



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

Focus Group Analysis – Portugal

Maria José Magalhães, Ana Guerreiro, Cátia Pontedeira, Raquel Felgueiras & Vera Silva

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of Peace Institute and Association for Nonviolent Communication and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

Focus Group Analysis Portugal

Introduction

We conducted two focus groups - one with young women (6 girls aged between 15-17) and one with young men (8 young men aged between 16-19) - in a state public school situated in Porto, with three facilitators, without the presence of teachers or other school staff. The chairs and tables were rearranged so that participants and facilitators were sat in a round circle, promoting a comfortable environment for dialogue. We started the focus groups by providing information about the informed consent, and talked about the need of commitment, respect and confidence among all in order to make the youngsters feel secure to say and disclose information on sexual harassment.

Overall, boys were more talkative about SH, while girls often diverted the conversation to other subjects that they considered relevant.

The analysis of the focus groups brought up important information about the perceptions of young people concerning SH: personal experiences (as victims and harassers); strategies of self-defense; stereotypes and conceptions about femininity, masculinity and sexuality; consequences of SH; perceptions about who are the harassers and the victims; strategies/responses to SH as victims and bystanders in public spaces and in the school; and proposals for a prevention program to combat SH in school.

After the summary we provide a list with a short description of the sixteen SH situations reported by boys and girls.

Method

The focus groups were organized separately by sex given that sexual harassment is a sensitive topic for young women and young men and considering that the majority of the victims are women and most of the harassers are male. Furthermore, conversations would be different in mixed groups (Pintasilgo, 1981; Tannen 1993; Cameron, 2005). The questions were introduced with activities and exercises.

The analysis of the focus groups was made in three steps: semi-inductive coding process and interpretation, design of a concept map and the writing of the document. The semi-inductive coding process was developed from the relevant sentences of the students. From this process arose several categories and keywords which were then used to build the concept map. Below we present the analysis of the focus groups.

1. Young people's perceptions of sexual harassment

The conversations with the young men and the young women gave some insights on the youngsters' perceptions on sexual harassment. Overall, they seem to perceive SH as part of a **continuum of violence** (Liz Kelly 1988). Mostly boys but also girls mentioned that



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

sexual harassment might be the beginning of sexual violence and can lead to other severe forms of violence, such as rape.

“the consequences for the future, for example, it could lead to rape.” (M)

“rape starts with harassment.” (M)

When describing SH behaviours young women and young men highlighted that these were unwanted behaviours and against the targets' will, relating SH with abuse.

“Look... it's to abuse people without their will, isn't it?” (F)

“It is for example, to go near a girl and slap her butt unintentionally” (M)

However, at the beginning of the FG, some boys equated SH with rape.

The **minimization of violence** was a common idea identified during the FG, but boys and girls perceive it in very different ways. On the one hand, girls referred the bystanders minimize and normalize SH by seeing it as a joke and as an acceptable behavior.

“They always take everything as a joke.” (F)

On the other hand, boys justify sexual harassment as a way to obtain affection and attention from a girl, especially, from beautiful girls.

“Because...sometimes, they feel the need (...) of affection from a girl. They feel the need of a good looking partner.” (M)

Boys also mentioned that men harass women because there is something missing in their lives (e.g. sex, affection...).

“For example, his wife does not give him what he wants and he goes looking around outside [home]” (M)

In a particular situation referred by the boys, they minimized the acts of a man who loosens his jeans in front of a group of male children, because he was a male person too, so it was not that bad (for more information, see annex - situation 3).

Girls did not minimize SH and emphasized the bystanders' minimization; while boys presented justifications for violence. Girls perceived SH behaviors as offensive and boys, in some moments, described the behaviours as unintentional.

Despite sometimes perceiving SH as the same as sexual abuse and rape, overall, youngsters had a clear notion about **what kind of behaviours** are included in SH. Young women and young men described SH attitudes like: wink, touching, abuse, stalking, intrusive conversation, sexualized messages, catcalling, exhibitionism, leering, groping/slapping, whistle and coercion. Girls mentioned more behaviors than boys and described these behaviours using examples related to their real experiences.



