STIVEN CATALYST

THIRD SERIES · NOVEMBER 2026

MANAGEMENT REVIEW

Management without theatre.



PEOPLE

WHEN THE CUSTOMER TURNS AGGRESSIVE

Threats and attacks from customers and the public: who is most at risk in Britain, where it happens in Germany, what the ILO convention asks of employers, a trial in seven hospitals, what to record, and a card for one area.

61.1%

of the reportable accidents from violence, attacks and threats at work in Germany in 2024 came from people outside the company: 10,504 of 17,194.

DGUV, 2025

INSIDE

COVER STORY

The jobs that face the public

PAGE 03

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Data for the ward, not a course

PAGE 06

TOOL OF THE ISSUE

The aggression card for one area

PAGE 08

NO. 109 · PEOPLE

In this issue

A receptionist is shouted at over a bill, a driver is threatened at a door, a call ends in abuse. It is often filed as part of the job. This issue treats it as a risk of work with numbers, duties and a record, like any other.

In England and Wales 1.2% of working adults suffered violence at work in a year, threats included; in protective services 6.8%. In Germany 61% of violent accidents came from outsiders. The ILO convention asks employers to assess the risk with their workers. A hospital trial worked with each ward's own data; training alone has little proof. A card for one area closes the issue.

Stiven Janaqi EDITOR · STIVEN CATALYST

03 COVER STORY
The jobs that face the public

04 THE NUMBERS
Where it happens in Germany

05 THE MODEL
Four duties of the employer

06 WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS
Data for the ward, not a course

07 HOW IT IS MEASURED
Count the threats, not only the injuries

08 TOOL OF THE ISSUE
The aggression card for one area

09 SOURCES
Sources and method

HOW TO READ THIS ISSUE

Figure
Every figure has its source and year at the foot of its page.

Our reading
Where the editor interprets rather than the research, it says so.

Practice
The steps and the card are proposals to try, not research results.

COVER STORY

The jobs that face the public

The Crime Survey for England and Wales counts violence at work, threats included. For 2024/25 it estimates 689,000 incidents, 370,000 assaults and 319,000 threats, against 329,000 working adults. The average risk is 1.2% a year; for the jobs that meet the public it is higher.

WORKING ADULTS WHO SUFFERED VIOLENCE AT WORK ONCE OR MORE IN A YEAR, ENGLAND AND WALES, 2023/24 AND 2024/25



In 54% of incidents the offender was a stranger; where known, most often a client or member of the public met through work. 38% of assaults caused an injury. Victims saw alcohol in 40% of threats and 21% of assaults, and 23% of victims went through it three times or more.

OUR READING

The same person at the same counter is hit again. Repeat cases point to a place and a task, not to bad luck.

Source: Health and Safety Executive, from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, 2025

HSE, Violence at work statistics 2024/25, and its CSEW tables 4–8. Bars: share of working adults aged 16–64 in each occupation group, two survey years combined; the 95% intervals are wide (protective services 3.7–9.9%). Domestic violence is excluded. Incivility between colleagues is in No. 79.

THE NUMBERS

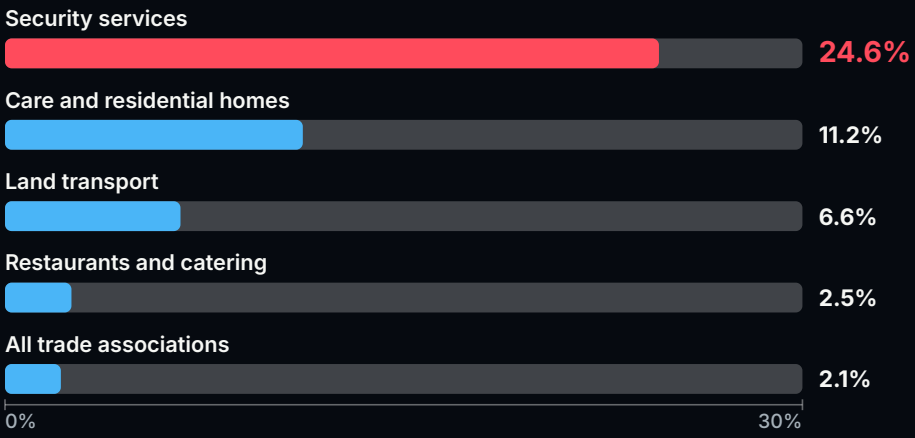
Where it happens in Germany

The German statutory accident insurance counts accidents from violence, attacks, threats and witnessing an extreme event, if they kept someone off work for more than three days or were fatal. In 2024 there were 17,194; 10,504 came from people outside the company, 1,647 from colleagues.

