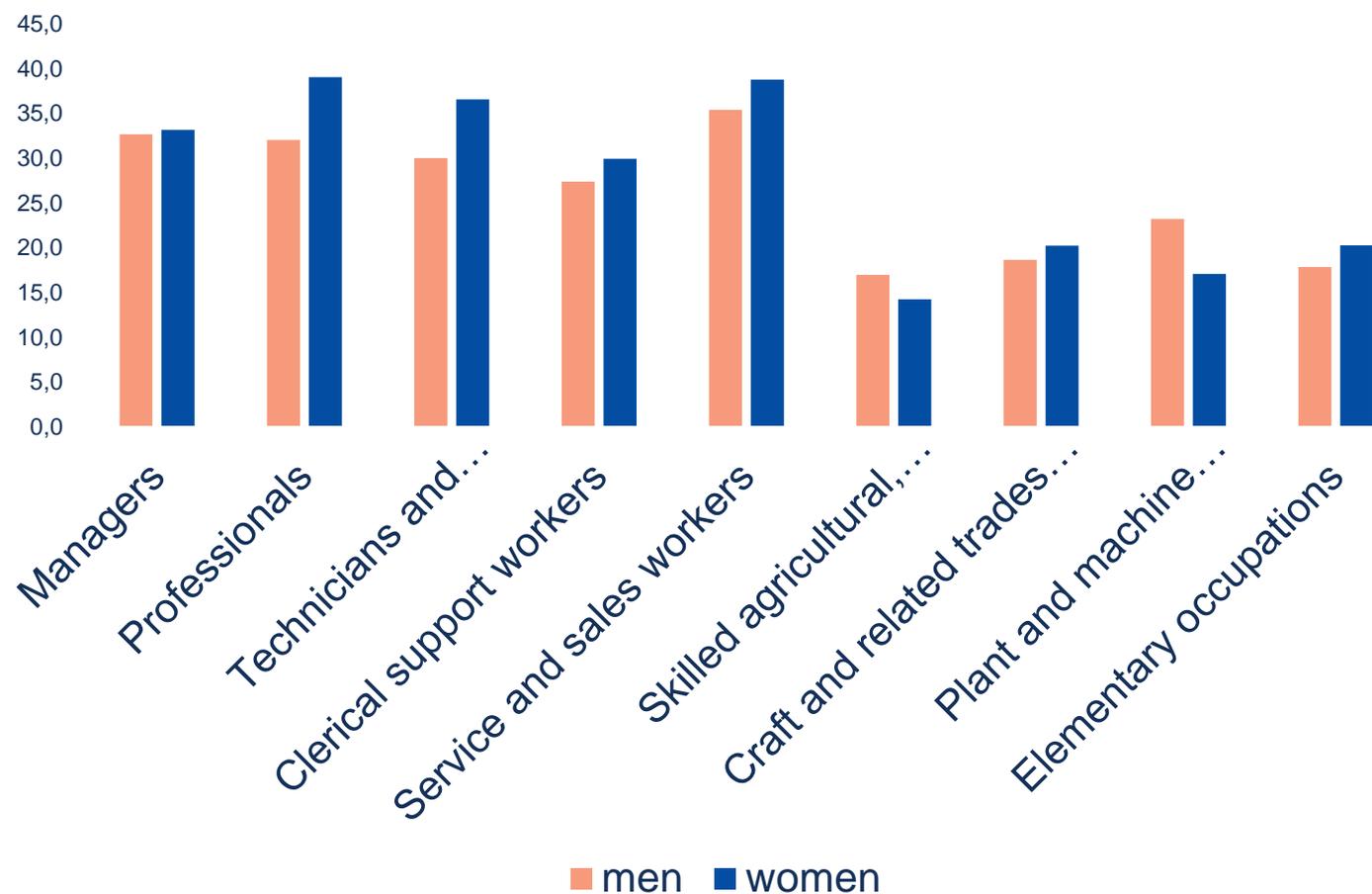
Exposure to emotional demands

EU28: 27%M - 34%W

