

# WHISTLE

**W**omen's  
**H**ealthy and active lifestyle  
Is **Th**reatened by  
verbal sexual harassment:  
**LEt's stop CATCALLING in sport**



**Project Reference**

Acronym: WHISTLE

Title: "Women's Healthy and active lifestyle Is Threatened by verbal sexual harassment: LEt's stop CATCALLING in sport"

Programme Erasmus + Programme of the European Union

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**Partnership**

*Lead Partner:*

P1 USMA CASELLE ASD – Italy

*Partners:*

P2 Si può fare cooperativa sociale, Italy

P3 Municipality of Padova, Italy

P4 KEAN, Greece

P5 VOLLEYBALL Foundation Greece

P6 Actividades Alternativas, Spain

P7 Fondatzia Kurazh/Courage foundation, Bulgaria

P8 Spor Elçileri Derneği, Turkey

P9 Fundacja Instytut Partnerstwa Strategicznego- , Poland

**Deliverable reference**

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**Deliverable Scope (as in the DoA):**

The scope of this deliverable is to define the method and the tools to detect catcalling and VSH stories among women.

The document is structured as following:

- Title
- Project and Deliverable details
- Credit and disclaimer
- Table of contents
- Project overview and context
- Common definition of VSH and catcalling
- Methodology of collection of stories about catcalling and verbal sexual harassment in sport
- Instructions and suggestions on how to collect the stories
- Templates to collect stories (interviews, surveys)
- Methodological issues (to be taken into account when pps will collect stories or interviews or develop the online surveys)
- Annexes

Milestone linked to the deliverable

M2.1 - Shared Method to collect stories and develop the survey

To be reached in M10

Evidence: D2.1 and minutes of the meeting during which the method is shared, discussed and fine-tuned.



## Partners involved in the elaboration of the document

Participant No	Organization name	Short Name	Specify if involved
1	USMA CASELLE ASD	USMA	YES
2	Si può fare cooperativa sociale, Italy	SiPF	YES
3	Municipality of Padova, Italy	CPD	
4	KEAN, Greece	KEAN	YES
5	VOLLEYBALL Foundation Greece	VF	
6	Actividades Alternativas Spain	ACAL	
7	Fondatzia Kurazh / Courage Foundation, Bulgaria	CF	
8	Spor Elçileri Derneği, Turkey	SPELL	
9	Fundacja Instytut Partnerstwa Strategicznego, Poland	SPF	

## History of changes

Rev. n.m	Date	Changes
Rev.1.0	25th July 2022	Baseline > first issue
Rev 2.0	15th November 2022	Table of Contents
Rev 2.1	21st November 2022	Table of Contents + Chapters 1 & 2
Rev 2.2	5th December 2022	Table of Contents approved during E1.2
Rev 3.0	21st December 2022	Chapters 3, 5 & 6
Rev 3.1	22nd December 2022	Annexes
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Rev 4.1	17th January 2023	Chapter 4
Rev 4.2	18th January 2023	Content of chapter 4 moved to Chapter 6
Rev 4.3	19th January 2023	Chapter 4
Rev 4.4	27th January 2023	Finalized the Deliverable
Rev 5.0	21st February 2023	Reviewed and approved

## Target group of the deliverable

The target groups of the deliverables are the project partners.



**CREDITS AND DISCLAIMER**

This document is the collective effort of many individuals and the partner organizations working on behalf of the project "WHISTLE" and every attempt has been made to ensure that the contained information is true and accurate. Every reader and user is expressly advised to use the content and information of this document on his/her own responsibility. The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

**Dissemination level**

PU		Public
PP		Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)
RE		Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)
CO		Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)



## Table of Contents

1. Project overview and context
2. Common definition of VSH and catcalling
3. Methodology of collection of stories about catcalling and verbal sexual harassment in sport
4. Instructions and suggestions on how to collect the stories
5. Templates to collect stories (interviews, surveys)
6. Methodological issues (to be taken into account when partners collect stories or interviews or develop the online surveys)

## ANNEXES

- the online tool (screenshots)
- monitoring tools about stories (screenshots)
- example of stories published on the website (screenshots)



# 1. Project overview and context

WHISTLE project wants to prevent and fight Verbal Sexual Harassment (VSH) and catcalling in sport, as this behavior has a negative influence over women's practice of sport and it is one of the causes of dropout from organized sports and one of the barriers that limits women to practice outdoor physical activity.

