

The stop!sv partnership



IREFREA Spain and Portugal



The Public Health Institute (PHI) at Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU)



The Department of Addictology at Charles University (CUNI)

IREFREA is probably the oldest European drug prevention network. The areas covered by the Spanish and Portuguese teams include alcohol and drug prevention (research, evaluation, and programme implementation) and its members are very active in professional and scientific arenas such as the EMCDDA and NIDA. These teams have also organised many European conferences and have lead or participated in over 30 research projects at European and national level. Both teams excel in research achievements having had a social impact on risk factors including youth and gender violence. The teams have extensive experience in training and empowerment of civil society organizations both at national and international level and IREFREA is represented in the Civil Society Forum on Drugs since its initial stages.

The PHI is a vibrant research community working to inform public health policy and practice, at local, national and international level. It specialises in applied research, systematic literature review, evaluation of prevention programmes and the development of public health intelligence on alcohol and drug use, violence, sexual behaviour, and exploration of the effectiveness of interventions to prevent harm in drinking environments. The PHI is a WHO Collaborating Centre for Violence Prevention, including gender violence and youth violence, with a particular interest in violence occurring in nightlife environments and a broader research expertise, focusing on alcohol and drug use, risky sexual behaviours and safer nightlife environments. The PHI co-hosts the UK focal point to the EMCDDA.

The DA has wide experience with quantitative and qualitative research in the field of substance abuse. The DA is experienced in leading projects including implementation, evaluation and dissemination activities. It actively collaborates with the Czech National Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addictions and participates in national and international research projects. The DA has a specialized section for law and criminology with extensive experience on surveys for criminal victimization and crime measurements.

For more information on the stop!sv project, please contact the partnership or visit our websites:

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The consequences

of sexual violence

Physical

- Pregnancy
- Chronic pain
- Gastrointestinal disorders
- Gynaecological complications
- Frequent headaches
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Cervical cancer

Immediate psychological consequences

Shock, Denial, Fear, Confusion, Anxiety, Withdrawal, Guilt, Nervousness, Distrust, Sleep disturbances, Flashbacks and Replay

Chronic psychological consequences

Depression, Completed suicide, Diminished interest in sex, Low self-esteem/self-blame

Social

Strained relationships with family, friends, and partners; Less frequent contact with friends and relatives; Lower likelihood of marriage; Isolation

Behaviour change

Engaging in high-risk sexual behaviour; Using harmful substances (cigarettes, drugs, excessive drinking); Unhealthy diet (fasting, vomiting, overeating); Delinquency and criminal behaviour; Avoiding healthy behaviours (e.g. seat belt use)

Recommendations

Studies suggest that the nature and frequency of sexual violence in nightlife settings are the result of a combination of interlinked factors that can either promote or prevent such harms (directly or indirectly). In order to prevent sexual violence and harassment:

As a client

- Respect boundaries with staff and other clients
- Accept and follow venue's house rules
- Reject permissive behaviours
- Drink with responsibility (e.g. drink water or non-alcoholic beverages between alcohol intakes)
- Avoid drugs and drug combinations (e.g. alcohol and prescription or illegal drugs)
- Stay close to your friends (e.g. help them if they are drunk, make sure they get home safely)
- Dance with a moderate sexual contact
- Elude having sexual activity in the venue

Act from the very first moment

- If you see anyone who looks drunk being escorted out of a venue by another client, inform the venue's staff so that they can deal with the situation.
- If you see a person surrounded by a group of people who appears to be uncomfortable or upset, warn the venue's staff so that they can check the situation.
- Speak up to your friends if they are making excuses for harassing or forcing someone to have sex with them.
- Warn venue's staff about potential aggressors or problematic people.
- If you see anyone who seems upset within the venue, ask them if they are okay or need help, or seek support from the venue's staff.
- Help someone who has had too much to drink and is passed out, and inform the venue's staff for support.