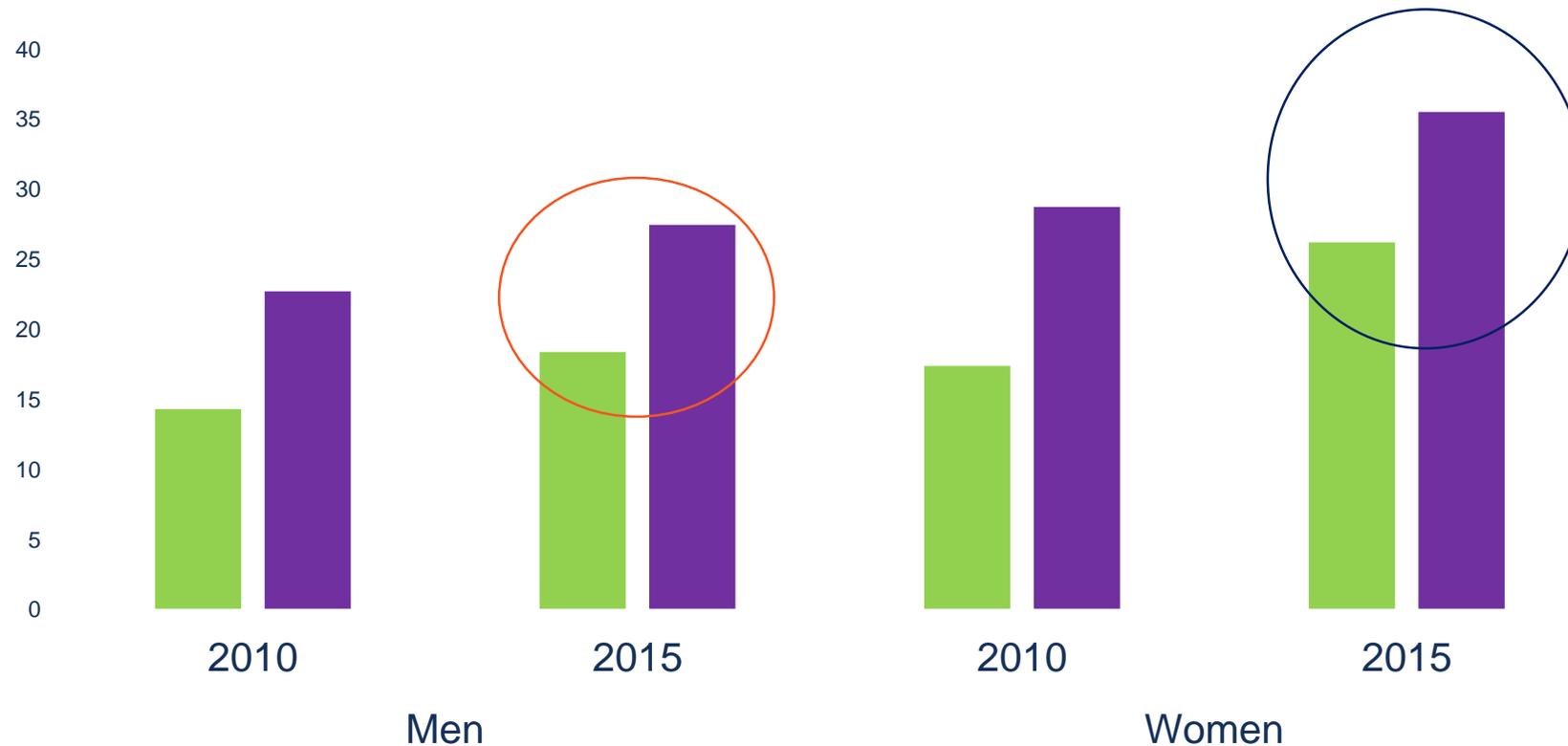
Share of employees exposed to emotional demands