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

“look i think SH [is committed by] those pervert men... messing around with every girl...Like those nuts teachers who wink and touch, and all those things... Everything which is abuse. That’s it.” (F)

“... and I would shit on my pants on my way to the bakery, you see? [stalking]” (F)

“once I was going to my boyfriend’s house and he [taxi driver] said ‘where are you going?’ and I said ‘it’s not your business’; and he said ‘ah, where are you from?’ and I answered ‘it’s not your business’ and he asked again ‘oh, is your boyfriend a good person?’” (F)

“[he was] leering, you know what I mean?” (F)

“He put something “on it” (laughing) it’s true...that gets really weird” [exhibitionism] (F)

During the FG they also mentioned some **spaces where SH can happen** such as taxi, train/metro stations, public transports, night club, street, mall, social media, schools and public spaces at night. Cyber sexual harassment was also referred by young women and young men.

“it could happen [SH] also by messages” (F)

Boys and girls agreed about the severe **consequences of sexual harassment** behaviours. They mentioned emotional consequences and deprivation of liberty and hence not being able to have a normal life.

“Move to another school” (F)

“Fear of being in public spaces” (F)

“Shame” (F)

“If she is a victim, she isolates herself.” (F)

Boys referred, more than once, that sexual harassment could lead victims to commit suicide, revealing that they have a clear perception about the seriousness of SH.

“Suicide; Discomfort” (M)

“It could lead to suicide too.” (M)

Boys as a group present a contradictory perception about SH. On one hand, there was minimization and justification and on the other hand, a clear perception of the serious consequences SH can have. Girls focused the conversation on their real experiences highlighting SH as an unwanted behaviour and the need of safety work (Liz Kelly 1988) as a result of the deprivation of liberty by SH.



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

2. Who does it happens to

When questioned about **who are the victims**, boys and girls recognize that young women are the most common victims of SH. Girls pointed out that SH victims are generally young and defenseless especially when they are alone in public spaces, including public transports. Furthermore, girls mentioned that at night young women's risk of being sexually harassed increases.

“But when we are alone it's much worse.” (F)

Girls also identified that young people are potential victims given that they are defenceless.

“Because younger people are defenceless.” (F)

Moreover, boys referred that they can also be sexually harassed, even in schools, and especially younger boys.

“An older person who harassed some kids here at school. Boys. Inside the school. Aged between 10 to 12 years old.” “At the gym” (M) [see annex - situation 3]

From the perspectives of young women and young men, SH happens more frequently to defenseless girls and/or in vulnerable ages and these perceptions are consistent with the literature existent in this field. Furthermore, they recognize that other people may be victims of sexual harassment (e.g. boys) although this is less likely to happen.

In terms of **social representation**, young women tend to represent SH victims as silenced and isolated girls. This reflects the power inequality between boys and girls in our society and the fact that they have no one to turn to. Boys described SH victims as prettier and young good looking girls who show off their body.

“Usually they don't report because they are afraid... and even ashamed.” (F)

“The women, the prettier and good looking girls who show off their body...” (M)

The **victim blaming** is also present in young people's discourses. This idea leads to seeing the victim as provocative. From the focus groups we identified distinct forms of victim blaming by young women and young men: judging the victim behaviour/attitude; blaming for provoking the situation; and/or being a liar. During the focus group with girls there were descriptions of victims as liars or wanting others to pity them.

“I think sometimes things don't happen like they say. I think sometimes they make it look worst than it was...” [referring to other girls] (F)



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

“I think there are girls who like people to pity them.” (F)

“sometimes girls are the provocative ones.” (F)

Boys mentioned that the way victims are dressed up could lead to SH justifying the harasser' behavior. Some young men also considered that SH makes young women feel better with themselves and attractive.

“And some of them like... to provoke.” (M)

“It makes feel better.” [about being harassed] (M)

Girls also expressed **the fear of not being taken seriously or believed** if they disclose SH.

