

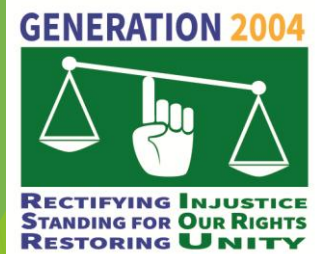
From the Drama Awareness

Transactional Analysis and
Understanding Harassment Dynamics

- Behavior and Communication
 - Responsibility

19 February 2026

Brussels



What is harrasment?

Definition

Any form of violence - verbal or physical - driven by a desire to dominate or intimidate someone. It involves hostile behaviors that damage a person's quality of life or their physical and mental health and create an environment that feels hostile, humiliating or threatening

Three conditions for harrasment:

- Repeated
- Intentional
- To last a long period of time

Types of harrasment

Psychological:

- Verbal abuse
- Intimidation
- Isolation/Social exclusion
- Gaslighting
- Undermining professional credibility - criticizing them in public

Sexual: Unwanted comments or behaviors of a sexual nature.

- Persistent requests, Sexualized discussions, Body talks, Unwanted nicknames

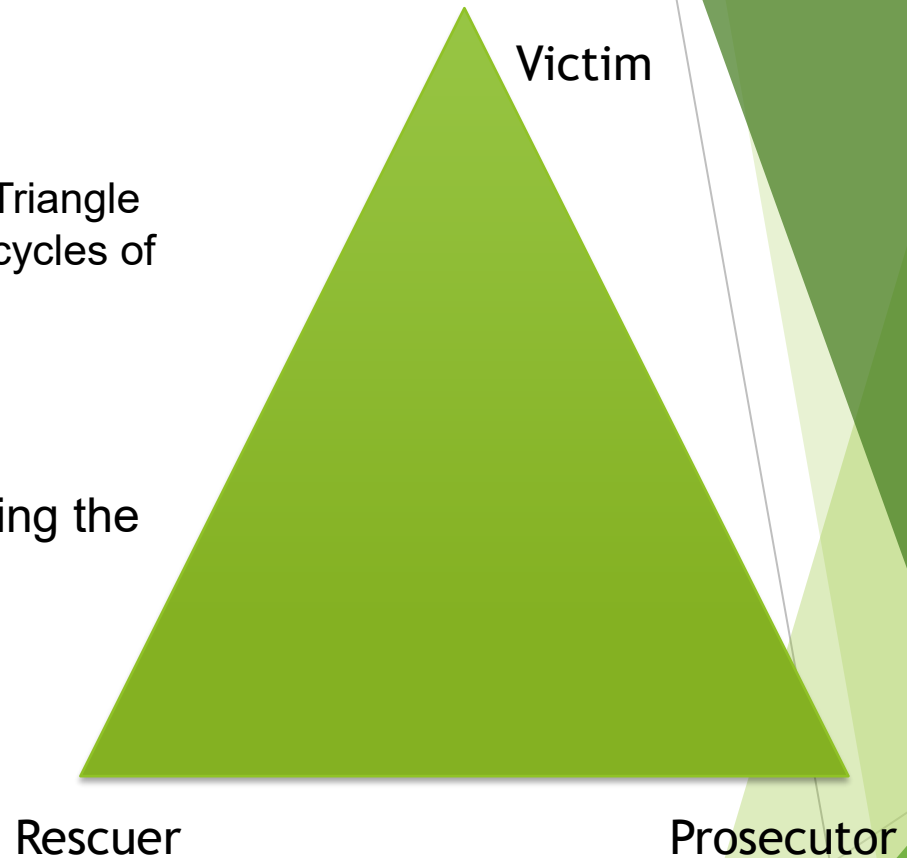
CCN or Mediation Service or other actors

- Listening Ear in total confidentiality
- Clarify the Situation: Staff Regulations (Article 12a).
- Explore Options: They explain the different paths available
- Strategic and emotional support - they are a guide through the Commission's complex bureaucracy
 - **Supportive Presence:** They can accompany you to meetings with HR or your hierarchy if you feel vulnerable.
 - **Referrals:** If you need medical or psychological help, they can refer you to the **Medical Service** or external support.
 - **Empowerment:** They help you draft emails or prepare for difficult conversations to set boundaries
 - **Emotional regulation:** we co-regulate one another

The Drama Triangle

Developed by psychiatrist Stephen Karpman in 1968, the Drama Triangle maps out destructive conflict patterns that trap people in endless cycles of blame and dysfunction.

