

Exploring the implementation of public policies regarding gender-based violence in the public space: A case study of the *Ask for Angela* campaign



Master thesis

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Abstract

This research examines how trust in institutions influences the efficacy of public policies aimed at preventing gender-based violence (GBV) in the public space, through the case study of the *Ask for Angela* campaign in Paris. As municipal governments increasingly address GBV, trust in their ability to respond to public concerns becomes a decisive factor in the success of such initiatives. Drawing on institutional theory, this thesis analyses three core mechanisms; perceived government performance, institutional responsiveness, and political will as key determinants of political trust. This study uses a qualitative methodology combining semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Interviews were conducted with campaign managers and municipal employees involved in implementing of *Ask for Angela*. Triangulated with municipal documents, these findings reveal that institutional trust is an essential mechanism for the efficacy of the campaign.

This thesis advances the importance of tackling issues of gender studies and public policy by placing trust as a central condition for effective governance in the field of GBV prevention. It shows how initiatives like *Ask for Angela* can function as both a practical tool for safety and as

a political signal of institutional commitment to equality in the public space and gender-responsive policy making.

Keywords: *Gender-based violence; institutional trust; municipal government; public policy.*

Introduction

The European Institute for Gender Equality finds that one out of two women has experienced sexual harassment in the public space (EIGE, 2025). This number forces us to wonder what measures are being implemented to prevent sexual violence in the public space. A space that is shared with the citizens inhabiting under the same political authority, although experiencing the feeling of safety drastically differently depending on gender. Modern societies have not yet eradicated the significant issue of sexual harassment in the public space and it is indeed a monumental challenge (Heben, 1994; Raibaud, 2016). To contextualise and define, gender-based violence encompasses all shapes of violence depending on one's gender and therefore intended towards women. Sexual harassment refers to a form of sexual violence and is introduced as a type of gender-based violence (Tuerkheimer, 1997; Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023). That is, the form of abuse women face in the public space. It is common knowledge that stranger harassment (i.e. experiencing unwanted sexual attention from strangers in public) is a frequent experience for women and that it has negative implications for their well-being (Fairchild & Rudman, 2008; Tuerkheimer, 1997).

The issue of gender-based violence in the public space is gaining visibility in political discourse (Kearl, 2010). Municipal institutions dedicate increasingly more policies and campaigns to address it (Thompson, 1994). In Paris where 53% of the population are women (Insee 2024), the municipality has introduced the *Ask for Angela* safety initiative as part of its policy response to sexual harassment. This leads us to question which mechanisms allow prevention policies such as the latter to be successfully developed.

Research has shown that an individual's trust in institutions is a determining factor of a campaign's success (Festenstein, 2020; Linde & Peters, 2020). Trust in institutions influences greatly the perceived legitimacy and effectiveness of public policies and how they are publicly

received. When citizens regard their local government as responsive and aligned with their interest they are more likely to support the policies implemented. This theory is thus a decisive factor in determining a campaign's effectiveness. As the perception of citizens that their institutions are effective is a crucial component of a campaign's efficacy, this thesis will look at trust more closely (Mair, 2009). By developing policies which are important to public opinion, political institutions respect the public trust and show they have the citizens' interest at heart. The institution is thus considered effective in the eyes of the public. As mentioned, trust in institutions acts as an instrumental factor in the campaign's effectiveness. Therefore, we include this mechanism as our key variable. We can evaluate the influence of trust in municipal government on the success of the campaign by analysing how trust in its various shapes determines policy-making decisions. The implementation of GBV prevention policies represents the means through which trust determines the perceptions of the campaign's efficacy.

Thorough research exists on grasping the relationship between women's safety in the streets and public policies (Thompson, 1994; Guaita et al. 2024; Mitchell, 2005). What can be done, and is it being done. To investigate public policies on GBV, this thesis uses as an illustration the *Ask for Angela* campaign. The public safety programme is designed to help individuals in a potentially dangerous situation and is mostly targeted at nightlife establishments. This discrete method allows – in this case women – to avoid distress and potential risk. By approaching the staff, they can get assistance by asking for “Angela”, a code signifying a need for help. In response, the staff (having been trained) recognises the code and can intervene by offering a safe space, facilitating an exit from the venue, or orienting the person to the right authorities. This prevention campaign shows how the public space can be made safer for the individuals occupying it.

The programme is being developed by the municipality of Paris and I am part of the team coordinating it. Therefore this is a relevant opportunity to study how trust in public institutions influences the development and perceived success of GBV prevention policies. The initiative already exists in several European cities such as London, Rotterdam, Brussels, Nice and Bordeaux. The implementation of *Ask for Angela* in Paris will serve as a concrete application of public policies and campaigns set up at the municipal level, towards preventing GBV in the public space.