“Fear that nobody would believe” (F)

When talking about other girls disclosing SH the young women mentioned several times that girls often lie to catch other people's attention. This contradiction shows a process of **othering** in the girls discourse. When they do not know the victim they tend to see her as provocative and attention seeker. But when they know the victim or when they describe their own experiences they see them as good defenceless girls. This process is a way of young women to not identified themselves as victims and also a reproduction of sexist prejudice and gender stereotypes which blame women and girls for gender/sexual violence.

From the FG, mainly from the girls' discourses, we can perceive some **victims defense/response strategies**: take a longer path home; take a taxi with a known taxidriver; hyper-vigilance; walk faster/run; make a phone call; pretend to make a phone call; report to a family member; walk with a friend; throw objects to the harasser; block harassers (on social media); do not answer (ignoring).

“I take a much longer path, and I get tired, but at least I don't see the guy.” (F)

“only with taxi drivers whom I know.” (F)

“I started to bring a friend with me” (F)

“i start to walk faster (...) and running.” (F)

“I call someone” (F)

“I pretend to be talking on the phone” (F)

“When that kind of conversations happen I immediately block the person” [online chat] (F)



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

Insulting the harasser was referred as a defense strategy in the focus group with boys. This was mentioned while describing a particular situation, when the boy was walking in the street dressed up like a girl for the Carnival (see annex - situation 11). A man mistaken him for a girl and cat-called him. His reaction was also a way to reaffirm his masculinity.

“I insulted him! Because I did not like it.” (M)

Insulting was mentioned as a boys' strategy while girls mostly referred safety work.

3. Who are the harassers

Both young women and men identified teachers, school staff and old men as being potential **harassers**. Young women mentioned construction workers (when in group) and taxi drivers, while young men also mentioned policemen.

“Even policemen do it [catcalling].” (M)

“[construction workers harass] when they are in groups. If one of them is alone, I don't think he would talk...” (F)

“oldman are very nasty...” (F)

“but also from teachers...sometimes they take their chances...”(F)

“a teacher who harassed a student (...)” (M)

The **social representations of the harassers** were significantly different between young women and young men. Girls described the harasser as a coward, dirty man, pervert/weirdo and nuts.

“there are very nasty old men! That hit on young girls... they are such pigs!” (F)

“(...) he used to call me, and he was a weirdo but I do not answer to him.” (F)

Boys described the harassers as machos in need of affection. They tend to accept the harasser's' behaviour as a normal strategy to get a girlfriend or just a woman's attention. When referring to a specific female harasser they named her “war tank”. While we are unsure why they use this nickname, we had the impression that this was a way to diminish the girl and say that they find her masculine and unattractive.

“Most of the harassers are old people...”(M)

“Ah, was the war tank” [referring to a girl described as a harasser] (M)



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

When describing real SH situations boys and girls named common men, however when they try to characterize the harassers they describe them with negative adjectives.

4. Conceptions of masculinity and femininity

When discussing SH notions of gender, sex and sexuality become apparent. It was through different ways that masculinity and femininity notions were depicted by students, but the most prominent were concerned with: body/appearance sexualization; ideology of complementary in the heteronormativity (women need protection of men); compulsive male sexual desire; the ideal of sexy and attractive men for girls.

Female body sexualization is apparent when they talk about the female body for the male gaze (Mulvey 1975):

“Usually, a man can use a shirt which shows his arms or chest, and/or shorts which shows his legs. Girls show off their butt and breasts and grab more our attention.”

(M)

Girls also mentioned female body sexualization as something that makes them feel uncomfortable.

