



# Portuguese Country Report about Bystander's implementation

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## INTRODUCTION

This Country Report is about the results of the implementation of the Project “Bystanders - Developing bystanders’ responses to sexual harassment among young people”. Bystanders’ Project was supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union and was promoted and coordinated by the Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences. In Portugal, the NGO UMAR - Alternative and Response Women Association was a partner of the project and participated in all the activities.

Sexual harassment (SH) is the most prevalent form of violence against women in Europe, according to FRA (2014) and the Project focused on raising young people’s awareness and will to acting as bystanders to fundamentally changing prevalent culture supporting SH behaviours and tolerance. Generally, the term *bystander* refers to someone who witness or know about an event and usually chooses not intervening (see also Banyard et al 2009). The Project Bystanders aimed to change this usual attitude and behaviour, for a more proactive position, following a whole school approach, that is, involving the different actor in schools – students, teachers, other school staff and school governance.

The Project Bystanders included general activities (knowledge production activities) and the implementation of a training programme with students and school staff — named by all the international team, following UK suggestion, as Programme “Speak out, Speak up”, referred as ‘Programme’ in this report. For the sake of confidentiality and anonymity, schools will be referred as School 1, 2 and 3. In this report, we use the abbreviation SH to refer to sexual harassment.

In the first section, considering the PT team has elaborated a paper on the Portuguese context<sup>1</sup>, a brief reference is presented, here. The second section is dedicated to the explanation of the method. Results are presented in the third section. The forth section, the discussion of the results, presents an expansion of the analysis of the results and respective articulation with Portuguese context, divided by three dimensions: gender, school, and educational context. The dimension of school will emphasize the specificities of the schools where the Programme was implemented. Educational context is intended to present social class issues that emerged in the intervention and in the results.

<sup>1</sup> See [https://www.fpce.up.pt/love\\_fear\\_power/bystanders/publicacoes.html](https://www.fpce.up.pt/love_fear_power/bystanders/publicacoes.html); see also: [https://www.fpce.up.pt/love\\_fear\\_power/bystanders/bystanders.html](https://www.fpce.up.pt/love_fear_power/bystanders/bystanders.html)



## 1. PORTUGUESE CONTEXT

Since 1994, when the first academic studies on sexual harassment were published in Portugal (Amâncio & Lima, 1994), some changes took place on gender-based violence prevention. Despite some media accused feminists of being prudish and moralist for demanding criminalisation of sexual harassment in the Criminal Code, in 2015, teasing someone sexually was finally included in the crime of “sexual importunating” (Art. N<sup>o</sup> 170<sup>o</sup>). Nowadays, SH is discussed in the political agenda, and more studies are published on prevalence and beliefs about SH<sup>2</sup>. These advances are established in the Istanbul Convention (2011) as well as the acceptance that gender-based violence prevention should be a priority. Portuguese governments are attributing funding (European and Nacional) projects on gender-based violence prevention at least since 2004.

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Bystanders Project constituted the first specific project on SH prevention, primarily because the intervention targeted bystanders. This Project was innovative in Portugal because of two main reasons: to the topic - sexual harassment – has not been addressed with youngsters in schools and the fact that it is not directed either to victims nor to offenders, but to bystanders. Bystanders are those who witness and or know about a SH behaviour and have the opportunity to act. The bystander position against harassment might help to prevent further similar conducts. Bystanders’ intervention in schools is also pioneer internationally since most of the intervention programs involving bystanders address university and college students.

Concerning schooling, the vast majority of schools are public, and curriculum is divided into academic (‘normal’) path (to go to university) and vocational courses. Vocational curriculum is very recent and was established by educational policies to decrease underachievement and school dropout. Compulsory education is up to 18 years old (the end of high school). Since 2007, education for sexuality (*sex education*) is compulsory and education for citizenship has new guidelines since 2017.

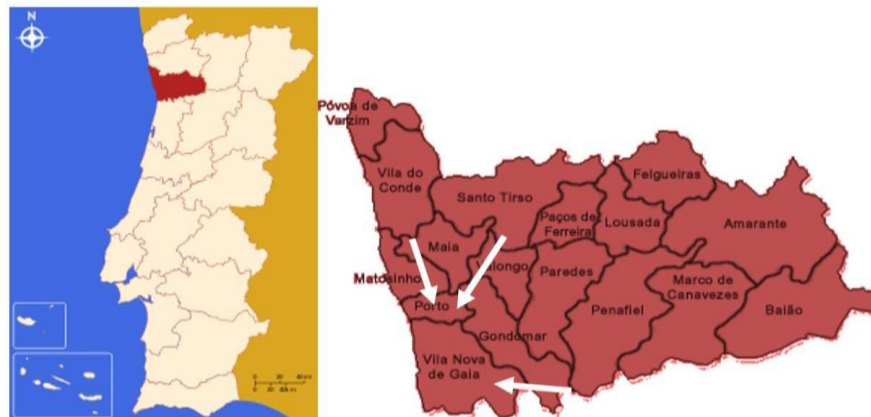
Portuguese schools are very open to receive NGO's and projects in different areas. Since 2004, UMAR - Alternative and Response Women's Association has been developing a primary prevention programme and has intervening with more than 50 schools. Despite the constraint of the academic work of the high school students (students from the 10th grade up to the 12th grade) it was possible to intervene in

<sup>2</sup> For further information on Portuguese background situation on sexual harassment, please refer to <http://www.bystanders.eu/country-research/>

two of the three initial contacted schools. To implement Bystanders' Project in three schools another one was contacted later (School 3).

To geographically contextualise the intervention, a map of Portugal highlighting the Area of Porto is presented (left side image). The right side image presents the urban areas in this District of Porto where the Project intervened.

In the city of Porto, two schools from different areas were chosen and in Vila Nova de Gaia, one school was involved. In each school, two classes were randomly chosen.



## 2. METHOD

The Project aimed to increase knowledge and awareness of sexual harassment in schools; to develop and implement a training programme with students and with school staff to enable them to intervene in situations of sexual harassment; to increase the motivation of bystanders to stop sexual harassment in schools and to develop school and local policies and protocols against sexual harassment.

The method of the Bystanders Project was threefold: i) activities to deeper understand the national contexts and social representations of students and school staff; ii) a training programme based in a whole school approach and an emancipatory pedagogy working with students, teachers, school staff, and school boards; iii) activities with municipalities and policy makers to advance local and school policies preventing SH.

After the literature review and the country context paper on SH, the international team developed the background research to deeper understand students and school staff's perceptions on the problem. Hence, the empirical part of the Project, the focus groups research, were carried out with students, teachers, other school staff, and parents. In these focus groups, some of the questions addressed were related to what



is sexual harassment, who does it happen to, who are the harassers, is there sexual harassment in schools, what do people who see sexual harassment do and what they could do. These conversations were recorded and analysed, and they were fundamental for the research team to understand what is considered sexual harassment by these different groups and their perception of possible bystanders' intervention. With these insights, a pilot programme was drafted. The pilot activities, ideas and examples of sexual harassment were retrieved from the focus groups. The pilot Programme was tested in one class and some adjustments were done for the final Programme "Speak up, Speak out".

This Programme was based on a whole school approach, that is holistic intervention with the most important actors in the school. According to the International Bureau of Education:

"Involves addressing the needs of learners, staff and the wider community, not only within the curriculum but across the whole-school and learning environment. It implies collective and collaborative action in and by a school community to improve student learning, behaviour and wellbeing, and the conditions that support these". (IBE 1985/2018: 1)

The whole-school approach is also defined by the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development as:

"The active involvement of all internal and external school stakeholders, namely students, teachers, school staff at all levels and the wider school community such as families and community members in reflecting and acting on sustainability is key to a successful implementation of the whole-school approach" (UNESCO, 2016: 2).

The Programme "Speak up, Speak out" is divided into four main dimensions regarding participants: municipalities, school board, students and school staff. For this country report, and results will be presented separately according to these four dimensions.

At **municipal level**, it was foreseen to meet with Majors and City Halls representatives to achieve the establishment of local policies to prevent SH.

**School board activities** included meetings with representatives with each school governance, in the beginning and in the end of the Project to ensure the possibility of the implementation of the Programme "Speak up, Speak out" and the possibility of establishing school policies and protocols to preventing SH in each school. In some schools, the School Board was more committed with the aims of the Project Bystanders than in others and results will be described in section 3.

**Student related activities** included the implementation of the Programme "Speak up, Speak out" with two group-classes of each school, in a total of six groups/classes from three different schools in the North of Portugal (as identified previously in the maps figures). The Programme with the students encompassed three sessions — two single-sex sessions and one mixed session — and a follow-up session three months later. Each session lasted about 90 minutes, and only students and two facilitators were in the

room. The follow-up sessions were also during 90 minutes. The table below shows the six groups with whom the Programme was implemented.

School	Number of students per group	Male	Female	Total
School 1	Class A	11	8	19
	Class B	6	7	13
School 2	Class A	15	9	24
	Class B	10	17	27
School 3	Class A	20	6	26
	Class B	4	9	13
<b>Total</b>		<b>66</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>122</b>

In the following paragraphs, sessions with students will be described.

The pedagogical methodology of the Programme focus on critical, emancipatory and participatory action (Ledwith 2007; Hoodfar 1992; Freire 1987; 2005) based on students' protagonism, promoting dialogue and establishing a much-needed relationship of trust between teachers/facilitators and students. According to Gatenby & Humphries (2000), this methodology allows to “speaking the unspeakable”.

Given the sensitivity of the subject, it was necessary to create a safe space for young people to share discuss their experiences, opinions and feelings regarding sexual harassment. At the beginning of the Programme implementation, some grounded rules were defined by the students, in each class, for a group commitment on how they should behave during the sessions. Confidentiality, the right to not respond or to not participate in specific activities, the right not to be judged nor made fun of, were some of the topics raised by the students. Facilitators ensured anonymity and confidentiality of information during the whole Project.

Facilitators prepared the classroom before each session so that students had space to move around in the room (necessary in certain activities) and to “break” the idea of being in a typical classroom. This preparation was essential otherwise some time of the session would be wasted for this purpose.





Questionnaires were distributed in three moments: at the beginning of the 1st sessions, after the 3rd sessions and in the follow-up sessions. Quantitative results of students who participated in the Programme implementation will be presented and discussed disaggregated by sex.

The table below presents the activities developed with a brief description of each activity.

Session	Activity	Activity description
Session 1 (single-sex)	Sexual Harassment Vignettes	Real situations of sexual harassment occurred in the countries participating in the project were described on cards (vignettes) numbered from 1 to 8. These vignettes were distributed to the students, and each should consider the situation as "acceptable" or "unacceptable", moving around the room and position themselves in the side they considered relevant (according to a division with a line in the floor)
	Concept Map	Based on predefined questions (such as "who harasses?", "who is the victim?", "where does the sexual harassment occur?"), students, organised in groups have constructed maps with their concepts regarding sexual harassment.
Session 2 (single-sex)	Combined Concept Map	A joint "concept map" was created covering concepts proposed by boys and girls at the end of the previous session. In this second session, boys and girls (in single-sex groups) discussed this combined map highlighting similarities and differences.
	Most likely activity	Some statements were elaborated (such as "who is most likely to get in a fight?", "Who is most likely to cry?", "who is most likely to cook at home?") and the students were asked to identify who is "more likely" to be associated with each situation, girls or boys? This activity was done in around circle, and students had two coloured cards with "boys" and "girls" written in each to raise according to their answer.
	Bystanders Video	A short video with some examples of Bystanders was created for this project. Based on that video the facilitators took feedback from them about what they think as barriers to act when sexual harassment happens and on what they could do to intervene.
	Bystanders Role-Play	Two volunteers (students) took the role of harassed and harasser and acted out a typical scene of sexual harassment inspired on one of the vignettes used in session 1. While roleplay, the audience was called to intervene and to give their opinion on the situation.
Session 3	Agenda for change	An agenda for action was developed with the groups based on their views concerning what measures could be taken to prevent





(mixed session)		the sexual harassment in their school's schools and to create a commitment to do certain activities after the project implementation.
	Speak Up Speak Out Logos	Organised by groups, the students develop their own words/slogan written inside an empty logo, that covered what they learnt over the three sessions of the project.
Follow-up session	How feelings have changed (single-sex part of the session)	The students had to complete three sentences related to their feelings on the sexual harassment, the victim and the harasser before and after the project.
	How thoughts changed (single-sex part of the session)	The students described in a thought balloon how their thoughts on sexual harassment, victims, harassers and bystanders have changed (or not) after the project.
	Activities planned and/or implemented by the students (mixed part of the session)	Space has been opened to give students the opportunity to talk about the activities that they developed in schools after the project, and on their obstacles.

**School staff related activities** included training sessions before and after the intervention with young people. In Portugal, these sessions were divided into two separated groups: school technicians and teachers. This division was carried out enabling them to feel comfortable to give their opinion(s) in each group. Despite this, the results will be presented jointly given the short number of participants in each group. The first session aimed to introduce the Project Bystanders and the Programme "Speak up, Speak out", as well as the role of the bystanders, and to encourage them to share their understandings of SH in the school. The teacher responsible for the student's classes that were part of the intervention was always present. At the end of students' sessions, there was two more session (with teachers and staff) to share what happened in the young people sessions (keeping confidentiality), and encouraging teachers/staff to continue the activities in school and promote school policies against sexual harassment.