Emotional demands by occupations



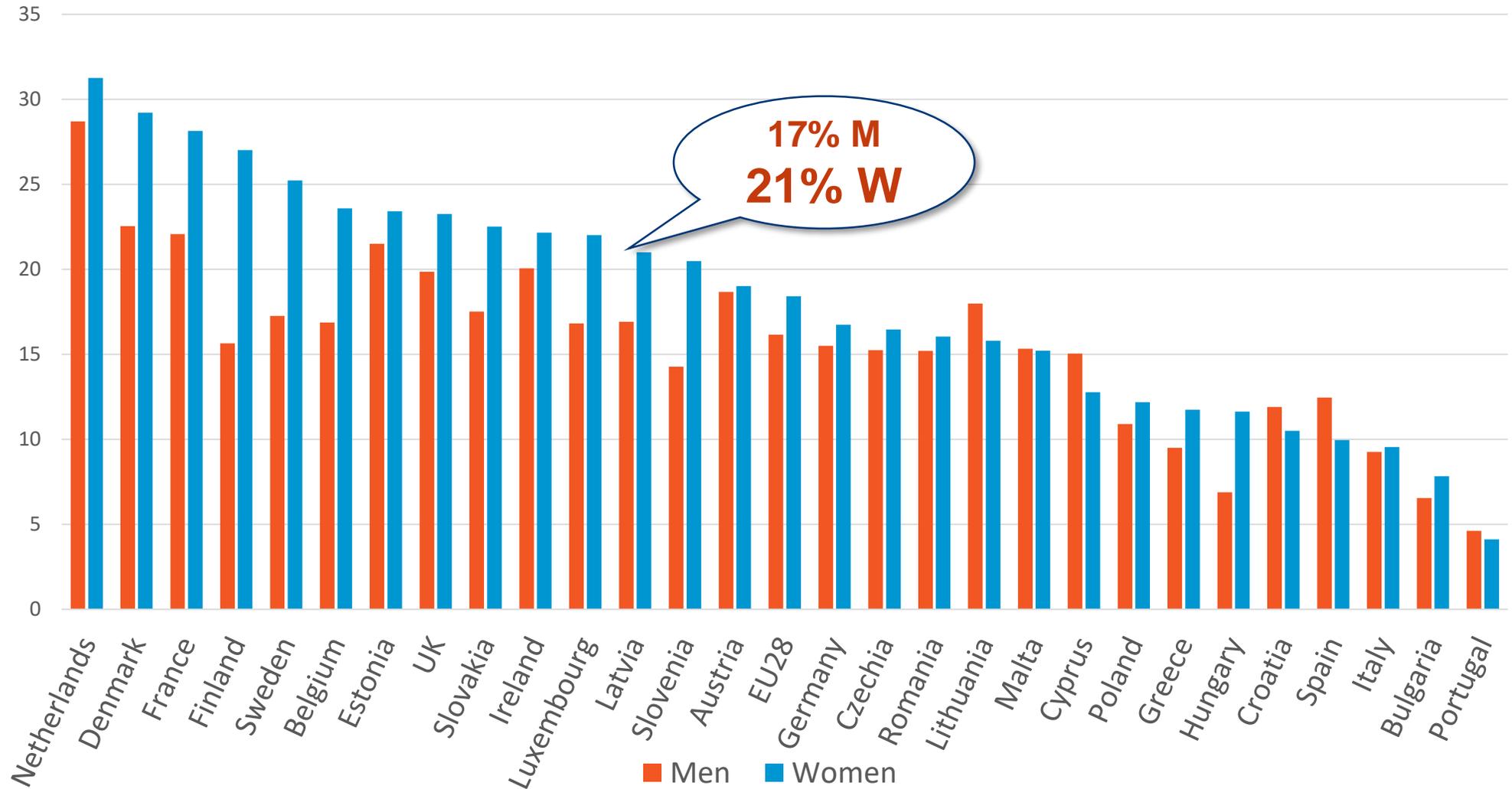
Emotional demands, 2010-2015



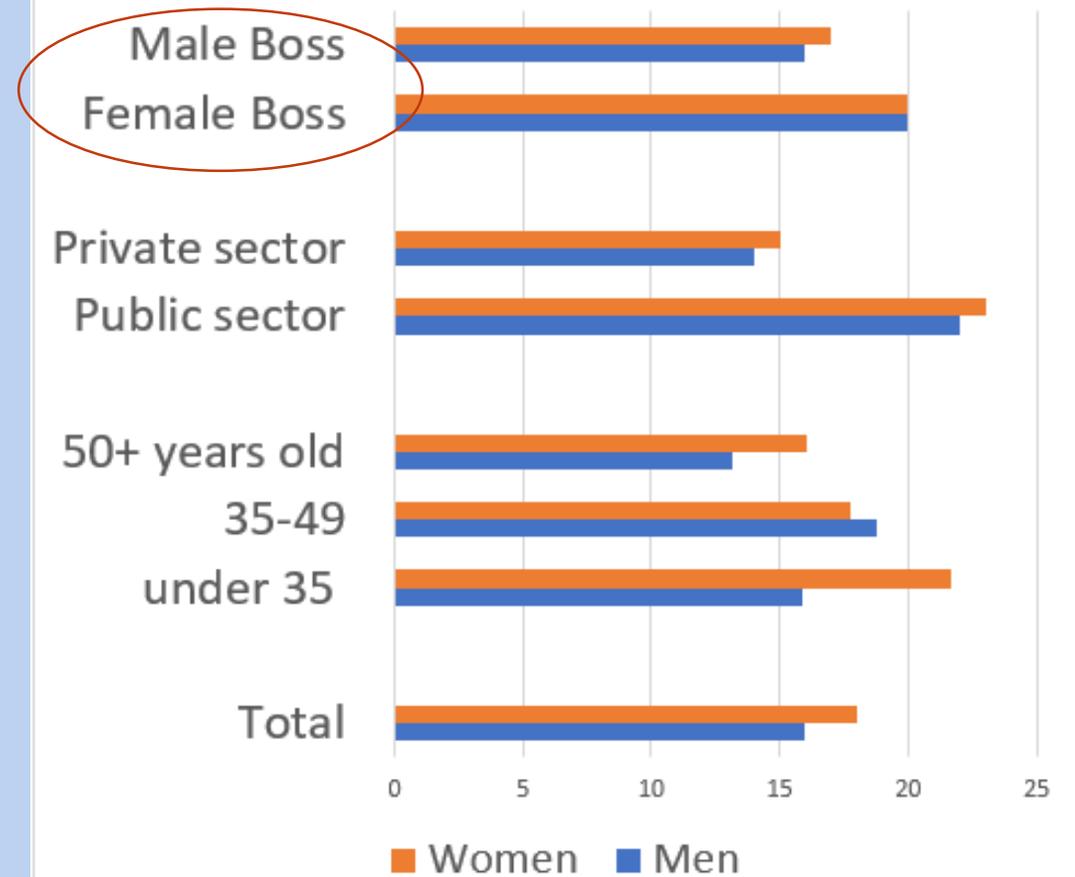
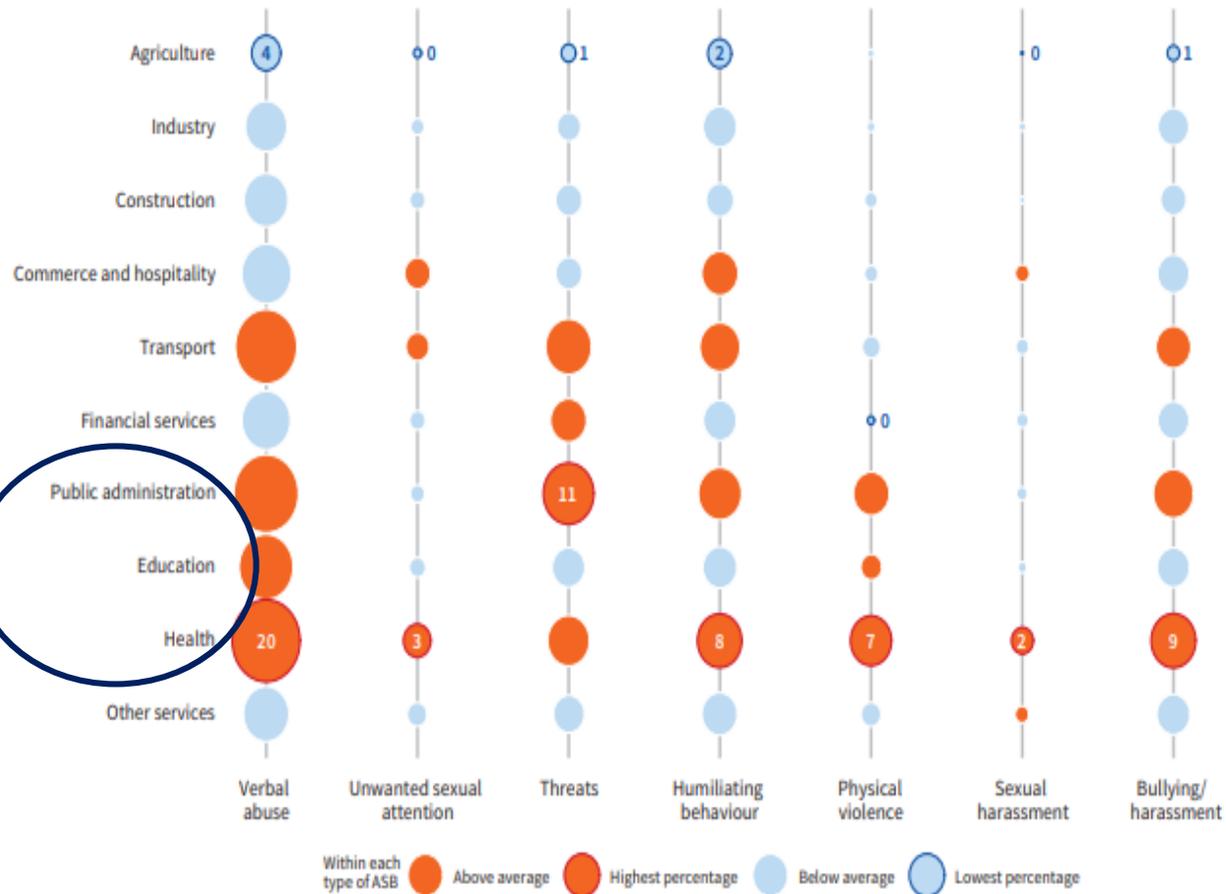
- Handling angry clients, customers, patients, pupils etc (half of the time or more)
- Your job requires that you hide your feelings (Always or most of the time)