“they just make fun of girls, either they are fat, or this or that.” (F)

Compulsive male sexual desire was mentioned by the young boys, when talking about men' inability to resist:

“Of course that if a man has a girl, even if she is pretty, next to another one wearing provocative clothes he will look to the provocative one, the one who is showing off her body more.” (M)

Boys also hypothesized situations when girls would not mind to be harassed by an **ideal sexy man**, in boys' perspective:

“For example, if a 16 year old girl is harassed by a 35 year old man I think she will feel very bad. But if it is by a cute boy, for example if the girl is 15 years old and the boy attends the same school as her and she even finds him interesting, then I think she will like it” [to be harassed]

The **ideology of complementary in the heteronormativity** (women in need of protection by men) emerged in the FG with boys, when they talk about the ways they feel and act protective to girls, their mates or girlfriends:

“Sometimes, you put your arm around her! (...) When you do that sometimes it's enough and he [the harasser] “ah, there is a man [with her]!” ...Sometimes you pretend to be her boyfriend and they get afraid [the harassers]!” (M)



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

The expression “Ah, she has a man!” also indicates that she is someone else's property. All the stereotyped conceptualisations of masculinity and femininity were mentioned by boys while girls only mentioned their discomfort about the female body sexualization with its constant female body scrutiny (Eisenstein, 1988). These stereotypes are all linked to gender violence and in particular to sexual violence.

5. Bystanders Intervention

During the focus group one topic proposed for discussion was **what do bystanders do** when facing a SH situation. Young women and young men considered that there is people who do nothing and when they talked about this they seemed to be aware of the acceptance and normalization of SH behaviours.

“But there were more people who saw and did nothing.” (F)

“they pretend [they don't see it]” (F)

For young men the possible reactions of bystanders are: shout out/call for attention, react with violence, dialogue, disapproving look, symbolic male protection of the woman/girl (man/boy pretends to be her boyfriend), insulting and speaking to someone who could help (a teacher, the school board). Furthermore, a young man mentioned that most active bystanders were fathers who have adolescent daughters and when they observe a SH situation against a girl they intervene.

“I asked ‘who is doing that?’. And then he looked and the man stopped harassing our colleague” (M)

“I think the majority of the people who help are fathers who have daughters of that age [adolescents] who imagine it could be their daughters and they react in the moment... like if she was his daughter” (M)

Teachers and other school staff were identified as possible bystanders at the focus group with young men however they considered that they usually do nothing except for a situation when a student who harassed young boys was dismissed from school.

“They only intervene like: “oh, don't say that!” [about teachers reaction to SH] (M)

“They did. The man stopped to work here...” [about the reaction of the school direction to the student who harassed some kids in the gymnasium]” (M)

“No, the staff here do nothing.” (M)

“They didn't care.” (M) [answer to a question about the reaction of the school direction to a situation of SH from a teacher to the students].



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

From these answers it's possible to understand that young men and young women are aware of what is sexual harassment, the need to intervene and the obstacles to intervention.

Obstacles to intervention were clearly identified when the youngsters were asked about the reasons why bystanders do not intervene. One of the reasons mentioned by the boys as an obstacle to intervention was that sometimes **people do not know how to act**, or what should they do in SH situations. According to the boy's opinion, people chose to ignore the situation:

"there are people who don't know how to react [SH]" (M)

"and therefore they ignore it [the situation]" (M)

Fear was often times referred by boys. They mentioned the fear of getting involved in a physical violent situation and the fear of retaliation.

"There are people who don't help because they are afraid of suffering retaliations in school or in the street." (M)

Both girls and boys are aware that society perceives this form of violence as minor and/or as a joke, and this can inhibit intervention.

"It's accepted; Nobody pays attention [to SH]" (M)

"And it's accepted [SH by people]" (F)

"or they think it is a joke...[why bystanders don't intervene]" (F)

Some boys also pointed out they could be called snitches by the others for complaining to an adult in school and this can discourage their intervention. On the contrary, other boys said that sometimes there are good reasons for being a snitch like for instance if it is to ask for help.

"[regarding if they would complain to an adult figure at school] No, because then people will call us snitch." (M1)

"But if it is to ask for help, it is good [to be a snitch]. But if it is a thing between friends... [suggesting that if it is something between friends it is not supposed to be shared with anyone]"(M 2)

Boys also referred the absence of complaint as another key obstacle to intervention in schools:



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

“I think school also doesn’t do anything because they rarely receive complains” (M)

Furthermore, young boys mentioned that even teachers can be bystanders of a violent situation and think that it was a joke between young people and this will inhibit them of intervene.

