



National Women's
Council of Ireland
Comhairle Náisiúnta
na mBan in Éirinn

**ENDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE
IN THIRD LEVEL EDUCATION**

ESHTE PROJECT

**A REVIEW OF DATA ON THE PREVALENCE OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND
HARASSMENT OF WOMEN STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

National Report-Ireland

2017



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SUMMARY

DATA ON THE PREVALENCE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE OF WOMEN STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

In 2015-16 there were 178,094 full time students in the 26 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) funded by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) in the Republic of Ireland:

- 51% of these students were women
- 89% of the new full-time undergraduates were aged 23 or younger¹

There is limited research available on the experience of gender-based violence in Irish HEIs but **Say Something (2013)**² reported:

- 11% of women students had been subject to unwanted sexual contact
- 5% were rape survivors, with a further 3% survivors of attempted rape
- 31% of women reported feeling harassed, including just under 19% being physically groped
- 17% of women had been photographed or filmed without consent, and 8% had these images circulated without consent online
- 10% of women had experience of stalking or obsessive behaviour including online

The **2015 National Sexual Assault Trauma Unit Activity Report**³ recorded that from 685 people who attended for rape or sexual assault:

- 92% of patients were women
- 45% of patients identified themselves as **students**

We have no data about ethnic minority women students or women students with disabilities and their experiences of sexual violence and harassment. However, general population statistics show that *the second most common risk factor for rape after gender, is disability*, 19% of all complainants were recorded as having a physical or intellectual disability or a history of mental illness⁴.

¹ <http://www.hea.ie/en/statistics/overview>

² Say Something-A Study of Students' Experiences of Harassment, Stalking, Violence & Sexual Assault 2013

³ National Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU):Annual Key Service Activity 2015

⁴ Rape & Justice in Ireland: A National Study of Survivor, Prosecutor and Court Responses to Rape 2009

Damaging and discriminatory attitudes towards women and sexual violence continue to persist in Irish society:

- 21% of Irish people think that there are understandable reasons for having sexual intercourse without consent, that is raping a woman
- 23% of Irish people believe women often make up or exaggerate claims of abuse or rape⁵

It is unsurprising then that 79% of Irish women who have experienced sexual or physical violence have never reported it to an official body⁶ and less than 3% of women students said they had ever reported their unwanted sexual experiences to An Garda Síochána⁷.

In responding to this, the review identified that many Students' Unions, the Union of Students in Ireland and HEIs work hard, often together, to create safe and inclusive campuses. They are committed to creating a zero tolerance of violence culture on their campuses and are limited only by resources, funding, capacity and time to do so. They work in partnership with specialist NGOs, particularly their local Rape Crisis Centres and are open to developing coordinated and sustainable initiatives.

⁵ Eurobarometer on Gender-based Violence 2016

⁶ Fundamental Rights Agency: Violence Against Women Survey 2014

⁷ Say Something-A Study of Students' Experiences of Harassment, Stalking, Violence & Sexual Assault 2013

INTRODUCTION

“Violence deprives women of their ability to enjoy fundamental freedoms and represents a serious obstacle to equality between women & men”⁸

In 2014 the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, reported that 25% Irish women had experienced a form of physical and/or sexual violence since the age of fifteen, and 8% experience physical and/or sexual violence each year⁹. Violence against women goes to the heart of patriarchy, of male dominance and entitlement and of a culture that enables men to perpetrate these crimes due to weak and inconsistent sanctions and deterrents.

As Chair of the Irish National Observatory on Violence Against Women¹⁰ and convener of the Women's Human Rights Alliance, the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI), has been working on the issue of sexual violence and harassment of women since its inception. NWCI's expertise in informing the development of government policy and legislation in the area of gender-based violence has been widely recognised, and we currently sit by invitation on the National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women and the Women, Peace and Security Monitoring Group and the Department of Foreign Affairs NGO Standing Committee on Human Rights.

A central advocacy position of the NWCI and the National Observatory is that Ireland lacks a proper understanding of the prevalence, impact and nature of violence against women across all domains of life experience. The intersecting issues of for example, class, ethnicity, (dis)ability and sexual orientation are not well studied, and in some cases have never been researched at all in Ireland. Gathering data is a vital part of revealing and speaking the truth about sexual violence and harassment, understanding its intrinsic gendered reality, planning, delivering and evaluating responses, and achieving lasting positive social change. Its absence obscures women's experiences and undermines efforts to tackle the violence.

The review will begin with an overview of the international frameworks that set the context for challenging violence against women. These frameworks outline the obligations the Irish state has on the issue itself, but also to proactively collect data and information to understand the scale and complexity of the problem. This will be followed by an overview of the national policy and legislative context and the NWCI recognises the recent, very positive and substantive legislative developments

⁸ Women Against Violence Europe

⁹ Fundamental Rights Agency: Violence Against Women Survey 2014

¹⁰ The Observatory is an independent network of grassroots and national organisations that monitor progress on violence against women in Ireland. It is affiliated with the European Women's Lobby (EWL) European Observatory on Violence against Women.

and commitments that have been made by the state. Relevant EU and national general population data and research will be outlined next, and then higher education specific frameworks and data will be reviewed.

The Ending Sexual Harassment & Violence in Third Level Education (ESHTE) project will work to engage meaningfully with ethnic minority women students and women students with disabilities, therefore this review has tried to identify and include frameworks and data of relevance to these communities too.

INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

International human rights frameworks encourage, and in some cases specify the collection of national data on sexual violence and harassment as a treaty obligation. States are obliged to take special measures to prevent exploitation, violence and discrimination and to uphold equality and dignity for all people. Obligations to various UN and EU treaty bodies have been particularly important for motivating the Irish State to meet its responsibilities as a positive duty holder.

Over the past decade many UN treaty bodies have expressed particular concern at the prevalence of violence against women and girls in Ireland. Concerns raised include low prosecution and conviction rates of perpetrators, high withdrawal rates of complaints and inadequate funding to organisations that provide support services to victims. In particular concerns have been raised about violence suffered by women from marginalised and vulnerable groups, including Traveller women, migrant women, asylum seeking and refugee women and women with disabilities. In 2005, in response to Ireland's combined 4th & 5th report, the final comments from the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Committee recommended in relation to violence against women that,

*"the State party adopt without delay its strategic plan and systematically monitor and regularly evaluate its components, particularly in relation to marginalized and vulnerable women including Traveller women, migrant women, asylum-seeking women and refugee women and women with disabilities"*¹¹

UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

The Republic of Ireland acceded to CEDAW in 1985 and to the Optional Protocol (the acceptance of the right to be monitored and to have enforcement actions instigated) in 2000.

The State made its combined 6th & 7th periodic reports to the CEDAW Committee in September 2016 and the Committee's concluding remarks were published in March 2017. These included recommendations that are very relevant to the work of the ESHTTE project:

The Committee recommended that the State:

- Ensure that the National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence...implement the "gold standard" so that data on all forms of gender-based violence against women,..., are systematically collected and analysed and...disaggregated by, inter alia age, ethnicity and relationship with the perpetrator

¹¹ CEDAW Committee concluding remarks 4th & 5th reports 2005

- Intensify existing efforts to combat gender-based violence against women....particularly targeting Traveller, Roma and migrant women and girls
- Criminalise...emerging forms of gender-based violence, such as online stalking and harassment
- Provide adequate financial resources to non-governmental organizations that provide services to victims of gender-based violence
- Expedite the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention)¹²

UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

Ireland signed CERD in 1968, but only ratified the Convention in 2000. Ireland submitted its combined 3rd & 4th reports to the Committee in 2011 and was due to make its 5th to 7th reports in 2014 but has not done so to date.

In its concluding remarks in 2011, the Committee recommended that

“the State party take all necessary measures to ensure that....migrant and minority women continue to be the focus of the target actions and objectives of the National Women’s Strategy”¹³

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

CRPD was signed by the Irish State in 2007 but the state has not yet ratified the convention.

- Articles 6 & 7 of the Convention recognise that women and girls with disabilities face greater risk of violence
- Article 16 deals with freedom from violence and abuse and reminds States to take “all appropriate...measures to protect persons with disabilities....both within and from all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, including their gender-based aspects”
- Article 16.5 requires effective legislation and policies to ensure that instances of abuse are identified, investigated and where appropriate, prosecuted
- Article 31 deals with data collection and requires States to undertake to collect appropriate information and statistical data to enable them to formulate policies to give effect to the Convention¹⁴

¹² CEDAW Committee concluding remarks 6th & 7th reports 2017

¹³ CERD Committee concluding comments 3rd & 4th reports 2011

¹⁴ UN CRPD- <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)

Established by the Council of Europe, ECRI is a monitoring body specialised in questions relating to racism and intolerance. It published its recommendations from its 4th report on Ireland in 2013, and these included:

- that the Irish authorities move to improve and to supplement the existing arrangements for collecting data on racist incidents and the follow-up given to them by the criminal justice system¹⁵

It particularly noted that the state's National Action Plan Against Racism, adopted in 2005 as a follow-up to the United Nations World Conference Against Racism held in 2001, has not been renewed.