Catcalling is not a new phenomenon, the novelty lies in the fact that in recent years there has been talk of it, women's movements have been born. Catcalling is not only something that just happens to female runners or cyclists on the streets; it also affects organized sport, even if there is not copious evidence about it; but the lack of data does not mean the lack of the problem.

The lack of data is much more due to the fear of reporting, the absence of a support system specifically designed for women who practice sport, the shortage of information within sports clubs, the lack of awareness of catcalling as a subtle and devious form of gender-based violence.

In this scenario, WHISTLE increases knowledge to better understand the phenomenon, particularly in the organized sports; it educates sport clubs practitioners, women associations and local authorities providing them with tools to detect the problem and to take the right measures to support VSH victims.

Specific activities directly address 150+ women, who are engaged both to share stories, and take part in pilot empowering programs. A creative awareness campaign on the effect of catcalling on women participation in sport is strategically developed to impact the larger group of males, coaches, sport professionals, managers, and fans.



## 2. Common definition of VSH and Catcalling

We would like to recall the meaning of the words “catcalling” and “Verbal Sexual Harassment (VSH)”, in order to have a common definition in mind to understand better this Deliverable.

Catcalling is defined as a series of behaviors including whistles, gestures, comments and unwanted sexual advances, implemented to attract the attention mainly of women in the streets and other public places by strangers. Including a strong component of objectification, catcalling can be considered a form of verbal harassment, as it is an unwanted behavior with a sexual connotation that offends a person's dignity. It is a discriminatory attitude since it is practiced mainly by men toward the female gender. These kinds of gestures, based on gender discrimination, violate the principle of equal treatment between men and women. Catcalling is a growing phenomenon that happens every day to many young women and girls and affects their lives: many start to feel uncomfortable or afraid walking down the street and wearing whatever they want, or practicing their favorite sport, to a point that can lead to sport drop-out. Catcalling can be hidden in statements that, at first glance, may seem like appreciation.

Verbal sexual harassment in sports environments refers to repeated and continuous inappropriate behaviors of a sexual nature, including comments, touching, sending or posting photos, messages and/or requests.

All of these are a type of sexual harassment and are a violation of the victim's civil rights:

- A coach or manager asking an athlete for sex or a date
- Referring to an adult as a girl, hunk, doll, babe, or honey
- Whistling at someone, cat calls
- Making sexual comments about a person's body
- Making sexual comments or innuendos
- Turning training discussions to sexual topics
- Telling sexual jokes or stories
- Asking about sexual fantasies, preferences, or history
- Asking personal questions about social or sexual life





- Making kissing sounds, howling, and smacking lips
- Making sexual comments about a person's clothing, anatomy, or looks
- Repeatedly asking out a person who is not interested
- Telling lies or spreading rumors about a person's personal sex life.



### 3. Methodologies of collection of stories

During the monthly operative meetings, our Consortium have discussed about the best methodologies to use for the collection of stories and came up with three different strategies: stories of VSH collected by means of direct interview or qualitative survey; stories of VSH/catcalling detected during the project implementation in the web and the social media; women who responded to the online survey. All the stories are anonymous.

#### - STORIES OF VSH COLLECTED BY MEANS OF DIRECT INTERVIEW OR QUALITATIVE SURVEY

For the direct interviews, women and/or girls who are or were practicing sports are contacted and asked to have a 1 to 1 discussion, specifying the topic will be catcalling and VSH in sport. It's important to set the meeting in a comfortable and cozy space, so the interviewee will feel safe. The interviewer has to bring: template copy, consent form copy to be signed by the interviewee, recording device (in case the interviewee will agree to record the interview) and pen and notebook for taking notes. Despite being already written in the consent form, it's important that the interviewer reminds the interviewee that her participation is voluntary, thus she has the right to decline any answer she is uncomfortable with and to interrupt the discussion whenever she feels like. At the beginning of the interview, it's fundamental to make sure that the interviewee understands the definition of catcalling and VSH; if needed, the interviewer can also read it together with the interviewee. After collecting the consent for data, voice recording and potentially podcast publication, the interview can start. The interviewer is encouraged to structure it as an informal discussion. The questions can be flexible based on how the interview is proceeding. Note: in case the interview is difficult to organize, questions can be printed and sent to the interviewee, asking her to fill the form on her own.