By exploring the development of the campaign at the municipal level, this study analyses the influence of trust in the municipal institution in making this campaign successful. Interviewing the different people in charge of this campaign helps to explore the role of the municipality in its efficacy, and to evaluate the institution's responsiveness to a public need of developing GBV prevention policies.

Even though the *Ask for Angela* campaign is known as a useful tool to prevent and fight street harassment and enhance women's security in the public space, this thesis does not assume its effectiveness. Instead, it investigates how institutional trust impacts its coordination, development and potential success. Trust in institutions and more precisely in local government emerges in existing research as a crucial factor in shaping how campaigns in general are perceived and whether they succeed.

This thesis provides in-depth research to further study and application of the campaign. Moreover, it contributes to the existing research on gender studies and public policy setting. Academic research on this topic has not yet been explored. This thesis is thus adding to existing literature and fills a gap, demonstrating the importance of addressing the part played by political institutions in facing modern society challenges that women undergo. The relationship

between trust and the efficacy of the campaign is then foundational to figuring out whether *Ask for Angela* can succeed in making public spaces safer and preventing gender-based violence.

Research question

Trust plays a crucial role in the efficacy of the *Ask for Angela* campaign as it influences how it is perceived, implemented, and sustained. This thesis asks how policies to prevent gender-based violence are designed and implemented at the municipal level. This leads us to the following research question:

How does trust in institutions influence the efficacy of public policies aimed at preventing gender-based violence in the public space? Exploring the Ask for Angela campaign.

To explore this, the following sub-questions guide the research:

Sub-question 1: How is trust operationalised by municipal actors involved in the implementation of the *Ask for Angela* campaign?

Sub-question 2: How do ultra-local actors such as associations and development teams contribute to the perceived legitimacy of the campaign?

Sub-question 3: What institutional or structural challenges influence the coordination and perceived success of gender-based violence prevention policies at the municipal level?

Sub-question 4: How does proximity between citizens and institutional actors shape perceptions of trust and effectiveness in public safety campaigns?

Theoretical framework

This section draws on institutional theory to study the influence of trust in municipal institutions on the efficacy of public policies addressing GBV, that is the Ask for Angela campaign. Three mechanisms arise to support the research question: perceived government performance, institutional responsiveness and political will. These concepts help us understand how trust impacts the development and potential success of the campaign. The sub-questions presented earlier are supported by a theoretical framework based on the latter mechanisms. They allow for an analysis of both actor-level coordination and structural conditions shaping GBV policy implementation.

Institutional theory

Perception of government performance through the case of the *Ask for Angela* campaign

Mishler and Rose (2001, 2005) define institutional theory in the sense that trust in government is based on whether the performance of the political institution is satisfactory. This first theory works through two mechanisms. First, government performance relies on the success of policies. Government performance refers to how citizens measure the effectiveness of the government and evaluate whether the government is keeping its agenda. If the performance of the municipality does not meet the expectations of the citizens, the institution will lack the trust needed to successfully implement its agenda (Lijphart & Waisman, 1996; Stark, 1995; Mishler & Rose, 2001). Citizens will be more likely to trust the municipality if they view the *Ask for Angela* campaign as an effective response to the fight against GBV. The implementation of such a prevention policy demonstrates that the municipality is responsive to the public need and acts on it.

Second, individual evaluation refers to the citizens' assessment of the government's effectiveness (Clarke et al., 1992; Mishler & Rose, 2001). Personal perceptions and judgments on policies or governmental decisions affect the citizens' trust in the government's actions and the nature of political bodies at the individual level. Citizens will assess if the municipality is efficient depending on whether it addresses the issue of GBV, here through the implementation of *Ask for Angela*, and will then determine if the policy-making is satisfactory. This relationship is bilateral, between the citizens at the individual level and the municipality at the institutional level. Trust is an essential indicator to measure if the decision-making process includes public opinion, and for this process to work the municipal body needs the support of its constituency to successfully implement the campaign. A successful campaign thus reinforces trust. We understand that trust in institutions is a driving force in policy-making oriented towards GBV prevention. We can then assess the *Ask for Angela* campaign's efficacy through the level of trust citizens have in the campaign as well as in their municipality. Drawing on the government's performance, this notion also includes the responsiveness it should demonstrate to enhance the level of trust. The application of this theorisation will allow us to measure how the variable influences the setting-up of the campaign.

Government responsiveness to public interest

The second mechanism at play is institutional responsiveness. Festeinstein's research on government responsiveness relates to the above. He theorises that citizens' trust arises as institutions address the interest of the public (Festeinstein, 2020). The need for more attention to GBV prevention thus implies that public concerns about women's safety in the public space have been raised. To represent public interests, municipal actors have to take responsive action. By displaying their commitment to the citizens' concerns about women's experiences outside the private sphere, the municipality is responsive to their expectations. Linde and Peters assess

the relationship between a government's responsiveness and responsibility (2020). The political institutions are responsible for their citizens and for their needs and expectations. The scholars draw on the fact that representative democracy refers to governments which are both responsive and responsible (Mair, 2009; Linde & Peters, 2020). As citizens trust their local authorities to voice and respond to their needs, they are more likely to mention safety issues of street harassment. Therefore, they urge the municipality to act through the safety initiative. Trust determines a positive action; as citizens witness the campaign's success, they develop trust in their local authorities' capacity to be responsive and responsible, which in the long run strengthens the campaign's impact (Mair, 2009; Linde & Peters, 2020).