The European Commission Disability Strategy (EDS) 2010 – 2020

The EU is a signatory to CERD and the EDS recognises that girls with disabilities are more likely to be victims of physical and sexual violence, and neglect, than those without disabilities. They are also more likely to be less well protected.

EDS specifically identifies constant data collection and monitoring as important, restating the goals of CRPD, "EU action will support and supplement Member States' efforts to collect statistics and data that reflect the barriers preventing people with disabilities from exercising their rights"¹⁶

The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence -Istanbul Convention (2014)

Ireland signed The Istanbul Convention in 2015. The Convention defines gender-based violence against women as violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately. It requires States to criminalise multiple forms of violence against women, including physical, sexual and psychological violence, stalking, and sexual harassment. The Convention recognises the importance of data collection and research with a specific Article outlining the minimum requirements for States. The data collected should be both administrative and survey forms. Research should be conducted to study the causes of the violence and the methods to prevent it and data collection should be co-ordinated by a national body.

¹⁵ ECRI 4th Report on Ireland 2013

¹⁶ EDS 2010 – 2020 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV%3Aem0047>

Article 11 -Data collection and research includes the requirements for the state to

- collect disaggregated relevant statistical data at regular intervals
- support research in the field of all forms of violence
- endeavour to conduct population -based surveys at regular intervals to assess the prevalence of and trends in all forms of violence¹⁷

Ireland does not yet meet the requirements of Article11, and there are a number of other actions that the Irish state must undertake before it can ratify the convention, these include actions of particular relevance for the work of the ESHTe project:

- Develop protocols for referral of victims to and from support services including state sector services
- Develop and deliver education / training modules, both initial training and developmental training, for continual delivery to specific target groups in the public sector
- Implement a co-ordinated, integrated national helpline service provision responding to the issues of domestic violence and sexual violence
- Develop and enact sexual violence legislation to strengthen protections for victims and society from convicted sexual violence offenders¹⁸

EU Victims Directive

Ireland has transposed Directive 2012/29/EU, the EU Victims Directive, establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime into Irish law, through the Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Bill 2016. Of particular importance to the ESHTe project will be the measures to ensure:

- Victims of gender-based violence receive specialised support services-with a recognition of the globally low official reporting rates which must be understood and accepted when resourcing is developed
- Actions must be implemented to ensure that women who do report violence are protected from secondary and repeat victimisation, intimidation and retaliation-including discriminatory stereotyping by professionals with responsibility for supporting them¹⁹

¹⁷ Council of Europe -Istanbul Convention 2011

¹⁸ Cosc, Istanbul Convention Action Plan 2016

¹⁹ EU Victims Directive, 2012/29/EU

NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORKS

Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence 2016 – 2021

The national framework for tackling gender-based violence in the Republic of Ireland is the **Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence**

2016 – 2021²⁰. The actions required by Ireland's international treaty obligations outlined above, will be coordinated and /or delivered through this plan. Its stated strategic intent is to

- Change societal attitudes to support a reduction in domestic and sexual violence
- Improve supports available to victims and survivors and
- Hold perpetrators to account

To achieve these objectives, Cosc, the National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence will

- gather data
- encourage research
- engage in monitoring²¹

The national strategy notes that a focus will be maintained on implementing actions which must be completed to enable Ireland to ratify the Istanbul Convention. Other relevant actions will be undertaken to ensure the full implementation of EU Victims Directive.

Ethnic Minority Women, Women with Disabilities

Despite the significant focus outlined above in UN committee reports on the issue of multiple discriminations experienced by ethnic minority women, and women with disability, the National Strategy does not explicitly address this challenge and the needs of these groups.

Action Plan, Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, 2016 – 2021²² does set as actions:

High Level Goal 1 -Prevention-Awareness / Education / Training

Awareness Raising Action 1:100

- Continue to work with specific audiences including persons who are high risk, marginalised or with specific needs and continue to work with professional bodies on awareness raising

²⁰ Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and GBV 2016 – 2021

²¹ Ibid

²² Action Plan, Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and GBV, 2016 – 2021

High Level Goal 2-Provision of Services to Victims and Holding Perpetrators to Account

Provision of Services to Victims-Action 2:1000

- Improve confidence in how An Garda Síochána manages Domestic and Sexual Abuse within diverse and emerging communities, such as the Traveller and Roma communities by supporting inter-agency and community partnerships both locally and nationally.

The **Action Plan** specifically notes that the **EU Victims Directive** is guiding the data and research objectives:

High Level Goal 3 -Implementation / Monitoring / Data / Research

Action 3.600

Establish a bottom line “gold standard” of data collection and analysis by all agencies working in the area(s) of domestic and sexual violence whereby all datasets are disaggregated by:

- Age of victim and perpetrator
- Sex of victim and perpetrator
- Relationship between victim and perpetrator
- Ethnicity of victim and perpetrator
- Any disabilities of victim and perpetrator

The NWCI, representing the National Observatory on Violence against Women, sits on the NGO Data Working Group to develop this “gold standard”²³.

Action 3.700

Implement the findings of the Expert Group on Crime Statistics in relation to the compilation of crime statistics by the CSO, relevant to domestic violence and sexual violence

Action 3.800

- Implement a set of key performance indicators and collection of basic standard dataset from funded domestic violence and sexual violence services
- Implement project to develop knowledge management systems for funded sexual violence and domestic violence services
- Development of outcome-focused key performance indicators

ACTION 3.1000

- Facilitate relevant third level institutes to establish a postgraduate research network on domestic violence and sexual violence

The National Strategy & Action Plan outlines progressive and ambitious goals. However, the sheer scope of actions under Goal 3 confirms how poor current national statistics and data collection are in Ireland. It should also be noted that the previous **National Strategy, 2010-2014** had also set as an

²³ There is a separate statutory organisations Data Working Group

objective, “Improve data on domestic and sexual violence” but as will be outlined below, national statistics and data collection processes are still very poor.

National Strategy for Women and Girls (NSWG) 2017-2020

The new National Strategy for Women and Girls was launched in May 2017. The preamble recognises that

“domestic and gender-based violence continues to be experienced by women across social classes and situations”.

It states as **Objective 5** that over the lifetime of the strategy, women and girls in Ireland should:

- Experience a reduction in gender-based violence²⁴

The NSWG contains no additional substantive actions to tackle sexual violence and harassment but states it will support the implementation of actions contained in the Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence 2016-2021. Initially there had been no objective in relation to violence against women.

The NWCI submission to the NSWG expressed,

“serious concern that tackling Violence Against Women has not been listed as a specific strategic objective by the Department of Justice and Equality in its consultation document. NWCI strongly recommends that this be amended and that specific and targeted commitments to tackle Violence Against Women in all its various forms are included. Sexual and domestic violence is a cause and consequence of gender discrimination and should be located within a gender equality framework”²⁵

The NSWG does call for the elimination of discriminatory stereotypes which it recognises impedes the achievement of substantive equality between women and men, across all equality issues. The strategy also recognises **“Women with particular disadvantages”** and that ‘positive action measures’ are needed where specific categories of women experience particular disadvantages. The strategy does not define what these measures might include or how they might be implemented.

Inclusion Ireland’s submission to the NSWG strategy noted that

“almost a decade after signing the UNCRPD, Ireland has yet to ratify the convention meaning that there is no domestic or international monitoring of Ireland’s performance in relation to the rights of persons with disabilities”²⁶

²⁴ National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017-2020

²⁵ NWCI Submission to NSWG 2017

²⁶ Inclusion Ireland, Submission to NSWG 2017

It also noted the significant problem that lack of Irish data on the lives of women with disabilities causes in relation to violence. The dependence on international data and one valuable but small scale Irish survey²⁷ means we have no meaningful understanding of prevalence and frequency, and specific challenges and needs women with disabilities may have.

Migrant Integration Strategy (MIS) 2017-2020

The Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration is the statutory agency with responsibility to develop, lead and co-ordinate migrant integration (sic) policy across other Government Departments, agencies and services. It was intended that functions undertaken by the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI), abolished in 2008, would be transferred to this agency. However, as outlined in the strategy, the focus is very much on migrant integration strategies and it makes no reference to the issue of violence against women, either interfamilial/community or experienced in other life domains.

As outlined on the website Office For Promotion of Migrant Integration²⁸, the context of the strategy is that key social issues that had been noted in the **National Action Plan Against Racism 2005-2008** are now being addressed in 'sectoral' specific policies, for example the Intercultural Health Strategy. However, as will be noted below that strategy document also makes no reference to the issue of sexual violence and harassment and ethnic minority women. During the NWCI consultation process for its 2017 CEDAW Shadow Report²⁹, many women reported that they experienced repeated, sustained and almost daily racist motivated incidents. How this intersects with sexual violence and harassment requires urgent focussed attention and research. In recognition of this reality of intersecting racism and sexism, the NWCI CEDAW Shadow Report 2017, called for a new National Action Plan against Racism with a strong gender focus and a national oversight committee with representatives from statutory and NGO sectors to implement it³⁰.