The following tables show the number of participants from each school involved in the Project and a brief description of the activities.

Number of staff members involved	School 1	School 2	School 3
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	11	7	3
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Sessions with staff	Activity	Activity description
Session 1	Sexual Harassment Vignettes	Real situations of sexual harassment occurred in the countries participating in the project were described on cards (vignettes) numbered from 1 to 8. These vignettes were discussed by pair/small groups in three main topics: a) what they would want to have happened to change it; b) what happened; c) to identify any barriers that prevent the ideal response from acting. Similarities and differences across the groups were debated.
Session 2	Overview of students' learning	The students' concept maps were brought up in discussion in the staff session. The differences between girls' and boys' perceptions about sexual harassment were pointed out and debated.
	Tackling sexual harassment through the curriculum	Considering that the focus of prevention needs to be on challenging gender norms, staff were asked to think about ways to discuss and integrate these topics into school curriculum. A mind map of ideas was elaborated.
	School guidelines	Following the previous activity, the importance of the whole school approach was highlighted. An "agenda for change activity" was discussed based on the idea that the prevention should take place across subjects at school. At this stage, facilitators explored students ideas to develop in the school and key-staff was identified to engage in these activities with students.

### 3. RESULTS

The threefold dimensions of the Project aims were accomplished by intervention with four different groups of social and educational actors: municipalities and policy makers, school boards, school staff and students. A fifth part of this section is dedicated to the results of the International Seminar, held in the 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> of October, in FPCEUP.

In this section, the intervention results are described and analysed separately.

#### 3.1 MUNICIPALITIES AND POLICY MAKERS RESULTS



Majors and representatives of the City Halls were contacted at the beginning of the Project to discuss the possibility of establishing protocols against gender-based violence and specifically against SH in schools. Two Municipalities were directed involved with the project because schools were from these municipalities. Despite, of these two, only one involved in the project more seriously and accepted the invitation of establishing political policies against sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Some Municipalities (Porto and Gaia) decided to be involved with the Project; others referred names of schools that could be involved in Bystanders Project. During the Project some meetings and dissemination have been held with representatives of City Halls, especially Gaia.

The municipality of Vila Nova de Gaia was very engaged with this project and in addition to school activities, it was possible to organise other activities such as a Municipal Seminar, the 20th of September, and a Seminar in civil Parish Council.

In the municipality of Vila Nova de Gaia promoted, on the 20th of September, in a joint organisation with UMAR, FPCEUP and the Municipality, the municipal seminar entitled “Gaia for the prevention of sexual harassment and sexual violence”. This event gathered professionals from all the Group of Schools of the Municipality (11 Group Schools), students from one of the schools involved in the Project and city councilors (education, culture and youth). Bystanders’ preliminary results were presented in this seminar and this created a good opportunity for networking between Municipality representatives, school professionals, students and Bystanders’ team. Some new schools expressed their will to integrate Bystanders’ Project in the future. This Municipal Seminar in Gaia gathered around 150 people.

In the civil Parish Council of Valadares in partnership with the Municipality of Gaia, a group of high school students involved in the Project presented their activities about preventing SH in school, in a local seminar on dating violence, in the 14th February.

Several meetings between Vila Nova de Gaia City Hall representatives and Bystanders’ team took place during the Project. The first meeting was to present the Project and the representatives of the Municipality proposed two schools to be involved in the Project. These schools were later contacted by the team, but from these two suggestions, only one responded positively. In one of the suggested schools, its School Board decided not to implement the Project because they believed teachers and staff would not accept training about SH (due to time constraints). Hence, the team chose another school to intervene.

Political measures to prevent sexual harassment in Municipalities were encouraged in several Municipalities. Gaia representatives committed themselves to include prevention of SH in the next Municipal Plan (2019-2020).



The Municipality of Porto was an essential partner in promoting the “International Conference on Sexual Harassment & Sexual Violence: victims, perpetrators and Bystanders”, that took place in the 8-9th October at the University of Porto (described in the point 3.5. of this section on results).

### 3.2. SCHOOL BOARD RESULTS

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School Boards were approached to introduce the Project and explain its aims. One meeting at the beginning of the Project and another at the end was held in all the schools. In the first meeting, the thematics of the Project were also explored as well as the possibility of implementing school policies regarding sexual harassment and gender-based violence prevention. In the last meeting, the youngsters ideas were shared with the School Board, exploring the possibility of school suppoorting the students in its accomplishment. Furthermore, the team insisted in the development of school policies against sexual harassment.

The three schools involved in the Project had school boards very engaged with these thematics. In one of the schools, School 2, the Director was present in all the school activities related to this Project. School boards were also responsible for invitin teachers and staff for the training sessions.

Concerning school policies and protocols to preventing SH, School Boards committed themselves to include this topic in the next School policy and curriculum plan document (it is called *Projeto Educativo* and its mandate is for four years).

### 3.3 STUDENTS RESULTS

Generally, the Programme had great results with students. Students had the opportunity to express themselves through pedagogical activities. The participative and emancipatory methodology was useful to promote the debate and reflection among the students.

Some of the activities resulted better than others. The activity that went better was the “sexual harassment vignettes”. Maybe the fact that students could move in the room contributed to the success of this activity. The fact that the activity was a game, motivate their participation. At the follow-up sessions this was the activity that all classes remembered the most.





The “Combined concept map” was an activity that students found interesting because they could see each other’s opinions. In the one hand, it was important that this activity was implemented in single-sex groups; on the other hand it help students to realised that, generally, boys and girls have similar views on most of the topics.

The less developed activity was the “role-play”, mainly, due to time constraints. It was implemented in School 1, but the results were not enthusiastic (most of the students just kept as a passive bystander). Bystanders’ team attributed this “failure” also to the lack of specific training of team staff to facilitate this type of dynamic: role-play. The role-play is an essential activity for this type of projects because it aims young people to position themselves in a specific situation. The rest of the activities resulted very well.

During the project, students (both boys and girls) mentioned their preference for single-sex sessions for debating SH. Hince, some of the students suggested that perhaps more sessions in single-sex groups would be better. The third session, mixed, resulted better in some classes than in others. In Schools 2 and 3, the group was prepared for this session, but in School 1, the team felt the groups needed more time to debate the topic in single-sex sessions, before mixed session.

In general, students were engaged with the sessions and commented about them with other colleagues and teachers. At the follow-up sessions, all schools demonstrated to be happy to have participated in the Project, and some of them asked for the possibility of the continuation of the Project. In School 1, the follow-up session was after six months of Programme implementation. Students said they did not remember most of the activities. It suggests that six months it’s too long for a follow-up evaluation.

In the next paragraphs, specific results of each activity will be expanded for a more in-depth analysis.

The first activity developed was “sexual harassment vignettes”. Given time constraints, in some sessions, some vignettes were not discussed. The most discussed vignettes were "filming bellow skirt and publish online", "slapping a girl in the bum and comment on her skirt", "sexual harassment by a sports’ teacher", "pornography and called a boy gay" and "group of girls blowing kisses and block way of a boy". An analysis sheet was used to explore the results of this activity, and it was divided into three fundamental dimensions: 1) the students understanding about sexual harassment, 2) perceptions regarding gender stereotypes, and 3) contexts and different actors involved in the occurrence of sexual harassment.

Through this activity, it could be concluded that in all schools, for both groups, sexual harassment is commonly interpreted as bullying or joke. Groups also tend to minimize the occurrence of sexual harassment, expressing tolerance for certain behaviours considered to be "less severe". They often use sentences like: "If there is a touch, then, it is something more serious", "It is not so serious because it is not reiterated", "I think it is super normal slapping the bum of girls", “slapping is not serious”. It was also



possible to understand that blaming the victim was a common discourse in the students' speech. Victims are often labelled as "provocative" "daring" or as "those who do not appear to be respectful". Although with discourses minimising SH, all groups acknowledge the consequences of SH for the victims. Particularly in School 3, many girls reported personal experiences of sexual harassment victimisation, including at school by colleagues and by teachers.

Gender stereotypes were also identified. These stereotypes were commonly expressed in discourses laden with myths about hegemonic masculinities and subordination/objectification of women. They often used sentences like sexual harassment against men "is insignificant, not serious", "boys like to be harassed by girls", "boyfriends do not like to show their women to other boys", and "feminine characteristics are considered more fragile than male ones". It should be noted that in School 3, the sexual harassment committed against a woman was seen by both groups as an offence not to the victim (woman), but as a disrespect to the boyfriend - if she has one. Women were commonly seen as most likely victims of sexual harassment, and students almost unanimously said that "it is always a joke among boys". Schools 1 and 3 were identified as places where sexual harassment happens. During the sessions, several students shared experiences of have been sexual harassed. Also some of them said that they had observed or know about SH behaviours. Besides, girls said that sexual harassment is also common in public transport and streets.

**Conceptual maps** reveal the perception and the social representations of the students that will be described below.

In "Who does it", students attributed most these behaviours to men, boys, teachers, elderly. What should be emphasised is that some points of view affirm that whoever harasses may be: "someone who feels superior or powerful enough to do it", "people from different ethnicities", "lovelorn", "paedophiles", "people with a mental disorder" and "authority figures".

In "What do they do", there are expressions referring to verbal, psychological/emotional, and physical aggressions, such as "sexual compliments", "psychological pressure", "pressuring for sex" and "disrespect privacy".

Regarding "whom they do it to", it was consensual that the girls/women are the ones who are more sexually harassed. However, students also referred to: "people who could not defend themselves", "minorities", "lesbians", "fragile and vulnerable people", "people of lower social status" and "bullying victims".

In "where do they do it" the more frequent places of SH are in streets, schools and other public spaces. However, one student pointed out that they also occur "online", "social networks", "private properties" and even at "home".





In the question "How does it feel for the harasser", students thought that harasser feels: "glad" "superior", "willful", "important" and "accomplished".

As for "how does it feel for the victims", the information obtained accounts for the diversity of ways a victim of harassment can feel. In this way, expressions such as "sad", "humiliated", "violated", "powerless", "abused" and "frightened" were mentioned. Boys and girls have contradictory perspectives about the victims. On the one hand, girls said victims could feel psychologically affected or embarrassed. On the other hand, boys stated that girls might like it. Additionally, some girls reported that victims might have an attractive body and that might lead the offenders to think they are easy (to flirt with). Some boys mentioned that victims might have low self-esteem.

The answers of the question "what do you think about the perpetrator" were: "abuser", "paedophile", "has no respect for people", "have no loving family who can tell them they are making mistakes", "weak" and "will to kill".

In "how does it make you feel" the main ideas were: "thoughtful", "hurt and uncomfortable", "frightened" and "disgusted with society".

In the question "why don't students say/do something" most answers were lack of interest, lack of knowledge and that some students can be also harassers. Less frequent responses were: "because they don't believe", "do not interfere", "ignorance", "in order to «protect» the classmates (harassers)", "fear of reporting friends", "cannot distinguish the harassment from playfulness" or "they don't know where to go".

In "What could students do", the responses were related to identifying, acting/intervening and denouncing situations of harassment.

The answers to the question "why don't teachers say/do something" focused on the teachers' disregard of students' voices and the lack of knowledge of school staff about SH. Examples of students answers: "victim won't tell, or they [teachers] won't believe them", "they aren't interested", "because it doesn't happen to a member of their own family", "they think that teachers think that SH is part of growing up", "sometimes they [some teachers] also do it" or "they might have been through the same (a sexual harassment situation)".

In "what could teachers do", students mentioned that teachers could explain to the harassers that they are acting incorrectly and that they could suffer the consequences for their actions. There was only one group of students who stated the importance of "imposing preventive measures" and of acting institutionally/formally, for instance, "reporting to UMAR".

In the **most likely cards' activity**, a table has been elaborated to organise young people's perceptions regarding gender stereotypes and (re)actions on sexual harassment (see Annex 1). Some ideas





about the differences in behaviour between men and women, gender roles, fragilities and female subordination, were debated. In general, both boys and girls reproduced discourses about extreme feminine sensitivity and understanding of violence as a natural attribute of men. In this sense, both girls and boys had similar expressions such as "girls are more sensitive", "it is normal that mothers cook", "women are labelled as fragile" and "the boys react violently, they do not know how to speak and be calm". Regarding the deconstruction of these discourses, School 2 presented a difference particularly evident in the group of girls. Although many of them reproduced a few sentences similar to the ones above, they also raised important reflections on the changes that they can observe in society and refer the fact that there are "many men and women who are sexist" and that "society has been evolving" towards gender equality.

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After the discussion about gender stereotypes, promoted by the debate of the most likely cards' activity, **Bystanders' video** was played. Overall, the students paid close attention. They reported that the video reproduces the reality and that sexual harassment has yet to be broached at schools. It should be noted that some boys laughed during the video, particularly when intimate photographs of a girl were displayed on mobile phones. In schools 2 and 3, in the boys' groups, there were some racist comments about one of the black boys in the film. At school 1, boys reported that, if the girl in the video did nothing, then she certainly have liked being harassed.

Using the Bystanders' video to trigger the discussion, students were asked about **obstacles** they face when thinking about reporting sexual harassment. Fear was referred to both by boys and girls as a regular feeling. Feelings of shame and difficulties in clearly identifying sexual harassment were also mentioned. Students referred that people do not act because, after all, that situation did not "happen to them". It should be noted that in school 3, boys said that they do not often intervene because they think the victim likes to be harassed or because "it was just a joke". At this same school, girls reported that teachers avoid the subject sexual harassment even in classes about sexuality.

