

BaHDIS research results

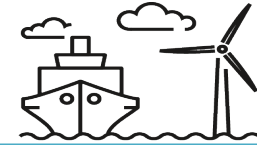
Bullying and Harassment in the Danish Fleet
University of Southern Denmark (SDU)
Center for Maritime Health and Society
(CMSS)

ERGOSHIP conference 2023
SDU – CMSS - ESBJERG
Presented by Senior researcher Lisa L. Froholdt,
and
Senior researcher Sisse Grøn

Outline

- Preliminary info
- Methods
- Definitions of bullying and harassment
- Brief quantitative data-questionnaire
- Qualitative data-interviews
- Questions and comments

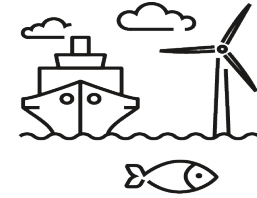




The Commissorium

In the summer of 2022, following several stories of harassment and bullying on Danish-flagged ships, the Minister for Industry, Business and Financial Affairs asked the Danish Maritime Authority for an investigation to clarify the problems.

On behalf of the Danish Maritime Authority, the CMSS/University of Southern Denmark investigated the extent of harassment and bullying on Danish ships.



The research project consortium

Senior researcher Lisa L. Froholdt, Professor Jesper B. Nielsen

Senior researcher Sisse Grøn

Research associate, Subash Thapa, Research assistant Andrew Fenn,

Research assistant Elin K. Hansen (CMSS/SDU),

Research assistant Thilde Ubbesen and Senior researcher Maj Britt Nielsen

(SDU/SIF) and Senior researcher Ida E. H. Madsen (National research Center for

Working environment (NFA).

University of Southern Denmark (SDU)
Center for Maritime Health and Society (CMSS)
National Department of Public Health (SIF)

Method



BaHDIS methods

A mixed-methods approach, combining a quantitative cross-sectional study with subsequent qualitative, semi-structured interviews.

Individual benefits, restrictions and distinct differences, but bolstered by combining the two.

Together, these methods contribute to a comprehensive and diverse understanding of the research questions, giving a **more complete insight into bullying and harassment in the Danish merchant fleet.**

Recruiting participants

- Seafarers invited through questionnaire
- BaHDIS survey promoted on websites and SoMe sites, including DMA, CMSS & among Seafarers.

<https://dma.dk/about-us/survey-on-bullying-and-harassment>

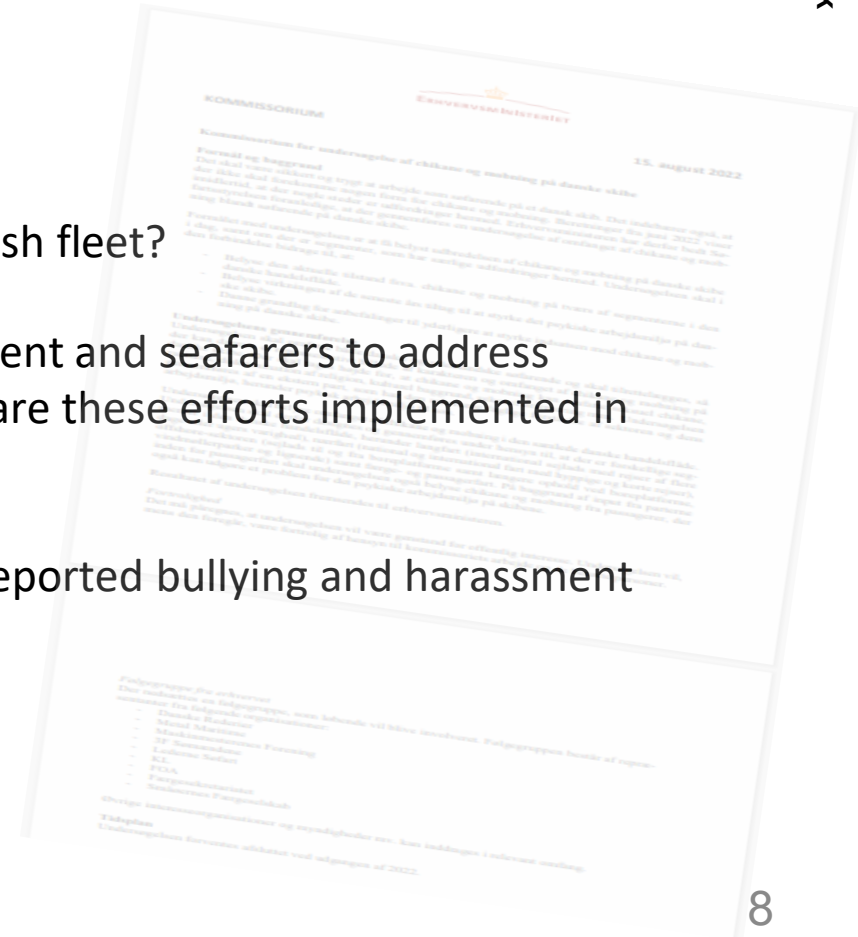
The University of Southern Denmark has made a small video about the study. Take a closer look here:



BaHDIS Research questions

Building on the requests in the Comissorium, the following research questions were drawn up and approved by DMA.

1. What is the prevalence of bullying and harassment in the Danish fleet?
2. What are the risk factors for bullying and harassment in segments of the Danish fleet?
3. What approaches are being used by shipping companies, including management and seafarers to address bullying and harassment and promote mental health in the workplace? How are these efforts implemented in practice? And how are they being experienced?
4. How has the industry or other stakeholders handled cases of reported or unreported bullying and harassment in the Danish fleet?



Ship segments

1. Cargo ships etc. sailing international routes with a duration of more than two days
2. Cargo ships etc. sailing short international routes with a duration of up to two days
3. Cargo ships etc. sailing exclusively national routes
4. Ships servicing offshore installations
5. Passenger ships sailing international routes
6. Shortcut and island ferries and other passenger ships sailing national routes



BaHDIS bias

“I asked someone who had been here a long time (about taking part in the BaHDIS survey), and the person said don’t do it because they monitor you. They know who it is that answers” (informant).

Some seafarers afraid to take part in BaHDIS survey, some urged not to participate.

Some did or could not participate out of fear of lack of anonymity and fear of retaliation.

Some mention access to IT searches from vessels can be monitored (Not an issue the BaHDIS team was made aware of before the study began).

These issues may be considered as bias in the study.

Bullying

Definition:

Bullying is when you are exposed to unpleasant or degrading treatment, rejection, exclusion, or hurtful teasing.

To call something bullying, it must have taken place many times over a period of time, and the person who is being bullied has difficulty in defending themselves.