#### - STORIES OF VSH/CATCALLING DETECTED DURING THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION IN THE WEB AND THE SOCIAL MEDIA

During the project implementation, partners are also asked to detect some stories from their own country on the web and social media. These stories have to be related to VSH and catcalling, they can talk about some famous cases as well as not



known ones. Partners are asked to make a general research on what's happening in their own country related to the topic of catcalling and VSH and to collect and save some of these stories. They can check the news, websites, pages and groups on different social media, etc.

As it's very likely that these stories will be found in the language of the partners' countries, partners are also asked to translate these stories in English.

#### - WOMEN WHO RESPONDED TO THE ONLINE SURVEY

The third methodology developed by our Consortium is an online survey on Google Form that participants can fill and send back. The survey has been written and translated in all the languages of the partners' countries, in order to obtain a wider range of responses and for the form to be accessible also to non English-speakers. At the beginning of the Google Form, the participant will find the definition of catcalling and VSH and the consent form: only after agreeing to the consent form, the participant will be allowed to fill and send the questionnaire. The forms were promoted through the website of the project and through the social media pages of each partner, and the link was sent via email as well. All the responses are going to be collected and translated in English.



## 4. Instructions and suggestions on how to collect stories

In order to organize and facilitate the process of collection of stories, KEAN (leading organization of the Work Package) have created specific instructions and suggestions for the whole Consortium to follow. Thanks to these guidelines, all the partners have the same format for saving the collected stories and folders are divided per country and sub-divided per organization inside every country's folder, if needed.

Here's the instructions:

### **BASIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR WP2 > TASK 2.1**

1. Find the templates here:  
[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/2/folders/1C0lh6cBjq2fz5Bb\\_swASwZ4uchRNCXhA](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/2/folders/1C0lh6cBjq2fz5Bb_swASwZ4uchRNCXhA)  
 or through the path: *WHISTLE shared drive > WP2 > Task 2.1 > 3. Whistle calls for stories: tools, templates, tutorials > 2. Final templates*
2. Duplicate folder with the name of your country here:  
<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/2/folders/1Jk9-dpotrin8fsGLIa7J6Jb0rKKLyc-j>  
 Rename it in this way: *Final templates – "COUNTRY"*  
 Each folder should contain at least one copy for each of the 3 templates!
3. Translate the templates in the language of your own country and save it inside the folder of step 2.  
 Rename the files as follows: *Ex.: WHISTLE Interview - ITA*
4. Open the Google Form template here:  
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1z1FNt2X7vRpaUOLAoDinJHHgsnXzsgmLRvrngn1x-8A/edit>  
 and make a copy (3 dots on the up right side of the page > select "make a copy")
5. Translate the copy of the Google Form template you have just created as per step 4. in the language of your own country.  
 You can copy-paste the text from the word file version of the template that you have translated in step 3.
6. Save the new link of the translated Google Form in your word file template, and add it in the monitoring tool at this link:  
[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KvUUIq2gXd67zq7xPCiMhJkg7CHkrOtEi\\_favW4I6c](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KvUUIq2gXd67zq7xPCiMhJkg7CHkrOtEi_favW4I6c)



[8/edit](#)

## BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

1. Read carefully the template questions
2. Set the appointment in a safe and comfortable place
3. Bring with you:
  - Template copy
  - Consent form copy
  - Recording device
  - Pen and notebook for notes

## DURING THE INTERVIEW

1. Make sure the interviewee understands the definitions of catcalling and VSH (read it if needed)
2. Collect written consent for data, voice recording and potentially podcast publication
3. Structure the interview as an INFORMAL DISCUSSION and remember that the interviewee has the right to stop the interview whenever she wants.
4. Offer links and info as follow up

!!! The questions can be flexible based on how the interview is proceeding

!!! If 1-to-1 meetings are difficult to organize, you can also print the questions and ask to the interviewee to fill in the form on their own

## THE SURVEY

1. Have the survey ready in your language
2. Share the link of the survey through social media or via mail (check with Actividades Alternativas - responsible for communication - the ways to share the link)