As already mentioned, given the limited time, the **role-play** activity was carried out only in school 1 with both groups (boys and girls) of one of the classes and with girls of the other class. Most boys said they would not intervene because "they do not do it in real life"; similarly, some girls would not intervene since they would not be able to identify the situation as sexual harassment. In general, the girls were not very participative, although they gave some suggestions of interventions, such as "addressing the harasser, telling him to leave the girl alone" or "asking if the girl needed help".

In the third session, **Speak Up/ Speak Out Logo activity** was done in all the schools. This activity resulted in several sentences and slogans against sexual harassment. Some of the slogans created are described below:

- Before harassing, think twice;
- Do not have fun by humiliating others;



- Help. Today for me, tomorrow for you.
- Harassment is NOT OK.
- Fear? Ashamed? Don't be. Ask for help.
- Stop catcalling
- Speak with teachers about sexual harassment
- Sexual Harassment is violence!
- No one has the right to ignore the "NO" of a woman!
- I do not want your compliments, I want your respect.
- Teach men to respect, not women to fear.
- Public transportation is public, women's body ARE NOT.
- My body, my rules
- The body is hers, do not touch without permission
- You have to act!
- Respect and you will be respected.
- Observing is not enough, act.
- Stand up, speak louder!
- Stand up but don't stand by
- Bystanders stand with you!
- Stand up and fight for everyone!!!

At the end of the third session, young people gave some suggestions for **activities to be carried out in school** to disseminating the knowledge acquired in the Project and to promoting school policies against sexual harassment. At school 1, bakery course students suggested baking cookies with messages against sexual harassment as well as a quiz: after answering a dilemma correctly, participants would get a cookie; if they failed, they would only get the paper (base of the cookie) with the right answer and some information about sexual harassment. At school 2, some students suggested writing a song (both in Portuguese and English) related to this topic and making a video clip so that they can share on social media or school website. Another idea was to create a theatre performance to deconstruct some gender stereotypes linked to sexual harassment. Students also mentioned the development of a school diary where students could write and share their stories and situations of sexual harassment anonymously (and perhaps have place to ask for help – an office and/or a hotline). At school 3, students suggested doing a graffiti on the Wall but also to make some posters and videos with sexual harassment situations and create an online quiz. Given that in this school we had a group from a professional course of catering and bar, they suggested creating a list of cocktails and drinks against sexual harassment and as well as a menu about it. These ideas were later presented to teachers so that they could support students in their accomplishment in each school.

**Follow-up sessions** had the objective to evaluate the Project and their results after a few months of the project. In School 2, the follow-up session happened three months after the Programme sessions implementation. In school 1 and 3, follow up sessions were six months after the Project. In the next paragraphs, a brief description of the follow-up activities' results is outlined.

The **activity of feelings**, was composed by three different questions related I) their feelings about being a victim (before and after the Project implementation); II) what they felt when they saw a victim of sexual harassment (before and after the Project implementation); III) what they felt when they saw a harasser (before and after the Project implementation). Word clouds were created for better visualisation of results. For each question, two word-clouds were placed side by side to see differences between feelings before and after the Project. The data were coded and analysed with NVivo software.

In the question related with what they felt being a victim of harassment it was observed that boys answers were less frequent than girls, namely because boys do not identify themselves as victims. In this specific question, a high number of boys did not reply to the question. Before the Programme's implementation, the most mentioned feelings by boys were: "embarrassed", "normal" and "indifference". After the implementation, feelings most nominated by the students, both boys and girls, were pretty similar. Some responses evidence that now they felt more able to identify SH and more capable of overcoming its consequences.

**Before Bystanders when someone harassed me  
I felt.... (BOYS)**



**Now I feel... (BOYS)**



In the same question, before the project's implementation, most of the girls' responses were that they felt "fear" and "shame" when victims of sexual harassment. After the implementation, the common feeling among the female students were: "disgust" and "anger", but some responses highlighted the fact that they now know how to protect themselves.

### Now I feel... (GIRLS)



19

In the question related to situations where students saw someone being harassed, and what they felt about the victim, before the implementation of the project, boys referenced they felt: "pity", "disgust", "sadness" and "indifference" for the victim. After Bystanders' project, boys referred many expressions that were the objective of this project - to promote will to act. Some examples in boys' responses were: "will to act", "need to help", "need to intervene". Feeling "indifferent" about the victim disappeared in the second cloud.

### Now I feel... (BOYS)

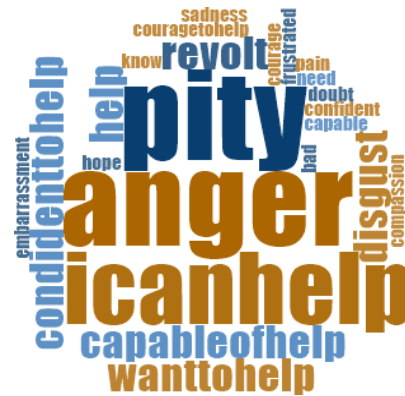


As for the girls, the predominant feelings for the victim were "disgust", "anger", "pity", "frustration", "compassion" and "powerless". After the implementation, some empowering feelings were reported. Girls now feel they can help victims and they want to and feel confident to help them.

Before Bystanders when I saw someone being  
harassed I felt.... (GIRLS)



Now I feel... (GIRLS)



20

Last feelings' question was about their feelings about the harasser. Some boys did not reply to this question before the Programme implementation but replied after, what might represent that after the discussion male students recognised harassers easier.

Before the implementation boys' mentioned feelings such as: "anger", "disgust", and "indifference". The most unusual feelings stated by boys were: "angry", "bad", "discomfort". After the implementation words that stood out were similar but "hate", "revolt" and "disgust" were more frequently.

Before Bystanders when I saw someone  
harassing someone else, I felt.... (BOYS)



Now I feel... (BOYS)



In the beginning of the Programme implementation, girls frequently referred to "anger", "fear" and "disgust" about the harasser. After, female students affirmed to be "confident to intervene", felt "shame of

the harasser", "disappointment", "courage to ignore him", "the obligation to make him/her see that it might hurt others" and, importantly, girls refer they know how they can protect themselves.

**Before Bystanders when I saw someone  
harassing someone else, I felt.... (GIRLS)**



**Now I feel... (GIRLS)**



21

In the activity **"how thoughts changed"**, some students had difficulty expressing their thoughts. Despite this activity was essential to know their perceptions about the Project and on sexual harassment, generally, girls mentioned having some better understanding about SH after the Project; and pointed out that the Project contributed to better identification, intervention and response in cases of sexual harassment as quoted:

*"I have unfortunately gone through this and often did not realise it was sexual harassment and, with the Bystanders help, I learned a lot on how to react in certain situations" (Girl, School 3)*

*"I enjoyed the project, the affection of the people involved, the games we played and, above all, to get that off our chests [referring to the disclosure of sexual harassment]." (Girl, School 3)*

One of the students emphasised that bystanders should intervene and that "we can always do more than just observe" (Girl, School 1). In this regard, one of the girls pointed out, for example, that "I had never reflected that the bystander is almost as guilty as the aggressor himself since he did not try to do anything to stop the situation" (Girl, School 2). Another student from the same class added that bystanders "are not limited to look, as many people think" (Girl, School 2), rather, "they must play a much more active role" (Girl, School 2) in these situations.

Concerning the boys' responses, on the one hand, in School 1 they were not participative: they wrote meaningless words and sometimes reinforced victim-blaming attitudes in expressions such as "the girl is guilty of the sexual abuse" (Boy, School 1). The team perceived a lack of interest on the part of boys





group. Perhaps the group might have been disinterested because they were disappointed with the lack of support from teachers and school to develop the proposed activities related to the Project. Boys from Schools 2 and 3 were quite expressive. The vast majority said that the Project promoted a significant change in how they identify sexual harassment, and especially their behaviour as bystanders. Some boys referred:

*"[The bystanders] have a key role to play in preventing harassment and violence. I became more aware."* (Boy, School 2)

Another student added that:

*"When I would see some sexual harassment situations, I was usually indifferent because I only thought about the men's point of view, but now I can interpret, and think about what the victims feel."* (Boy, School 2)

22

Students gave more relevance to the problem after the Programme implementation and stated they could better recognise the different harassment situations. Some students recognized a greater understanding of the consequences of sexual harassment and realised that sometimes victims can be afraid to ask for help.

Concerning the **activities that were carried out in schools** after the three sessions of the Programme, effectively, Schools 2 and 3 were the most proactive. In school 2, two girls of Class A composed a song, lyrics and melody, related to loneliness and overcoming problems. Students from the other class in this School used sexual harassment as a topic for debate in a marathon of debating Philosophy that involves the whole school annually. At School 3, students from Class B, of a catering vocational course, created a list of cocktails and milkshakes in the "Open Day" of the School. Some of these cocktails' names were "Don't put your hand on", "Stop harassing", "Prevent, defend and combat". The students also gave a bracelet with a message for all those who drank a cocktail or milkshake. The messages were "Sexual harassment is not my thing", "We against sexual harassment", "Don't be ashamed to talk; report sexual harassment". The other class (A) from this School did not accomplish any activity.

In School 1, as suggested by class B, it was done a charity event (with cookies and coffee) where some posters about sexual harassment were exhibited. However, the class was not involved in the activity. Teachers mobilised other students, that did not participate in the Bystanders' Program, but not those who were participants and have suggested the activity.

School	Classes	Activities that were carried out
School 1	Class A	-

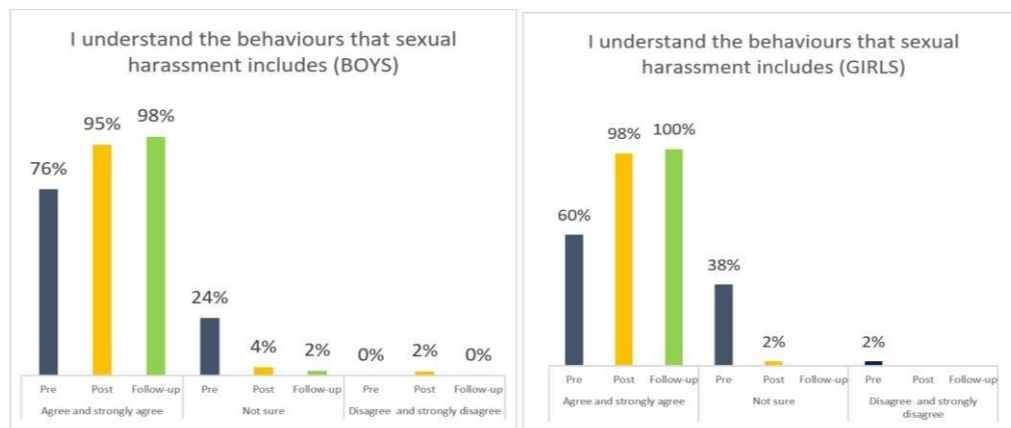




	Class B	Charity event with posters against sexual harassment.
School 2	Class A	Song related to loneliness and overcoming problems composed by students
	Class B	Sexual harassment was included as a topic for debate in the annual marathon of debates (Philosophy) that involving all classes from the school.
School 3	Class A	-
	Class B	Participation in the School "Open Day" with cocktails and milkshakes named with sexual harassment slogans and distribution of bracelets with messages combating sexual harassment.

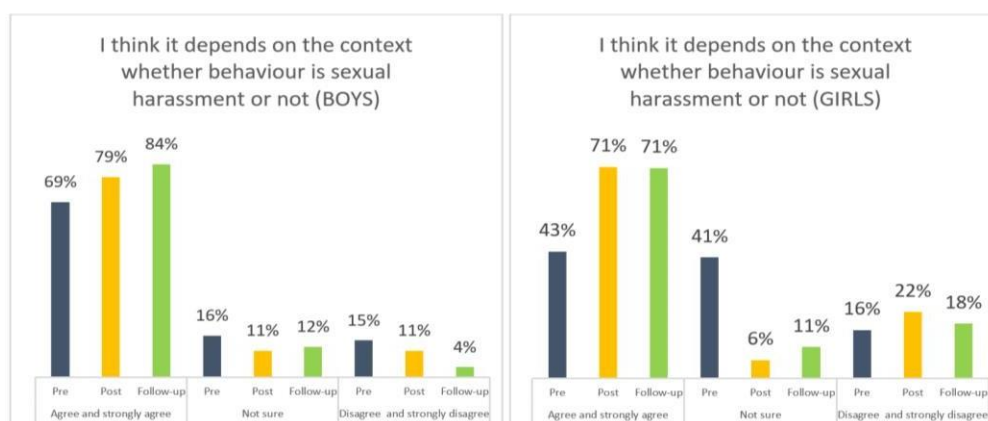
**Quantitative results** for students were analysed through a pre- and post-questionnaire, and a follow-up questionnaire. In these three moments, the questionnaire was the same and composed of 8 simple statements. For each statement students could say they "strongly agree", "agree", were "not sure", "disagree" and "strongly disagree". These topics were addressed during the Programme Speak out, Speak up, and the results are displayed bellow for each question. For this analysis, responses of "strongly agree" and "agree" were gathered and similarly with the "disagree" and "strongly disagree" responses and each column represents a moment of measurement of the questionnaires responses. Thus, the blue columns refer to the pre-questionnaires, the oranges to the post-questionnaires and the green columns refer to the follow-up sessions. Tables with detailed information about each class/group were attached in Appendix II.