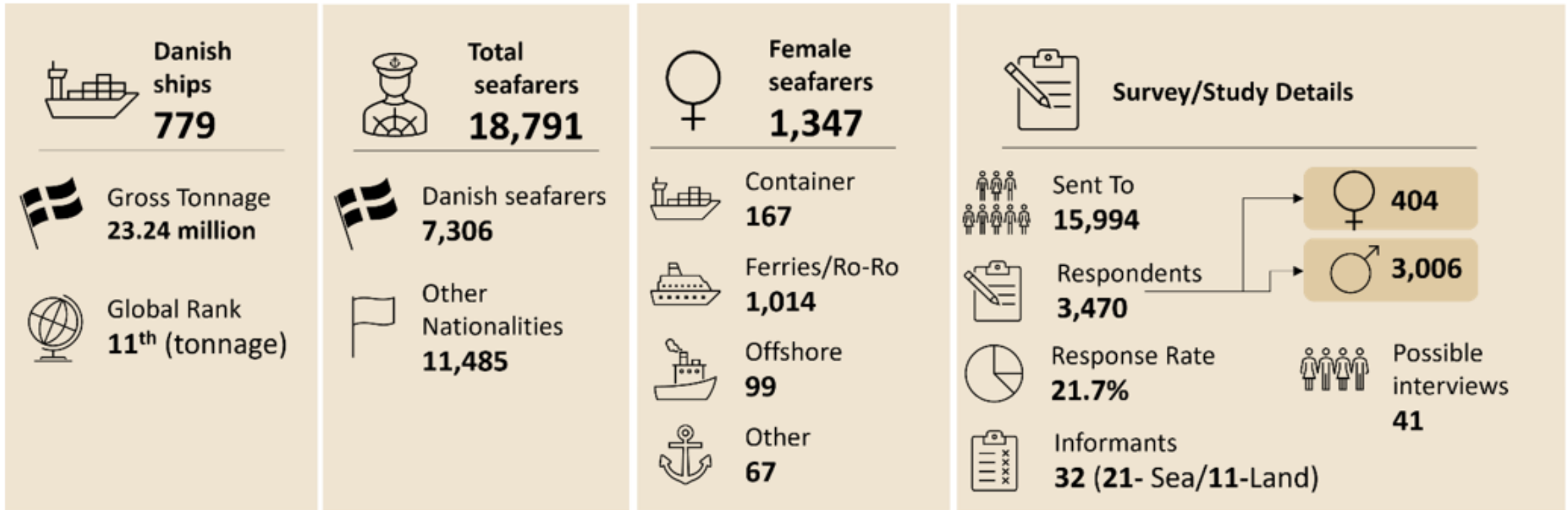
Harassment

Definition:

Harassment is when a person's dignity (or self-respect) is violated by another person or persons who create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, specifically in relation to race, religion or belief, cultural background, sex/gender and sexual orientation.

Legal definition as described in the EU Directive on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women (Directive 2002/73/EC)

Figure 2; Participants in the study (Source Danish Shipping, 2021, 2022; BahDIS report 2023)



Quantitative Data



Respondents- questionnaire

The questionnaire was sent out to 15.994 seafarers' emails by the shipping companies. GDPR rules were acknowledged - companies had email addresses to seafarers.

3.470 questionnaire responses in total and a response rate of 21,7%.

Of the 3.470 responses, 686 were partially completed.

Among the respondents, 3006 are men, 404 are women and 17 other.

Questionnaire response
period:
13 February - 31 March 2023

Respondents- questionnaire

Previously validated instruments were used, including items from:

- "The Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire II" (COPSOQII),
- the short version of "The Negative Acts Questionnaire" "S-NAQ",
- the National Institute of Public Health (SIF) at SDU and the National Research Center for Work environment (NFA), "Questionnaire for Unwanted Sexual Attention and Harassment in the workplace" (SUSO), and relevant target questions.

34 questions
with open
questions and
free text
responses

Questionnaires inserted into SurveyXact program and free text inserted into NVivo coding program.

Prevalence

Questionnaire responses reported a substantial number of cases of bullying, harassment, unwanted sexual attention, threats of violence and actual physical violence.

The most vulnerable were the youngest age group under 31 years, women, new arrivals, junior officers and seafarers in the cargo segment.

The least vulnerable in the fleet are seafarers in the offshore segment, passenger vessels and ferries, as well as seafarers in small crews across segments.

Prevalence

Numerically, most victims of violence, bullying and harassment are men, but as there are far more men than women in the sector, a larger percentage of female seafarers' report violence, bullying and harassment.

In two out of three cases, the perpetrator of harassment and violence was a senior officer or team leader.

The perpetrator of bullying in more than one-half (60%) of cases was a colleague at the same level, while in 30% of cases a senior officer perpetrated bullying.

The number of cases of threats of violence harassment and bullying are so high that they are unlikely attributable to specific individuals companies or segments.

Prevalence

Who threatened you?

(multiple responses allowed)

From whom?	(n=253)
Colleagues	65
Senior officers/Team leaders	157 (62%)
Lower-ranking crew	37
Clients/ customers/ passengers	31
Others from the same shipping company	7
Prefer not to answer	25

Seafarers' Work-related Factors and Exposure to Physical Violence (Q14) – and from whom?

From whom?	(n=67)
Colleagues	24
Senior officers/Team leaders	34 (50%)
Lower-ranking crew	9
Clients/ customers/ passengers	9
Others from the same shipping company	2
Prefer not to answer	5

Seafarers' Work-related Factors and Exposure to Bullying (Q15) – and from whom?

Who bullied you?	(n=515)
Colleagues	323 (63%)
Senior officers/Team leaders	149 (29%)
Lower-ranking crew	60
Clients/ customers/ passengers	18
Others from the same shipping company	20
Prefer not to answer	78

Seafarers' Work-related Factors and Exposure to Harassment (Q20) – and from whom and what?