We have established that the public's trust in their local political authorities is an essential component of the campaign's efficacy. Further application of the responsiveness mechanism to this study evaluates that citizens indeed perceive their government to be effective. Such a campaign's development relies on support and commitment to the safety of citizens. If the policy-making of local authorities aligns with the public interest, citizens are more likely to trust this institution (Festenstein, 2020). By supporting the *Ask for Angela* campaign, the municipality voices the concerns of the citizens that policies must be decided on regarding safety in the public space.

Political will

Political prioritisation of GBV prevention policies as a means of the campaign's efficacy

The third mechanism of this framework is political will. Scholars define the notion of political will as the motivation of institutions to respect their agenda-setting priorities and to establish these policies (Post, Raile, A. & Raile, E., 2010; Treadway, 2005). This thesis addresses prioritisation as an expression of political will. Through prioritisation, political institutions

show which issues they consider urgent and worth investing in. The municipal level must be dedicated to introducing and following through with the GBV prevention policies and campaigns they support. The efficacy of the *Ask for Angela* campaign rests on the commitment of the political actors in their policy-making duties.

The success of the *Ask for Angela* campaign depends on the municipality's prioritisation of GBV prevention policies. Political will is a crucial factor which examines the influence of trust in the municipality and is applied to our methodology. This mechanism is directly associated with government responsiveness as it also motivates political actors to respond to public concerns. When citizens acknowledge the municipality taking responsibility, it enhances the political authority's capacity to address the issue of women's experience of the urban environment (Mair, 2009).

Therefore, these three mechanisms lay out the theoretical analysis that will unfold. They represent how trust in institutions operates as an essential factor for effective public policy particularly in preventing GBV. The study aims to grasp how trust is built around the coordination of the campaign and how it contributes to or refrains from the success of gender-responsive programmes in the public space.

To apply this reasoning, the following research method looks at the extent to which trust in institutions supports prevention policies and at the same time strengthens the efficacy of the campaign.

Methodology

Research method

The goal of this thesis was to explore the role of trust in the efficacy of the *Ask for Angela* campaign. This study uses a triangulation research design combining qualitative interviews and document analysis to explore how trust in municipal institutions affects the implementation and perceived success of GBV prevention policies. I examine below the impact of the mechanisms of perceived performance, institutional responsiveness, and political will on the campaign's success.

Triangulation is a research methodology of data collection based on combining data sources to boost the reliability and validity of the findings. This method is particularly useful with qualitative data and is therefore relevant for this type of research. This study combines interviews and content analysis of documents. Questions are oriented towards the perception of the campaign's efficacy, the role of the municipal institution, and how public trust in government actions relates to the impact of GBV prevention policy. In addition, this research involves an analysis of official municipal documents related to the *Ask for Angela* campaign and other relevant GBV prevention policies. This provides accuracy to the findings and supports the results of the interviews by addressing both mechanisms of Mishler and Rose's theory on trust in institutions. However, this research adds a particular emphasis on the second mechanism of citizens' perceptions of institutional efficacy rather than on measuring policy outcomes.

Semi-structured interviews

I have conducted semi-structured interviews. They consist of interviews with a topic list to structure the interview with open questions. This approach ensures that respondents share their insights and are able to answer in a dialogic space.

Seven interviews took place with people directly involved in the coordination of the campaign. They include campaign managers, gender equality project officers, local development managers and night policy managers. The interviewees are chosen from Paris and Rotterdam. They provide me with their perception of the campaign's efficacy to enable me to assess how the mechanisms described above, perception of government performance, government responsiveness and political will, influence the campaign's efficacy. The interviews were designed to address the sub-questions outlined particularly regarding institutional trust, the role of the involved actors and perceived campaign efficacy.

Content analysis of documents

The reported results from these interviews are supported by content analysis of documents (primary material and sources). Content analysis of documents material includes the review of official municipal documents related to GBV prevention policies and campaigns previously run. They gather campaign materials, policy briefs, meeting reports or road maps of the initiative. Documents analysed include an internal municipal roadmap detailing how the campaign is developed at the ultra-local level in the Goutte d'Or neighbourhood in the 18th arrondissement, as well as a cartography of the Belleville neighbourhood in the 20th arrondissement identifying locations where *Ask for Angela* will be implemented. These documents were coded in Atlas.ti and used to add to the interview data.