The first question addressed was if they knew what can be considered as SH. From the pre-questionnaire to the post-questionnaire it can be seen that both boys and girls improved their knowledge related to behaviours that are included in sexual harassment (boys 19% and girls 38%).

**Question 1**


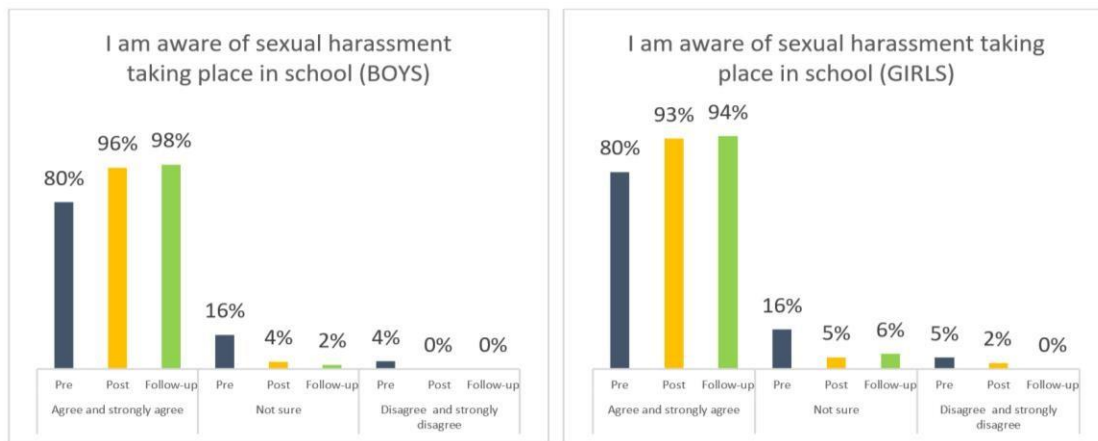
24

The second question was about the context where sexual harassment happens. Agreement responses regarding the influence of context in considering a situation as sexual harassment increased in boys and girls from the pre to the post-questionnaire and in the group of boys it also increased in the follow-up assessment.

**Question 2**


The third question was about school as a possible context where sexual harassment happens. Boys increased their agreement on this on 18% from the pre-questionnaire to the follow-up, whereas girls raised their agreement on 14%. It is worth to mention that in the follow up there is not a single student that disagree that sexual harassment takes place in school. This result demonstrates that students are now more aware that sexual harassment can happen in schools.

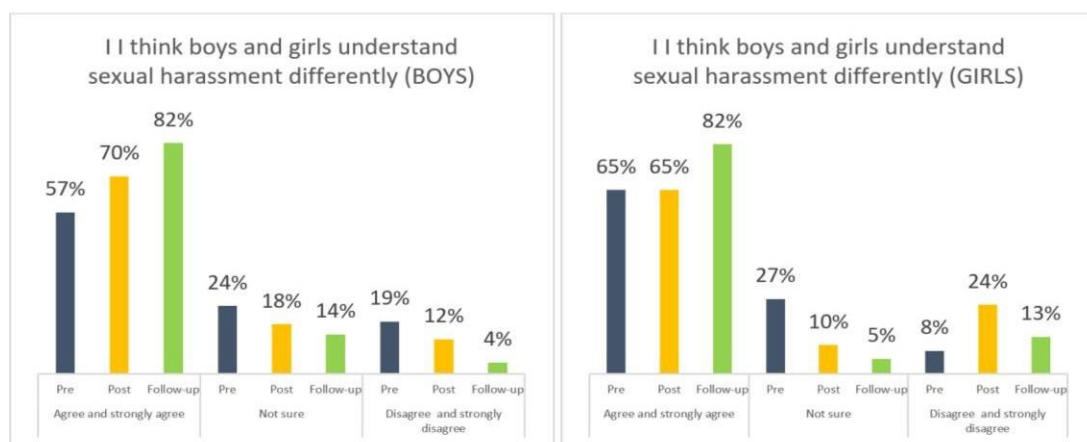
### Question 3



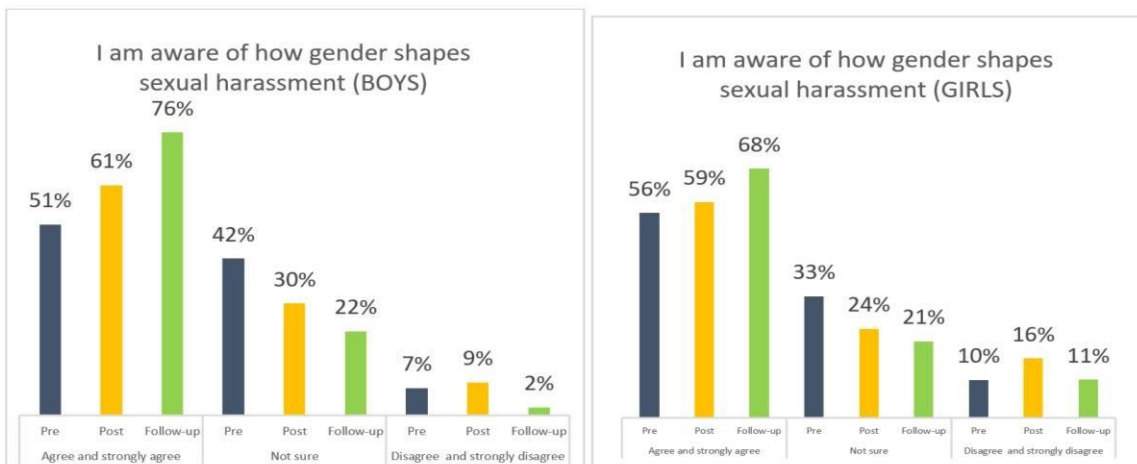
25

Question four was about their opinion if boys and girls understood differently sexual harassment. At the beginning of the intervention Programme almost half of the boys were not sure or disagree with this sentence; in follow up evaluation, 82% agree that boys and girls understand sexual harassment differently. Despite the difference not being so prominent, as it can be seen in the graphs below, the percentage of girls agreeing with this sentence also increase from 65% in the pre-questionnaire to 82% in the follow-up.

### Question 4

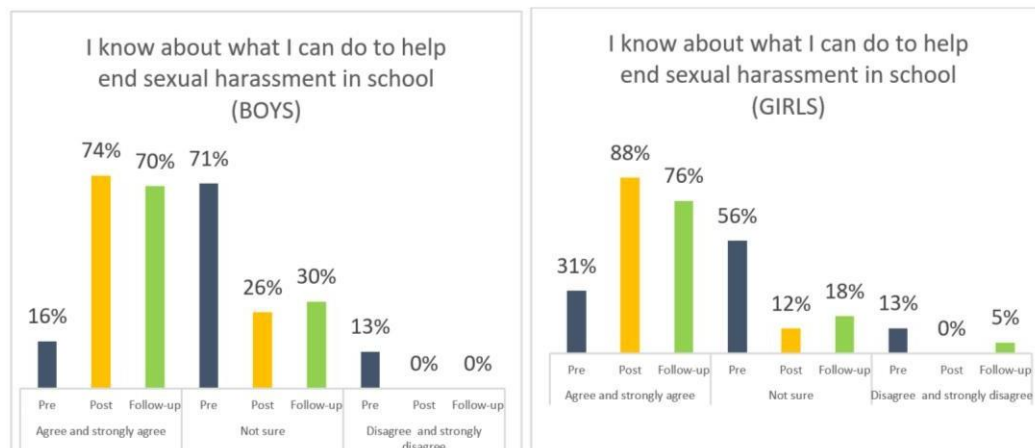


Question five was related to the differential understanding of sexual harassment between boys and girls. The team realised students did not understand clearly this question when filling the questionnaires. Still, it was possible to conclude that students of both groups (boys and girls) understood better how gender shapes sexual harassment after the follow-up evaluation (when compared with both pre- and post-questionnaires).


**Question 5**


26

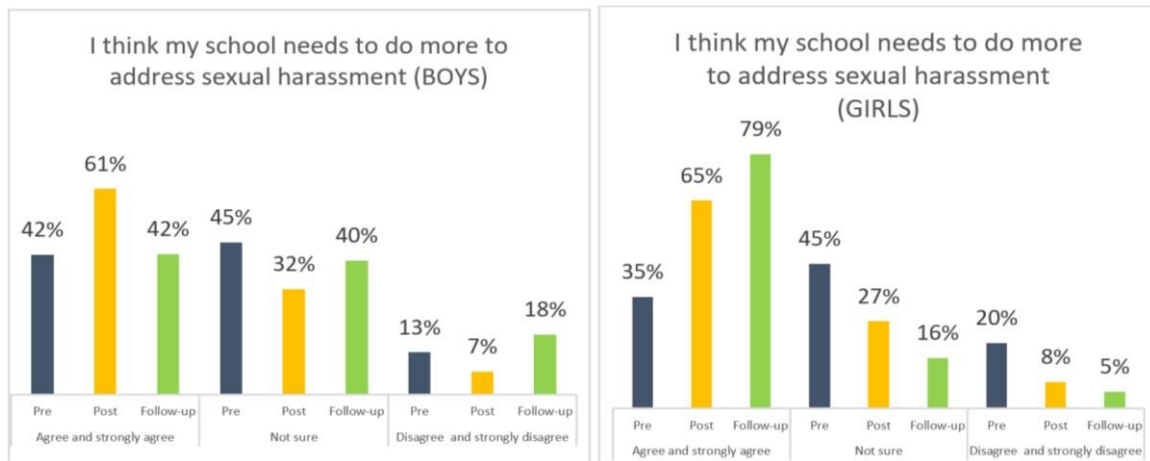
Question number six was intended to evaluate if students knew what they could do to end sexual harassment in their schools. This was the question with the most significant improvement. At the beginning of the project only 16% of the boys knew what they could do and in the post-questionnaire evaluation, 74% of them agree that they knew what they could do (percentage upscaling of 58%). A percentage of 31% of girls at the beginning of the Programme agreed that they knew what they could do, and at the end the percentage was of 88% (enhancement of 57%). From the pre-questionnaire results, it can also be concluded that boys and girls had a different starting point: girls know twice more what they could do to end sexual harassment in school.

**Question 6**


Question number seven was related to the need to address sexual harassment in school. At the beginning of the Programme, the majority of both groups (boys and girls) were not sure or disagree with

this statement. In the post-questionnaire, the responses were better, and 61% of boys and 65% of girls agreed this was necessary. Interestingly, boys' responses were not that good in the follow-up evaluation.

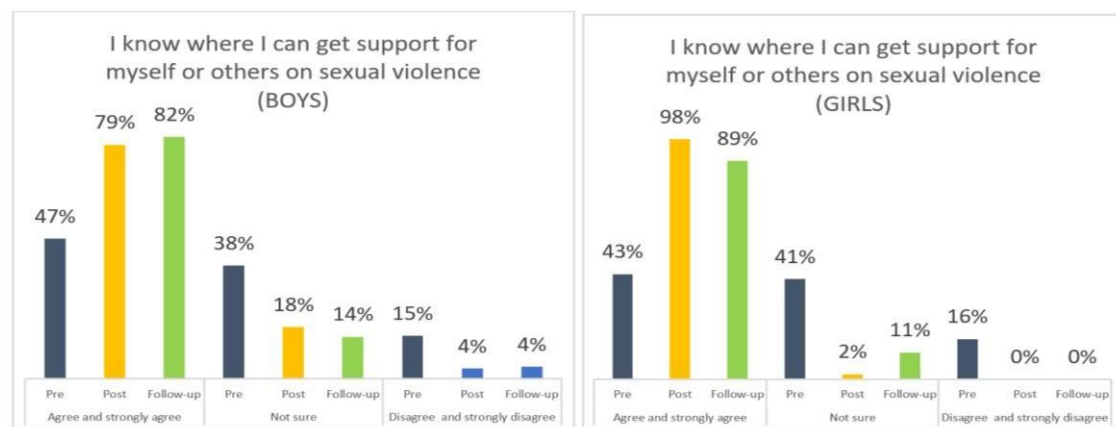
### Question 7



27

The last question was related to places where students can get support if they need for themselves or others. It was possible to conclude that both groups did not have that information at the beginning of the Programme, but in the post-questionnaire, 79% of boys and 98% of girls agree they knew these places.

### Question 8



## 3.4 STAFF RESULTS



As previously mentioned, the staff was divided into two groups (school personnel and teachers), despite this, results will be presented jointly according to the activities held during the sessions due to the small number of staff involved.

In the activity with **sexual harassment vignettes**, the groups discussed sexual harassment based on topics related to how to identify it and barriers more commonly found to intervening against this violence in the school. Staff from Schools 1 and 3 identified their schools as places where sexual harassment is frequent. One of the teachers mentioned that it happens every day in her/his school.

The opinions about sexual harassment were significantly divergent between groups. On the one hand, at School 1 it was possible to observe a gendered and classist stereotyped vision about students, namely girls. Victim-blaming discourses were frequent including the reference that girls are “provocative” and “like to be harassed”. On the other hand, in Schools 2 and 3, staff were more interested in reflecting about sexual harassment and forms of intervention and prevention in schools.