Who harassed you?	(n=311)
Colleagues	89
Senior officers/Team leaders	210 (68%)
Lower-ranking crew	27
Clients/ customers/ passengers	27
Others from the same shipping company	17
Prefer not to answer	24

Chikanøs adfærd af seksuel karakter

Chikanøs adfærd af seksuel karakter oplevet mindst én gang det seneste år.

	Mænd		Kvinder	
	Antal	% *	Antal	% *
Uønskede seksuelle kommentarer til krop/tøj/livsstil	145	6%	88	26%
Uønsket fysisk berøring med seksuelle undertoner	50	2%	54	16%
Uønsket efterspørgsel om en date også efter tidligere nej	23	1%	44	13%
Nogen fortæller historier med seksuelt indhold, der opleves ubehageligt	127	5%	48	14%
Nogen taler respektløst om andre	366	14%	109	33%

* % af henholdsvis mænd og kvinder

Respondenter besvarede de 5 spørgsmål hver for sig

Efforts & Needs



Qualitative data



Qualitative data- interviews and informants

*“A quote from an informant”
Something said during an interview*

*“A quote from a respondent”
Some of the free text in the
questionnaires*

Interview informants

- Seafarers invited through questionnaire
- BaHDIS survey promoted, including DMA, CMSS & Seafarers.

Interview period:
2 March – 3 May
2023

- Interview guide based on questionnaire
- Data basis – 41 participants
- Sea-based (21) and shore-based (11) informants (=32).
- Voluntary (24) and purposeful (8) sampling.

	Data basis and participants			Distribution Sea/Shore	
	Volunteers	Selected	Total	Sea	Shore
Data basis	25	16	41	26	15
Participants in all	24	8	32	21	11

- Approx. 60 minute interviews: transcribed, coded in NVivo programme (168 pages).
- Free text from questionnaires, coded in NVivo programme (54 pages).
- Large dataset: 222 pages (interview & questionnaire free-text).

Bullying and harassment – general or main results



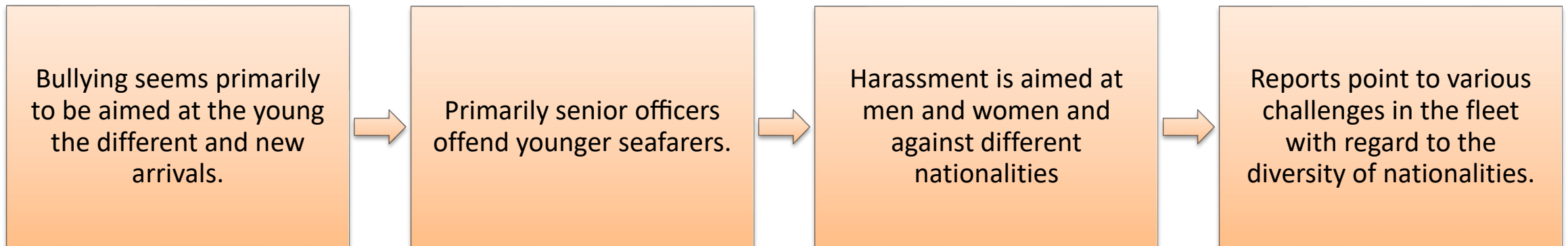
Bullying and harassment – general results

Informants (interviews) and respondents (questionnaire) in the study report a widespread culture of bullying in the Danish merchant fleet.

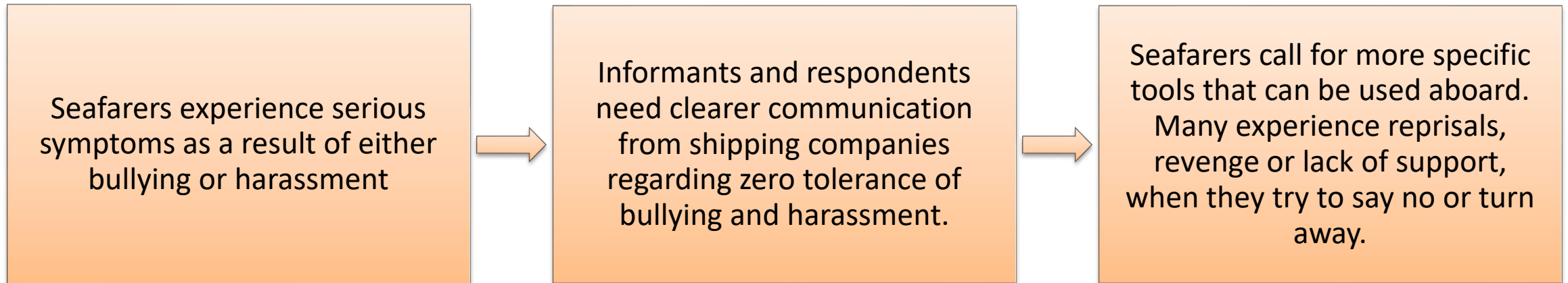
Some had different perceptions of conditions aboard:
Ranging from, happy for their workplace to, its everywhere.