“Teachers can see it [SH] and think it was a joke” (M)

The youngsters’ opinion on **what should bystanders do** is linked to their perception of the obstacles to intervention. Young boys mention that in their opinion, the teacher’s intervention when facing SH should be to report to the board and that this board should act accordingly to the importance of the issue.

“report to the school board; act accordingly to the severity of the issue. (M)

Boys referred that if all the students spoke about sexual harassment the professionals’ intervention in schools would be more likely to happen.

“If we [students] all talked, I think they [school professionals] would take more drastic measures.” (M)

The parents’ role was also briefly mentioned by the group of boys as important to put some pressure in the school to intervene against violence. Sometimes only when the parents pressure the school takes action.

“[the board only did something about the case] Because students told about it. They complaint to their parents and then parents came to ask for responsibilities [to the teachers] about what happened...” (M)

Students intervention was also discussed by the boys who mentioned that the first option would be to intervene politely, by talking with victim and offender avoiding violence. Although violence was referred to as a last option. Below is the conversation about peers intervention.

“[how could peers intervene?]”

- Verbally (M1)

- Avoiding violence (M2)

- Well, if the person does not get the message in well manet, it will get it in a wrong one. Violence is here for some reason (M1)”

Although girls did not go into detail in this topic, they also identified some responses that they could use if they were bystanders, such as to call someone or screaming.



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

“I would scream.” (F)

“(…) or then I would try to call people.” (F)

In the table below we organized the young people’s suggestions for an intervention programme on SH in schools.

Young people’s ideas for an intervention programme

	Young Men	Young Women
Students proposals for a SH prevention programme activities at school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - campaign and call the TV; - campaign in futebol games at the stadiums (“Say no to SH!”, players with posters to show in beginning/end/break of the game, students using t-shirts with the letters of the campaign sentences at the stadium bench (each person showing one letter - Sentences: “SH is not beautiful. ; Say no to SH! ; Know how to say no! ; If it was with you? ; SH is for the week! ; Before you do it, think. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to organize a demonstration/campaign against SH (posters, scarves, t-shirts, flyers, to use same dress color/symbol during a day to raise awareness against SH; - to spread contact information of support victims groups; - theatre play and a song; - build a book; - to make a video report with the people from school giving their opinions about SH. (to upload on youtube); - Facebook page/blog; - Walk against SH; - to develop a newspaper and a radio show
<p>Teachers activities proposals for a SH prevention programme at school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Afternoon snack for the presentation of a PPT on SH to teachers. 		

Summary

The focus groups with young girls and with young boys developed in distinctive ways. Boys were more talkative about the topics presented by the facilitators while girls seem to have their own agenda — their own topics to debate.

The perceptions about SH from boys and girls can be summarized by the concept of continuum of violence (Kelly 1988), although these perceptions were intertwined by victim blaming views by boys and girls and the fear of not being taken seriously or not being believed by girls.



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

Concerning social representations about victims and perpetrators of SH, girls and boys differ. On the one hand, girls showed contradictory positions when it happens to them (or someone they know) and when it happens to others. When it happens to them they pointed out the difficulty of disclosing because society naturalizes this form of violence — viewing SH as a joke or as a ‘normal’ behaviour; while when it happens to other girls, they promptly label them as liars. Hence, a process of othering can be identified as they identify themselves as victims but they do not recognize the others as victims.

On the other hand, boys tended to minimize violence when justifying some male behaviours they knew about.

Underlying social representations on victims and perpetrators of SH are the social constructions around femininity and masculinity, even though with distinct performative actualization (Butler, 1988, 2010) by girls and boys. The female body sexualization was referred to by boys as a ‘natural thing’, while for girls this was a means of discomfort. Boys also defended positions that can be termed as the ideology of complementarity heteronormative while girls signaled the ‘compulsive’ male sexual desire.

The main consequences of SH were stressed by girls as deprivation of liberty and concomitant need of changes in their ‘normal’ life, as a form of safety work (Kelly, 1988).