MIS 2017-2020 does set as a key action:

- the establishment of a working group to examine data gaps in relation to migrant needs and experience³¹

²⁷ Sexual Violence Against People with Disabilities: Data collection and barriers to disclosure 2011

²⁸ <http://www.integration.ie/website/omi/omiwebv6.nsf/page/Racism-npar-en>

²⁹ Reported in NWCI submission to NSWG 2017

³⁰ NWCI CEDAW Shadow Report 2017

³¹ MIS 2017-2020

National Disability Strategy NDS (2004)

The National Disability Strategy was launched in 2004 to secure the participation in society of people with disabilities. It included a range of disability legislation and legally required plans for 6 key government departments showing how they would address disability issues.

The **National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan 2012-2015**, identified a programme of work to be implemented which included,

- Objective 3 that People with disabilities are safe and free from abuse
 - Review Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1993
 - Disability Awareness initiatives are developed by COSC³²

However, in March 2017 Inclusion Ireland condemned the 10-year delay in ratifying UN CRPD and called on the State to ratify without delay, noting that Ireland is now the only EU country to not have ratified the convention,

“The Convention sets out in clear terms that the rights of persons with disabilities are human rights and these rights apply equally to persons with disabilities; the fact that the UNCRPD will not be ratified, a decade after it was signed shows that people with disabilities in Ireland are not a priority for this Government”³³

An Garda Síochána Domestic Abuse Intervention Policy (2017)

The 2017 policy framework was revised to ensure that the national police services, An Garda Síochána, could comply with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention and the EU Victims Directive. The document is procedural in nature and outlines the nature of interventions that Garda members are required to make when responding to Domestic Abuse related incidents. The policy affirms violence as extremely serious, criminal and potentially leading to lethal outcomes for its victims.

It confirms that while Domestic Abuse is not defined in Irish legislation,

“the physical, sexual, financial, emotional or psychological abuse of one person against another who is a family member or is or has been an intimate partner, regardless of gender or sexuality, can be considered to constitute ‘Domestic Abuse’”

and as such Garda policy applies to violence and harassment occurring within all intimate partner relationships.

³² National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan 2012-2015 -In 2014 Inclusion Ireland & Cosc published the Sexual Assault Support and Information- An Accessible Booklet

³³ <http://www.inclusionireland.ie/content/media/1630/inclusion-ireland-condemns-10-year-delay-ratifying-un-convention-rights-persons>

An Garda Síochána policy on the investigation of Sexual crime, Crimes against children, Child welfare (2013)

The document outlines the procedures that Garda members must follow when investigating crimes of a sexual nature and suspected child abuse. It outlines information on Garda standards, procedures and legislation through to victim support in regard to such incidents.

Again the document is necessarily technical but highlights several important issues that contribute to the systemic nature of under reporting. It confirms that

“It is the duty of the Gardaí to investigate fully all incidents of sexual crime...reported to them”

Highlights that

“Inadequate action by Gardaí during the course of such investigations can often confirm the aggressor’s perception of invulnerability which in turn can lead to further crime and/or leave the complainant vulnerable to further attack”

Gardaí must be aware that

“Inappropriate body language, remarks and a failure to show sensitivity and compassion to a victim can and has resulted in the withdrawal of genuine complaints”

And that

“Under no circumstances should members dissuade complainants from maintaining their complaints”

In 2017 An Garda Síochána also published the **Crime Prevention Information Sheet -Personal Safety-Domestic Abuse** and **the Information for persons reporting sexual crime and child abuse** leaflet. The increased focus on gender-based violence is very welcome, and in 2017 included the establishment of four Divisional Protective Services Units (DPSUs), the beginning of a national roll out of these units with responsibility to

“provide a consistent and professional approach to the investigation of domestic and sexual crimes across the country”³⁴

The establishment of these units is a central part of An Garda Síochána’s Modernisation and Renewal Programme, and at that time of their announcement, the NWCI noted,

“Having a dedicated service for women who have experienced domestic and sexual violence will support women in reporting these crimes and having greater confidence in the services provided by An Garda Síochána. The units will contribute to women staying in the system and thus reducing the high attrition rates for cases of domestic and sexual violence”³⁵

³⁴ Press Release <http://www.garda.ie/Controller.aspx?Page=20558>

³⁵ Ibid

Health Services Executive (HSE) Policy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender based Violence (2010)

The Health Service Executive (HSE) is responsible for the provision of health and personal social services, with public funds. The State understands violence against women as a serious public health issue and the HSE framework recognises that domestic and/or sexual violence has significant negative health effects, both in the short and long term for individuals, families and society. It states that the health burden from violence against women aged 15-44 is comparable to diseases such as cancer and heart disease.³⁶ The national policy framework sets a series of high level goals including

- to promote primary prevention of violence and invest in early intervention.
- to provide best practice in all service provision to victims of Domestic Violence and/or Sexual Violence
- to ensure data collection as a basis for driving high quality and more relevant service development.

The HSE has an awareness of the heterogeneity of women who will present at health services with experiences of sexual violence and abuse. The **Health Services Executive (HSE) Policy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender based Violence 2010** notes that,

“Service responses should be mindful of the culturally diverse nature of the population and should adopt interculturally competent approaches to meeting the needs of those who have experienced DV”³⁷

The **Traveller Health-A National Strategy 2002-2005**, explicitly references the experiences and needs of Traveller women in relation to sexual violence and abuse, naming service access, awareness of services, intercultural barriers all needing to be addressed.

The **National Intercultural Health Strategy 2007 – 2012**, makes few specific recommendations regarding sexual violence and harassment in its findings, except to note the need for the provision of responsive services for victims of sexual violence.

Despite a significant number of useful policy documents and frameworks, the closure of the Women’s Health Council, and the ending of the Women’s Health Officer position, it is not clear that the HSE has a clear focus and commitment on the gendered reality of violence as a public health crisis. In its NSWG submission the NWCI recommended that the NSWG strategy contain

³⁶ Health Services Executive (HSE) Policy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender based Violence 2010

³⁷ Ibid

“commitments from the Department of Health and the HSE... recognise violence against women as a major public health issue and allocate dedicated resources to fully deliver on its commitments in the Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence”³⁸

The **2014 Recent Rape/Sexual Assault: National Guidelines** developed by the national Sexual Assault Trauma Unit (SATU) are predominantly guidelines for the clinical responses that should be undertaken for adults over the age of 14 years who have been raped or sexually assaulted. SATUs are a key source of administrative data on rape and sexual assault³⁹ and the guidelines outline a multiagency, best practice response including protocols and referral outlines for An Garda Síochána, Tusla, rape crisis centres and other specialist agencies.

SATUs are part of the ‘reporting chain’ for prosecutorial purposes and the document provides an important review for SATU staff of the barriers that their patients may experience in continuing in this process, including

“victims may... have a lack of faith in the official systems, and/or not identify the behaviour as sexual violence”⁴⁰

The guidelines also outline how associated trauma may present,

“There is no one ‘normal’ way to react after experiencing sexual violence. A victim/survivor may present as expressive and tearful, quiet and controlled, distressed, in shock, in denial and/or experiencing physical revulsion”⁴¹

As research reviewed later in this report outlines, these are important understandings for all support services to hold and accept. How a survivor is behaving, and whether they are willing to report or not, is often used as a judgement regarding the severity and veracity of an incident of sexual violence and harassment. When frontline staff are aware and sensitive in these ways it contributes to a culture of safety and respect for survivors which will increase the possibility of formal reporting of incidents.

³⁸ Reported in NWCI NSWG 2017 submission

³⁹ See below for review of most recent SATU data

⁴⁰ SATU 2014 Recent Rape/Sexual Assault: National Guidelines

⁴¹ Ibid

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Irish legal system has been undergoing a process of reform and consolidation of legislation regarding sexual offences and related criminal offences over the last 3 years. Ireland continues to be very actively reviewing and amending legislation in regard to sexual violence and harassment and this section will outline core legislation in existence or under development that is of relevance to the issues the ESHT project seeks to challenge.

Criminal Law (Rape) Acts, 1981 and 1990⁴²

The Criminal Law (Rape) Acts, 1981 and 1990 define rape and other serious sexual assaults in Irish law. The 1990 amendments introduced:

- gender neutral language in regard to both perpetrator and victim
- a broader definition of rape, to include sexual assault other than penile penetration, and other than vaginally
- to include oral and anal sex, and the use of objects to violate the vagina;
- the criminalisation of rape within marriage
- the inadmissibility of past sexual history of the accuser as being irrelevant to a rape case; the failure or omission by the accuser to offer resistance to the act does not of itself constitute consent to the act

The Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997⁴³

The Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997 defines harassment as

“persistently following, watching, pestering, besetting or communicating with someone...intentionally or recklessly, seriously interferes with the other's peace and privacy or causes alarm, distress or harm”

There are currently no protective orders under civil law dealing specifically with harassment or stalking. However, during the publishing of the **Domestic Violence Bill 2017** which will consolidate Irish law primarily in relation to domestic violence, and relationships between spouses or civil partners, the Minister for Justice and Equality stated that she intends to bring forward amendments to extend access to safety and protection orders to those in intimate relationships, who are not cohabiting⁴⁴.