These documents provide institutional insights into the framing, the objectives and the perceived impact of the campaign. They also encompass official documents on the monitoring unit which was set up during the Olympic Games to raise awareness of sexual GBV and acted as a welcome unit for victims. This primary material is crucial to evaluate the concrete application of government response to public needs and how the policy-making process is

carried out. Therefore, existing literature as well as content analysis enhances the accuracy of the research.

By combining the interviews and the content analysis, this study strengthens the results of the implementation of the *Ask for Angela* campaign and the municipality's support. The triangulation of the data collection boosts the validity of the findings through the evaluation of the municipal institutions' role in responding to the public interest.

Participants and sampling strategies

The interviews counted seven participants. Even though the sample size is modest the highly targeted nature of the interviewees ensures relevance, knowledge and expertise on the topic. They were selected based on their direct involvement with GBV prevention policies and campaign implementation. This targeted approach allows for in-depth insights from actors. However, future research could benefit from additional perspectives for instance from nightlife staff or citizens impacted by the campaign. The respondents include campaign managers, gender equality project managers, night-life policies and local development managers, all working on the issue of GBV in the public space and on policy-making in Paris, and one campaign manager in Rotterdam. As mentioned, a limitation of this sample could be the lack of implication of citizen perceptions. Nevertheless, this research focuses on policy design and campaign implementation which is where trust is most operationalised.

Data collection

The interviews were recorded and transcribed in Microsoft Word and deleted afterwards. Qualitative data from interviews and document analysis is coded using the software Atlas.ti. The findings are based on the theoretical framework developed earlier and analysed to draw conclusions on the campaign's efficacy and the role of trust in the municipal institution.

Positionality

As the researcher, I am aware of the responsibility that came with this research regarding gender-based violence especially when dealing with sensitive topics such as sexual harassment. Thanks to my position at the Mayor's office of Paris, I am familiar with the *Ask for Angela* campaign and the municipal policies designed to combat GBV. This position allowed me to understand the campaign's aim, and to ascertain that I had to be aware of the need for transparency and neutrality in this research process. Although I am personally involved in the success of the *Ask for Angela* campaign, I made sure that my position did not influence the data collection and analysis. I was neutral and did not force the respondents to answer if they did not wish to during interviews. My goal is to gather insights from participants about the effectiveness of the campaign, without being biased as to not impact the findings and the interviewees' opinions. I paid attention to creating a comfortable and respectful environment for the participants and allowing their answers and opinions to inform the research. Furthermore, I am aware of the importance of confidentiality and privacy with regard to the respondents. I ensured that all interviews and data collected were handled ethically during the research process.

Privacy measures

Informed consent: Before participating in the interview, the participants had been submitted with a consent form to provide their written informed consent. This form explains the purpose of the research.

Anonymity: All personal information about the participants remains anonymous. Personal details were coded.

Voluntary participation: Participation was voluntary and interviewees could withdraw at any point during the interview without any consequences. This was communicated at the beginning of each interview.

Disclosure of information: Participants were informed about the research goal and that their answers remained anonymous. No personal or identifying information has been disclosed.

Results

This section gathers the results drawn from interviews and document analysis. Access to official municipal documents was granted on the development of the *Ask for Angela* campaign. The documentation comes directly from official municipal documents such as meeting reports, campaign presentations, report findings, or roadmaps and supports the research question on the efficacy of the campaign and the role trust in the institutions plays. Seven interviews were conducted, with local development managers, a gender equality project manager, a Night Mission manager and *Ask for Angela* campaign managers in Paris and Rotterdam. The interviews were transcribed from French into English using the software Playground A.I. and the transcripts were analysed using Atlas.ti. From the coding and analysis of the interviews, I generated 37 codes which were regrouped into six group codes and divided my results section as follows.

The seven interviews were conducted with an average of eight questions asked in total, slightly changing depending on the person interviewed. They all started with a quick presentation of the programme, addressing the impact evaluation and indicators of success to finish with the influence of trust in the institutions (see appendix). The theoretical framework is based on the notion of political trust. The interviews allowed me to investigate the role of trust in public

policies for the implementation of the *Ask for Angela* campaign. These findings also report on the efficacy of the campaign.

1.1. Governance and institutional coordination

This section addresses the sub-question on how municipal structures and coordination influence the development of the campaign.

The *Ask for Angela* campaign in Paris is set up at the municipal level. Municipal actors within different directions are part of the programme development. To assess the influence of trust on the efficacy of the campaign, a few questions during the interviews focused on asking the relevant municipal employees about their correlation.