## COLLECT THE DATA

1. Collect the data in the folder of your country here:  
<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/2/folders/1IOctiDTEdKy4-oQCd5xKstyjJrnfOOoh>
2. Update the monitoring tool with the numbers of the stories collected here:  
[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KvUUlq2gXd67zq7xPCiMhJkg7CHkrOtEi\\_favW4I6c8/edit#gid=1684627392](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KvUUlq2gXd67zq7xPCiMhJkg7CHkrOtEi_favW4I6c8/edit#gid=1684627392)
3. **FOR THE INTERVIEWS:**
  - Upload all the consent forms signed (scan) in your folder.
  - Prepare a copy of the English template for each interviewee and complete the form and questions with the help of notes and recordings.
  - Upload all the English templates completed
  - Upload any podcast recordings collected
4. **FOR THE SURVEY:**
  - Download the responses from the Google Form
  - Upload the responses excel in your folder
  - Translate the responses in English



## 5. Templates to collect stories (interviews, surveys)

As mentioned above, the Consortium worked on specific templates concerning the collection of stories for the methodologies of interviews and surveys, in order to standardize the documents collected. Each template was translated in all the languages of the partners' countries, uploaded in the specific Drive folder and copies were printed and/or used for the collection of stories.

Here's the templates in English:

### 1. TEMPLATE FOR THE INTERVIEW:

**“WHISTLE - Women's Healthy and active lifestyle Is Threatened by verbal sexual harassment: LEt's stop CATCALLING in sports”**

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#### Investigating Catcalling and Verbal Sexual Harassment in Sport

##### INTERVIEW GUIDELINES:

##### Conducting an interview:

First Phase: Introduction (10 min)

- clarify the general needs of the project
- verify the understanding and the principle of the general lines of the project
- collect consent for the use of data and for recording

Second Phase: Content (45 min)

- establish the interview
- make the interviewee feel comfortable (she has the right to end the session at any point)
- take notes and record the session for transcription and podcast

Third Phase: Leave (5 min)

- Collect hot impressions/comments
  - ask for impressions on the interview and on the project in general.
- 



The questions you find in this template have the aim to help structure the interview and help the interviewee tell her story. They can be submitted by adapting them to the specific interviewee and the context.

Make sure the interviewee understood the aim of the project and the definitions listed below before you start.

Please, keep in mind the project's and research's goals when doing the interviews.

- comprehend what *catcalling* and *verbal sexual harassment* are and how they can happen both in organized and not-organized sports settings.
- This call for stories/interviews focuses on organized sports, both for teams and individuals (such as football, volleyball, basketball, pool sports, athletics, tennis, pole dance etc.).
- This call for stories/interviews is open also to self-organized sports (such as running, jogging etc.)
- consider balancing the number of interviewees according to sport, role, age etc.
- understand which capacities and competencies should be upgraded for better use of sport in facing societal challenges.

Before describing the scope of the project and analyzing the needs, we would like to recall the meaning of the word *catcalling*. *Catcalling* is defined as a series of behaviors including whistles, gestures, comments and unwanted sexual advances, implemented to attract the attention mainly of women in the streets and other public places by strangers. Including a strong component of objectification, *catcalling* can be considered a form of verbal harassment, as it is an unwanted behavior with a sexual connotation that offends a person's dignity. It is a discriminatory attitude since it is practiced mainly by men toward the female gender. These kinds of gestures, based on gender discrimination, violate the principle of equal treatment between men and women. *Catcalling* is a growing phenomenon that happens every day to many young women and girls and affects their lives: many start to feel uncomfortable or afraid walking down the street and wearing whatever they want, or practicing their favorite sport, to a point that can lead to sport drop-out. *Catcalling* can be hidden in statements that, at first glance, may seem like appreciation.

Verbal sexual harassment in sports environments refers to repeated and continuous inappropriate behaviors of a sexual nature, including comments, touching, sending or posting photos, messages and/or requests.

All of these are a type of sexual harassment and are a violation of the victim's civil rights.