Most felt the opposite: Bullying and harassment is very common.

Bullying and harassment – general results



Bullying and harassment – general results



Bullying and harassment – detailed results



Bullying

"There is a focus on bullying and harassment, and it is something that gets talked about at the meetings and in connection with the weekly safety meetings" (Informant).

"It's about a transformation, that will take time" (Informant).

"I think conditions aboard are fine" (Informant).

There are varied responses to bullying and harassment.

"And people started to ignore the person and make fun of them behind their back or even in front of them by using specific references they didn't know about" (Informant).

"They moved away from me when we sat down in the mess" (Informant).

Harassment

There have been cases of harassment, relating to culture.

“Old white Danish men create an extremely hostile atmosphere for non-whites” (Respondent).

“Discrimination onboard still exists” (Informant).

“Some employees in the Danish fleet on voyage or temporary contracts depend on earning money so much they will put up with a lot before they complain” (Informant).

Harassment

There have been cases of harassment, relating to gender.

"The older ones also have a distorted idea about whether women should be at sea at all" (Informant).

"There's also sexual exploitation between men" (Informant).

"There was this person who went into her cabin and began touching her, or there was someone lying in their (the women's) bunk at night when they can down after a watch" (Informant).

Risks factors

Quantitative results

The most vulnerable groups:

- Persons under 31 years
- Women
- People with shorter sailing experience
- Junior officers
- Specifically within the cargo segment

Some informants and respondents also believe that vessels do not constitute a more exposed environment than other workplaces.

Qualitative results

The most vulnerable groups:

The young
The different
The new arrivals

Contributing factors:

- Isolation
- Fatigue
- Home sickness and sexual desire
- Poor management and lack of support

Risk factors

Isolation

"There's 15 of us. We see each other every day, [...] That makes big demands of your social skills".

(Informant)

Fatigue

"There's no energy for the good conversation, and you're quicker to criticize or point a finger"

(Informant)

Home sickness and sexual desire

"You miss company. You miss intimacy with someone"

(Informant)

The new, the young and the different

"There'll also be some sort of bullying if there's a difference in what you can or can't do physically".

"It was like that cook who was a homosexual, yeah? And women at sea are also different, you know?".

(Respondents)

Work environment

The work environment factors most frequently linked to bullying and harassment are:

- Social relationships
- Inclusion
- Management
- Workload
- Training

Social relationships are sometimes a protective factor - at other times an excluding factor.

Senior officers are not always sufficiently trained for the task of establishing an inclusive environment.

Work environment

Inclusion

"We've had a wrong view of how we treat women and how we treat the youngsters who come to sea"

(Informant)

"Despite the diversity initiatives and campaigns from the office ashore, it's still not a workplace that welcomes women and homosexuals very well"

Respondent)

Management

"Senior officers should stop bullying and making degrading comments".

(Respondent)

*"You have to be **** careful. They're not very good at taking criticism. ... On a modern vessel, you actually have to be very good at reading cultural differences".*

(Informant)

Unwanted sexual attention

There have been cases of harassment, relating to gender in the industry.

"The older ones also have a distorted idea about whether women should be at sea at all" (Informant).

"There's also sexual exploitation between men" (Informant).

"Yes. They don't really know how to deal with a rejection". (Informant)

"So, some people have made it a habit to put a chair under the door handle. She sent me a photo, and it was one of the boys. Young men also have to put a chair under their door handle". (Informant)

Witnesses

Being a witness also has consequences.