⁴² Criminal Law (Rape) Acts, 1981 and 1990

⁴³ Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997

⁴⁴ <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR17000033> -Press Release

This will include powers to make orders in relation to electronic communication. The **Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA): Violence Against Women 2014**⁴⁵ survey reported that 12% of Irish women have experienced cyber violence and harassment including image based abuse, ‘revenge porn’, ‘up skirting’, ‘down blousing’, and cyber stalking. The Union of Students of Ireland report, **Say Something (2013)**⁴⁶ reported that 17% of female students had experience of a range of image based abuse and that obsessive behaviour was being perpetrated through social media and other forms of ICT. The Law Reform Commission **Harmful Communications and Digital Safety Report (2016)**⁴⁷ proposed new criminal offences to address these types of sexual violence and harassment and recommended reforming the existing offence of harassment, to ensure that it includes cyber activities and intimidation.

There is currently a private members bill, **Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences 2017**⁴⁸, under consideration by the Dáil and the Irish government has given an undertaking to advance legislation on this issue. This combined with the extension of the powers of **the Domestic Violence Bill** to intimate though not cohabiting relationships will increase the protections available in cases of obsessive and harassing cyber activities which are particularly impactful on younger women.

Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017

The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017 was part commenced in March 2017. The Act made provisions to protect victims of sexual offences from being re-victimised during court proceedings, for example excluding cross examination by the accused.

The Act also introduces a statutory definition of ‘consent’ to a sexual act. The introduction of this statutory definition of consent to a sexual act brings Ireland into line with other common law jurisdictions. It provides a clear statement of the circumstances in which consent could and could not be given. These include recognising a person does not consent to a sexual act if,

- She or he is asleep or unconscious,
- She or he is incapable of consenting because of the effect of alcohol or some other drug

⁴⁵ Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA): Violence Against Women (2014)

⁴⁶ USI Say Something (2013)

⁴⁷ Law Reform Commission Harmful Communications and Digital Safety Report (2016)

⁴⁸ Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Bill (2017)

The Act also recognises that consent may be withdrawn at any time before and during sexual activity and failing to offer resistance does not equal consenting.

The establishment of a positive definition of consent in law is of particular importance for the goals of the ESHTe project. **Young People, Alcohol and Sex, What's Consent Got to do With It? (2014)**⁴⁹, reported that in the student context consent was largely an unspoken process, heavily mediated by alcohol and thus quite likely to lead to situations where one person was beyond the ability to positively consent to sexual activity. A legal framework emphasising positive consent will provide significant support to national 'Yes To Consent' campaigns lead by student unions and NGOs.

The **Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Bill 2016**⁵⁰ will transpose into Irish law Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime. As outlined previously of particular importance to the work of the ESHTe project will be the measures to ensure:

- Victims of gender-based violence receive specialised support services
- Actions must be implemented to ensure that women who do report violence are protected from secondary and repeat victimisation

Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 (EEA), Equal Status Acts 2000-2015 (ESA)

Ireland has a national framework for the promotion of equality and human rights. The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) is Ireland's national human rights and equality institution, set up to protect and promote human rights and equality in Ireland.

The EEA and ESA prohibit discrimination and harassment on nine specified grounds, these include on the basis of gender, ethnic background or as a member of the Traveller community.

The **Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 (EEA)**⁵¹ prohibit sexual and/or racial harassment within the workplace. Sexual harassment is defined as behaviour which damages a person's dignity, for example, commenting publically on a person's body; puts a person in a hostile environment, for example, by displaying pornographic posters. The EEA confirms that sexual harassment can take many forms, including actions; gestures; spoken or written words; e-mails, text messages and social media posts. In the workplace, sexual harassment can be done by employers; co-workers, and

⁴⁹ Young People, Alcohol and Sex, What's Consent Got to do With It? 2014

⁵⁰ Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Bill 2016

⁵¹ Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015

clients, customers and anyone else that the employer could reasonably expect you to come into contact with.

The **Equal Status Acts 2000-2015 (ESA)**⁵² prohibits discrimination in relation to the provision of goods and services on the nine specific grounds. For example, it is unlawful for an educational establishment to discriminate in relation to access to a course, facility or benefit they provide. All public bodies, which includes Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Ireland,

*“have a positive responsibility to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of their employees, customers, service users and everyone affected by their policies and plans”*⁵³

Section 42 of the **Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014** requires public authorities to take a proactive approach to tackling institutional gender discrimination, and promote the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all its work.

Although only formed in 2016, IHRECs’ Public Sector Duty team will have responsibility to work with HEIs to ensure they are meeting their requirements under equality legislation. As sexual violence and harassment is recognised as a central way in which gender discrimination manifests and is expressed, their work will support the goals of the ESHTe project.

⁵² Equal Status Acts 2000-2015

⁵³ Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014

AN OVERVIEW OF THE DATA AVAILABLE ON THE EXTENT, NATURE AND ATTITUDES REGARDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN IRELAND

The first (and only) general population survey, **Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland; A National Study of Irish Experiences**, the SAVI report, was published in 2002. There has been no subsequent research of its depth, despite repeated calls by the National Observatory and other sector specialists. Identifying the extent, prevalence and type of sexual violence in Ireland is currently dependent on under-resourced NGOs and data generated by EU surveys, particularly **the 2014 Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA): Violence Against Women: an EU-wide survey report**.

GENERAL POPULATION DATA-KEY STATISTICS

National Data & Studies

An Garda Síochána National Crime Statistics: Central Statistics Office (2015)⁵⁴

- 2,361 sexual offences
- An increase of 83% in the number of recorded sexual offences against mentally impaired persons; increased from 12 in 2014 to 22 in 2015
- 105 racist crimes in 2015 and 98 to the end of Q.2 in 2016⁵⁵

Official Irish crime statistics have been published by The Central Statistics Office (CSO) since 2005 when they took over this responsibility from An Garda Síochána. However, these statistics cannot be analysed or disaggregated by age, gender of victim and perpetrator, ethnic minority status or a range of other important indicators for sexual violence and harassment. The PULSE (Police Using Leading Systems Effectively) recording system does not lend itself to data analysis – for example date of birth is recorded, but PULSE cannot analyse and report on how many women between 18 - 25 (for example) have reported sexual assaults.

The accuracy of the records have also come into question. A Garda Inspectorate Report in 2014⁵⁶ found that domestic violence calls were often not recorded correctly. Further, in 2015 and 2016⁵⁷ the CSO published reports identifying problems with the recording of crimes on PULSE and suspended publishing crime statistics. On each occasion, the recording (or not) of domestic (intimate partner) violence was of particular concern. In early 2017, the Garda Commissioner confirmed that a further

⁵⁴ An Garda Síochána National Crime Statistics: Central Statistics Office (2015)

⁵⁵ Office of Migrant Integration

⁵⁶ Garda Inspectorate: Crime Investigation 2014

⁵⁷ Central Statistics Office: Review of the quality of crime statistics 2015, 2016

examination of data relating to homicide and incidents of domestic (intimate partner) violence was being undertaken, as there was significant lack of confidence in their 'robustness'⁵⁸

The new Divisional Protective Services Units, supporting victims of sexual crime and domestic violence, will seek to improve rates of reporting, recording and detection. Two of these units will be based in regions that ESHT has associate partners present, Cork city (Sexual Violence centre Cork & University College Cork) and Louth (Dundalk Institute of Technology).

Health Services Executive (HSE) - Sexual Assault Treatment Units (SATUs)

The 6 Sexual Assault Treatment Units (SATUs) in Ireland provide clinical, forensic and supportive care for those who have experienced sexual violence. These units are located in hospitals in Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Mullingar, Galway and Letterkenny. 2015 Report confirmed:

- 685 women and men disclosed rape or sexual assault -an increase of 57 cases nationally 631 (92.1%) patients were women
- 79% of patients had reported the incident to An Garda Síochána⁵⁹

A very significant statistic is that the average age of patients is 25 and an average 45% of patients identify themselves as students. Although not all SATUs record the ethnicity of patients, in general 3-5% of patients are recorded as non-white (sic) where this information is collected. None of the SATUs are reporting on (dis)ability status of patients.

Irish Non-Governmental Organisations

- In 2016 Women's Aid received disclosures of 695 incidents of sexual abuse including 316 rapes⁶⁰
- In 2016 Sexual Violence Centre Cork provided services to 310 victims of sexual violence; 91% were women; in the case of adult rape 50% were students⁶¹
- In 2015 Dublin Rape Crisis Centre's (DRCC) National Helpline received contacts from 11,789 people- 76% were female⁶²
- In 2015, the Rape Crisis Network of Ireland's (RCNI) 11 member RCCs received helpline contacts from 13,208 people-88% were female⁶³
- In 2016, 28% of new women using the Women's Aid One to One Support Services were migrant women

⁵⁸<http://www.irishexaminer.com/breakingnews/ireland/gardais-domestic-violence-stats-not-robust-789520.html>

⁵⁹ National Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU): Annual Key Service Activity 2015

⁶⁰ Women's Aid Impact Report 2016

⁶¹ SVCC Annual Report 2016

⁶² DRCC Annual Report 2015

⁶³ RCNI Annual Report 201

Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland: A National Study (SAVI) (2002)⁶⁴

Although 15 years old, the SAVI report remains the only national study on sexual abuse and violence. At the time the prevalence of sexual violence in Ireland was unknown. The main aim of the SAVI study was to estimate the prevalence of various forms of sexual violence among Irish women and men across the lifespan from childhood through adulthood.