- a coach or manager asking an athlete for sex or a date
- Referring to an adult as a girl, hunk, doll, babe, or honey
- Whistling at someone, cat calls
- Making sexual comments about a person's body
- Making sexual comments or innuendos
- Turning training discussions to sexual topics
- Telling sexual jokes or stories
- Asking about sexual fantasies, preferences, or history
- Asking personal questions about social or sexual life
- Making kissing sounds, howling, and smacking lips
- Making sexual comments about a person's clothing, anatomy, or looks
- Repeatedly asking out a person who is not interested
- Telling lies or spreading rumors about a person's personal sex life





**To be filled in by the interviewer:**

The information below is very important for the following analysis phase of this project/research. The details can be collected through direct questions or extrapolated from the story description completed by the interviewee/participant of the survey.

The questions you find in the following list and in the survey table have to be submitted by adapting them to the interviewee and the context.

**Details of the interviewee:**

Age: -----

Nationality: -----

Role of the Interviewee: (ex. athlete, trainer, coach, manager, fan, referee, other...)  
-----

Role in the episode: (ex. victim in first person, witness, other ...)  
-----

Sport: (team or individual structured sports) -----

Location where the episode occurred: (ex. field, gym, grandstand, changing/locker room, on the way to/from the training/match, other...)  
-----

Moment when the episode occurred: (ex. before the match/training, after the match/training, on the way to/from the venue, during the match/training, other ...)  
-----

Historical period collocation of the episode: (ex. present; '90s, 5 year ago, and so on...)  
-----

**Date/Country of the Interview:** (Ex. 02/08/2018 Italy)

**Interviewer partner:** (Ex. USMA)

**“WHISTLE - Women’s Healthy and active lifestyle Is Threatened by verbal sexual harassment: LEt’s stop CATCALLING in sports”**

*Please, tell us your story!*



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The following fields are designed to help you to write your story. For every field, write around

1. Have you witnessed or experienced personal situations of *Catcalling* or *Verbal Sexual Harassment (VSH)* during your activity in sports organizations?

2. Telling your story. What has happened? How has the story started?

3. How did you realize what was going on? What kind of signals could you detect?



4. Have you tried to cope with this situation? What was possible to do? What have you done? Have you involved other people/organizations? Who was involved?

5. Did you feel you had the skills to manage this kind of situation? Which was the most difficult part of it? Did you ask for help or support? Did you receive any form of support during or after the episode?



6. What was the impact of this episode, both on your sport's life and in general on your opinion and view?

7. End of the story: how did the story end up? What would you say to people who are living similar situations?



## 1.1 CONSENT FORM FOR THE INTERVIEW:

**Project Title : "RIGHTS: Respect Is the Goal, Hate speech Threatens Sport integrity"**

### CONSENT FROM

I volunteer to participate in this international EU-funded project entitled "RIGHTS: Respect Is the Goal, Hate speech Threatens Sport integrity" conducted by ..... from ..... . I understand that the project is designed to gather information on a hate speech in grassroots sports. I will be one of approximately 12 people being interviewed in ..... (Country name) for this research.

1. My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without any responsibility.
2. If I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview.
3. The interview will last approximately 30-45 minutes. Notes will be written during the interview. Upon my permission an audio recording of the interview will be made for its transcription.
4. I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of voice records and notes/transcripts will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.
5. I grant permission for the data generated from this interview to be used in the researcher's publications on this topic.
6. I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this research.

+aut

My Name	My Signature	Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Investigator

**Note:** If the interview is being conducted through an online chat video/audio platform, you can provide verbal consent by indicating "I agree to participate in the research study. I understand the purpose of this study and I am participating voluntarily."



\*For further information, please contact: Ms./Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ [Name of Researcher]

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_ [ tel, address affiliated institution]

## 2. TEMPLATE FOR THE SURVEY:

LINK TO THE GOOGLE FORM TEMPLATE:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1z1FNt2X7vRpaUOLAoDinJHHgsnXzsgmLRvrngn1x-8A/edit?usp=sharing>

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### **WHISTLE - Investigating Catcalling and Verbal Sexual Harassment in Sport**

“WHISTLE - Women’s Healthy and active lifestyle Is Threatened by verbal sexual harassment: LEt’s stop CATCALLING in sports” is an Erasmus + Sport project.

Its goal is to prevent and fight Verbal Sexual Harassment (VSH) and catcalling in sports, as this behavior has a negative influence on women’s practice of sport (such as dropout from organized sports or limits on outdoor physical activities).