Adverse social behaviour

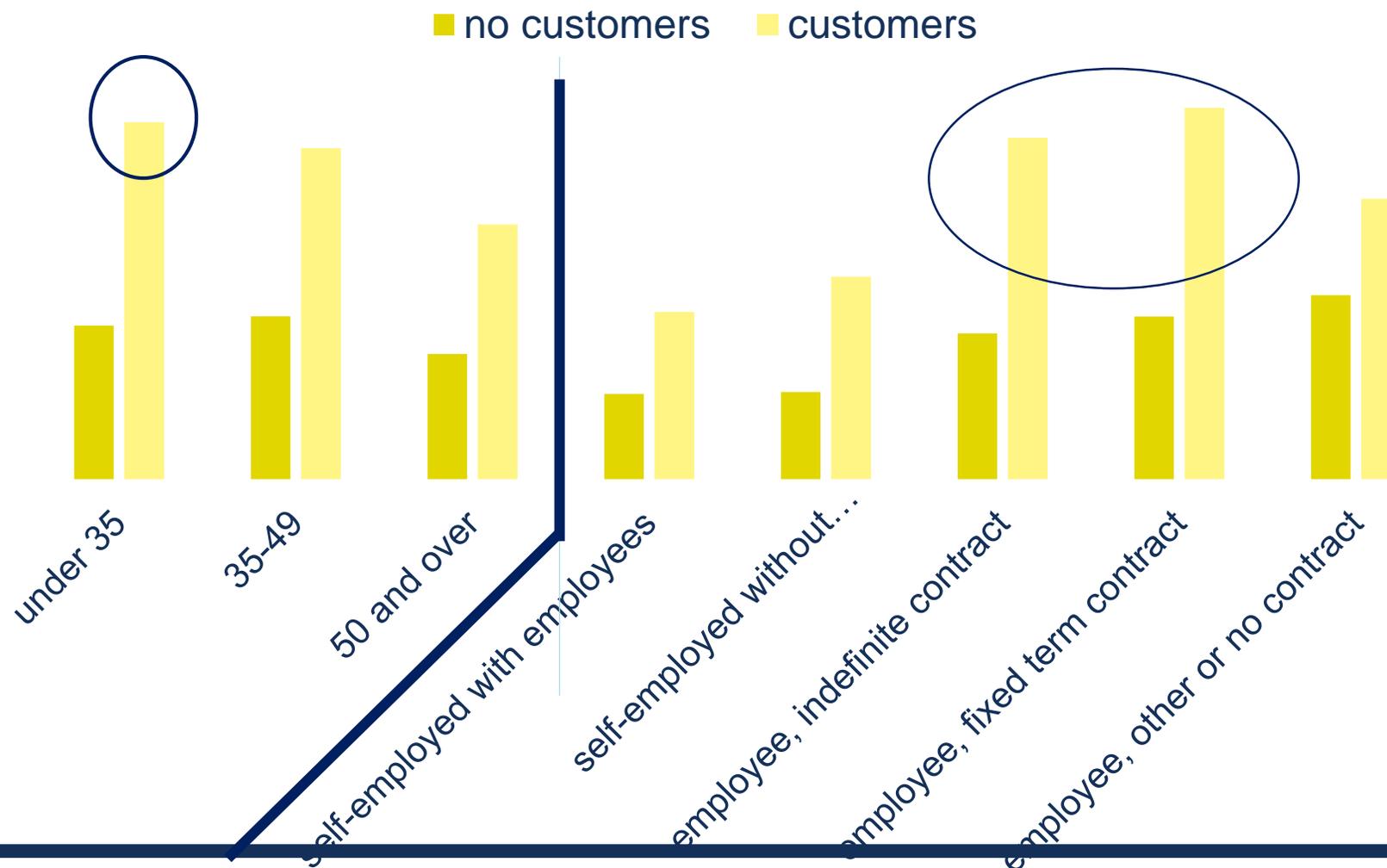
Share of employees exposed to adverse social behaviour