61.1%
came from people outside the company

56%
of the new accident pensions from these accidents had shock as the first diagnosis

VIOLENCE, ATTACKS AND THREATS AS A SHARE OF ALL REPORTABLE ACCIDENTS AT WORK IN THE SECTOR, GERMANY, 2024



OUR READING

A middling share can hide the largest count: land transport's 6.6% is 2,277 accidents, more than any other sector listed. The share says where violence dominates; the count says where it adds up.

Source: Deutsche Gesetzliche Unfallversicherung (DGUV), Referat Statistik und Datenanalyse, 2025

DGUV, Statistik Arbeitsunfallgeschehen 2024 (2025), tables 63 and 64: employees and entrepreneurs, without professional athletes; the sector shares are for the commercial trade associations and include witnessing. In the public sector the share is 7.0%, with railways at 30.9%. For just under 14% the report gave no detail of the violence.

THE MODEL

Four duties of the employer

The ILO Violence and Harassment Convention, adopted in June 2019, covers threats as well as acts, single or repeated. It reaches work-related calls and messages and the way to and from work, and asks states to take violence involving third parties into account. Article 9 sets out what employers are to do.

1. **A policy, made with the workers**
   on violence and harassment, adopted and applied
2. **Part of safety and health**
   with the psychosocial risks that go with it
3. **Hazards found, risks assessed**
   with the workers taking part, and measures to control them
4. **Information and training**
   on the risks found, the measures and everyone's rights

56%
of EU workplaces name difficult customers, patients or pupils as a risk (2024)

54%
of those with 20 or more staff have a procedure for threats, abuse or assaults by outsiders

OUR READING

The convention starts with an assessment made together with the people at the counter, not with a poster at the entrance.

Sources: International Labour Conference, 108th Session, Geneva, 2019; European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA), 2025

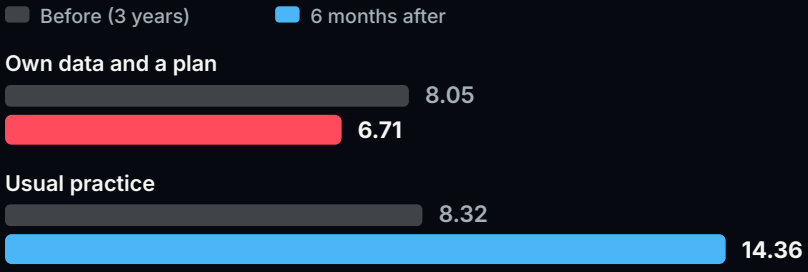
C190, Articles 1, 3, 4 and 9, shortened by the editors. It binds the states that ratify it, which then oblige employers by law. ESENER 2024, first findings (EU-OSHA, 2025): one respondent per workplace; the procedure question was asked only where the risk was named; it was 51% in 2019, 72% in health and social work.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Data for the ward, not a course

Judith Arnetz and colleagues randomised high-risk units in seven US hospitals; 41 were analysed. On 21 of them, the supervisor got three years of the unit's own violence data in a visit of at most 45 minutes and drew up an action plan with the staff; the other 20 carried on as usual. The outcome was violence from patients and visitors.

VIOLENT EVENTS PER 100 FULL-TIME STAFF A YEAR, 41 HOSPITAL UNITS (2017)



The gap held at six months, then closed: after two years both groups were higher. Injuries were lower with the plan at 24 months, 2.81 against 8.09. A Cochrane review of nine studies with 1,688 health workers found that training may raise knowledge but may not reduce aggression; the evidence is weak.

OUR READING

A course once a year is the easiest measure to buy and the hardest to prove. A unit's own numbers, read with its staff and read again, did more.

Sources: Judith E. Arnetz, Lydia Hamblin, Jim Russell, Mark J. Upfal, Mark Luborsky, James Janisse & Lynnette Essenmacher, Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine 59(1), 2017; Steve Geoffrion, Danny J. Hills, Heather M. Ross et al., Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, CD011860, 2020

Arnetz et al. (2017), one Midwest hospital system; rates from reported events and paid hours. The six-month effect came from the control units rising; the authors suggest a booster. Geoffrion et al. (2020): very low to low certainty, long-term RR 1.14. Both are from health care; the editors' reading is that the method carries over.