- Four in ten (42 per cent) women reported some form of sexual abuse or assault in their lifetime. The most serious form of abuse, penetrative abuse, was experienced by 10 per cent of women.
 - 20% of women reported experiencing contact sexual assault as adults
 - 5% reported unwanted non-contact sexual experiences
 - 20% reported experiencing contact sexual abuse in childhood
 - 10% reported non-contact sexual abuse.
- 24% of perpetrators of sexual violence against women were intimate partners or ex-partners
- 16.2% of women had experienced some form of sexual harassment at least once during the preceding 12 months

SAVI also reported that 'rape myths' were very common, 29% of people believed a woman wearing revealing clothing was 'inviting' rape and 40% believed that accusations of rape were often false.

Men were more accepting of rape myths including beliefs that

"a person being raped could stop the rapist if they really wanted to" and "when woman says no, she really means yes"

A shockingly low reporting rate was recorded

- Only 8% of women who suffered an adult sexual assault reported to the Gardaí

The SAVI report made several recommendations including,

- That a systematic programme of Irish research is needed to inform, support and evaluate developments in addressing sexual violence in the coming years. This should include a regular national survey assessing public attitudes and experiences and critically evaluating changes in both over time.

This recommendation was never implemented.

⁶⁴ Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland: A National Study 2002

Domestic Abuse of Women and Men in Ireland- Report on the National Study of Domestic Abuse (2005)⁶⁵

As titled, this report based on a national survey was focussed primarily on the issue of domestic violence between married and formally co-habiting heterosexual couples. Its definition of severe required there to be multiple experiences of abuse.

- one woman in 11 (9%) has experienced severe physical abuse in a relationship
- one in 12 (8%) has experienced severe sexual abuse
- one in 13 (7%) has experienced severe emotional abuse.

Women were over twice as likely as men to have experienced severe physical abuse, seven times more likely to have experienced sexual abuse, and almost three times more likely to have experienced severe emotional abuse. Only a minority, one in five (20%) had ever reported the abuse to the Gardaí.

Report of Scoping Study for Dublin City Council Safe City Programme-Challenging sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence in public space (2015)⁶⁶

This unique report outlines the findings of a scoping study on sexual harassment against women and girls in public spaces in Dublin. Although the EEA & ESA provide mechanisms for legally challenging sexual harassment in the workplace and in the provision of services, the experience of unwanted sexual behaviour and commentary in public spaces currently has few legal remedies and as with most forms of sexual violence and harassment in Ireland is very under researched.

Sexual violence and assault does not happen in a vacuum and the type of public harassment the report outlines, clearly delineates the enabling environment in which serious sexual assault and rape occurs. ***The extent of sexual harassment is identified as very frequent, occurring at least once a week, being such a regular occurrence that women hardly even acknowledge it to themselves, so frequent in fact that one of the respondents described it as ‘shocking’.***

Sexual Harassment was defined as,

“unwelcome sexual comments, attention, actions, or gestures... includes non-contact forms, sexual comments about a person’s body parts or appearance, whistling while a woman or a girl is passing-by....following, stalking,...also includes physical contact forms, like someone purposely brushing up against someone else...in a sexual way”

⁶⁵ Domestic Abuse of Women and Men in Ireland- Report on the National Study of Domestic Abuse 2005

⁶⁶ Report of Scoping Study for Dublin City Council Safe City Programme-Challenging sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence in public space 2015

- Sexual harassment starts when girls are as young as 14
- Sexual harassment was associated with age-women under the age of 30 were regarded as far more likely to experience sexual harassment than older women
- Sexual harassment included men making sexually inappropriate comments, shouting out abusive remarks, demanding sexual actions. The men were all ages and from all socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.
- Women reported being inappropriately touched, being “rubbed against” or “groped” both on public transport and throughout the city
- Harassment and abuse is extended into cyber space through the unconsented to sharing of sexual images on social media platforms, perpetuating acts of harassment and violence indefinitely.
- Generally these incidents were not reported to Gardaí because they were not considered “significant enough”, as it is just seen as “part of normal life”

ETHNIC MINORITY WOMEN & WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

- 12% of the Irish population are non-Irish nationals
- 0.6% of the Irish population are Travellers
- 13% of Irish population reported having a disability⁶⁷
- In 2016, 28% of new women using the Women's Aid One to One Support Services were migrant women⁶⁸
- In 2015, just over 5% of women calling the National Rape Crisis 24 telephone Helpline were migrant women⁶⁹

The lack of key data and research for these groups of women creates an additional issue, which is that the little that does exist focuses on the experience of sexual violence and harassment within familial and/or the community of origin of the woman. This is of course entirely appropriate, but means we have virtually no understanding of the experience of sexual violence and harassment in other ‘public’ realms of Irish life.⁷⁰

SEXUAL VIOLENCE & HARASSMENT AND ETHNIC MINORITY WOMEN

The SAVI Report named both ethnic minority status and disability as creating additional vulnerabilities for women but was unable to determine any prevalence data in Ireland. The situation has not improved significantly since then, with all subsequent national frameworks naming a lack of

⁶⁷ Central Statistics Office: Census 2011

⁶⁸ Women’s Aid Annual Report 2016

⁶⁹ DRCC Annual Report 2015

⁷⁰ This review will not cover the very substantial research now available on violence against women in state institutional settings

disaggregated data and in depth research a barrier to a proper understanding of the intersectionality of gender, ethnicity, disability and violence.

SAVI researchers conducted a small focus group, with 10 Traveller women, and highlighted a series of specific barriers including,

- The intersection of racism and violence

“not wishing to endorse negative portrayals of Travellers in society at large, ethnic solidarity can silence those who experience sexual violence”

- a lack of faith in the response of the Gardaí.
- distrust of Social Services

The greatest barrier to disclosing sexual violence was seen to be the shame that disclosure would bring on the abused person themselves and their family, creating a situation whereby the abused person is held accountable, not the perpetrator. The women felt the cost of disclosure within the Travelling community is simply too high.

The SAVI Report also reported on people with disabilities; however that chapter was a review of international data, practices around disclosures in institutional settings, and contained no Irish statistics.

Domestic Abuse of Women and Men in Ireland- Report on the National Study of Domestic Abuse (2005)⁷¹ spoke with women from both the Traveller community and immigrant women, holding a series of small focus groups around Ireland. The work focussed on perceptions of these groups in relation to violence and abuse and reported that although both groups regarded emotional, as well as physical abuse as ‘domestic violence’, there was a general attitude that marital rape and sexual assault were not serious offences.

The focus groups suggested that both Traveller and immigrant women feel a strong reluctance to involve authorities, reporting a man to the Gardaí would be viewed negatively by the community and the women would be made to feel ashamed of reporting him. For immigrant women, this factor is further complicated by their fears and insecurities surrounding their legal status in Ireland.

⁷¹ Domestic Abuse of Women and Men in Ireland- Report on the National Study of Domestic Abuse 2005

Translating Pain Into Action: A study of Gender-based Violence and Minority Ethnic

Women in Ireland (2009)⁷² reported that although non-indigenous minority ethnic women only comprise approximately 5% of Ireland's population, they represented 13% of those seeking services from gender-based violence organisations. Traveller women who make up 0.6% of population represent 15% of service users. Migrant women face the same general fears that women do and also fear for their residency status should their abusers be the main visa holders. They also lack the familial and social networks that many women turn to instead of statutory service providers. Although an important review of international policy and research, this report was very small scale in the Irish context, and there were only 26 participants in the focus groups.

AkiDwA, the Irish migrant women's NGO held focus groups with 60 women to produce the report **Understanding Gender Based Violence: An African Perspective (2008)**⁷³. They identified similar barriers to reporting; women feel intimidated because it is cultural tradition not to talk publicly about what are understood to be 'private' matters and they fear stigmatisation within their community. Many African women do not use available services because they fear alienation from their family; the possible threat to their residency status and the perception that the Irish laws on sexual violence and harassment are not very strong. Additionally, many women reported that services do not meet their needs and that they had experienced racism and discriminatory responses

Migrant Women and Domestic Violence in Ireland: The Experience of Domestic Violence

Service Providers (2008)⁷⁴ a small scale research study of 6 domestic violence service providers, reached similar conclusions. In addition services identified an almost complete absence of even anecdotal understanding of the prevalence of sexual abuse, particularly for African women, due to extremely strong cultural prohibitions about speaking of sexual violence and harassment.

The Information & Resource Pack for Traveller Women Living with Violence (2008)⁷⁵ was produced by the National Traveller Women's Forum (NTWF), an Irish NGO network of Traveller women and Traveller organisations. A significant, culturally specific barrier they reported on for Traveller women is the high importance of extended family and kinship networks and a fear of losing

⁷² Translating Pain Into Action: A study of Gender-based Violence and Minority Ethnic Women in Ireland 2009

⁷³ Understanding Gender Based Violence: An African Perspective 2008-this report and other work by AkiDwA made significant contributions to understanding FGM in Ireland and bringing about the 2012 FGM Act. That particular violence is outside the scope of the ESHTe project and this review.