Several interviews were conducted with the municipal employees in charge of the campaign coordination. The questions focused on their role in the implementation of *Ask for Angela*, the role of the municipality and the theoretical notion of political trust and how it relates to the development of the campaign (see appendix). This framing of interviews aligns with the theory of institutional responsiveness which influences the public's trust in their local authorities. One municipal employee directly involved with the coordination of the campaign, when asked about the public's trust in the *Ask for Angela* campaign, responded thusly:

"We have a huge stake in the deployment, the initial phase [...], how do we justify that this program is relevant in the territory [...] adjust it according to the priorities and needs of the territory."

This quote highlights the importance of adapting the initiative to local priorities and needs. It also suggests that municipal legitimacy is built through responsiveness to territorial realities

and therefore the campaign has to be aligned with them. This level of responsiveness contributes to political trust as it shows that the municipality takes action.

The EDL (Equipes de Développement Local, i.e. Local Development Teams) have a very local focus on multiple arrondissements (districts) of Paris. They adapt the project they carry out to the particular needs of the neighbourhood and its inhabitants. Local development managers from two districts were interviewed, the two areas in which the *Ask for Angela* campaign is experimented. Their grasp on local needs builds a strong mechanism for the positive development of the programme.

"It allows us to work on women's feeling of insecurity in public space."

By asking questions on their role in the implementation, we found that the Night Mission and the SEII (Service Égalité, Intégration et Inclusion, i.e. Equality, Integration and Inclusion) have a more centralised role in the implementation of the campaign. The coordination of relevant actors falls into their responsibility. As mentioned above, the EDL have a privileged grasp of ultra-local dynamics.

An official municipal document is relevant here to expand the campaign to other cities. The document is entitled "Report on discussions surrounding the *Ask Angela* schemes in France and Belgium – 10 April 2025" (see appendix). Beyond the Paris case this internal meeting report on the *Ask for Angela* campaign across French and Belgian municipalities provides valuable comparative insight into how the initiative is coordinated in other cities. This document shows that the campaign exists in Bordeaux, Lyon, Nice, and Brussels and the municipal government develops the campaign differently depending on the actors involved, training strategies, and funding. On the one hand, Bordeaux's alignment with public transport and the police enhances coordination and on the other, Lyon maintains full control over training delivery and visuals. The city of Nice reveals a very operational approach, with weekly visits

from the police and alert systems directly connected to the municipal police. These contrasts show that a number of disparities exist in institutional commitment but also that the campaign's legitimacy and visibility depend on local political will and support. When coded along with the interviews this document confirms that *Ask for Angela* does not have one way to function but depends on the context of the municipality implementing the initiative. We understand the importance of the role of local institutions in shaping public perceptions of efficacy and trust in GBV prevention policies.

1.2. Territorialisation and local implementation

The following paragraph explores the sub-question regarding the role of local actors in shaping the campaign's legitimacy and efficacy.

Two of the participants are the municipal employees in charge of the experimentation of the *Ask for Angela* campaign. The interviewees shared their thoughts on the importance of neighbourhood-specific knowledge and implementation strategies. The campaign's effectiveness is based on formal institutional commitment as well as its ability to concord with the citizens' realities within diverse urban spaces. To sum up the interviewees' line of thinking, legitimacy as one of the dimensions of political trust is achieved when public policies led by the municipal government reflect the social characteristics of the neighbourhood.

One of them reflects:

"This project that's super interesting with Ask for Angela, there's this to do, there's that to do, and I initiate projects a bit more long-term. There. But after, if he (Deputy Mayor of Paris in charge of tourism and nightlife) had said No, I don't want Ask for Angela to be proposed in a political city neighbourhood at all, it would have been very complicated for me to implement that."

This quote underlines how political will at the ultra-local level can determine whether a project moves forward or stalls. The capacity to implement a campaign like *Ask for Angela* relies on support from local officials who are willing to take ownership of the initiative in their specific territorial context. The interviewee confirms the importance of political prioritisation in shaping the influence of trust, among institutional actors as well as with citizens and especially local inhabitants.

Additionally, the *Ask for Angela* roadmap is a useful tool to examine how the campaign takes into account the realities of the neighbourhood it is implemented in (see appendix).

Beyond political alignment, local socio-cultural knowledge was also cited as essential to commitment and legitimacy. A participant shared an experience from a walk organised in the Goutte d'Or neighbourhood in the 18th arrondissement of Paris:

"In the exploratory walk we conducted in Goutte d'Or, we were with young women [...] from immigration, because of Arab origin and [...] from Africa, generally. And in fact, they told us that we need to be introduced to merchants because they know us. Because we look alike."

This quote illustrates how personal and cultural familiarity shapes perceptions of safety and access in the public space. The participant acknowledged that, despite working in the neighbourhood, municipal actors could still be perceived as outsiders. Being introduced to local merchants who “know them” and “look like them” was essential to the implementation of the campaign. This shows how even in neighbourhoods where inhabitants live, perceptions of belonging are mediated by markers of identity and social connection. It also reinforces that institutional actors even though they are present on site, can still be seen as outsiders especially when it comes to GBV.

