



## LILAC CARE PROTOCOL

**Taking care of people who experience(d) gender-based violence in large-scale festivals**





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More information is available on the website <https://sexismfreenight.eu/>. Sexism Free Night ©, 2022

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## Introduction

Women, transgender and non-binary people who use drugs face specific risks and constraints when going out at night and attending festivals. For this reason, the consortium of Sexism Free Night had been working and developing approaches to promote inclusiveness and gender-responsiveness<sup>1</sup> in the drug field. This protocol is based in the insights and knowledge produced in the scope of the project, but also in the experience of harm reduction teams and collectives implementing psycare services in large-scale festivals. In addition, the implementation of outreach responses to detect and respond to sexualized violence in large-scale events in Spain, and later in Portugal – Lilac Points, also guided and inspired the writing of this document. However, even keeping the Lilac – the colour of feminism - to identify the scope of this protocol clearly, our proposal is not to create a new service in festivals, but instead to enlarge and expand the focus of intervention of existing harm reduction and psycare services. Instead of segregating intervention in gender-based violence as new area of intervention in festivals, we believe that gender-responsiveness must be transversal to every service, and to every shift of harm reduction and psycare teams and collectives. For several years, these were in the front line of awareness and care responses provided to festivalgoers as well as creating dialogue platforms with festivals organizers towards the implementation of environmental prevention approaches. In addition, Psycare, psychedelic first aid or psychedelic emergency are concepts used to define a set of outreach care services aimed at sitting and support people in vulnerable situations or psychological crisis related with drug use or environmental factors (e.g.

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<sup>1</sup> Gender-responsiveness means to recognize and react to the structural gender inequalities and unequal power relations, by paying attention to the unique needs of women and LGBTQIA+ people but also by considering and valuing their specific experiences and perspectives in the design, implementation and evaluation of practices and policies.





sensory overload related with visual and/or hearing stimulus, social anxiety due to overcrowding). Psyccare services rely on four main dimensions:

- a) The creation and management of a physical space recognized as safe (protected, private, and deprived from some environmental stimulus as music or lights)
- b) A team of professionals and peers trained in harm reduction, psychological support, psychological first aid and sitting and able to provide care and support in a non-judgmental
- c) A referral network and protocols to deal with more severe psychological crisis or mental health situations.

In this sense, psyccare services are already implementing physical and emotional safe spaces in large-scale festivals and events. For this reason, harm reduction and psyccare services are key-stakeholders towards the implementation of care policies and measures to deal with people who experience(d) gender-based violence and sexist discrimination in large-scale festivals.

This protocol was developed in the scope of the collaboration of Sexism Free Night with Kosmicare<sup>2</sup> in the implementation of care practices targeting people who experience(d) gender-based violence in 5 large-scale festivals<sup>3</sup> in 2022 in Portugal.

Through this collaboration, Kosmicare team included in all shifts professionals trained and prepared to support people who experience(d) situations of sexist microaggressions and more severe forms of gender-based violence (e.g. sexual abuse, rape, intimate partner violence), or people who felt unsafe, anxious and afraid that something may happen to them.

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<sup>2</sup> Portuguese harm reduction NGO implementing full spectrum harm reduction measures and care practise targeting people who use drugs in nightlife and festival environments (awareness, psychological first aid, drug checking). Kosmicare also advocates for comprehensive and gender-responsive drug policies.

<sup>3</sup> Queima das Fitas, NOS Primavera Sound, Arraial Lisboa Pride, Boom Festival and ZNA Gathering





We expect this protocol to provide guidance to other harm reduction and psycare teams and collectives. Considering that we are still learning how to implement gender-based care in large-scale festivals, this is work-in-progress protocol able to be improved and updated when needed.