⁷⁴ Migrant Women and Domestic Violence in Ireland: The Experience of Domestic Violence Service Providers 2008

⁷⁵ NTWF The Information & Resource Pack for Traveller Women Living with Violence 2008

their support and/or causing problems within them if they disclosed or officially reported on sexual violence and harassment.

Pavee Point, an Irish Traveller and Roma NGO which has had a national violence against women programme since 1998, developed a **Position Paper on Violence against Women (2011)**⁷⁶ outlining the impact of multiple discriminations for Traveller women. They reported that seeking help for SVH is very difficult for Traveller women due to the interplay of racism and sexism in Irish society, a fear that reporting to Gardaí will result in a lack of appropriate response, lead to further stereotyping of Traveller men and a rejection of the women by their community. Pavee Point has called on the State to,

*“collect data on sexual violence, including disaggregated data by gender and ethnicity, while respecting the rights to personal data protection of data subjects and avoiding stigmatisation of the relevant groups”*⁷⁷

SEXUAL VIOLENCE & HARASSMENT AND WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

Again, there has been very little primary research undertaken in Ireland with a specific focus on people with disabilities.

Domestic Abuse of Women and Men in Ireland- Report on the National Study of Domestic Abuse (2005) reported that the chance of having experienced severe abuse is 60 per cent higher for those with an ongoing health problem or disability and 2.9 times as high for those who are severely hampered by a condition or disability. The report interprets the data as showing, *“health problems and disability are likely to be primarily outcomes of abuse rather than something that makes an individual more vulnerable to abuse”*⁷⁸

A key report produced by Rape Crisis Network Ireland (RCNI), was based on information drawn from data gathered by 14 rape crisis centres (RCC) in the Republic of Ireland, **Sexual Violence Against People with Disabilities: Data collection and barriers to disclosure (2011)**⁷⁹

The data represents all people using these RCCs for counselling and support between 2008 and 2010. Although a small scale report it highlighted a very disturbing reality:

- Survivors with disabilities who attended RCC services in 2010 were more likely to have been subjected to three or more incidents of sexual violence, than those with no disabilities (39% compared with 25%).

⁷⁶ Pavee Point Position Paper on Violence against Women 2011

⁷⁷ Ibid

⁷⁸ Domestic Abuse of Women and Men in Ireland- Report on the National Study of Domestic Abuse 2005

⁷⁹ Sexual Violence Against People with Disabilities: Data collection and barriers to disclosure 2011

An earlier report commissioned by RCNI of the criminal justice system in relation to the prosecutions of rape in Ireland, **Rape & Justice in Ireland: A National Study of Survivor, Prosecutor and Court Responses to Rape (2009)**⁸⁰ unearthed a further disturbing statistic. In reported rapes

- **the second most common risk factor for rape after gender, is disability** -19% of all complainants were recorded as having a physical or intellectual disability or a history of mental illness.

Disability and Women in Ireland 'Building Solidarity and Inclusion (2009)⁸¹ reported disabled women activists and writers identifying a number of factors which have contributed to making them more 'vulnerable' to violence

- Discrimination, social prejudice and the non-recognition or non-acceptance of the same rights for a disabled person as for the rest of the population
- Male values, attitudes and behaviours
- 'Devaluing' of disabled women
- Portrayal of disabled people as vulnerable beings easily under control

There appears to be little state response or public awareness of this reality for women with disabilities. The reports also review the specific barriers to justice experienced by women with disabilities, including lack of accessible information and therefore less awareness of rights, available services and supports.

⁸⁰Rape & Justice in Ireland: A National Study of Survivor, Prosecutor and Court Responses to Rape 2009

⁸¹ NWCi Disability and Women in Ireland : Building Solidarity and Inclusion 2009

EU Data & Studies for Ireland

Fundamental Rights Agency: Violence Against Women Survey (FRA) 2014⁸²

- 1 in 2 -50% of Irish women experience sexual harassment
- 6% of women have experienced sexual violence by a current or former partner
- 14% of women have experienced physical violence by a partner since age 15

- 31% of women have experienced psychological violence by a partner
- 12% of women in Ireland had experienced stalking (including cyber stalking).

- 50% of Irish people thought violence against women was fairly common.
- 41% of Irish women know someone in their circle of family or friends who have experienced intimate partner violence
- Ireland has the second highest number of women avoiding places or situations for fear of being assaulted out of all EU countries.

- 79% of women in Ireland who had experienced physical or sexual violence had not reported it

Eurobarometer on Gender-based Violence 2016⁸³

This survey assessed the perceptions and attitudes of EU citizens about gender-based violence. The issues it explored included: opinions about and attitudes towards gender-based violence; perceptions of the prevalence of domestic violence and sexual harassment; whether a range of acts of gender-based violence are wrong and are, or should be, illegal.

Several very disturbing statistics for Ireland highlighted the dangerous and damaging culture and beliefs that continue to underpin the high level of sexual violence and harassment experienced by Irish women:

Rape

- 21% of Irish people think that there are justifiable and understandable reasons for having sexual intercourse without consent
 - 11% believe it is acceptable if the woman is drunk or was using drugs
 - 9% believe it is acceptable if the woman voluntarily goes home with someone
 - 9% believe it is acceptable if the woman is wearing revealing, provocative clothing
 - 7% believe it is acceptable if the woman is out walking alone at night.

⁸² Fundamental Rights Agency: Violence Against Women Survey 2014

⁸³ Eurobarometer on Gender-based Violence 2016

Attitudes towards violence against women

- 23% of Irish people believe women often make up or exaggerate claims of abuse or rape
- 18% of Irish people believe that violence against women is often provoked by the victim.

Overall 74% of Irish people thought sexual harassment against women is common.

Different systems- Similar Outcomes? Tracking attrition in reported rape cases across Europe (2009)⁸⁴

This EU Daphne project examined attrition rates in rape cases in 11 EU countries including Ireland and fundamentally, **the majority of women reporting rape across Europe do not see justice done.** Attrition in reported rape cases has risen across much of Europe over the last two decades, with two thirds of countries having marked falls in conviction rates since 2000. Of course as outlined in multiple other reports, the first 'attrition' is the enormous under reporting of all acts of sexual violence. In Ireland, the report found that the rate of reporting had increased by over 500% between 1977 and 2007 but that the conviction rate had fallen. Between 1998 and 2000 the conviction rate was 16%, but at the time of the report it had dropped to 8%. The report concludes that,

*"this is the outcome of the continued influence of stereotypes of rape, rape victims and rapists at all stages of the legal process, and a failure to modernise investigation and prosecution practices. Sexual violence needs to be the subject of the same intense debate and policy development as has been the case with domestic violence if this depressing pattern is to be reversed."*⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Different systems- Similar Outcomes? Tracking attrition in reported rape cases across Europe 2009

⁸⁵ Ibid

HIGHER EDUCATION IN IRELAND

NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

The **Higher Education Authority (HEA)** is the statutory planning and policy advisory body for higher education and research in Ireland, and advises the Minister for Education and Skills and the government on the development of the sector. It is the statutory funding authority for Irish universities, institutes of technology and other state aided higher education institutions (HEIs). There are 26 HEA funded HEIs in Ireland; 7 Universities, 14 Institutes of Technology and 5 Teacher Training colleges⁸⁶.

The national framework for HEIs is the **National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030**⁸⁷. Whilst acknowledging that *“the people who enter higher education in the coming decades are the...policy-makers, social innovators and business leaders of the future. They are also citizens who will add to the richness of society – as parents, community leaders and teachers”*, the strategy makes little effort to articulate what kind of citizen the HEIs will contribute to developing or how the HEIs can intrinsically support the development of more just and equal societies. Despite recognising that socio-economic inequalities are a persistent and systemic barrier to participation in HEIs and a commitment to addressing these, neither gender nor other multiple, and/or intersecting discriminations are addressed in any clear way.

“The culture in HE tends to be macho and misogynistic”⁸⁸

Following a landmark case taken in 2014 by a senior lecturer against her university employer of 34 years, the Irish Equality Tribunal found that the university had discriminated against her for promotion because of her gender. This case opened the debate in Ireland regarding broad gender equality issues in HEIs and the HEA commissioned the **National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions**. The report established that the under-representation of women among staff in higher education, particularly at senior levels, is a serious manifestation of gender inequality in Irish HEIs:

- 81% of professorial positions are held by men
- 62% of non-academic staff are women
- 72% of the highest paid non-academic staff are men
- There are only 4 female presidents of institutes of technology & there has never been a female university president in the Republic of Ireland⁸⁹

⁸⁶ <http://www.heai.ie/en/statistics/overview>

⁸⁷ National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030

⁸⁸ National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions 2016

⁸⁹ National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions 2016

This is despite the governing legislation of HEIs requiring these institutions to have regard for gender inequality. The **Institutes of Technology Act 2006**⁹⁰ states “a committee shall ... have regard to the attainment of gender balance and equality of opportunity among the students and staff of the college’, and the **Universities Act 1997**⁹¹ states that they should ‘promote gender balance and equality of opportunity among students and employees of the university’.