The fascinating and frustrating reality?
People can switch roles within a single conversation, keeping the drama alive and solutions at bay.



"When we're in the triangle, we're reacting, not responding. Energy goes to drama instead of progress."

The Prosecutor - Behavior & Communication

▶ Behavior:

- ▶ Excessive corrections and control
- ▶ Public humiliation or belittling
- ▶ Isolation or withholding resources
- ▶ Setting people up to fail

Communication:

- ▶ “It’s all your fault.”
- ▶ “You never listen.”
- ▶ “How many times must I repeat myself?”

The Victim - Behavior & Communication

▶ Behavior:

- ▶ Self-doubt and self-blame
- ▶ Freezing or over-pleasing
- ▶ Feeling blocked and powerless

Communication:

- ▶ “What did I do wrong?”
- ▶ “I can’t do anything right.”
- ▶ “Why does this always happen to me?”

The Rescuer - Behavior & Communication

▶ Behavior:

- ▶ Doing tasks for others
- ▶ Intervening to fix relationships
- ▶ Helping out of pity

Communication:

- ▶ “I’ll do it for you.”
- ▶ “What can I do for you?”
- ▶ “If not me, who will help?”

Role Switching in Harassment Situations

- ▶ Roles are dynamic and can shift.
 - ▶ The victim may become the prosecutor.
 - ▶ The prosecutor may claim victimhood.
 - ▶ The rescuer may feel attacked and become victim.
- ▶ This creates escalation and conflict spirals.

The Real Cost of Workplace Drama



- ▶ **Drains Productivity**
 - ▶ Energy flows to blame and defence instead of solutions.
 - ▶ Teams spend more time managing conflict than delivering results.
- ▶ **Reduces Accountability**
 - ▶ In the triangle, everyone reacts but no one truly takes ownership.
 - ▶ Problems persist and maybe they even extend.
- ▶ **Erodes Trust**
 - ▶ Team members become defensive rather than collaborative.
- ▶ **Blocks Growth**
 - ▶ Victims don't develop skills
 - ▶ Rescuers burn out from overcommitment
 - ▶ Persecutors alienate their teams.

The Empowerment triangle

David Emerald's Empowerment Triangle offers a healthier framework. Instead of drama, we choose growth.

▶ Victim → Creator

- ▶ Focus on choices, solutions, and what you can control rather than what's wrong. Takes ownership. Seeks clarity and feedback. Identifies solutions. Sets boundaries. Instead of helplessness → agency and action

▶ Rescuer → Coach

- ▶ Ask empowering questions and support self-reliance instead of taking over. Guides without doing the work. Asks powerful questions. Encourages autonomy. Instead of over-helping → empowerment

▶ Persecutor → Challenger

- ▶ Hold others accountable respectfully and challenge them for growth, not punishment. Clear expectations and procedures. Constructive feedback. Defined milestones and deadlines. Instead of blame → clarity and accountability.



Reflection Exercise - Identify Your Default Role

- ▶ Individually reflect and write down:
 - ▶ 1. When someone blames you, which role do you enter more often? (Victim / Prosecutor / Rescuer)
 - ▶ 2. When you are under pressure or tight deadlines, how do you react?
 - ▶ 3. When a colleague asks for help, do you guide or take over?
 - ▶ 4. When someone criticises your work, do you defend, freeze, attack, or clarify?
 - ▶ 5. Which role do you occupy most often in your professional environment?

Discussion:

- ▶ What triggers you into that role?
- ▶ What would the Empowered version of you do instead?

Life Positions

YOU ARE OK

I'M NOT OK, YOU ARE OK

« Poor me »
Helpless
Passive
Victim

I'M OK, YOU'RE NOT OK

The healthy position
Happy
« We can make it »
Solution oriented

I AM NOT OK

I'M NOT OK, YOU ARE NOT OK

« Oh, this is terrible, we'll never
make it »
Hopeless
Passive - aggressive
Homicide/Suicide
Victim and Persecutor

I AM OK, YOU ARE NOT OK

« It's your fault »
Angry
Blaming, criticizing
Aggressive
Persecutor and Rescuer

I AM OK

YOU ARE NOT OK

GENERATION 2004



**RECTIFYING INJUSTICE
STANDING FOR OUR RIGHTS
RESTORING UNITY**