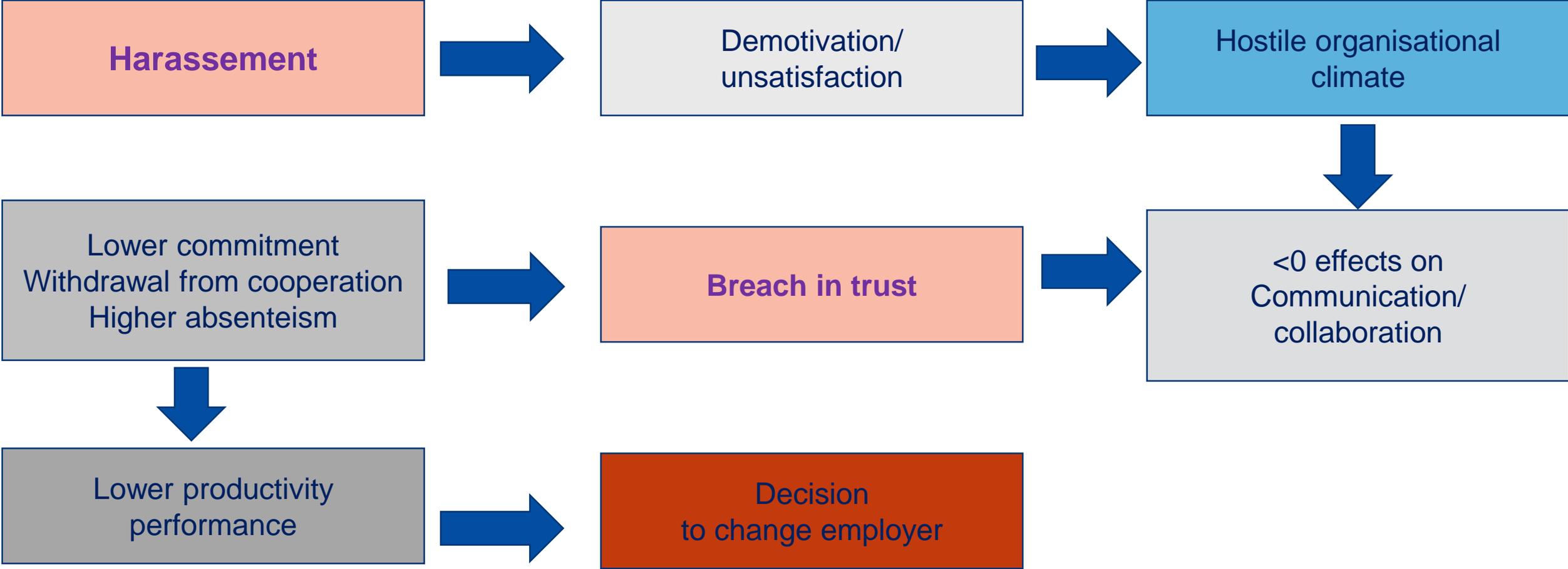
Prevalence of ASB in EU28, Sectors



Prevalence of ASB in EU28, age, status

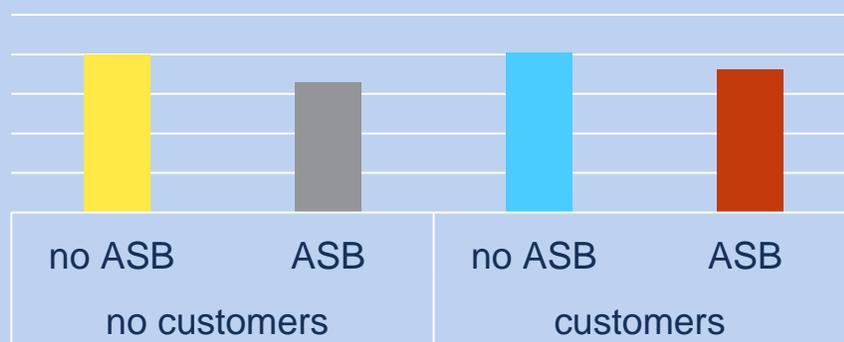


ASBs effects



Impacts of ASB

subjective well-being



motivation



Less job satisfaction

Lower involvement

Poor motivation to work

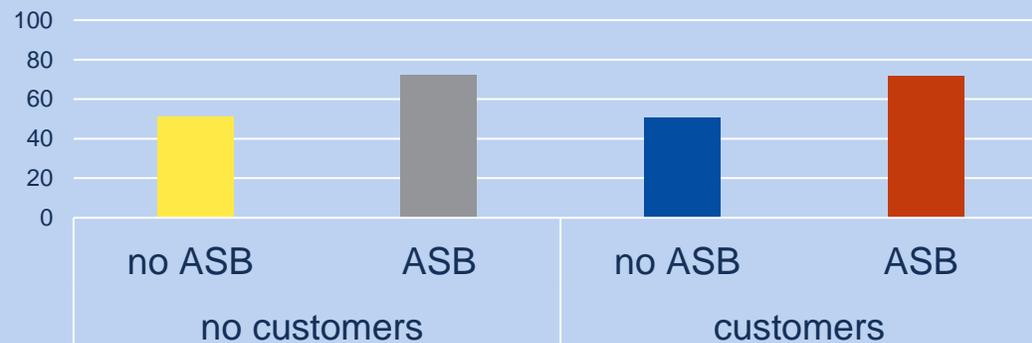
Increased job turnover

Impacts of ASB

absenteeism



Not deserving to be excluded
presenteeism



Emotional work as Burnout determinant

LT	Bastakyte and Kaminskas (2013)	high-paced, emotionally demanding and stressful conditions = the main psychosocial risk factors	real estate agency employees
	Vimantaitė (2007).	ongoing emotional tension, often evoking stress and conflicts at work	for nurses in cardiac surgery centres
PL	Kowalczyk et al (2011)	high level of work-related stress	nurses,
NL	Smulders et al (2013)	excessive emotional demands	comprehensive
UK	(Kinman et al, 2011).	emotional labour	teachers

Source: Eurofound 2018, *Burnout in the workplace: A review of data and policy responses in the EU*

Burnout: no agreed definition, several Work-related determinants

- psychosocial risks, with a strong emphasis on high demands (such as long working hours and fast-paced work).
- risks linked to specific occupations (for example, human services),
- as well as risks linked to conflicts of ethics and values, role conflicts, low career prospects and low justice at work,
- a form of job insecurity whereby individuals no longer think they belong and make a difference in their company, but believe that their employer sees them as a tool.

Burnout determinants

- Conflicts in the workplace
 - People experiencing conflicts or bullying in the workplace are overrepresented among those who develop symptoms of depression and exhaustion (SE, SBU2014)
- (Lack of) social support from colleagues,
 - significant , but not fully compensating the excessive effects of work pressure (NL)
- (Low) Autonomy
 - DE: *Rose et al (2016)*:
- Impact of management
 - NL: lack of support from management meant = the risk of burnout was found to be 2.3 times higher
 - PL: mentoring, appreciation and trust from supervisors play a positive role in mitigating burnout and maintaining or restoring motivation to work

Autonomy	Men with burnout (%)	Women with burnout (%)
High autonomy	6	7
Rather high autonomy	9	8
Rather low autonomy	11	13
Low autonomy	17	15