The HEA review, the **Implementation Plan: Measuring and Monitoring Progress**⁹² and the **Athena SWAN Charter**⁹³ it promotes as a way of measuring progress, focus solely on gender inequality as it impacts staffing and research opportunities. The Irish Research Council (IRC) has also committed to tackling gender inequality as it relates to research funding and commissioning in HEIs (and elsewhere), with the **IRC Gender Strategy and Action Plan 2013–2020**⁹⁴ as part of its commitments under the EU Research and Innovation programme, Horizon 2020, where gender equality is a cross-cutting issue.

A high number of women attend HEIs in Ireland, but it is clear they continue to experience very significant gender discrimination and inequality should they choose to stay there as researchers and staff. HEI as institutions manifest the same gender inequality as wider Irish society. Whilst these reports are very important acknowledgments of persistent, systemic gender discrimination and inequality in HEIs, the HEA in particular, does not appear to have addressed officially, the other overt (and covert) gender discriminations and harassments that contribute to the perpetuation of these inequalities and which are likely to be experienced by women students as well.

Neither the **Irish Universities Association (IUA)**⁹⁵ nor the **Technological Higher Education Association (THEA)**⁹⁶ have a public policy position or framework on any form of gender inequality in their member institutions.

⁹⁰ Institutes of Technology Act 2006

⁹¹ Universities Act 1997

⁹² Implementation Plan: Measuring and Monitoring Progress 2016

⁹³ <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/athena-swan-ireland/>

⁹⁴ IRC Gender Strategy and Action Plan 2013–2020

⁹⁵ <http://www.iua.ie/press-publications/publications/>

⁹⁶ <http://thea.ie/about-us/about-us>

HIGHER EDUCATION - GENERAL DATA & STUDIES

HEA-General Statistics 2015-16⁹⁷

- 43,460 new full-time undergraduate students
 - 51% were women
 - 89% were aged 23 or under
- 178,094 full time students
 - 51% were women

Eurostats - Europe 2020 education indicators in 2016⁹⁸

- 52.9% of Irish people aged 30-35 had attained third level education, with 58% being women.

These statistics are part of a long running trend in Irish education, women attend HEIs in equal numbers and overall Ireland has a very high percentage of people who have attained third level education.

HEA Equal Access Survey 2015-16⁹⁹

The Equal Access Survey is a voluntary HEA survey which collects information on the social, economic and ethnic background of new students who enter higher education for the first time.

- 1.7% of new entrants had a disability (including a psychological/emotional condition)
- 12.5% of new entrants identified as an ethnicity other than Irish (including any other white background)

The Irish Traveller Movement (ITM) has reported¹⁰⁰ that with the removal of the Visiting Teacher Service for Travellers (VTST) in 2011 which gathered the most reliable statistics on Travellers transferring after Leaving Certificate, there is little way of collating accurately how many Travellers are in HEIs.

The Irish Survey of Student Engagement-National Survey, Local Impact¹⁰¹

This national survey process, running since 2013 asks students about their experiences of higher education. It is primarily focussed on academic work, however it also asks students about their 'supportive environment' with questions such as their HEIs support for attending events that

⁹⁷ <http://www.heai.ie/en/statistics/overview>

⁹⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Europe_2020_indicators_-_education

⁹⁹ <http://www.heai.ie/en/policy/national-access-office/access-data>

¹⁰⁰ ITM Committee Report 2014:International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights

¹⁰¹ <http://studentsurvey.ie/survey-results/>

address important social, economic, or political issues. It does not ask students about their experiences of their experiences of inequality, discrimination or violence as part of their campus experience.

HIGHER EDUCATION - DATA AVAILABLE ON THE EXTENT, NATURE AND ATTITUDES REGARDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE & HARASSMENT

Young People, Alcohol, and Sex: What's Consent Got to Do With It? (2014)¹⁰²

Commissioned by RCNI, this qualitative study with a 187 students explored the intersection of alcohol use and consent to engage in sexual activity and is a unique study in Irish research.

The study explored attitudes and beliefs about sexuality, and consent, particularly in the context of alcohol, through the exploration of hypothetical scenarios. There was a strongly held belief that non-consenting sex is wrong. Little evidence was found of a gender difference in this belief. There was also an acknowledgement of the serious, long-lasting consequences of sexual assault for victims.

However, the study reported that long-standing 'rape myths' identified in international research (there is no comparable Irish research) do inform Irish students understanding of sexual violence and harassment. These include

- a 'double standard' attitude, whereby victims are attributed more responsibility if they had been drinking while perpetrators are often perceived as less responsible
- many women who have been forced to have sex do not label the experience rape, due to their own internalised expectations for what rape entails

Students in the study adhered to the stereotype that rape is typically a violent premeditated attack by a stranger, requiring vaginal penetration. The scenarios presented for exploration did not match this 'model' of rape and thus students required extensive discussion before being able (and sometimes not being able) to identify what had occurred as violence, abuse, assault or rape.

Contextual factors that made the naming and differentiation of sexual violence difficult included:

- Intoxication,
- Being in a relationship with the aggressor,
- Non-verbalisation of consent and non-consent,
- Sex acts other than vaginal penetration

¹⁰² Young People, Alcohol, and Sex: What's Consent Got to Do With It? 2014

The legal criteria for 'rape' and 'sexual assault' were not fully understood and significant distrust of the Gardaí being supportive of a complaint was expressed in all scenarios, even when students were clear that the behaviour was wrong and degrading. There was a high level of anxiety of a legal 'inquisition' of the victim's behaviour or choices. The relationship with alcohol consumption was clear in the exploration of non-reporting too. Blacking out and subsequent memory loss is a common experience among Irish university students. The report quoted an Irish study in which over 80% indicated that they had been drunk on multiple occasions to the level of not remembering later what they had said or done.

There was a high level of gendered expectation about how female victims would react following rape or sexual assault. The reactions of women were presumed to be initial distress and later shame with attendant relevant behaviours. This type of gendered expectation of victim behaviour has been shown to contribute to lack of belief if women do not exhibit these 'symptoms'. Levels of distress have also been used to judge the 'severity' of the assault as opposed to their being an acceptance of the 'objective' wrongness' and trauma of the assault and/or rape.

Sexuality and sexual consent were perceived as highly gendered experiences, with men being positioned as initiators and 'pursuers' of sex, it was considered entirely understandable that a man would lose control of himself due to a combination of alcohol and his 'sexual drive' (even when this behaviour was seen as wrong). Women were understood as more passive, to need be convinced to have sex but due to these gendered norms unlikely to do so in a spoken or concrete way, *"males occupied an agentic role ('you keep going until they say no') based on breaking down female resistance ('men go out looking for sex, women to avoid having sex)'"*.

Consent is expected to follow a highly gender stereotyped, heterosexual relationship model, with the male 'sex urge' being a driving force with a gate keeping female role. Consent was seen as a tacit and implicit, not concrete or spoken (in usual circumstances), this leading to so called grey areas where consent had been 'given' because the woman had 'not said no' i.e. drunken sex in which consent was implied, because of preceding acts of intimacy, a pre-existing relationship, unspoken body language 'signals' etc.

As a core focus of the study was the relationship between alcohol use and sexual consent, unsurprisingly the students identified alcohol use as a key risk and **recommended that there be promotion of a better understanding of alcohol as a source of risk and harm for women and men.** Drinking is an integral part of the Irish student experience and the students identified a key function

of alcohol as a way to lose their inhibitions in an environment that appears safe, in order to initiate and engage in sexual activity. This points to a wider unhealthy culture of negativity and shame regarding sexuality and sexual experiences, which the students part named in their **recommendations for more comprehensive and meaningful relationships and sexuality education at an earlier age**. This included the opportunity to engage in the type of real world scenario exploration of sexual consent that the study used to facilitate its work¹⁰³.

Students were not always clear that services provided local rape crisis centre would be accessible to them unless they had been 'raped' in the what was their (often incorrect) understanding of the stereotypical sense. However, they did name the institutions counselling and health services and the student's union welfare officer as sources of support. A key recommendation of the study was to **improve student's knowledge and attitudes to reporting sexual assault and seeking professional support**.

Sexual Consent: An Emerging Topic For Third Level Education: Identifying Needs, Developing Engagement Strategies, and Implementing Them (2016)¹⁰⁴

Following on from the 2013 report, the NUI Galway School of Psychology continued to study the implementation of the SMART Consent workshop approach. The research is not published yet, however early findings presented at the RESPECTnet conference in 2016 included:

- 25% of women students have experienced unwanted sexual contact or attempts at unwanted sexual contact through the use or threat of violence (based on 2,500 surveyed students and 700 workshop attendees)

Say Something-A Study of Students' Experiences of Harassment, Stalking, Violence & Sexual Assault (2013)¹⁰⁵

Say Something, commissioned by the Union of Students of Ireland (USI) with support from Cosc is, to date the only national quantitative study on the prevalence of sexual violence and harassment in Irish HEIs.

2,590 Irish students and 162 international students, 55% from universities, 43% from Institutes of Technology and the remainder from teacher-training colleges and other USI affiliated institutions, completed an online questionnaire. The study replicated the United Kingdom's National Union of Students (NUS) process which led to their ground breaking report **Hidden Marks** published in 2010.