Bystanders were generally described as passive due to the naturalization of SH behaviours. The main obstacles for bystanders’ intervention were the fear of retaliation, being considered snitches and not knowing what to do.

At the end of the focus groups, both boys and girls were very creative and came up with ideas for an intervention programme on SH in schools.

References:

Butler, Judith (1988) Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory, *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 40, No. 4. (Dec., 1988), pp. 519-531.

Butler, Judith (2010) Performative Agency, *Journal of Cultural Economy*, 3:2, 147-161, DOI: 10.1080/17530350.2010.494117

Cameron, Deborah (2005) Language, Gender and Sexuality: Current issues and new directions, *Applied Linguistics*, 26(4), 482-502.

Eisenstein, Zillah R. (1988) *The Female Body and the Law*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kelly, Liz (1988) *Surviving Sexual Violence*, Oxford: Polity Press.

Mulvey, Laura (1975) Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema, *Screen*, 16:3, pp 6-18.

Pintasilgo, Maria de Lourdes (1981) *Os novos feminismos: interrogação para os cristãos?* Lisboa: Moraes.



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

Tannen, Deborah (1993) *Gender and Conversational Interaction*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Annex

Reported sexual harassment situations

The following list gathers the information on SH situations reported during the two focus groups.

Situations reported by boys

Situation 1 - In the sequence of the definition of sexual harassment, a boy reported that he was already groped in the school. All the other boys laughed when he told us that. He did not explain more about the incident.

Situation 2 - After the gender probe being discussed, one of the boys mentioned that he had already been harassed by girls. He did not describe when and how it happened. All the others agreed that SH happens in all ages with male and female victims. After a review question by the facilitator they reinforced that it can happen to anyone but according to what they see on the TV, women are more likely to be the victims.

Situation 3 - when asked about situations of SH that they know of, the first example that the boys gave was a situation of an older man who harassed male children at school. The victims were boys aged on 10-12 years and the harasser called the boys near the gym and loosened his jeans and said "I am also men, take it easy". Boys also added that "of course that in the mother's opinion that was harassment", but for them, they see the situation as normal. They mentioned that in their opinion, the man was only trying to make boys comfortable and prevent them to be ashamed at the gym, because of him (since there was no reason for them to be ashamed as he was also a man). One of the participants in the focus mentioned that some boys wanted to take a shower in the gym, but they felt uncomfortable with the man present and therefore they did not take a shower. This was the situation that got to the parent's knowledge and they contacted the school (especially teachers) asking for responsibilities. (This same situation was reported by teachers and staff of this school, who informed us that this man was dismissed or relocated in another school).

Situation 4 - Boys also reported a situation of a female teacher that harassed a student (boy aged 19). This situation was described between laughs and fun. As described, the teacher asked the student to get out of the school with her (namely to go to a pharmacy) and asked the boy to paint her (it was not clear if this was to make a portrait of her or for example to help her put some make-up). Boys also mentioned that she used to say that she needed to give him some extra lessons (possibly about the subject that she was responsible for).

Situation 5 - Sexual harassment of girls based on their clothes was mentioned by boys as a situation that happened in their school. They described the girl (aged of 16 or 17 years old)



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

as going to school dressed in a very exuberant way. They said that sometimes she was wearing a miniskirt and they referred to the situation as “it looked like Carnival” - clearly making fun of the situation. Young boys mentioned that this girl hears a lot of catcalling. They also mention leering as frequent and said that, as far as they know, the girl is not touched but that they believe that harassers wanted to touch her as well. One of the boys described this girl as “having a huge butt” and they all laughed of the situation.

Situation 6 - Young boys also mention another situation of victimization of one of their peers. They described the situation with laughs, and said that a boy (18 years old) was groped by a girl when he was going out of the school board room. They described that the girl (15 years) was leering at the boy by the entrance and when he walked past her, she said “I am going to grope you”, and gave him a slap in the butt, despite not knowing the boy. When asked about the boy’s reaction, the focus group participants referred that he kept looking ahead for a few seconds and latter look back and said “oh, disgusting”. At this moment boys started to described the girl as a “war tank” and facilitators understood that they were referring to a girl they knew and that was considered by them as ugly and/or fat.