The objective of this questionnaire is to increase the knowledge and attention on the topic, and encourage women victims of catcalling and VSH episodes to report them.

*What are catcalling and VSH?*

*Catcalling is defined as a series of behaviors including whistles, gestures, comments and unwanted sexual advances, implemented to attract the attention mainly of women in the streets and other public places by strangers. Including a strong component of objectification, catcalling can be considered a form of verbal harassment, as it is an unwanted behavior with a sexual connotation that offends a person's dignity. It is a discriminatory attitude, since it is practiced mainly by men toward the female gender.*

*Verbal sexual harassment (VSH) in sports environments refers to repeated and continuous inappropriate behaviors of a sexual nature, including comments, touching, sending or posting photos, messages and/or requests.*

*All of these are a type of sexual harassment and are a violation of the victim's civil rights.*

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#### **Section 2:**

#### **CONSENT FORM:**



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I agree to participate in the international EU-funded project entitled “WHISTLE - Women’s Healthy and active lifestyle Is Threatened by verbal sexual harassment: LET’s stop CATCALLING in sports”, by answering the following questions.

I understand that my participation in this survey is anonymous and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of data and information will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.

I grant permission for this survey’s data to be used in the researcher's publications on this topic.

For further information, please contact: Ms./Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ [Name of Researcher]

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_ [tel, address affiliated institution]

### **Section 3:**

#### **Questions**

**Have you witnessed or experienced personal situations of Catcalling or Verbal Sexual Harassment (VSH) during your activity in sports organizations?**

- yes
- no

**How did you react?**

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**What was the impact of this episode, both on your sport’s life and in general on your opinion and views?**

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**Would you like to tell us more?**

*Mode 1: open answer*

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*Mode 2: how to contact us, or a space to leave a contact so that we can reach out to her.*

#### **Section 4:**

Thank you for your contribution to the WHISTLE project!

Reach out to us using the following contacts/links, if you want to tell us more about your story(es) or the episode(s) you witnessed.

\*\*\*\*\*@gmail.com

+39 0000000000

<https://www.facebook.com/whistleprojecteu>

<https://www.instagram.com/whistleproject.eu/>

<https://whistleproject.eu/>

If you want to learn more or be part of the research, leave here a contact (email/phone/social media) where we can connect with you:

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## 6. Methodological issues (to be taken into account when partners collect stories or interviews or develop the online surveys)

There are some methodological issues to be taken into account during the collection of stories, that might or might not depend on the methodology of collection.

Generally, the Consortium has observed since the very first pilot collection of stories that the interviews give the possibility to collect more information, as the interviewee feels the human contact with the interviewer and, if the interview is held correctly and with the right emotional support and sensitivity, the interviewees feel safe enough to share more personal and detailed experiences.

On the contrary, the online survey, despite being easier to share, spread and be filled, obtains commonly very short and summarized answers, mostly negative to the request to share personal experiences on VSH or catcalling. Furthermore, participants were reluctant to give their personal information in the Google Form, as the statistics of the collected stories show. During a monthly meeting, the Consortium has shared the hypothesis that, with the online survey, people are less willing to share their stories as the Google Form can't create the feeling of a comfortable and safe environment like it happens during the in person interviews.

The Turkish partner has also noticed a geographical pattern in the answers received from its country: interviewees from the Western side were more open and willing to share their stories than the ones from the Eastern side of Turkey; this can be related to the fact that in the Western side, close to Europe, they feel less gender pressure and feel free to share their experiences more comfortably. Consequently, it has been more complicated for the Turkish partner to collect relevant stories from the Eastern side.

Turkey is not the only country in which the geographical factor has to be taken into account: the Bulgarian partner has remarked how people from big cities were more familiar with the topic, while women from villages, small cities and rural areas weren't even feeling comfortable sharing their own general opinion about VSH and catcalling.

Furthermore, in Bulgaria it has been noticed a general lack of knowledge about the topic, and sport associations were reluctant to collaborate. Even after explaining what is VSH and catcalling, girls and women were often not willing to share their stories and, even when they did, they weren't taking a firm position against the harassers and the passive witnesses of violent acts, normalizing the aggressive behaviors and having no



idea on how to react to it. Filling the questionnaire was easier for them as they wouldn't feel comfortable speaking about catcalling face to face, but even the answers collected from the questionnaires were very short and synthetic.