¹⁰³ Subsequently, students at NUI Galway and the Galway Rape Crisis Centre devised a play, *100 Shades of Grey*, and then co-created a film adaptation '*Lucy's House Party*', as a response to the report. It has become an integral part of the Manuela Programme, a six session, secondary school programme addressing issues of healthy relationships, sexual consent along and attitudes to excessive alcohol and drugs use

¹⁰⁴ RESPECTnet 2016 Conference Promoting Safe Relationships in Higher Education

¹⁰⁵ Say Something-A Study of Students' Experiences of Harassment, Stalking, Violence & Sexual Assault 2013

Students were categorised as Women, Men and Other and in all but one, surveyed domains of experience, women students experienced more, and more frequent sexual violence and harassment than men:

- 11% of women had been subject to unwanted sexual contact, many on multiple occasions
- 5% were rape survivors with a further 3% survivors of attempted rape
- 31% of women reported feeling harassed, including just under 19% being physically groped
- 17% of women had been photographed or filmed without consent, and 8% had these images circulated without consent online (Men 18% & 10%)
- 10% of women had experience of stalking or obsessive behaviour including online

Less than 3% of students who had unwanted sexual experiences had made a Garda report, and only 6% who had experienced obsessive behaviour had reported. As with general population studies, students did not expect to be believed, did not expect to be taken seriously and did not always understand that what had occurred was a criminal offence. Women also felt ashamed and that they would be blamed for what happened. Where women had experienced more general sexual harassment, they felt they were expected to laugh it off, and that there was a culture of normalisation and acceptance of 'typical lad' behaviour.

The most frequent responses listed for not reporting the incidents this were:

- They did not believe the incident was serious enough to report (57%)
- They did not think that what happened was a crime (44%)
- They were ashamed or embarrassed (29%)
- They thought they would be blamed for what happened (22%)
- They did not want their parents or family to find out (21%).

Violence Against Women –the Perspective of Students in Northern Ireland (2008)¹⁰⁶

Working with Amnesty International University of Ulster students undertook a survey of 715 students at the four University of Ulster campuses across Northern Ireland. The report revealed very disturbing statistics and attitudes towards women who have experienced sexual violence and harassment,

- 40% knew at least one woman student who had been hit by a boyfriend/partner
- 43% knew at least one woman who had been coerced or pressurised to have sex by a boyfriend/partner

¹⁰⁶ Violence Against Women –the Perspective of Students in Northern Ireland 2008

Between 30% and 48% believed a woman was wholly or partially responsible for being raped if she is drunk; if she has acted in a flirtatious manner; if she has failed to say no clearly to the man; if she is wearing sexy or revealing clothes; if it is known that she has had many sexual partners; if she is alone and walking in a dangerous or deserted area.

Unfortunately, none of these studies addressed the experiences of ethnic minority women or women with disabilities.

CURRENT INITIATIVES TO CHALLENGE SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT IN HEIs¹⁰⁷

An increasing number of campaigns, programmes and other initiatives have been developed on Irish campuses over the last 3-5 years. Many have been led by student unions, student societies and the Union of Students in Ireland, in partnership with NGOs. Institutional level awareness has also been developing, and despite the continuing lack of meaningful data of the specific nature of the Irish context, there is a broad agreement that there is a serious problem and a range of actions to tackle the serious level of sexual violence and harassment in HEIs are being implemented.

IDENTIFYING & UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUES

Student Union Surveys

During 2015 the Student Unions in University College Cork (UCC), University College Dublin (UCD), and Trinity College Dublin (TCD) each undertook a confidential, anonymous and voluntary survey around consent, sexual violence and harassment, awareness of services, and related issues¹⁰⁸. The results of these surveys were similar and shocking. The UCD SU survey¹⁰⁹ (overall 3,089 respondents) reported 25% of students having had a sexual experience they had not consented to. This figure matched TCD SU¹¹⁰ findings (overall 1,038 survey respondents), where 25% of women said they had been subjected to an unwanted sexual experience. UCC's survey¹¹¹ (overall 333 respondents) reported almost 1 in 7 students having been the victim of a serious sexual assault.

Each Student Union has used their survey results to widen discussions about the need for programme interventions, including consent workshops and bystander interventions and to develop policy initiatives at an institutional level.

¹⁰⁷ ESHTe staff acknowledges there may be initiatives taking place that we are unaware of

¹⁰⁸ ESHTe staff acknowledges that other SUs may have undertaken similar type surveys that we are unaware of

¹⁰⁹ Survey Results shared with ESHTe by SU staff

¹¹⁰ <http://trinitynews.ie/sexual-assault-survey-officially-launched-on-campus/>

¹¹¹ <http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/1-in-7-ucc-students-were-victims-of-rape-or-sex-assault-319537.html>

RESPECT Network

The RESPECT Network (Research for Safe Relationships: Education, Collaboration, and Training) was formally launched in November 2016 at its inaugural conference **Promoting Safer Relationships within Higher Education**. The RESPECT Network is comprised of academics and policy makers working on issues associated with healthy relationship behaviours, attitudes and available support for individuals in the North and South of Ireland.

RESPECT aims to generate research which will support institutions and organisations to develop policies and procedures supporting individuals and families in a wide range of relationship activities including issues associated with sexual behaviours, drug and alcohol consumption and other relevant concerns. The researchers are from a variety of disciplines including Psychology, Law and Social Work. As outlined at their conference RESPECT will focus on the context of HEIs for approximately 3 years.

BYSTANDER INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES

- Dublin City University Student Union (DCU SU) piloted an 8 week programme in 2016 with 45 student attendees.
- In 2017 Dr Louise Crowley at the School of Law, University College Cork (UCC) piloted a mandatory, 5 credit module programme for 1st year law students. This academically led, mandatory, and institutionally managed and delivered programme is unique in Ireland to date.

Both programmes were based on the Bystander Intervention Toolkit developed by Dr Rachel Fenton in the University of West England.

CONSENT

ASK Consent¹¹²

In 2015 USI, DRCC and the White Ribbon campaign, launched the #askconsent national awareness raising campaign with support from Cosc. This has continued to run annually on social media and Dublin HEI campuses.

¹¹² <http://www.drcc.ie/media1/consent-page/>

Consent Workshops

Since 2015 NUI Galway's SMART Consent workshops, delivered in partnership with students unions have had 700 attendees across 7 Irish campuses.

Subsequently, Trinity College Dublin undertook Training the Trainer development with NUIG, with a view to developing Trinity specific content. This development has culminated in USI voting in early 2017 to design national consent workshop for roll out to all affiliated HEIs.

Consent is BAE campaign

Initiated in 2016, this is a week long campaign of workshops, debates and screenings focussed on the issue of consent **B**efore **A**ll **E**lse. The campaign is organised by the Queen's University, Belfast Student Union.

SHAG Week

Many students unions also cover topics relating to consent during their Sexual Health Awareness and Guidance, (SHAG) week activities.

CONCLUSION

There were 178,094 full-time students enrolled at the 26 HEA funded HEIs in 2015/16, of which 51% were women. Although the qualitative reports reviewed are relatively small scale in relation to this population, their findings reveal that a very high number of women students are experiencing very serious levels of sexual harassment and violence. These students do not feel able to report what has happened to them and do not always recognise that what has happened is a crime. The reports also reveal **why** this is still the case; the context of these experiences remains highly negatively gendered, and some students (men and women) continue to hold negative if not misogynistic beliefs regarding women and sexuality, and women and sexual violence and harassment.

Despite, there being both statutory and institutional awareness of gender inequality at academic and administrative levels of HEIs, as evidenced by the existence of national plans to address it, there is no national or institutional level survey being regularly (or even infrequently) undertaken to establish, measure or even ask students about their experiences of gender inequality, gender-based violence or any experience of discrimination or inequality in their HEI. The absence of baseline data and lack of coordinated regular surveying presents serious challenges in tracking positive behavioural and attitudinal changes, identifying successful interventions, and ensuring the needs of minority groups are met. Similarly, the lack of a national coordinated effort, with commensurate resourcing, undermines the capacity of successful actions becoming mainstreamed and sustainable. Funding for existing actions is highly dependent on small grants and one time funding opportunities. The type of culture change needed to create a zone of zero tolerance of violence requires institutional and statutory commitment; the ESHTe project hopes to provide the first steps to developing such a collaborative structure.

APPENDIX 1 - ESHTA ASSOCIATE PARTNERS-IRELAND

STUDENT UNIONS

Union of Students in Ireland
Dublin City University Students Union
Dublin Institute of Technology Students Union
Queen's University Belfast Students Union
Trinity College Dublin Students Union
University College Dublin Students Union

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Dublin City University
Dublin Institute of Technology
Dundalk Institute of Technology
Institute of Art, Design and Technology
Queen's University Belfast
Trinity College Dublin
University College Cork
University College Dublin
University of Limerick

NGOs

The National Observatory on Violence Against Women
Dublin Rape Crisis Centre
Sexual Violence Centre Cork
Confederation of Student Services in Ireland
Irish Student Health Association

STATUTORY

An Garda Síochána
Cosc- National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence

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