### **Gender-based violence and sexist discrimination in a nutshell**

Sexist violence is related with power imbalances resulting from the gendered and heteronormative hierarchy of society and culture. In a binary social context, masculine is the gender identity who traditionally owns the power, women has subaltern places in the private and public sphere, and gender and sexually diverse people (LGBTQIA+) tend to be seen as transgressive and are heavily penalized for not conforming to the dominant sex/gender structure. Considering these power relations and gender oppression, women and LGBTQIA+ are disproportionately affected by physical, psychological and economical violence and men mainly perpetrate this. These are amplified by drug use in the public sphere (in this case, nightlife and festivals) since traditionally this was a male-exclusive behaviour, and even nowadays there are several myths and biases related to drug use that aggravates violence towards women and LGBTQIA+. Drug stigma intersect with gender stereotypes creating specific risks and harms among women and LGBTQIA+. In this context, our work towards the implementation of gender-responsive approaches to care of people who use drugs is a health promotion and social commitment but also a political statement.

In practical terms, and based in our experience, we created a typology of sexist violence that can be experienced and reported during the event. It is important that in the wide definition we are included the severe forms of sexist violence (e.g. rape) discrimination, micro aggressions, and sexist violence experienced in the past but triggered during the event.

- Sexualized violence/ rape with violence or coercion





- Sexualized violence/ rape without physical violence or coercion (the person is unconscious or psychologically / physically unable to resist)
- Sexual abuse (invasive intimate touches without penetration)
- Sexual harassment
  - Verbal (e.g. sexist comments, insinuations)
  - Physical/ non-verbal (persecution, touches, groping)
- Stalking
- Intimate partner violence (date violence, domestic violence)
  - Verbal/ psychological
  - Physical/ non-verbal
- Sexist discrimination due to the gender or sexual identity of the person (homophobia, lesbophobia, transphobia, or other forms of LGBTQIA+phobia)
- Physical violence due to the gender or sexual identity of the person
- Sexist or misogynist social humiliation (e.g. laughing, taking pictures to expose or make fun of someone)

## Lilac Care at large-scale festivals and other events

### Defining Lilac Care

Usually, the red is used to identify medical emergencies, so in this protocol we use the lilac as the reference colour to identify gender-based crises. Considering this, in this protocol we identify as lilac care the set of practices aimed at prevent, detect and respond to sexism and gender-based violence in nightlife and festival environments. To implement lilac care, harm reduction teams needs to have: a) a place/ infrastructure able to isolate, provide support and privacy to people who experienced violence; b) having people in the team trained in gender and able to support and taking care of people who expected gender-based violence.





## Building a Lilac Policy

Before creating or implementing your protocol your team must first have to define your lilac policy. We recommend that a team implementing lilac care team envision that:

- **Sexism, LGBTQI+phobia, racism or other forms of discrimination and power relations are unacceptable.** This includes discrimination towards or from people who visit your services
- **Sexual harassment towards or from your guests is also unacceptable.**
  - You are welcome to make it clear to the person who is harassing you and, in case you need, speak out and ask for the support of your peers
  - **If you see one of your peers being harassed**, humiliated, bothered by someone make something up to **interrupt the situation**
- If someone asks for support due to a situation of sexism, LGBTQI+phobia or sexualized violence call immediately someone from the Lilac team
  - **At least one person from the Lilac team will be working in every shift**, and they will be clearly identified

## Lilac Care code of conduct - Care and psychological support

- Be sympathetic, hear what the person is telling you and believe her
- Trust your judgement. If you think the person is struggling, feeling threatened by someone, scared, is because probably she is.
- Keep yourself vigilant and avoid victim blaming, overload of difficult questions or other potentially harmful verbal or non-verbal approaches
- **Create a physical and emotional safe space for the person**