Italy and Bulgaria share the same difficulties entering in contact with sport clubs, as they don't engage or send any contribution. Many Italian female athletes didn't even reply to the first contacts such as email or calls. The ones who did, expressed a general sympathy for the project but didn't contribute anyway. As for the women interviewed, most of them have trouble recognizing catcalling and - even when they do - they consider it normal, at best a bit annoying.

The Spanish partner has underlined that most women are likely to not identify catcalling and VSH at first, denying having ever experienced or witnessed such situations. Only through interviews and examples, they would remember some episodes in which they felt unsafe, uncomfortable or threatened. Women over 35 are more willing to accept and normalize catcalling and VSH. Another important element to consider is the political barrier, as some women are declining the interviews describing it as "political propaganda": they generally claim that catcalling and VSH don't exist as it doesn't make anyone uncomfortable, it's not badly intended or it simply never happened to them.

In some specific cases, despite the interview being held in a safe space, the interviewee might relive the bad experience strongly enough to manifest psychological behaviours such as sadness and/or anger. It's been reported from some of the first interviews in Greece and the reaction of the harassed person while telling the story is an important factor to take in consideration during the whole process of collection of stories, as the interviewer has to be ready to deal with certain kinds of emotional and psychological reactions.

Partners' countries that have not been mentioned above have not encountered any methodological issues during the collection of stories.

It's fundamental to take into account all the important elements remarked in this chapter and the ones that are still coming out during the process of interviewing in order to consequentially analyse the data collected from the stories, considering all the variables, factors and the social, geographical and political contexts.



## ANNEXES

- the online tool (screenshots)



HOME ABOUT WHISTLE INTERVIEWS SUPPORT US



TELL US YOUR STORY

### WHISTLE Investigating Catcalling and Verbal Sexual Harassment in Sport

"WHISTLE - Women's Healthy and active lifestyle Is Threatened by verbal sexual harassment: LEt's stop CATCALLING in sports" is an Erasmus+ Sport project

Its goal is to prevent and fight Verbal Sexual Harassment (VSH) and catcalling in sports, as this behavior has a negative influence on women's practice of sport (such as dropout from organized sports or limits on outdoor physical activities).

**The objective of this questionnaire is to increase the knowledge and attention on the topic, and encourage women victims of catcalling and VSH episodes to report them.**

What are *catcalling* and *VSH*?

*Catcalling is defined as a series of behaviors including whistles, gestures, comments and unwanted sexual advances, implemented to attract the attention mainly of women in the streets and other public places by strangers. Including a strong component of objectification, catcalling can be considered a form of verbal harassment, as it is an unwanted behavior with a sexual connotation that offends a person's dignity. It is a discriminatory attitude, since it is practiced mainly by men toward the female gender.*

*Verbal sexual harassment (VSH) in sports environments refers to repeated and continuous inappropriate behaviors of a sexual nature, including comments, touching, sending or posting photos, messages and/or requests.*

*All of these are a type of sexual harassment and are a violation of the victim's civil rights.*



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**Questions**

\*

**Have you witnessed or experienced personal situations of Catcalling or Verbal Sexual Harassment (VSH) during your activity in sports organizations?**

Yes

No

**How did you react?**

La tua risposta

**What was the impact of this episode, both on your sport's life and in general on your opinion and views?**

La tua risposta

**Would you like to tell us more?**

La tua risposta

- monitoring tools about stories (screenshots)

NUMBERS OF STORIES COLLECTED (partners have to update):							USMA	SPF-DcD	PD	KEAN	VF	AA	CF	SPELL	SPI	total	
SO	ID	KPI description	Type	Unit	Target												
SO2	K2.1	Stories of VSH collected by means of direct interview or qualitative survey	result	n.	90		10	2	10	10	5	18	12	14			81
		Stories of VSH/catcalling detected during the project implementation in the web, the social media	result	n.	60				12	8	6	7	18	0			51
SO2	K2.2	Women who responded to the online survey	result	n.	80		5		10	17	10	16	7	10			75
NUMBERS OF STORIES TO ACHIEVE:							USMA	SPF-DcD	PD	KEAN	VF	AA	CF	SPELL	SPI	total	
SO	ID	KPI description	Type	Unit	Target												
SO2	K2.1	Stories of VSH collected by means of direct interview or qualitative survey	result	n.	90		5	5	5	10	5	15	15	15	15		90
		Stories of VSH/catcalling detected during the project implementation in the web, the social media	result	n.	60		6	6	6	12	6	6	6	6	6		60
SO2	K2.2	Women who responded to the online survey	result	n.	80		5	10	5	10	10	10	10	10	10		80



