



the global voice of
the legal profession

Us Too?

Bullying and Sexual Harassment in the Legal Profession

The largest-ever survey on bullying and sexual harassment in the legal profession

6,980
respondents

from
135
countries

Conducted in
6 languages

From law firms,
in-house, barristers'
chambers, judiciary
and government



**Bullying is rife in legal
workplaces, affecting:**

**1 in 2 female respondents and
1 in 3 male respondents.**



**Sexual harassment is
also common, with:**

**1 in 3 female respondents and
1 in 14 male respondents**

having been sexually harassed in a work context.

Respondents were:



67% female **32% male** **0.2% non-binary/self-defined**

From across the spectrum of the legal profession.



More needs to be done. Of respondents' workplaces, 53% had policies and 22% undertook training to address bullying and sexual harassment.

Targets do not report. In:



57% of bullying cases and 75% of sexual harassment cases,

the incident is never reported.



Targets don't report due to: **the status of the perpetrator, fear of repercussions and the incident being endemic to the workplace.**



Policies and training do not appear to be having the desired impact.

Respondents at workplaces with policies and training are just as likely to be bullied or sexually harassed as those at workplaces without.

Targets are leaving unsupportive workplaces.

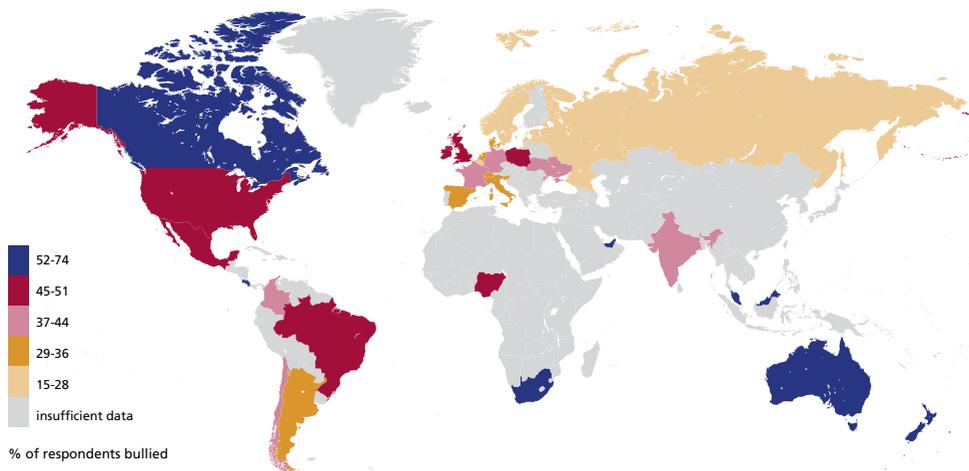
65% of respondents who have been bullied and 37% of respondents who have been sexually harassed

left or are considering leaving their workplaces.

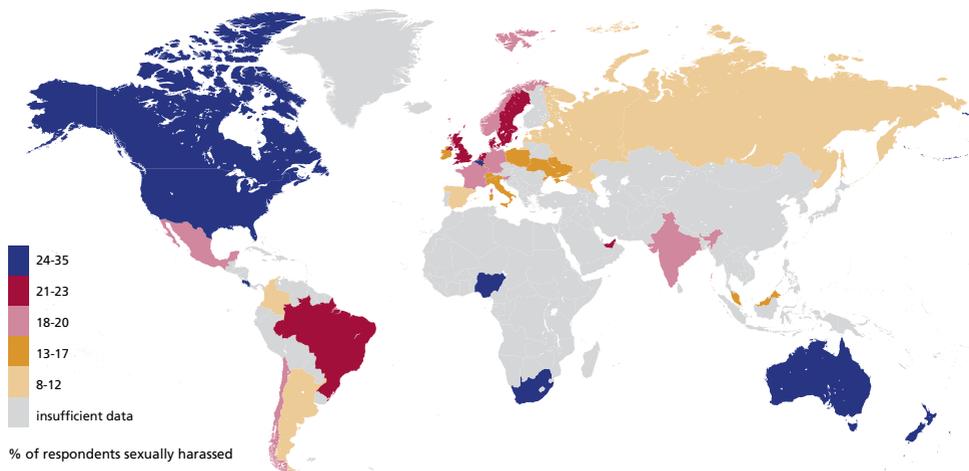


Bullying and sexual harassment by country*

Bullying



Sexual harassment



*Gender-weighted

Recommendations

1. Raise awareness

The legal profession has a problem. Spread the word – it is the first step towards achieving change.

2. Revise and implement policies and standards

Policies to address bullying and sexual harassment are under-utilised and not sufficiently effective. We need more effective policies and better implementation.

3. Introduce regular, customised training

Effective training can reduce the prevalence of workplace bullying and sexual harassment. Training must be the norm, not the exception.

4. Increase dialogue and best-practice sharing

A problem shared is a problem halved. Let's work together to address the scourge of bullying and sexual harassment in the profession, sharing what works and what doesn't.

5. Take ownership

This is everyone's problem. From senior leaders of the profession to incoming graduates, we all need to take ownership of the problem and work towards a more harmonious legal profession.

6. Gather data and improve transparency

Data about the nature, prevalence and impact of bullying and sexual harassment is important – we don't have enough. Once we have the data, we need to be open about it. Transparency will help us to address these issues.

7. Explore flexible reporting models

Legal professionals do not report bullying or sexual harassment often enough, at the time it happens or at all. We need to improve existing reporting channels and explore new ones, to make reporting a better experience for targets.

8. Engage with younger members of the profession

Younger legal professionals are disproportionately impacted by bullying and sexual harassment. They must be part of this conversation – they will play a major role in developing and implementing solutions and shaping workplace culture.

9. Appreciate the wider context

Bullying and sexual harassment do not occur in a vacuum. Mental health challenges, a lack of workplace satisfaction and insufficient diversity are all related issues. These dynamics need to be understood and addressed collectively.

10. Maintain momentum

Change is not inevitable. But it is possible, if individuals, workplaces and institutions work together to eradicate bullying and sexual harassment from the profession.