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## Factsheet 43 - Including gender issues in risk assessment



Continuous efforts are needed to improve the working conditions of both women and men. However, taking a 'gender-neutral' approach to risk assessment and prevention can result in risks to female workers being underestimated or even ignored altogether. When we think about hazards at work, we are more likely to think of men working in high accident risk areas such as a building site or a fishing vessel than of women working in health and social care or in new areas such as call centres. A careful examination of real work circumstances shows that both women and men can face significant

risks at work. In addition, making jobs easier for women will make them easier for men too. So it is important to include gender issues in workplace risk assessments, and 'mainstreaming' gender issues into risk prevention is now an objective of the European Community. Table shows some examples of hazards and risks found in female-dominated work areas.

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As modern work contexts are complex and variable, managing conflicts can grow time consuming and challenging.

However, conflicts have beneficial, as well as detrimental properties relating to employees' health and productivity. That is because conflicts help to foster innovative processes and to improve decision-making, which is beneficial and therefore functional. However, detrimental and dysfunctional conflicts can put a strain on employees' well-being and cooperation. Dual concern theory describes possible conflict management strategies in terms of the relation between: the concern for one's own interest, and one's concern for the other party's interest. Besides, common goals, constructive controversy and effective information exchange help preventing detrimental conflicts or at least its respective escalation.

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