In addition to the interviews, another municipal document is useful here. The local development team of the Belleville neighbourhood in the 20th arrondissement made a cartography (see appendix). The latter helped developing a more situated understanding of how the *Ask for Angela* campaign is being implemented locally. The map identifies cafés, bars, restaurants and shops considered as “safe locations” by and for women. It is helpful in visualising how the campaign is anchored in the neighbourhood. The involvement of associations such as Archipelia, placed at the centre of the initiative, highlights the importance of partnerships. Compared to broader, more centralised policy making, this kind of document shows how the campaign takes shape at the ultra-local level. When read alongside the Goutte d’Or roadmap, these materials demonstrate that municipal legitimacy is consolidated through strategy but also through concrete and local specific neighbourhoods. They also show how institutions are increasingly using spatial and visual tools to express their commitment to preventing GBV which adds to the forms of relational trust mentioned by interview participants.

The campaign’s territorialisation therefore depends not only on adapting the tools of *Ask for Angela* to each area but also on who is involved in its delivery. The ability to mobilise trusted local figures enhances both the credibility and effectiveness of GBV prevention initiatives. These findings reinforce the idea that meaningful local implementation is not only logistical but also deeply relational and socio-culturally embedded. Trust here comes through local coordination and contributes directly to the campaign’s perceived legitimacy and thus efficacy.

1.3. Influence of hierarchical dynamics

Throughout the interviews conducted, the complexity of the municipality’s structure surfaces. The municipality has a very structured way of functioning. It is highly centralised and composed of multiple services and directions working on particular matters. The centralised

organisation of the institutions is a major difficulty in generating and ensuring trust between citizens and their municipal government. Information gathered from the interviews allows to assert that the complexity of administrative procedures can limit public understanding and hinder institutional trust. The *Ask for Angela* campaign is coordinated by three municipal actors which makes the implementation more complex. The municipality's commitment to act in the "public interest" as an interviewee mentioned is essential to the theory of perceived government performance as put forward earlier. This mechanism can help to evaluate the efficacy of the campaign based on the notion of trust through perceived government performance. When asked about the coordination of the initiative between the different actors, one municipal employee shares the following:

"France is a very centralised state, in which communities have more and more autonomy, but still, are dependent on the State. And so maybe, with a tradition of initiating things that are maybe different in other countries. The advantage I see is that the fact that a mechanism like this is carried by a territorial community it's the primary angle, it's general interest."

The implementation of the *Ask for Angela* campaign illustrates well the dynamics of the municipality. The partnership between the three services shows that each project is carried out and supported by several actors. The public policy procedure makes it a quite tedious process to implement. Different actors are involved and a methodology is organised to be followed step by step. A roadmap was written by the local development team (EDL) to frame the development of the campaign. The roadmap precisely outlines a step-by-step guide to the development of the programme which depends on trust and government performance and responsiveness.

Although necessary, institutional coordination creates an obstacle which may weaken the trust given to the municipality's responsiveness to GBV issues. The complexity of the governance

structure can disrupt responsibilities and slow down implementation and therefore change the perception that the institutions are acting effectively.

The importance that the issue of street harassment is gaining shows that coordination at the political level is inherent to the implementation of public policies. Government performance and responsiveness can be measured here through the municipality's dedication and commitment to the prioritisation of GBV in the policy agenda. The motivation to address GBV in the public space demonstrates its responsiveness to public concerns. The Virage survey of 2015 found that women are significantly more likely to experience sexual violence in public spaces (Bajos et al., 2016).

“Women feel more insecure in public space than men. We have seen plenty of figures on street harassment, on violence in public space, etc. [...] The issue of violence against women is a priority for the elected official.”.

This statement is thus directly linked to government responsiveness, which I have defined earlier. It reiterates that policy prioritisation shapes the public's trust in their municipality and the *Ask for Angela* campaign gains legitimacy to be an efficient tool in preventing GBV. The visibility and prioritisation of the municipality's commitment to GBV prevention policies become a condition for perceived government performance.

1.4. Associative actors as a mechanism of trust

The efficacy of the *Ask for Angela* campaign also relies on the coordination between the municipality and local associative actors. Two of the interviewees are local development managers, namely municipal employees in charge of implementing the programme at the ultra-local level. An important notion came up in their interviews, that trust takes on another form here and allows to support the theories of political will and perceived government effectiveness.

As associations are crucial to social legitimacy, coordination with the municipality is a key factor in the efficacy of the programme.

As mentioned, three main entities carry the programme. However, the implementation of ultra-local implementation is essential in experimenting with it. Territorialisation allows a number of associations to exist. Working with them is necessary for local development teams, as both their knowledge of the neighbourhood in which *Ask for Angela* will be set up is crucial. A recurrent theme is therefore the central role associative actors play in setting up an effective programme. “Role of associations” was coded and we observed that the code came up 15 times throughout five interviews.