Poor mental health conditions can occur:

- being witness to the brunt of a terrible actions over a period of time,
- not being able to do something about it when it occurs,
- fear of being the next victim.



Current efforts in the industry

Industry

- (Knowledge of) current efforts and initiatives vary
- Many suggest more national regulation to support initiatives by shipping companies

Information

- Some informants and respondents know their companies have established guidelines for reporting, others lack knowledge about where, or to whom, offensive behaviour should be reported
- Informants would like more support and information
- Many would also like better information about complaints policies and processes

Training

- Both informants and respondents mention need for better officer training in management and personnel management
- Some also report that e-learning is not enough to change values

Current efforts in the industry

"I can see no reason for optimism that the initiatives will work"

(Informant)

"I have no idea about the other companies... I have some friends, some even chief engineers. We just meet up, and the way they view bullying and harassment is totally different from what I see"

(Informant)

"I think things are better now. It's as if there's greater awareness and, you know, a lot is happening".

(Informant)

"Yes, but some want to have the tools to manage situations aboard. I mean captains and senior officers usually want to learn how they can deal with this".

(Informant)

"Many people don't know about the possibilities to get help from the DMA".

(Informant)

Handling cases

Reasons for not reporting according to informants:

1. Doubt
2. Lack of courage
3. Fear
4. Senior officers covering for each other

Views of handling cases:

- Some know their company has guidelines for reporting, others do not
- Many wish for more and better information about complaint policies and processes
- Large variation across companies according to informants – some report good process, others report weak or no case handling
- Informants mostly reported examples where victims were removed

Handling cases

Not reporting

"I'm talking from experience. Men take their revenge. I mean, they'll hurt you in a way that you can't prove"

(informant)

"A representative from the shipping company, a person from the office here, showed up on the ship".

(informant)

Reporting options

"A telephone hotline is all well and good, but you have to be able to deal with the situation onboard and be sure that it's followed up on"

(informant)

Experiences of case processing

"Things are calming down now and the person was removed. He was fired last week".

(informant)

Experiences of case processing

"They sent me an email when the investigation was finished, and they had reached a conclusion [...] my accusation was correct, and I had every right to complain".

(Informant)

"I couldn't go to the captain of the ship where I was having a bad time because he was one of the people after me".

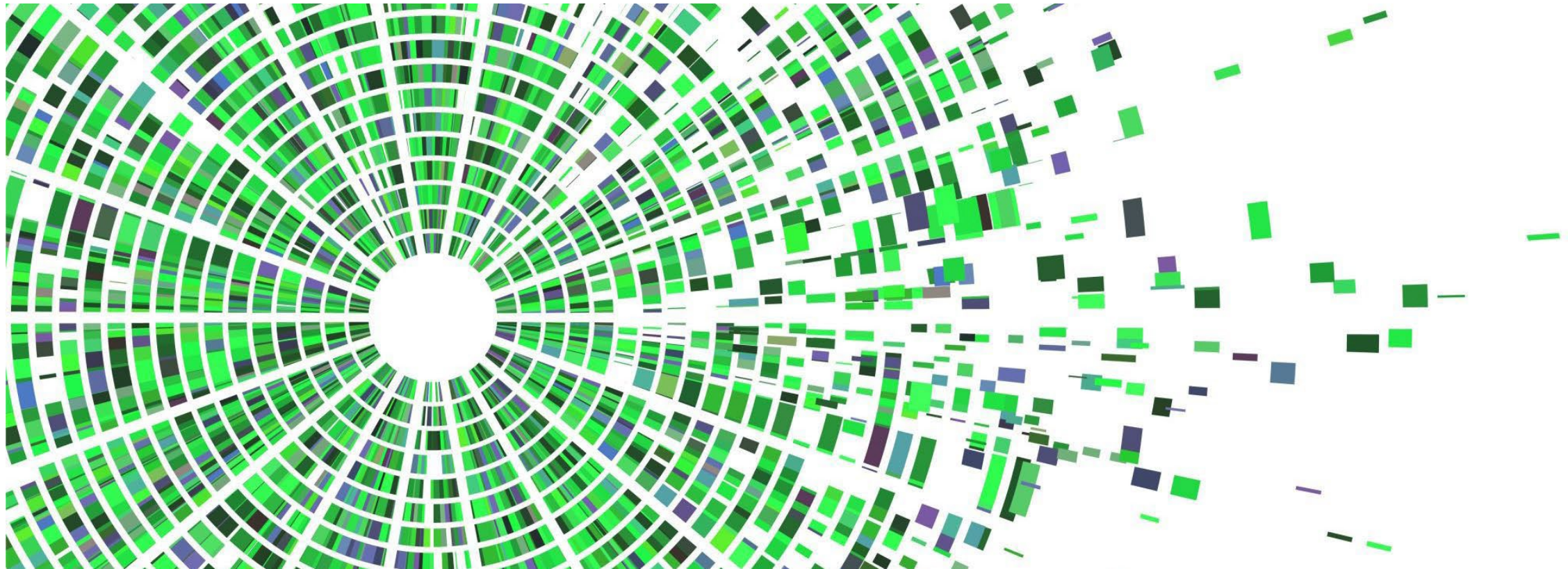
(informant)