At the beginning of the Programme, in School 2, staff were reluctant to the existence of sexual harassment in their schools, but after the Programme implementation they recognised they were naive. In this period, students reported to them several situations of sexual harassment that took place in that school. At the end of the Programme, they were very thankful for the Bystanders Project has raised the opportunity to bring this issue to light.

The **overview of students' learning** was carried out through students' concept maps were shared with the staff, ensuring confidentiality of students and classes. Generally, they were surprised and concerned about the idea that students identify them as possible harassers. At the same time, they were enthusiastic about helping students to carry out the Project-related activities in schools and promoting effective policies against sexual harassment. Teachers from School 2 reported that they had valuable feedback on the Project from the students and there were several situations reported where the students intervened and felt very empowered. At School 3, staff highlighted that this was the first time that a specific class was enthusiastic and involved in any project.

Concerning the **tackling sexual harassment through the curriculum** and how to integrate preventing SH as a topic, teachers were very interested and receptive, especially at School 2. A Physical Education teacher suggested talking about sexual harassment within the theme of acrobatics, by mentioning the unwanted touch and consent. An English teacher said that she could include the topic when studying social media with particular emphasis on gender discrimination. Another teacher of Portuguese Language added that she could address this issue in the discussions on the medieval lyric. Finally, Biology and Geology teachers suggested an emphasis on "respect for the others" when they teach the Human Reproductive

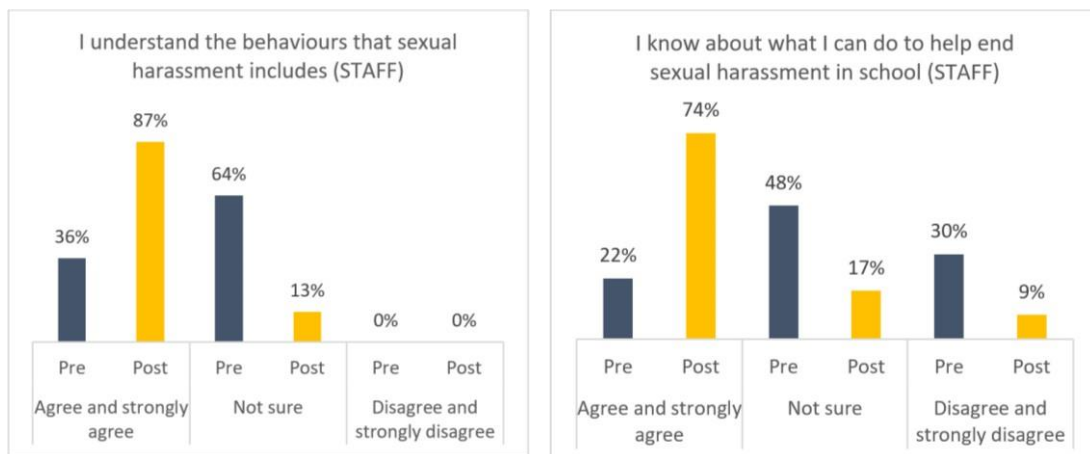


System. Teachers also mentioned that in some classes there is no space for this kind of broad discussion in the curriculum because the students need to be prepared for their entry into universities.

Meetings with the Schools' boards to explain the main goals of the Project were carried out. In general, school boards showed a willingness to introduce preventions of sexual harassment in the **schools' guidelines** and internal procedures.

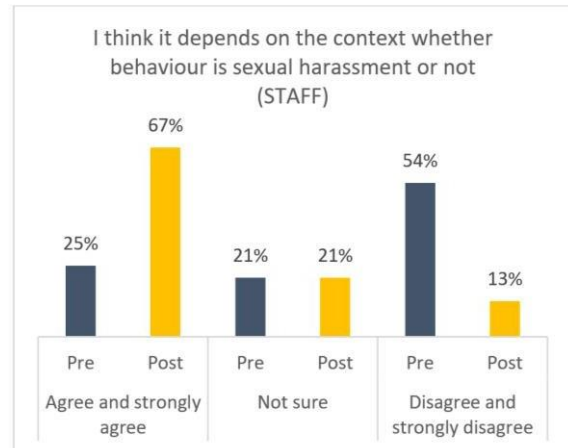
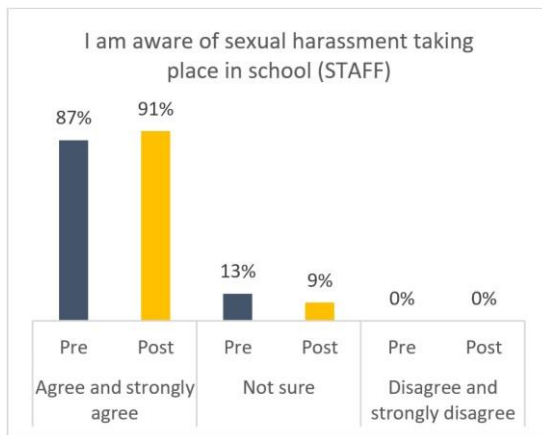
Similarly to what was done for the qualitative results, although the sessions have taken place separately (teachers and school staff), the **quantitative results** will be presented together. These results were analysed through pre- and post-questionnaires, composed by the same nine statements. They replied it as "strongly agree", "agree", were "not sure", "disagree" and "strongly disagree". As was done for the students' quantitative results, responses of "strongly agree" and "agree" were gathered as well as "disagree" and "strongly disagree". It is worth to mention that questions were similar to students' questions, with the adding of a statement regarding their teaching and inclusion of sexual harassment as a topic. Staff results are displayed below according to each question.

Through the analyses, it was possible to perceive a clear enhancement in the understanding of what behaviours sexual harassment include (51% of staff agree more after the implementation). This same improvement (52%) was also observed on comprehension of what can be done to end sexual harassment in schools, and these results suggested that both perceptions and ways to prevent sexual harassment are better understood by the schools' staff after the Project.

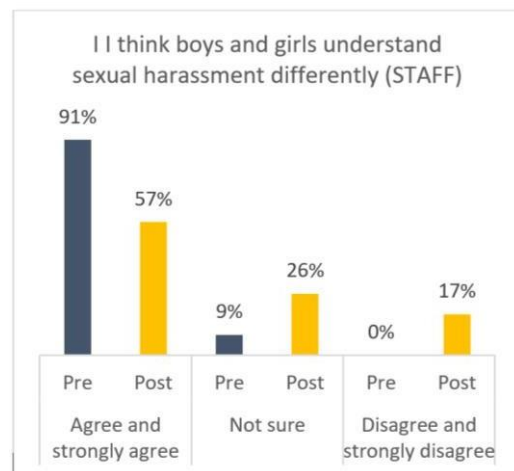
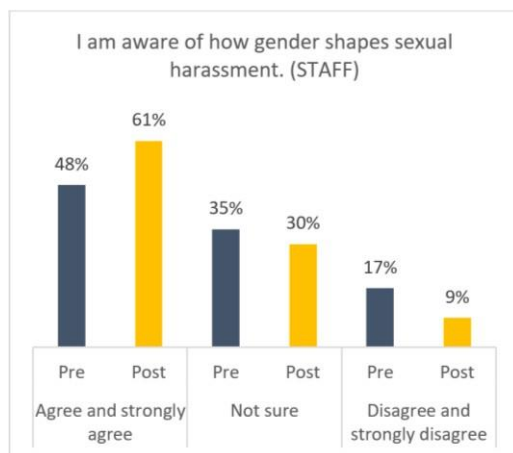


Regarding the context, the pre-questionnaire already pointed out that the staff recognised the school as a place where the sexual harassment happens. Even though the post-questionnaire reveals a better understanding of this matter, and it is possible to see that most consider there it is always sexual harassment regardless of context.

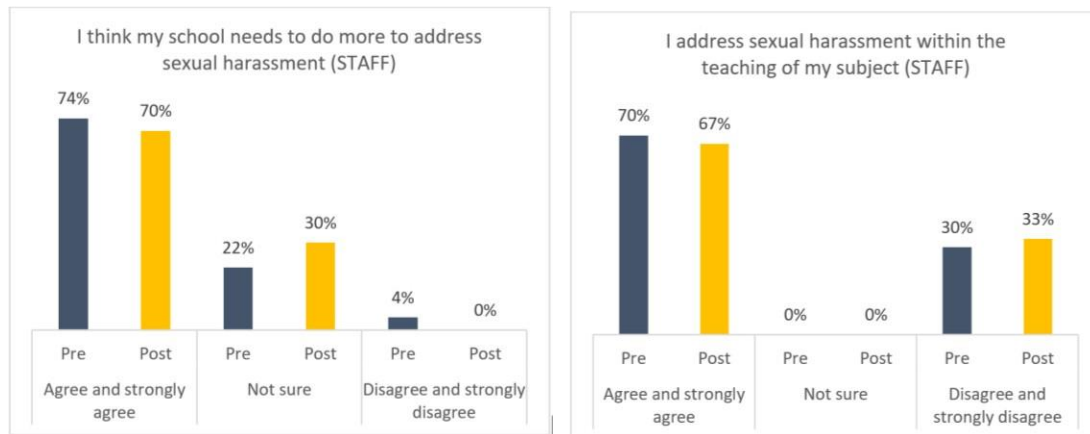




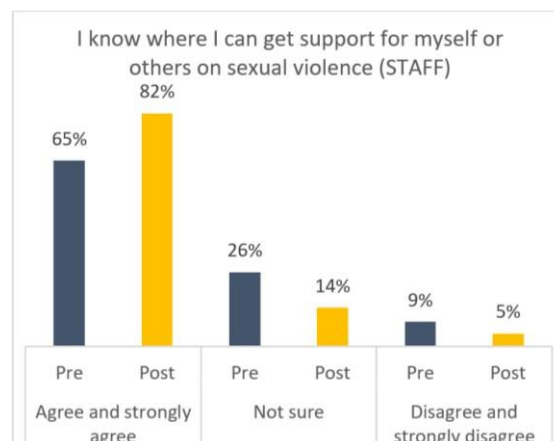
The results suggest that after the Project, most staff members (61%) agreed that gender shapes the experiences of sexual harassment. Although this is a positive result, it is necessary to consider that about 30% of the participants still have doubts about this, and it is essential to consider that the number of sessions may have been insufficient to achieve better results. Before the Programme, 91% of staff members reported that girls and boys understand sexual harassment differently. In the post-questionnaire, however, this figure dropped to 57%, and approximately 1/4 of respondents said that they were not sure about this statement. This result shows that it is still necessary a more exhaustive approach with school staff regarding gender differences concerning socialisation and sexual harassment.



Most teachers, about 70%, stated that they approach this topic in their classrooms. In the same way, both the pre- and post-questionnaire denote that the staff recognises that the school plays an essential role in the prevention of this type of behaviour(s), also suggesting that more should be done to address sexual harassment. Therefore, it is essential to consider that strategies to prevent sexual harassment must go beyond of classrooms sessions, through an approach that involves the whole school community.



The post-questionnaire shows that after the Programme, the staff is more aware of where and how to find support to sexual harassment situations. On the one hand, this result is significant and reveals a better knowledge about networks for victim support, on the other hand, it should not be forgotten that almost 20% of the respondents still have doubts about the existence of these networks. Therefore, a more exhaustive dissemination and information should be necessary. Schools should also have institutional responses for these forms of violence, with specialised professionals that could support victims and bystanders.



### 3.5 INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

At the end of the Bystanders' Project, an International Conference was carried out in October 2018, in the 8th-9th, at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of the University of Porto. This Conference was entitled "International Conference on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence: Victims,



Perpetrators and Bystanders". In this International Seminar, the Secretary of the State for Gender Equality was present and made clear the commitment of the government to act against SH and sexual violence.

This event also brought together almost two hundred participants among academics, researchers, authorities and students from the Portuguese schools where the Bystanders Project was implemented. Students of all the six classes that participated in the Project were present in the first day and had a specific moment to present their results and their perspectives in a roundtable with two representatives of each class (a boy and a girl) and one staff representative. At this moment, participants had the opportunity to share with the audience what they have done in their schools.

Both City Halls were present in the International Seminar as well as representatives from police forces and Child Protection Commissions. Professionals from all the Municipalities of the District of Porto were invited to be present at this conference, and at least professionals from five Municipalities were present.

The Municipality of Porto provided notebooks, pens and city maps for all the participants in the Conference. This conference gathered around 200 people. Professionals of the Municipality of Porto were also present in this event. This event was a valuable moment to disseminate the project outcomes and to share knowledge on sexual harassment.<sup>3</sup>

## 4. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### 4.1 DISCUSSION BY GENDER

At the beginning of the project, both boys and girls have shown some difficulty in identifying sexual harassment that was often mistaken with bullying or joke. However, throughout the Project the knowledge and awareness concerning SH increased although some confusion with bullying remains. In the same sense, the staff also experienced a significant increase in awareness about SH and a greater sensibility to regarding gender issues - although its quantitative results denote some difficulty in recognizing that gender shapes SH.