"The City of Paris doesn't have the human resources, doesn't have the detailed skills to implement things like this and to train. [...] There are limits to what we can do in fact."

This highlights credibility and HR means deficit that associations help resolve. Because they are both reputable and have a territorial anchoring to local communities, these organisations can act as reliable go-betweens which improves the programme’s integration. This supports the theorising that when institutions partner with actors who have grassroots credibility, they leverage existing trust to strengthen legitimacy to the public. It demonstrates that associations are essential in municipal governance and efficacy in Paris. The interviews reveal that they are always presented as fundamental to the operationalisation of GBV prevention policies.

As one municipal staff member explained:

“Associations do 50% of public policies. It's not possible to implement, in any case the policy that is wanted by Anne Hidalgo (Mayor of Paris) and by the current municipal team, without associations.”

An associative network is an essential mechanism to ensure trust and legitimacy in the public and how the campaign's efficacy is perceived. Respondents repeatedly emphasised that the campaign could not function properly and foster collaborative trust without the contribution of associative actors. The findings show that associations compensate for institutional constraints and act as a guarantee to cultivate the community's trust in the programme. I can confirm my theorising that they act as mediators of trust and strengthen institutional credibility. The fact that they are close to the inhabitants enables them to facilitate the indirect relationship between the project managers and the women concerned with the campaign. This resonates with the theoretical framework regarding government responsiveness being carried by the municipality and delegated to the relevant actors with social legitimacy and field-based knowledge.

Moreover, associations are not only execution partners but also play a formative role in shaping the campaign's development:

"So, what was part of the mechanism development process is, first, talking about it, discussing it with associations that [...] address a female audience. That's why we went to meet Collective 4C, the Accueil Goutte d'Or social centre (local associations involved in the Ask for Angela campaign)."

These findings underline the role association networks play in shaping public policy. The *Ask for Angela* campaign is not a top-down initiative but a collective coordination between the municipality and associative actors. Their collaboration builds trust by demonstrating a shared responsibility between associative actors and institutions. They benefit additional legitimacy to the programme and its perceived efficacy to the public.

1.5. Trust and legitimacy

This paragraph addresses the sub-question about how citizens' trust in institutions affects the perceived legitimacy and efficacy of the *Ask for Angela* campaign.

As tackled above, trust is a driver of perceived legitimacy and acted as a code in Atlas.ti to analyse its role and relevance in the efficacy of the *Ask for Angela* campaign. The findings show that political and institutional trust were robust at the ultra-local level, partly due to the additional trust associative actors foster. Trust in institutions acts as a mechanism influencing both the implementation and the public reception of the *Ask for Angela* campaign. An important part of the interviews conducted dived into the notion of trust. Interviewees were asked about the perception of institutional effectiveness depending on the level of governance with trust being considerably stronger at the ultra-local level. One municipal staff member noted:

"For me, trust in institutions, the more local it is, the more ultra-local it is, the easier it is. The more you go to the city of Paris, the more you go to the state, it becomes increasingly difficult because there's a lesser understanding of what is actually being done."

This quote shows the role of proximity and familiarity in shaping public trust. Arrondissement (district) level town halls were described as more accessible and better understood by residents also due to direct and more frequent interaction with local officials and services. My theory on trust in public institutions works through the role of visibility and territorial anchoring to ensure legitimacy. The findings show that at the arrondissement level citizens trust their local government.

"The arrondissement town halls, you go there, you do your paperwork, you know the people. The mayor passes by in the street... there's a proximity that leads to a better understanding of what is the responsibility of the district town hall and what is not."

Nevertheless, respondents described the central city hall as more distant and difficult to understand. The institutional feature of the municipality may be an obstacle for citizens to identify which parts of local government are responsible for which actions and this aspect can sometimes lead to mistrust. Trust also depends on which issues receive political attention. One of the interviewees, a gender equality project manager, pointed out that domestic violence had been prioritised by elected officials although sexual harassment in public spaces which is the focus of the *Ask for Angela* campaign is still less clearly integrated into the policy agenda. This is also reflected in the administrative structure supporting the campaign, it is coordinated at the municipal level and a part of its implementation relies on ultra-local actors such as district-level development teams and local associations. This fragile responsibility reveals how certain GBV issues are institutionally prioritised over others, depending on where and how they are embedded within the governance structure.

“There isn’t really a distinct category for sexual and gender-based violence. [...] Within my file (a file containing their job missions), there are references to sexist and sexual violence, including efforts to address them — and that’s where ‘Ask for Angela’ fits in”.