HOW IT IS MEASURED

Count the threats, not only the injuries

Injury reports miss most of it. Britain's RIDDOR counts only physical violence; verbal abuse is excluded even if it leads to time off. In the hospitals of the trial, comparing staff surveys with the reporting system showed that 88% of violent events went unreported.

01	**What happened**	abuse, threat, physical attack; on site, at a door, by phone or message
02	**Where and doing what**	area, task, the moment: a refusal, a bill, a wait, bad news
03	**Who**	stranger, known customer, the same person again
04	**What it did**	injury, shock, time off, a colleague who witnessed it
05	**Rate, not count**	events per 100 full-time staff, by area, every quarter

OUR READING

If abuse is not written down, it is accepted. The first measure is that staff know a threat counts.

Sources: Health and Safety Executive, from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, 2025; Judith E. Arnetz, Lydia Hamblin, Jim Russell, Mark J. Upfal, Mark Luborsky, James Janisse & Lynnette Essenmacher, Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine 59(1), 2017; International Labour Conference, 108th Session, Geneva, 2019

The fields are the editors' selection, built on what the trial's unit reports showed (type of incident, job, location, rates per 100 full-time staff from paid hours) and on C190's coverage of calls and messages. The 88% is an earlier study in the same hospital system, as Arnetz et al. report it.

TOOL OF THE ISSUE

The aggression card for one area

One card per area that meets the public, filled in with the people who work there and read again after every incident. The Risk Assessment tool keeps the result for each work area, with measures, owners and the date of the next review.

01 Area and contact desk, door, phone; who works there and when

02 What staff have met asked in person; abuse and threats count

03 The moments that trigger it refusals, bills, waits, bad news, alcohol

04 What already protects who can be called, what staff may decide, what they are told

05 Agreed measures what, who, by when; agreed with the staff of the area

06 After an incident talk it through the same day, time off if needed, the card read again

Sources: International Labour Conference, 108th Session, Geneva, 2019; Judith E. Arnetz, Lydia Hamblin, Jim Russell, Mark J. Upfal, Mark Luborsky, James Janisse & Lynnette Essenmacher, Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine 59(1), 2017

The card is the editors' proposal, built on Article 9 of C190 and the action plans of Arnetz et al. (2017); it is not tested as a whole. The risk matrix is in No. 28. The essay linked below is about an angry complaint at night, not violence: listening first and saying what can be done at that hour.

More in the essay The angry guest at 2 a.m.

Open the tool: Risk Assessment stivencatalyst.com/tools/risk-assessment/

SOURCES AND METHOD

Every figure has a source.

The figures in this issue come from the sources below. The year shows how recent each one is.

Violence at work statistics, 2024/25
Health and Safety Executive, from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, 2025
https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/assets/docs/work-related-violence-report.pdf

Statistik Arbeitsunfallgeschehen 2024
Deutsche Gesetzliche Unfallversicherung (DGUV), Referat Statistik und Datenanalyse, 2025
https://publikationen.dguv.de/statistiken/arbeitsunfallgeschehen/5157/arbeitsunfallgeschehen-2024

Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)
International Labour Conference, 108th Session, Geneva, 2019
https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_711570.pdf

First findings of the Fourth European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks (ESENER 2024)
European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA), 2025
https://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/first-findings-fourth-european-survey-enterprises-new-and-emerging-risks-esener-2024

Preventing Patient-to-Worker Violence in Hospitals: Outcome of a Randomized Controlled Intervention
Judith E. Arnetz, Lydia Hamblin, Jim Russell, Mark J. Upfal, Mark Luborsky, James Janisse & Lynnette Essenmacher, Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine 59(1), 2017
https://doi.org/10.1097/JOM.0000000000000909

Education and training for preventing and minimizing workplace aggression directed toward healthcare workers
Steve Geoffrion, Danny J. Hills, Heather M. Ross et al., Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, CD011860, 2020
https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD011860.pub2

EDITORIAL METHOD

Each figure was checked for its year, its publisher and what it measures, in the full text where it could be opened. A source read only in a summary, an abstract or excerpts is marked “via”. A figure not confirmed in what was read is marked so on its page, or left out. The editor's interpretation is marked “Our reading”.



MANAGEMENT REVIEW

Management without theatre.

Every issue, one management question, checked against the best research.

ALL ISSUES

stivencatalyst.com/magazine/management-review.html

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Edited by Stiven Janaqi, who answers for it; “the editors” in this publication means him. Its texts, translations, layout and the checking of figures against their sources are done in working sessions with Claude, an AI model by Anthropic.
stivencatalyst.com/how-this-is-made.html