

# HOW TO PREVENT WORKPLACE VIOLENCE IN SWEDISH STATE AGENCIES - A CRIMINOLOGICAL STUDY INSPIRED BY RESILIENCE ENGINEERING

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## **Abstract**

According to the Swedish Work Environment Act, the primary responsibility for ensuring a safe and healthy work environment is placed with the employer. The current project study state agencies in the light of this responsibility. The authorities that are analysed in this project - for example the Social Insurance Agency, the Migration Board and the National Board of Institutional Care has in common that their clients' personal welfare is affected by the decisions made by these authorities. The analysis is based around of how to create knowledge about violence and threats in risk assessments in government agencies.

The common occurrence of negative decisions in these authorities is a known risk factor for producing threats and violence aimed at the public officials responsible for the decisions. At the same time these are authorities whose performance and impartiality is vital to maintain a democratic society. This project aims at providing a deeper understanding of how the knowledge that forms the base for the risk-assessment of threats and violence in these authorities is gathered and produced.

Since the explanatory models for violence at work must be sought in complex causal relationships involving both the individual and surrounding systems, it has been relevant to look for inspiration in the knowledge produced by other research traditions than criminology which is my main field. Thus two perspectives from Resilience Engineering did assist the systematic charting of the correlations between exposure to violence at work and the situational conditions that contribute to producing incidents of threats and violence.