The victimisation was much more present in the girls' groups, even though one of the boys mentioned experiences with other boys as offenders. Regarding disclosing the victimisation, girls reported

<sup>3</sup> For more information and photographs about this event, please visit: <http://www.bystanders.eu/news-and-dissemination/>



fear of not being taken seriously or not being believed by others (including by teachers). Girls also mentioned that this might be one of the reasons why teachers do not intervene - because they do not believe victims. Boys did not mention these feelings of fear of not being believed since many of them do not recognise themselves as potential victims of sexual harassment. An ideal of brotherhood among boys was identified when they refer that they do not report SH because they want to “protect” their friends - the other harassers.

Although young people receive the same education at school, boys and girls have different socialisation processes, as it was shown by the concept maps activity, for example. The fact that they have made their concept maps separately was an efficient way to learning about equality and sharing the opinions, which would not naturally be made clear in mixed groups. The sharing of both girls’ and boys’ concept maps has proved to be important for group discussion. Another important aspect is that some attitudinal and behavioural changes could be noted in the follow-up sessions, especially in the groups of girls. In the follow-up sessions, girls presented substantive changes, feelings like shame and frustration disappeared and gave way to ungary and disgust. Relating these results with FRA (2014) survey, where women reported feeling anger, annoyance, embarrassment, shame and fear, we can observe that mostly the girls have changed substantively for a more proactive position. This proactive awakening against SH were present at various moments in the activities, particularly in the activities of feelings and thoughts and from this point of view, it can be said that the program has empowered girls.

Victim blaming discourse was also present in both groups in the first sessions of the project, often the victims were referred to as provocative or daring. That suggests, in turn, a difficulty for young people to break with hegemonic masculinities (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). The follow-up sessions showed, however, that this discourse became less present in the groups, especially among girls. Despite these blaming discourses, both groups have seen the sexual harassment as so negative as well as the consequences for the victims. Besides, certain behaviours were considered acceptable (like staring) while others were considered more severe especially if it involves touching. In contrast, although reporting higher levels of victimisation and feelings of disgust and anger against both the harasser and the harassment, girls also reproduce some of victim blaming discourse which suggests a dichotomy or a contradiction between what they feel for themselves as possible victims and what they feel for the other victims. However, this contradiction between “us” and the “other girls” (*the othering process*) was lesser than in the focus group research.

In general, from the beginning to the end of the Project, girls report that they feel their voices are undervalued or discredited. This feeling persisted, even since the pilot phase of the Project, when the focus group was held. This result suggests that working with teachers and staff was not enough for the students to feel their voices will be heard and their experiences valued. Hence, for a whole school approach to be more effective, it needs to become more continuous and more intensive with teachers and other school staff.



It is as fundamental as that the intervention itself since if we motivate the students to action, it is crucial that they feel this support from the school board and the teachers that they realise that their actions resonate in the adult/professionals.

## 4.2. DISCUSSION BY SCHOOL

Ethos is a specific pedagogic culture in a school, including particular forms of relationship between teachers and students. Among teachers, ethos can be found in the most frequent pedagogical methods (active and participatory vs. exposition and memory based), the activities organized outside the classroom and the relationships with the student's families. We believe ethos also makes a difference, since a school board's leadership culture is vital, as well as the engagement of teachers in communicative and trusting relationships with students.

Three distinct ethos were found in the schools where the Project was held that can be related to the degree of success of the intervention against SH and may demand more attention for future implementations of the Programme Speak Up, Speak Out.

School 2 is very active, with a teaching body that engages in communicative and close relationships with its students and organizes many activities outside the classroom and goes above and beyond the national curriculum. The school board was aware of SH and GBV and some prevention projects had already been set in motion. This pedagogic involvement might have served as the basis for the classes choice (Classes A and B), with more middle-class students. Some teachers knew that SH and GBV are not specific of working-class women and girls. Teachers also supported the students organizing awareness raising activities as well as representing the school in Municipal events outside the school, using ideas that had been discussed and created in sessions, together. These professionals also engaged in the Project and integrated some of the students' ideas in other annual activities, e.g. "Debate Marathon", organized by the Philosophy department. This Marathon is a contest in which 12th grade students debate one theme among an already defined set of topics, are evaluated by a jury and then awarded, if victorious. SH and GBV were one of the themes, which was very important for the Project. However, since this was one topic among others, it didn't have the expected visibility. Nevertheless, this integration was a sign of the relevance accorded to SH and a message for all the school.

School 1 is very active, but social class divisions are more evident in its ethos. The building is located in a part of the city where upper and middle classes neighbourhoods are sided with those of social housing. The school board and the teachers are very concerned with the fact that vocational courses do not count for the national ranking of schools. The teachers participated and were very engaged with the Bystanders Project, greatly improving their knowledge and awareness about SH and GBV in schools. The



briefing the team held with the school board and the teachers to present the results with both Classes A and B resulted in them accepting and taking the ideas for campaigning against SH in school. However, they did not allow space for the students' participation, which means that in future implementations of the Programme, the students' protagonism should be even more emphasized in the school staff training sessions.

Finally, School 3 is located in a social housing neighbourhood and which creates a much more homogenous environment when it comes to social class/status. The ethos of the school is a commitment to make a difference in the lives of these girls and boys. Although part of the working class, these families come from different groups, including Romani, African immigrants, unemployed and very poor families. In general, the communication between teachers and students is very open and they seemed to trust these professionals. Moreover, it was the only school in which the girls said they had already shared their worrying experiences of SH to some teachers. The school board and teachers were also the ones who gave their students greater amount of support for the development and accomplishment of the activities that had been suggested in the third session (mixed – boys and girls).

#### 4.3 DISCUSSION BY EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

Social class differences also emerged in the results of the “Speak Up, Speak Out” Programme. Even though schools are not officially divided by social classes, the split is evident in the classes organization and in the curriculum: academic path is the usual for middle-class students (Classes A and B of School 2) and vocational path for working class students (both classes in Schools 1 and 3).

Girls from Schools 1 and 3 shared many experiences of sexual harassment, especially in internships and in public spaces, such as streets and public transportation (metro, taxis, etc.). In the single-sex sessions, girls shared many experiences of victimization while interns, some of which should have been reported to the authorities. Upon listening to these stories, the Bystanders team asked for a meeting with School 3 and learned that both teachers and the school board were aware of some of these situations and so the latter committed to establish better partnerships with the companies where the girl's internships are being held. The School 3 girl group shared some SH events with teachers but, as far as the team knows, no measures had been taken until their intervention, nor does the team know if any of the agreed actions were carried out by the school board.

As with FG students, the girls from Schools 1 and 3 also talked about a range of strategies to potentially avoid SH in public spaces. As interns, girls felt helpless (disempowered) against their employers,





given the power relations that were difficult to overcome. They also appeared to have greater awareness of these situations, possibly because they might have experienced more sexual harassment.

Additionally, and after the Programme implementation, boys from these two schools showed increased awareness and promptness to act against SH. Because of their greater awareness prior to intervention, changes were less significant in the boys from School 2 (middle class students).

When it comes to having agendas against SH, Schools 2 and 3 showcased a more diverse set of ideas, but it's important to point out that students from no. 2 were more focused in academic success than others.

In School 1, however, the effectiveness of the proposed ideas was very different: the school took their ideas but ignored the students and left them out upon the organization of the activities and participation. Therefore, the activities were implemented with all classes in school except Classes A and B, possibly because these students are from working-class backgrounds (more research would have to be conducted on this matter). In the follow up session, these students did not know if the activities that had been organized were related to what they had initially suggested or had anything to do with the Project.

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## CONCLUSIONS

The Bystanders project comes out in a particular historical moment for sexual harassment prevention in Portugal. The debate about sexual violence, including SH, is currently in the political agenda and in the media, mostly due to the Istanbul Convention and the *MeToo* movement, which recently gained notoriety<sup>4</sup>. Although Portugal is under the European Directive on Safety and Health at Work, 89/391/EEC (June 12th, 1989), and the Council Resolution on the Protection and Dignity of Women and Men at Work, 90/C157/02 (May 29th, 1990) and used them for its Labour Code<sup>5</sup> (for sexual harassment prevention), the truth is SH in the workplace is only punishable with a fine and the women can only rely on the management's sympathy (whenever they are not the abusers) (Magalhães et al, 2011). In Portugal's Criminal Code, SH is not explicitly criminalized, even if some of the behaviors can be included in the article no. 170 ("importunating") and sexual coercion (article no. 163).

<sup>4</sup> The MeToo movement was created in 2006, by Tarana Burke, to help poor women of color who were survivors of sexual violence.

<sup>5</sup> DL n.º 441/91, from 14th November and DL n.º 25/94, from 1st February.



The Bystanders project visibility in the media has contributed in keeping the public debate and awareness about SH going, as well as the political and social scenarios that facilitated our intervention in schools, although the developed work started from scratch.

The conclusions we're presenting will be organized based on the Project results and its dimensions, which are related to the following objectives: i) recognizing and awareness of SH, the achievements in increased awareness and recognition and the remaining contradictions; ii) the change of students' attitudes and behaviours as bystanders in schools, towards SH; iii) understanding how school boards and town councils have taken action in the development of local policies to prevent of SH in schools.

### Recognition and awareness of SH: achievements and prevailing contradictions

One of the main achievements of the Project was the increase of awareness and recognition of SH and its consequences, by the students who participated in the *Speak Up / Speak Out* sessions. The students groups clearly recognized sexual harassment situations better after the Project's implementation. There were some differences, however, between the groups that participated in the focus group and those who benefited from the intervention: the first group understood that SH is one aspect on a continuum of violence; the second group did not share the same experience. The second group was able to identify harassment as a form of sexual violence and as gender-based violence, but they did not mention it clearly as normative and as functional as discussed by Liz Kelly (1998).

The chosen methodology for the *Speak Up / Speak Out* programme relied on participation and on an emancipatory perspective, by working with the students' views and opinions, so they could learn to question them and grow. From the beginning until the follow up sessions none of the *Speak Up / Speak Out* programme classes mentioned the concept of continuum of violence.

The single-sex sessions, particularly the ones with underprivileged girls, served as safe spaces for sharing their SH experiences as interns, something that didn't happen in mixed-sex sessions. These moments were perfect for bonding and strengthening the sense of sorority, which may have contributed to the decrease of victim blaming and othering.

While awareness and recognition increased with intervention, some contradictions are still present. A first one has to do with catcalling not being perceived as a serious threat or if harassment doesn't involve touching is seen as less severe, both of these meaning there's awareness of SH but not all aspects of how problematic it is have been fully grasped, as these students are still struggling on how to balance the patriarchal culture they live in with this new knowledge and information. However, this first contradiction



isn't so obvious amongst those students who come from underprivileged backgrounds, since their working experience in internships made them more aware.

A second contradiction, seen only in a handful of girls but across all of the girls groups (focus group and intervention classes alike), comes from the feeling of othering among them, that is, women and girls rarely identify with each other. Due to a patriarchal socialization that pits women and girls against each other (something that prevails in Portuguese culture), dividing them in two separate categories – pure/virginal and seductress/femme fatale/prostitute (Mota-Ribeiro, 2005: 26-28; Barreno, 1985; 1976), girls may still align with victim blaming discourse.

A third contradiction stems from the feeling of brotherhood tied to hegemonic masculinity: although there's a greater awareness of SH, simultaneously, there's a minimization of its seriousness. This means that boys and girls are able to identify and recognize SH in a cognitive level but, when it happens in real life between themselves, boys have a tendency to downplay the violence and highlight the range of severity within SH, meaning they may say the SH event was no more than a joke, that it meant no harm which, in itself, is also a sign of male solidarity and a strong sense of brotherhood. In this case, the majority of boys might be trying to cope with what they do and what they now know that constitutes harassment. The small group of girls that were mentioned above also participated in this downgrading of violence, most likely because their awareness is still taking its first steps.

We found a contraction in the staff and teacher's discourses: on the one hand, they see SH as grooming and *natural* in those ages, and on the other, expressed that SH unusual, particularly unusual in schools and without seriousness enough to be considered a priority. This was evident in the beginning of the intervention and, at the end of the Project, despite some examples in the data were presented, some teachers still did not recognize sexual harassment clearly as gender-based violence.

When it comes to adults, the results indicate that there wasn't much of an increase of awareness like the students benefited from. The majority of teachers and a great part of the staff stuck with the victim blaming behavior. Despite the Project's Whole School Approach philosophy, the intervention with the teachers wasn't enough. The results also indicate that there was, in fact, a betterment in the awareness that SH exists in schools, however, the idea that this type of violence is seen as something natural, as a rite of passage or even as part of the courtship process was still evident. In this way, boys harassed because they are trying to get girls' attention. This conception of harassment as a necessary precursor of intimate relationships is directly related to masculinities, heteronormativity and gender norms – where boys had to take the lead to *conquer* (all?) girls.

This intervention with teachers was planned as an addition to the students' one, which was our main focus. Overall, looking at the whole Project, we realize the *Speak Up / Speak Out* programme should have included more intervention sessions with the teachers. In the future, intervention with teachers should definitely

take place as well as working more closely with other school staff, at least in Portugal, since they spend a lot of time in the more informal locations and places in school.

### Changes in young people's attitudes and behaviors as bystanders

Since the beginning of the Project, students recognised that sexual harassment happens in schools and at the end of the project acknowledge further the importance of addressing this topic in schools.

Another main goal of the Project was to spark and trigger the willingness to action and knowledge to intervene as bystanders and the findings were very clear about the great changes and transformations that took place amongst the youth.