Facts & practical recommendations for young people to enjoy recreational nightlife safely

Sexual harassment and sexual violence among young people in nightlife environments

What can we do to prevent it?

stop • sv

Staff training on prevention of sexual violence

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Sexual violence

in the nightlife environment

The World Health Organization defines sexual violence as:



“ Any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work.

This definition incorporates a wide range of aggressive and non-consensual acts that, in the context of nightlife environments, can include:

Unwanted non-contact sexual attention or harassment
(e.g. verbal comments and sexual gestures)

Unwanted sexual contact
(e.g. groping, kissing, touching)

Sexual activity with someone who is intoxicated and unable to give consent

Coerced sexual activity
(e.g. threats, verbal pressure, surreptitious provision of alcohol and drugs)

Sexual exploitation
(e.g. providing underage access to clubs in exchange for sexual favours)

Rape or attempted rape

Sexual violence in nightlife is thought to be most commonly committed by male clients towards female clients. However, it can be committed by individuals of both genders towards both opposite and same sex victims, and can also be committed by staff – towards both clients and other staff members.

How does sexual violence

manifest in nightlife?

Meeting potential romantic or sexual partners is one of the main reasons why young people go to bars and nightclubs, meaning nightlife venues can be highly sexualised environments.

This can complicate understanding and recognition of the issue, which is further exacerbated by widespread alcohol and drug use, which can both reduce aggressor's inhibitions and increase victim's vulnerability to sexual assault.

There are several ways in which sexual violence and harassment can manifest in nightlife settings, including:

Sexual violence and harassment may be opportunistic, for example if someone takes advantage of crowding to touch another person or if someone's intoxication is exploited sexually by another person (including a partner, date, friend, acquaintance or stranger).

Sexual violence and harassment may occur through misperceptions, such as when an individual incorrectly perceives another person to be sexually interested in them or a sexual action to be acceptable to them. Violence may also arise as part of the response to such misperceptions, such as through an aggressive rejection of an advance or an aggressive reaction to a rejection.

Predatory individuals may target nightlife venues as easy locations for finding victims; in particular those who have been drinking heavily or using drugs. Such individuals may be less likely to recognise their vulnerability; less capable of refusing or defending themselves against sexual approaches; and less likely to report sexual assault to authorities. Predatory individuals may also provide individuals with alcohol or drugs (openly or surreptitiously) for such a purpose.

Social norms may support sexual violence and harassment and prevent people from recognising this as such (e.g. if women who drink or work in bars are considered to be 'loose' or if being 'touched up' on a night out is accepted as normal behaviour). Sexual violence by men towards women can be related to cultures of machismo, male bonding and the assertion or defence of perceived dominant male identities.

What is the incidence

of sexual violence in nightlife?

Across Europe, information on sexual violence in nightlife settings is scarce, however available statistics suggests that it is a key issue. **In 2012, the first comparable survey on violence against women was implemented across 28 EU Member States** (by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights).

Sexual violence incidents in nightlife environments (females between 18 and 29 years of age)*

DK	Denmark	33%	BE	Belgium	12%
FI	Finland	31%	NL	Netherlands	10%
IE	Ireland	21%	LT	Lithuania	10%
CZ	Czech Republic	20%	FR	France	9%
RO	Romania	19%	MT	Malta	7%
SI	Slovenia	18%	HR	Croatia	7%
AT	Austria	18%	BG	Bulgaria	7%
UK	United Kingdom	17%	PL	Poland	7%
SE	Sweden	17%	EE	Estonia	7%
HU	Hungary	16%	PT	Portugal	6%
ES	Spain	16%	LV	Latvia	6%
DE	Germany	14%	EL	Greece	3%
LU	Luxembourg	14%	CY	Cyprus	1%
SK	Slovakia	13%	IT	Italy	1%
	Average	13%			

* FRA gender-based violence against women survey dataset, 2012.