Effects of burnout on work



Declining job satisfaction

changes in motivation to work and burnout are bidirectional



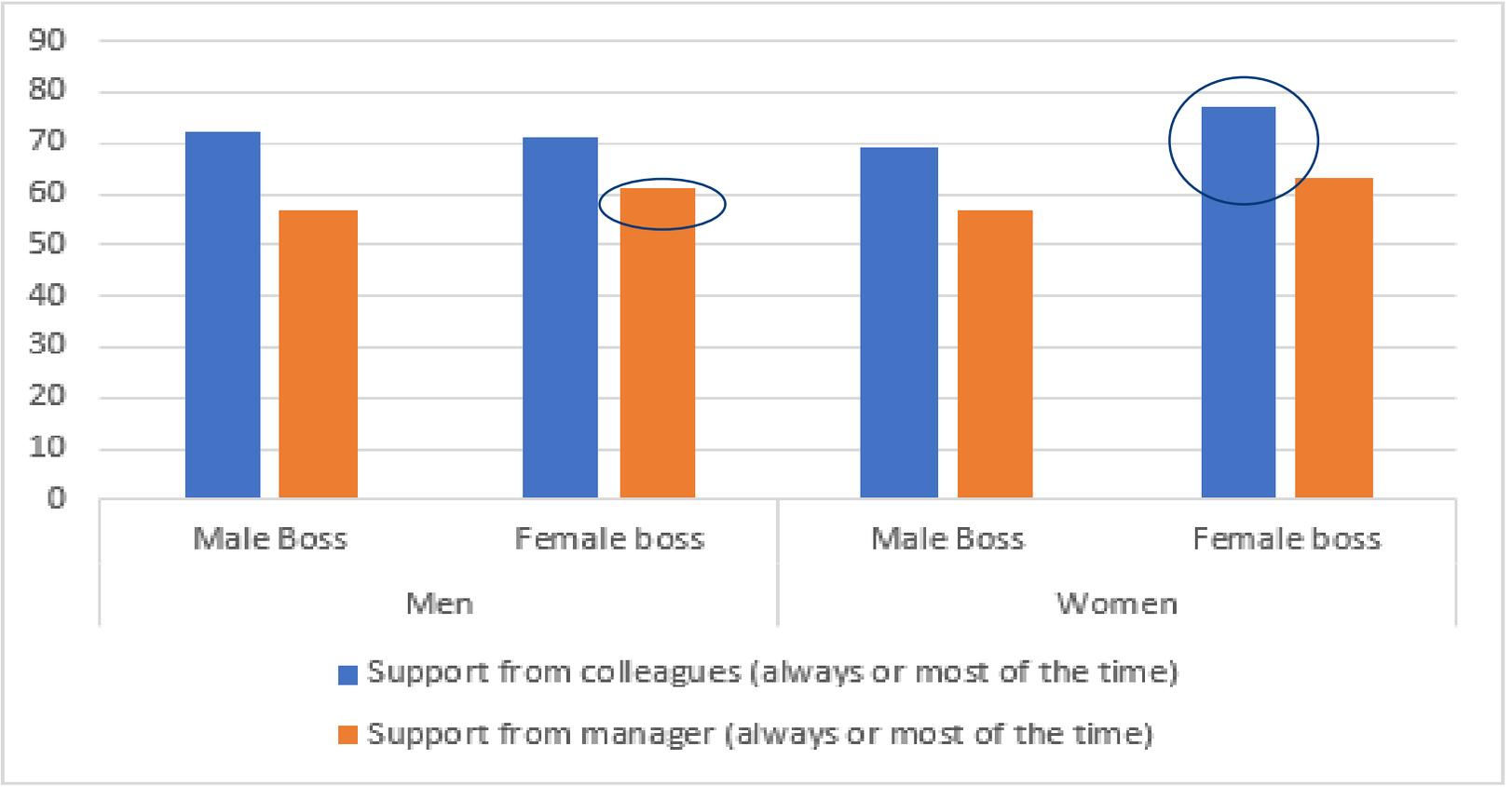
AT: 6% workers
(Arbeiterkammer
Oberösterreich, 2017).

DK: 13.9 & 6 d/y
highest & lowest
work burnout
quartiles



NL: people with high level of emotional exhaustion - often given up work within 2 years (4.1%, vs. 2.3% not suffering from emotional exhaustion)

Support from colleagues and managers



Concerted Actions, prevention of burnout (examples)

IE	Health Service Executive	policy for prevention and management of stress in the workplace
	Workplace Relations Commission	Guide on Work Related Stress in conjunction with IBEC and the ICTU(Irish Congress of Trade Unions).
MT	Occupational Health and Safety Authority	The Maltese framework for the control of work-related stress
SE	Swedish government	2016 provisions on organisational and social working environments to regulate requirements, objectives, workloads, working hours and victimisation.
	white-collar trade union Unionen	annual working environment barometer
UK	TUC & National Health Service	'Better Health at Work' scheme
	Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	set of management standards on the primary sources of stress at work define the characteristics and culture of an organisation in which the risks of work-related stress are effectively managed and controlled

Points to keep in mind

- Awareness is key
 - To identify an incident as harassment as ASB
 - To address under reporting , undermining effectiveness of responses
 - Cultural differences
- Specific workers/sectors/occupations
 - Younger workers , temporary contracts
 - Working with customers
 - Public administration, health, education and transports
- Emotional demand and conflict at work have detrimental impacts on
 - Workers' health and well being at work
 - job quality
 - Workforce engagement
 - Sickness leave & Accidents
 - Companies' Performance and image

Addressing the issue

**Not an individual
issue,
a work
organisation one**

**Importance
of social
support**

**Management
can make a
difference**

**Concerted
actions pay of**

➔ **Foundation Findings**

Physical and psychological violence at the workplace.



www.eurofound.europa.eu



2017

Working conditions
Burnout in the workplace:
A review of data and
policy responses in the EU



2019

**Gender Equality
at Work**

2020

**Employees'
involvement
& skills
development**



Violence and harassment in
European workplaces:
Extent, impacts and policies