- example of stories published on the website (screenshots)



## Carlota Fernández Osorio

Age: 27 | Gender: Female | Sport: Karate | Nationality: Spanish

*"I know girls who are not doing as much exercise as they were before and girls who dropped out of sports because of these sorts of behaviors (Verbal Sexual Harassment)."*

[→ See full interview](#)

## Have you witnessed or experienced personal situations of Catcalling or Verbal Sexual Harassment (VSH) during your activity in sports organizations?

Yes, but mostly in sports in general (Exercising in the streets or in the gym) more than in top-level sports.

## ¿ Do you remember any relevant stories of VSH or catcalling that have left a mark on you?

Luckily I've never experienced anything relevant enough to leave a mark, but it's a usual thing to get comments or unwanted attention while exercising in the street just for the fact that you're a woman. For example, whistles while you jog, guys approaching you while you exercise or inappropriate messages on social media referring to your body or your looks when you post a video doing some sort of exercise or sport.

## ¿Did you identify those situation as Verbal Sexual Harassment in that moment?

I believe we don't identify this as Verbal Sexual Harassment because society has taught us to be used to it, because it's occasional or because it's normally never the same person, it's not usually the same person, or at least in my case...



## ¿What do you do in these situations?

I just ignore them, if they make a comment while jogging in the streets or even if they approach me with some sort of intention of harassing me, I always pretend I didn't see or hear anything, or sometimes I'm quite categorical.

## ¿Have you tried to cope with this situation? Have you talked to someone about it?

When you talk about it there is a feeling of 'overall acceptance', nobody will consider this as a type of harassment but more like a 'bad attitude' or lack of respect, but we have never named this sexual harassment, maybe because we want to underplay it or try to avoid having to deal with something that quite affects us.

## ¿How does it affect your personal and sports life?

It doesn't really affect me, personally, I believe I'm strong and self-confident. But I'm conscious of the damage this can do to other people. I know girls who are not doing as much exercise as they were before and girls who dropped out of sports because of these sorts of behaviors (Verbal Sexual Harassment).

## ¿How does it affect your personal and sports life?

It doesn't really affect me, personally, I believe I'm strong and self-confident. But I'm conscious of the damage this can do to other people. I know girls who are not doing as much exercise as they were before and girls who dropped out of sports because of these sorts of behaviors (Verbal Sexual Harassment).

## ¿ What advice would you give to girls who have suffered or are suffering 'catcalling' and Verbal Sexual Harassment?

At first I would suggest just to ignore it, even if this is not the solution it's the easiest way for this not to affect you, and then evaluate the situation objectively knowing that it's nothing personal (unless it's something reiterated and it's always coming from the same person, in that case you might have to think of more drastic ways to deal with it)

Starting from there and as we gain more and more confidence, confront it in case we feel it's necessary, as it's everyone's fight not to accept it as something normal and to make a change in our society.





## Amber Kitchen - The princess of Muay thai -

Age: 27 | Gender: Female | Sport: Karate | Nationality: Spanish

*'I receive inappropriate videos and photos from strangers every day'*

→ [See full interview](#)



# Amber Kitchen - The princess of Muay thai - 'I receive inappropriate videos and photos from strangers every day'

In this first episode of 'The Whistle project podcasts' Amber Kitchen speaks about her experiences of Verbal Sexual Harassment in sports.

Amber Kitchen is an Muay thai celebrity with a very successful career. She competes at the 'One Championship' league and also runs her own gym.

In this interview she talks about the 'unkind' side of being a young woman with big success in the world of Muay thai and how she has to deal with all sorts of harassment in her daily life.

## Watch the full interview on Youtube



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