This objective included the development of activities in the school created and organized by the young people. In all classes, students shared original ideas about how to prevent SH as bystanders. However, the involvement with this Project goal was more difficult in the sports' vocational group, where boys are the majority of the class. This might have to do with their lack of interest about debating this topic, but it can perhaps be related to the fact that they comply with the hegemonic masculinities and intentionally resist the debating on these topics (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Robinson, 2005). Half of the classes (3 out of 6) implemented activities and one 4<sup>th</sup> class did not do it because the schoolboard did not give them conditions.

After the implementation there was bigger need to act as bystanders by the students. Students increased their knowledge on how to intervene but, perhaps more importantly, it was clear that they now wish to do it.

This was explicit in the follow-up sessions, particularly in the feelings activities, where students described that after the Bystanders' project they «want», «feel more encouraged to», «have the willingness» and «know how» to intervene in sexual harassment situations. After the Project implementation, another significant finding was the change in the girls' feelings: they repeatedly mentioned "anger" and "revolt" about the SH and harassers. This is an important result in particular if we consider that accordingly literature these feelings traditionally has been connected to the action as well as social and political transformations (Brody, 1997; Holmes, 2004; Jaggar, 1989). Furthermore, Stein (2012) also points out the usefulness of anger for survival and activism. If, in the beginning of the intervention, shame, fear, compassion and pity were the most common feelings expressed by girls, by the end, anger, revolt and willingness to help were frequently mentioned.

All these changes suggest that students, especially girls, were awakened to play an increasingly active role in preventing sexual harassment.

Most of the activities foreseen for the classes were developed.

The prevailing victim blaming discourses amongst the staff and the teachers are dangerous and counterproductive for preventing SH. Whenever these adults support the idea that victims are the ones to blame by, for instance, advising girls not to bring certain types of clothing to school, they are reinforcing victim blaming and gender norms, that is, prevention is based on conservative and traditional ideologies. It is important to know a little bit more about the school ethos to carefully plan the intervention and empower staff and teachers to be active bystanders.

### Curriculum and policy development in schools against Sexual Harassment

Regarding the inclusion of sexual harassment in their curriculums, it was clear that this was not a priority for most of the teachers. However, thanks to the Project, some teachers were more receptive to include this topic in their subject's curriculum (e.g. Portuguese, English, French, Geography and, obviously, in Sex Ed. and Citizen Education). Bullying, teen dating violence and domestic violence were the topics mentioned as priorities.

In some schools the focus on students' academic achievement shadowed the relevance of topics related to the youth's daily lives. Hence, in future implementations of the *Speak Up / Speak Out* Project, the promotion of children and adolescents' well-being should be considered a substantial step to academic success. Violence of any kind is known to have serious consequences to its victims (for violence against women see e.g. Liz Kelly, 1998; Fitzgerald, 1993; Gruber & Fineran, 2007), which is another reason why all forms of gender based violence should be approached in schools. When it comes to children and young people, abuse may cause delay in cognitive growth, memory failure, damper academic achievement and even class or school dropout.

Portuguese schools have specific spaces/timings created to debate these kind of topics, namely Citizen Education and Sex Ed. However, since SH is so naturalised, these matters should be clearly included, so as to stop being part of the hidden curriculum (Giroux, 1983, 1999; Carr, Wilfred & Kemmis, 2004). The implementation of this project should, for future reference, create more spaces for pedagogical debates with the teachers, so these concerns can go from the hidden to the overt curriculum (*idem*).



Where implementation of local policies is concerned, the Project's impact is of major relevance: three of the participating schools agreed and committed to include SH prevention in their Local Education Policy<sup>6</sup>; and out of two municipalities, one also committed to include SH in their Municipal Education Policy<sup>7</sup>.

Considering Portugal has initiated SH intervention in education from scratch, the findings of this Project have a substantial impact. It is down to us to be on the lookout and make sure that these institutions will deliver.

General conclusions about the Project are that it addressed the main purposes to increase knowledge about sexual harassment, and promoted the bystanders' action. The methodology was clearly a good decision for the aims of the Project. The fact that students had the opportunity to actively participate, through an emancipatory methodology provides stronger changes in long-term (Gatenby & Maria Humphries, 2000).

Finally, the school *ethos* was, indeed, an important factor to give young people a space for their voices.

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<sup>6</sup> Schools have a five year mandate which, in this case ends in 2019. By then, they will have to make another local education policy that included SH (*Projeto Educativo de Agrupamento*).

<sup>7</sup> In Portuguese *Projeto Educativo Municipal*.



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## APPENDIX

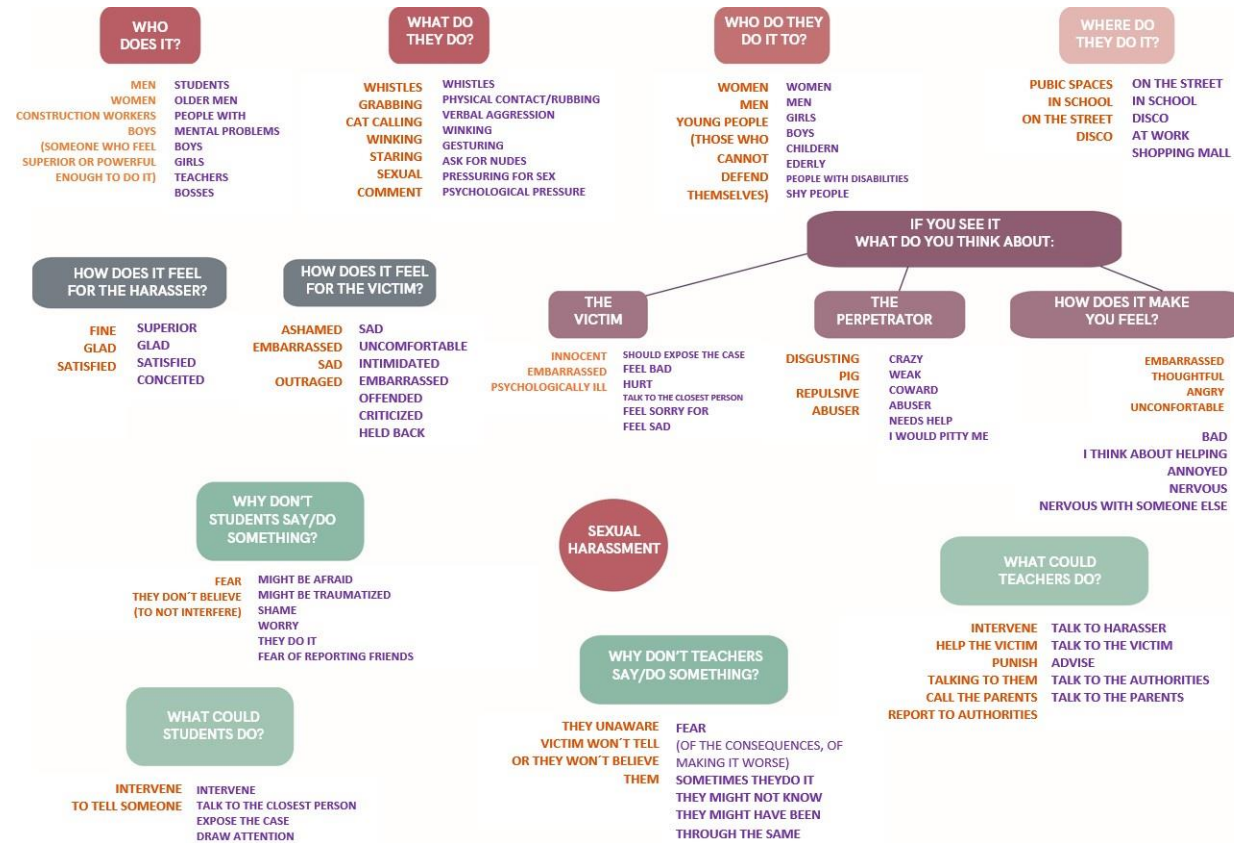




# BYSTANDERS

## ANNEX I - CONCEPT MAPS

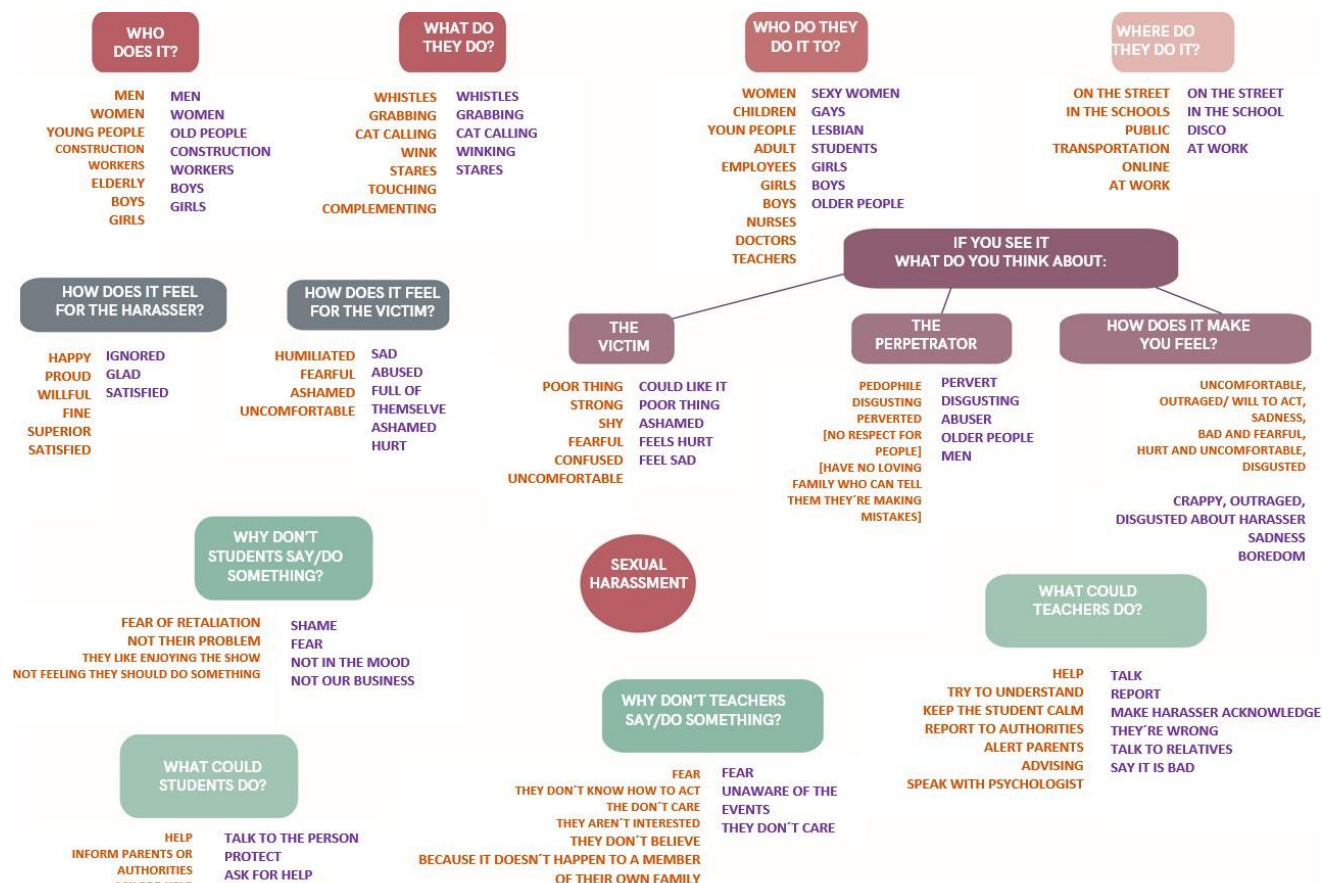
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# BYSTANDERS