- Invite the person to a more private area and offer her with your unconditional acceptance presence
- Inform the person about their rights - confidentiality, to right to tell you only what they want...
- Build trust and be aware of the basic needs of the person. Ask her if they are ok, if they want to drink water, if they want to call a trustful friend...
- Empower the person
  - “It’s not your fault”, “you deserve to be safe”, “sexism violence is a crime and the person to blame is the perpetrator”
  - The person has to feel she is under control and that she has the right to decide what she want to do. Don’t force the person to complaint, don’t take decisions over the person will (even if your think you know what is best!)
- In case the person is very anxious or with psychological crisis all a lilac peer working at the Psychedelic Emergency Hub
- Is the person under the influence of drugs? If so, firstly tray to take care of her and only when the person is sober and rested, try to make the person aware that she can tell you what happened and that you can help
- **Be aware of the context surrounding the person**
  - Is the person alone in the event? Is the person with trustful friends? Are there something in the even that is making her afraid/ uncomfortable?
- **Protect the confidentiality of the person you are supporting**
  - Don’t talk randomly about the case even with your shift colleagues
  - Discuss the case only with the members of the Lilac Team
- **Is the perpetrator there?**
  - First of all don’t act if the situation is dangerous or tense. Call the support of the safety team
  - A Lilac representative must isolate the victim and take her from the situation while other colleague talk with the perpetrator





- Use a non-violent approach but let the person know his behaviour is unacceptable and make him aware of the Portuguese law
- If the perpetrator is with friends, ask for their support in the management of the situation
- **In case of rape, give the (sober) person relevant information**
  - The possibility of Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PPE) in the first 72h after the occurrence
    - If the person wants to know more about this, call a doctor at the Psychedelic Emergency Hub or Emergency service, or the Lilac team coordinator
  - The possibility of complaint
    - Inform the person that, in case she want to complaint it is better not to take a shower or changing the clothes
    - Does the person wants to formally complaint?
      - Call the Lilac team coordinator (she is aware of the Portuguese law and complaint procedures)
- **The person states she was spiked?**
  - First of all, deal with the psychological crisis
  - Call a doctor at the Psychedelic Emergency Hub to evaluate the physical and psychological symptoms
  - When the person is calmer, ask her to tell you what happened
  - Don't doubt of the person but try to understand, together with the person of the crisis is related with voluntary drug use intersected fear and risk perception or if there was a strong possibility that someone chemically submitted her
  - If the person wants to complaint, call the Lilac team coordinator
- **The person was victim was victim of intimate partner violence during the event?**
  - Isolate the person and bring her to a physical and emotional safe space





- Domestic violence is a public crime in Portugal – call the Lilac team coordinator to inform the person about the national law. Nevertheless, as a team, it is possible to present a formal complaint
- Provide all the psychological care the person may need, empower her and inform her about her rights
- Create a safety plan with the person (e.g. moving around the event, leaving the event, returning home...)
- **Is the person triggered by a past trauma?**
  - Provide trauma-informed care
    - Be sympathetic and try to explore the traumatic event
    - Try to decrease the anxiety or angst of the person – try a non-pharmacological approach, but call and psychiatrist in case you think the situation is difficult to manage
    - Normalize the reaction of the person – it's normal to feel self-blame, shame, guilt, anger, fear, sadness...
    - Deconstruct rape myths such as internalized guilt
    - Support the process of emotional expression
      - Verbal, or even non-verbal (movements, drawing...)
    - Explore and promote coping strategies (how to deal with the pain? How to accept that this situation happened to me? This event doesn't define me as a person...)
    - Inform about the relevance of (re)building a life project that includes the commitment to deal with past trauma
- **Useful contacts and International referral network**
  - Intimate partner violence/ domestic violence - <https://www.hotpeachpages.net/europe/index.html>
  - Sexualized violence - <https://www.rcne.com/>





- Sources of help for survivors - <https://www.rcne.com/links/sources-of-help-for-survivors/>
  - Sexism Free Night Network -
  - LGBTQIA+ support - <https://www.ilga-europe.org/>
  - Or, give the person one of these contacts: [sexismfreenight@gmail.com](mailto:sexismfreenight@gmail.com); [hello@sexismfreenight.eu](mailto:hello@sexismfreenight.eu)
- **Before the beginning of the intervention, the communication channel between the Lilac team will be created, including a WhatsApp group to support the supervision of the intervention**
  - **In case of any doubt/ insecurity, contact the Lilac team coordinator**
  - **Some cases can be difficult and triggering even for us!**
    - Ask for the support and care of your Lilac peers/ coordinator