Situation 7 - Groups of girls as harassers were also mentioned by the boys. One situation was described where a boy was harassed by a group of girls. These girls were friends of the boy’s ex-girlfriend. The reported situation of harassment included slaps in the butt of the boy and whistling. Apparently, after the abusive situation, the boy called the ex-girlfriend asking for explanations for her friends’ acts. According the description, the girl said that her friends think he is pretty and interesting. After that they never got in touch again.

Situation 8 - Boys identified a SH situation where a girl was on the bus and an older man groped her butt. The only information that they know about this case was that someone punched the offender, but no other description is given.

Situation 9 - Public transports were also identified as places where SH happens. A violent situation was reported in the metro where a young girl was being catcalled her of “doll” and she felt uncomfortable with that and called her boyfriend (who was expecting her at the metro station). The harasser beside calling her of “doll” was constantly sending her kisses with his hand. Apparently, this harasser was described to be drunk and/or hangover. When t metro arrived to the station where the boyfriend was, he enter in the metro and punch and insult the harasser. The situation was reported to be seen by other people (bystanders) but boys mentioned that nobody did anything about it.

Situation 10 - Some boys said that a girl was harassed when she was alone for a few minutes in a mall. They described that a group of friends was shopping together but when they went outside to smoke (outside the building) the girl was left alone and was harassed by a man who was stalking her. The boys went looking for the man but did not find him. No other details of the situation were reported.

Situation 11 - One of the boys said he had been harassed during the Carnival. He was dressed as a woman and while walking down the street with some friends a car stopped and the driver (a man) catcalled him. The boy insulted the man and said he did not like the



Supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union

feeling of having a man saying those kind of things to him. When the driver noticed he was actually a boy he went away.

Situations reported by girls

Situation 12 - A girl reported a self-victimization situation where she was walking home and a man walked up to her and asked her if it was cold. The girl felt uncomfortable with the situation and wanted to reply but she kept in silent. She mentioned that she did not answer because the guy had a friend near by, but the harasser insisted in the comment about the cold weather twice. No other reaction or comment to this situation was made.

Situation 13 - Two girls mentioned the taxi as a space where they were harassed. They describe the taxi drivers as very talkative and that is not always a bad thing but because they are alone they feel afraid. One of the girls reported that once she was going to her boyfriend' house and the taxi driver asked where she was going. She said that was not of his business and he insisted asking where she lived and if her boyfriend was a good person. She felt that situation very awkward and therefore she called her father to have someone with whom she could speak instead of listening and talking with the taxi driver. When listening, other girls mentioned that they only get in taxis whose drivers' are known to their parents.

Situation 14 - A girl experienced a situation in a train station where a man was always making a sign with his hand and leering at her body. For about 15 minutes when she moved, he moved too, stalking her around the train station. There were many people around seeing this but no one said anything. The girl said that she was afraid but at the same time she felt a bit safe because she was in the train station with many people around.

Situation 15 - Metro was also described by girls as a place where harassment happens. One of the girls mentioned that there was a man who would dress baggy training pants and place some volumed object in the area of his penis and starts to handle it as if he was masturbating. The girl said that this situation is very odd for the people inside that metro and that sometimes he also harasses girls. She described that sometimes he looks at people, particularly girls while handling the object pretending he is masturbating. She referred that she used to be afraid and that her father started to walk her to the metro station due to this. Situation was reported as disgusting by several young girls. The man was described as being an old man over 60 years old.

Situation 16 - A girl mentioned a situation when she went to her uncle's house and she was stalked by a man on a bike. That men also started to go to a coffee shop near her home and catcalled her. She felt afraid to get out of home alone, even for simple things like to buy bread. She told her uncle about this and he was a bit disturbed by the situation. When she needed to go out she started to ask a female friend to go with her but the harasser begun to follow her friend too. As an alternative, she started to take different paths (avoiding the harasser). The girl referred that the harasser was about 30 years old and that he probably had some mental disorders.