School: 1 Group: B

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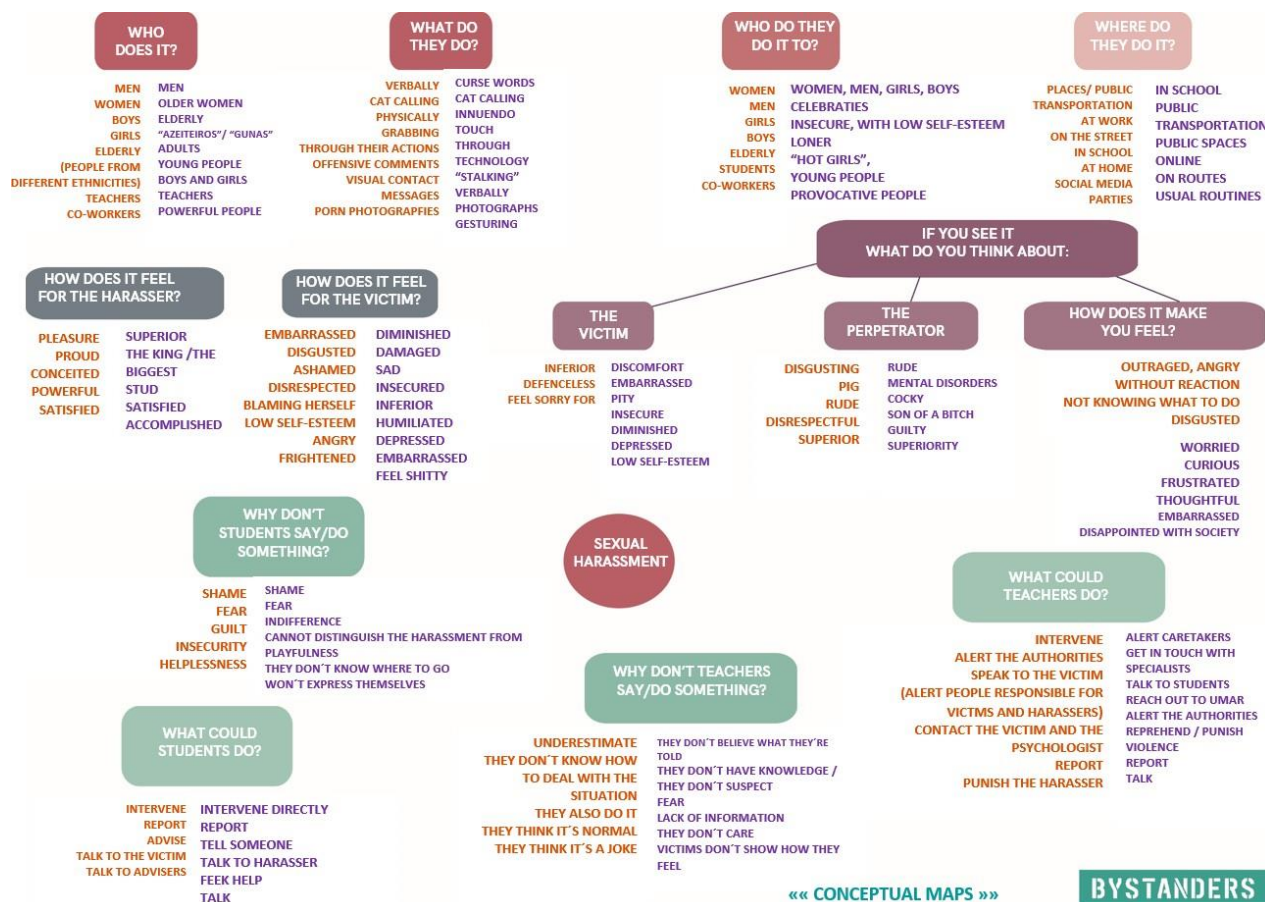
BYSTANDERS



# BYSTANDERS

School: 2 Group: A

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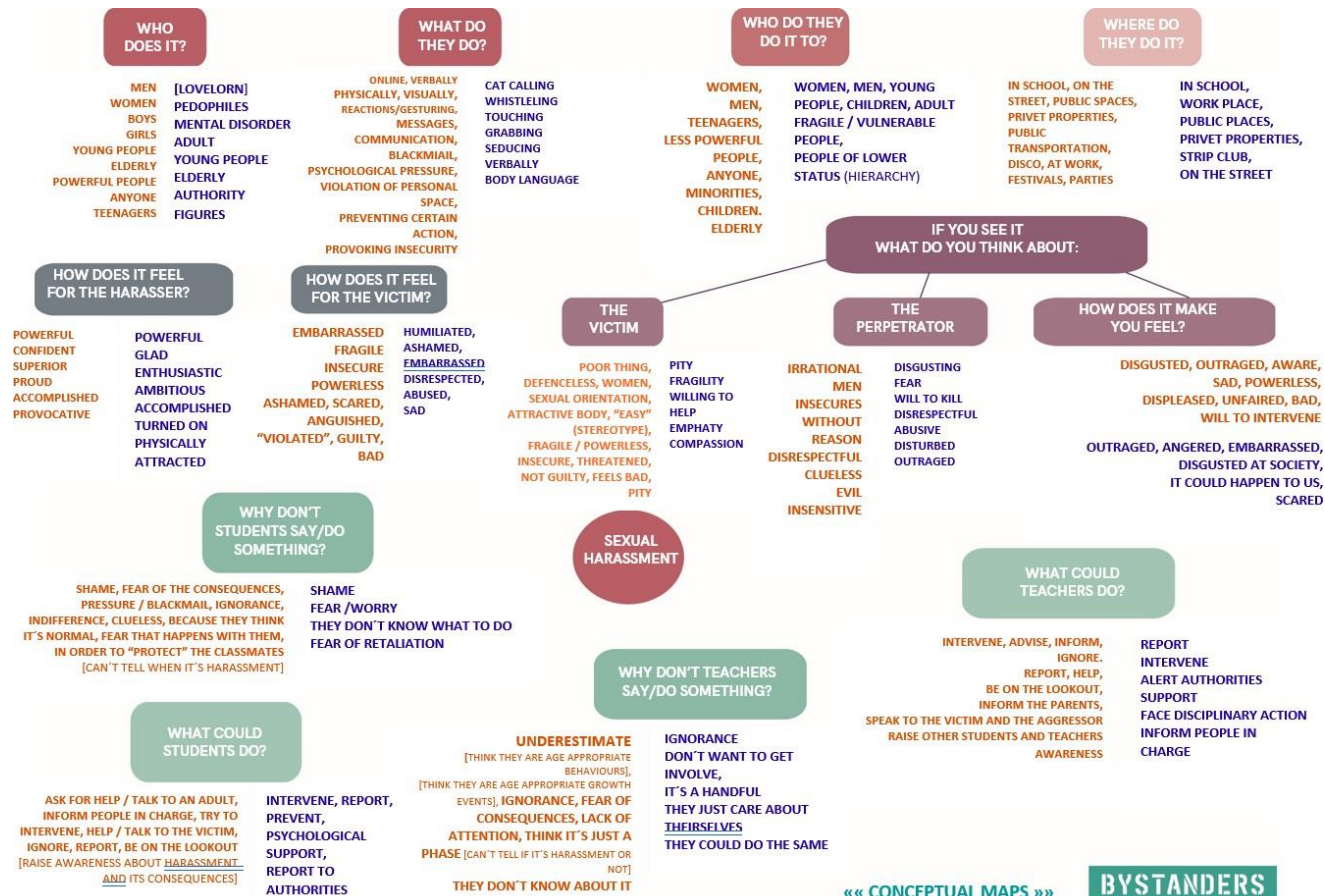




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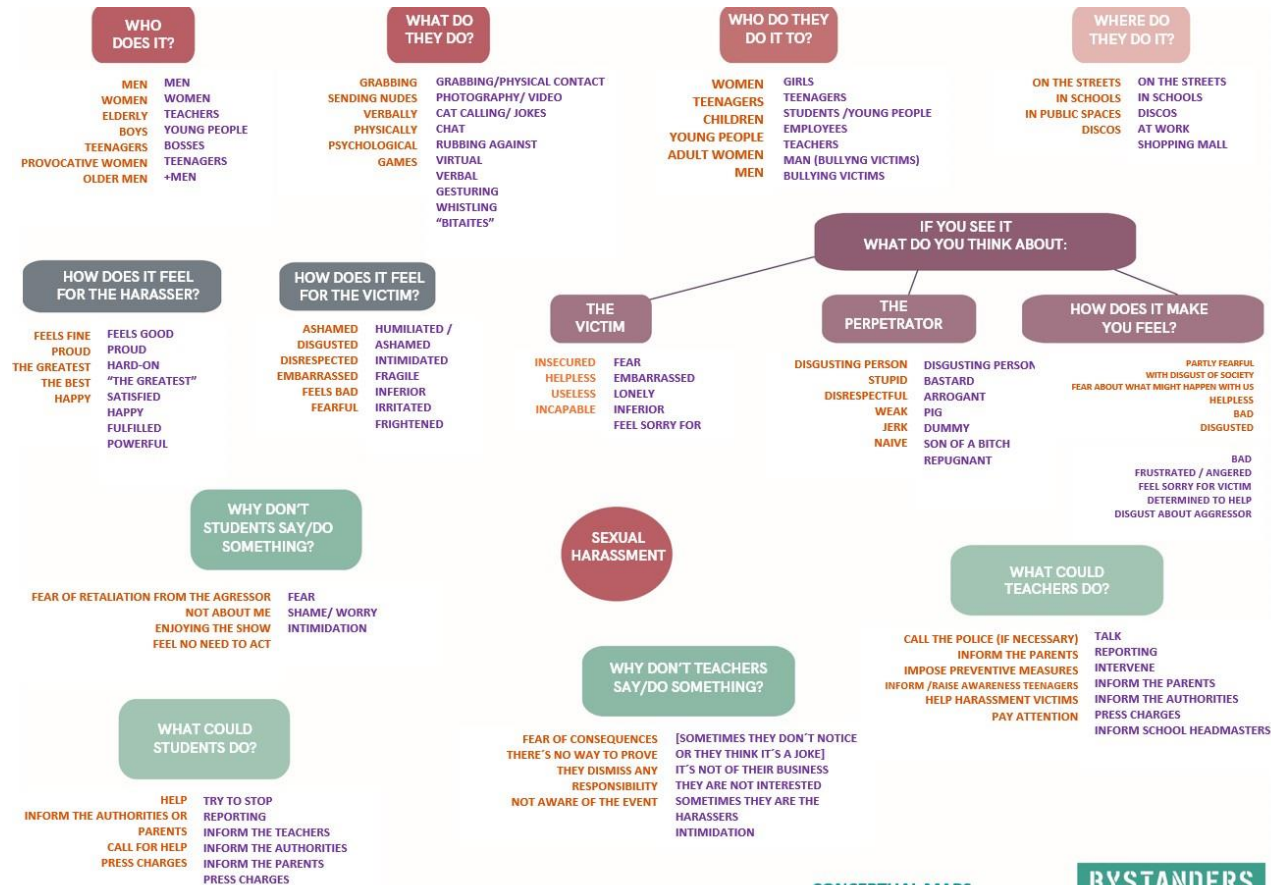
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# BYSTANDERS

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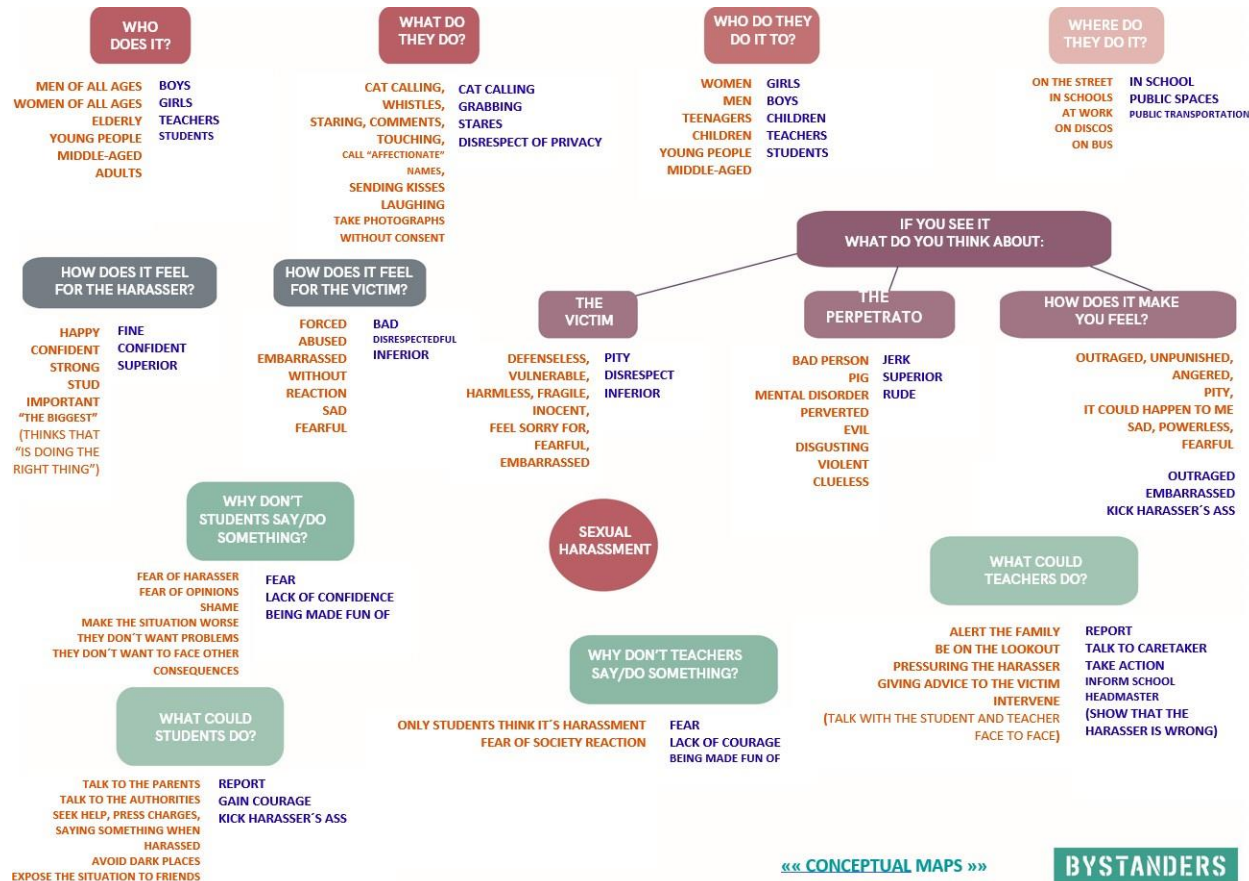




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