

Combating Sexual and Gender Based Harassment International Students Guide to Street Safety

IT'S NOT A COMPLIMENT, IT'S HARASSMENT!



canımız sokakta!
hollaback!

This guide is to help you feel and be safe while you are in Istanbul.

There are many places in the world with different ideas of what are considered appropriate or acceptable ways to speak to and/or interact with others that may not be the norm where you're from. Whether you want to blame popular culture or not, many people have assumptions especially about "foreign" women, and their supposed promiscuity and/or availability. While each and every individual has the right to make her/his own choices regarding their bodies, such assumptions can result in any number of uncomfortable situations. While we recognize that any one can be targetted with harassment, women and members of LGBTI communities are by far the most common victims. Remember, stereotyping goes both ways, and it is unfair to assume every person is going to harass you.

Sexual street harassment is defined as:

unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, unwanted comments, gestures, and actions forced on a stranger in a public place without their consent and is directed at them because of their actual or perceived sex, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation.

Some examples of street harassment include:

- unwanted whistling
- leering
- sexist, homophobic or transphobic slurs
- persistent requests for someone's name, number or destination after they've said no
- sexual names, comments and demands,
- following
- flashing
- public masturbation
- groping
- touching
- sexual assault
- rape

The important thing to remember is that harassment is not about sex but power, and you are not to blame. Gender based harassment is generally not motivated by sexual interest or intent. It is often based on hostility and its purpose is to make the target feel unwelcome or ridiculed.

When you are out:

- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Try to stay in well lit areas
- Don't give out your number. Take theirs
- Don't accept drinks from stranger
- Always keep your drink with you
- Try to stay in areas you recognize
- Stay in groups
- Stay in communication with friends
- If you are followed; go into a shop or a hotel and ask for help
- Do not lead them to your house



TAXIS:

If you are taking a taxi alone especially at night:

- Take a photo of the taxi number on the door or the license plate and send it to a friend
- Call or pretend to call a friend once you are on your way and let them know when you will arrive

Public Transportation:

Metro, Tramway, Metrobus and Minibuses are all notorious sites for harassment.

- Try to stand by women
- Try to get to the center of the car/vehicle between the seats, stay away from the open areas near the doors
- Keep your bag between yourself and the next person
- You can try to get to a corner or against a wall but remember this can also trap you
- If you are not in a hurry, wait for the next, less crowded vehicle
- Speak out: Say 'ayıp' (shame) or 'dokunma bana' (don't touch me)

HELPFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

Turkish	English
Yok / Hayır	No
Ayıp (a strong word in Turkish)	Shame
Yapma	Don't do it
Çek Elini	Take your hands off me
Dokunma bana	Don't touch me
Beni rahat bırak	Leave me alone
Git başımdan	Get away from me
İmdat/Yardım!	Help!
Beni elledi	He/she touched me/groped me
Polis	Police
Polise gideceğim	I am going to the police
Polisi arıyorum	I am calling the police
Şikayetçi olmak istiyorum	I want to make a complaint

STAND UP FOR YOUR PEERS

If you see someone who is in trouble and you feel comfortable doing so, intervene. Stand next to them in solidarity.

- This tip is for the men out there -- if you see behavior that constitutes harassment directed towards one of your female or LGBTI peers, say something. Even if no women or LGBTI individuals are around, but one of your friends says something offensive or derogatory towards someone else, a simple "hey, that's not cool" could potentially help.
- The same goes for women as well. If you witness harassing behavior, verbal or otherwise, towards other women or members of the LGBTI community then make it clear that it is not ok with you.

You're never going to be able to change an entire society's way of thinking in a day, but you can show your support for women and LGBTI individuals. Be one of the good ones!

Who you can contact:

Call the police: 155 or go to the police station (polis karakolu in Turkish) to file a police report closest to where the incident took place.

- There is no guarantee that any English will be spoken. Tell them you want to make a complaint (şikayet in Turkish) and ask whether they could call a translator. If not, call one of your Turkish speaking friends.
- Explain the whole situation to the police. Do not withhold information. Be calm. It is really important that the police understands what exactly happened.
- In cases of sexual assault, you have a right to ask for a lawyer; if you want a lawyer, tell the police you'll wait until they assign a lawyer from the Istanbul Bar Association. There is no guarantee the assigned lawyer will speak English.
- Give your statement. It will be printed. You should read it, or make the translator read and approve the statement. Sign it and ask for a copy.
- Notify the University's International Office and give them a copy of your statement.

• KHAS Gender and Women's Studies Research Center:

<http://www.khas.edu.tr/gender/100>
B-Block, 2nd Floor, Room No: 320.
Phone: + 90 (212) 533 65 32.
Email: gender@khas.edu.tr

• School Psychologist/psychiatrist:

Phone: + 90 (212) 533 65 32 / Ext. 1179

• Hollaback Istanbul:

<http://istanbul-en.ihollaback.org/>

Check out some of these apps



Be Smart and Enjoy Your Time in Istanbul

This is not about scaring you off studying in Turkey, or describing it as a strange exotic place with people who don't know how to behave or respect women or LGBTI individuals. This kind of behavior happens everywhere. We hope this information will help you to have the best, safest, and most positive experience in Turkey possible!



References:
hollaback.org
Stopstreetharassment.org

<http://www.khas.edu.tr/kadin/>

[/genderandwomen](https://www.facebook.com/genderandwomen)

[@GenderKhas](https://twitter.com/GenderKhas)