Prevalence

The number and scope of reported cases of threats of violence, bullying and harassment makes it unlikely that the issue merely covers individual people, individual shipping companies, or individual segments of the sector.

In accordance with the overall scope described in the quantitative & qualitative results describe a broadly rooted culture of bullying, with an adverse impact on the mental health of many seafarers.

Questions and comments





Round up and summation

- This is a presentation of the BaHDIS findings
- The report presents all the results.
- Thank you for listening.



Banken



Harassment

Definition:

Sexual harassment is both a scientific and a legal term. One of the most recognised conceptual frameworks in the scientific literature distinguishes between three types of sexual harassment: 1) unwanted sexual attention (e.g., unwanted physical contact), 2) coercion (e.g., job-related pressure or bribery) and 3) gender harassment (e.g., negative comments about men and women).

The legal definition, as described in the EU Directive on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women (Directive 2002/73/EC), defines sexual harassment as any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person or creating a hostile and humiliating environment.

How does the bullying start and develop?

Typically involved more than two people.

It is often a group, sometimes the entire crew.

"It's much more fun if you can get three or four people to laugh with you"

"They moved away from me when we sat down in the mess."

It can start with pranks and teasing and develop from there.

"You know, when you're going around taking the piss out of someone and suddenly it just boils over".

Adapting to life aboard can be a contributory factor to bullying.

Indifference from the crew or management or mistrust from shipping companies can hamper wellbeing and cause a person to feel excluded and isolated.

"You can't just go home, for example, when you don't feel welcome and that sort of thing".

Poor leadership- officers covering up for each other, officers who are part of it, or officers unwilling to deal with the matter.

Consequences

Informants talk about the consequences for their mental health and wellbeing. These symptoms are described by informants as serious.

"When I came home, I realised I was under pressure. I lived it. I mean, my body knew it, I became ill as soon as I came ashore. I was so tired and emotionally drained".

"Bullying can change a person who is so kind at first, and it can make him so depressed. And, you know, so lost".

Poor mental health in seafarers affects their ability to work on board, as one informant described it: *"I'd say that if I'm not great mentally, they can't get the best out of me"*.

Mental health issues and welfare problems are also a safety risk, as another informant suggested: *"It can be very dangerous if you're not well mentally, ... it's still very risky environment"*.

The problems have also caused many seafarers to leave the sector.

Observers

Bystanders

4. Within the past 12 months, have you seen a colleague being bullied or harassed in your current workplace onboard?

	Number	Percent
Yes	472	16,5%
No	2091	73,3%
Do not know	237	8,3%
Prefer not to answer	53	1,9%

Interviews

So there was a potential to get 40 participants/interviews/ 32 persons participation were realised. 8 purposeful and 24 voluntary

5/6 segments are represented

24 men

17 women

21 sea-based all voluntary

11 land-based 2 voluntary and 9 purposeful

1/25 voluntary retracted participation.

7/16 purposeful never responded to invitation

1/16 purposeful invitation was declined

2 disgruntled

1 concerned

Informants interview demographics

Purpos- eful	Volun- tary	Total	Actual	No shows	Purpos- eful	Volun- tary	Male	Female	Sea- based	Land- based
16	25	41	32	9	8	24	19	13	21	11