The code trust in the municipality was frequent throughout the analysis. The institutional framing of the municipal government weakens the public’s opinion in the sense that the municipality’s commitment to tackling street harassment affects the perceived legitimacy of the campaign. Overall, these findings suggest that both the level of institutional commitment and the transparency of political prioritisation in the agenda-setting shape trust in the effectiveness of GBV prevention policies. The campaign becomes a means where the public opinion evaluates the outcomes and the symbolic and political dedication on the issue. These findings thus reveal that citizens’ trust not only relies on performance but also in legitimacy.

The *Ask for Angela* campaign manager in a venue named ‘Worm’ in Rotterdam shared their experience coordinating the latter. Their knowledge of the campaign’s effects confirms that public engagement is intrinsically related to perception of legitimacy. She asserts the following:

“Public reaction to Ask for Angela has been overwhelmingly positive. People recognise the campaign, share photos of it, and engage with its message... Since then, more venues have adopted house rules, codes of conduct, and similar protocols.”

1.6. Operationalisation challenges and constraints

Here, the focus is on the sub-question related to the limitations of campaign implementation at the municipal level.

As addressed above the lack of structural organisation due to municipal hierarchy makes the implementation of public policies against GBV tedious. On the one hand, the municipality made it clear to the public that street harassment is a policy priority. On the other hand, the lack of concrete attention to the topic makes it a controversial implementation. This complex relationship shows a gap between political will and institutional delivery. This may weaken public trust in municipal responsiveness and therefore the efficacy of the *Ask for Angela* campaign.

The implementation of the *Ask for Angela* campaign revealed operational challenges particularly related to human resources, administrative procedures and political timing. These issues were tackled by the respondents and resonate with the theories of government performance and institutional responsiveness where it is considered that trust and perceived effectiveness are contingent on institutions’ ability to act efficiently. One interviewee compared the campaign to a basic public service like waste management, noting that while it does not require the same scale, it still belongs to the category of services the municipality should

provide. It is about sending the message that preventing street harassment is a concern of public interest. However, the respondents pointed out that this message is not always clear when the municipality is in charge and could be better received if the campaign was run by an association. This raises questions on how institutional visibility and delivery affect the way public initiatives are perceived, and how this might shape their legitimacy to the public.

“It’s something as important as waste management. Of course, it doesn’t involve the same number of staff, but it’s still a public service. That’s a strong message, though it’s not always received as clearly as it would be if it came from an association funded by the city, rather than the city implementing it directly.”

One key constraint relates to limited staff capacity within municipal departments. As previously noted, the Night Policy mission and related teams often consist of small units with wide-ranging responsibilities, making it difficult to sustain long-term initiatives without external support.

Another major barrier I have identified is the procedural and hierarchical complexity of municipal governance. Interviewees emphasised that innovative actions, such as deploying *Ask for Angela* in specific districts, often depend on the explicit political will of arrondissement officials. Without endorsement from elected representatives, implementation stalls, regardless of the project’s perceived relevance or urgency. This observation supports the notion that political prioritisation is a prerequisite for administrative mobilisation, especially in politically sensitive urban areas. Trust in local government is a precondition for the positive outcome of local public policy, as demonstrated in the *Ask for Angela* campaign roadmap.

Finally, timing and coordination across departments emerged as a persistent challenge. Projects often risk losing momentum due to delays in validation processes, conflicting agendas, or insufficient communication between administrative and political actors. These delays not only

slow down implementation but can also impact institutional trust, as the public perceives inaction or inconsistency on issues that affect their safety in public space.

The framing of the *Ask for Angela* campaign plays a critical role in how it is received by both the public and institutional actors. Interviewees noted that when the municipality publicly supports GBV prevention policies, it sends a strong message about the importance of safety in public space and elevates the issue to the level of essential public services.

The interviews reveal how framing a campaign like *Ask for Angela* as a public service reinforces its legitimacy and institutional weight. They underline the impact of having a policy carried out by the municipal government, as opposed to merely supported through third-party actors. In addition, respondents emphasised the importance of political voice and visibility in reinforcing the campaign's impact. The figure of the elected night official was repeatedly cited as instrumental in shaping public narratives around safety, inclusion, and nightlife policy.

"The fact also of having an elected night official, it's something quite rare, but it's something very important also because there's a scale of speech that is still really strong. I see it, Frédéric Hocquard (Deputy Mayor of Paris in charge of tourism and nightlife), he is extremely solicited for his speech, for the things he puts in place, for an electoral dimension that is still quite important."

Here, communication becomes both a strategic and symbolic act. The public presence of political actors who actively champion gender-based safety policies amplifies their perceived importance, aligning GBV prevention with other publicly valued services. This symbolic framing strengthens institutional commitment and can enhance citizen engagement with the campaign and more generally with other public campaigns.

Discussion and conclusion

The results presented assess and confirm the central role institutional trust plays in the perceived effectiveness of the *Ask for Angela* campaign in Paris. Drawing on insights from interviews and municipal documents, this research explored the role of trust in fighting GBV violence in the public space. The theoretical framework put forward to measure the efficacy of the campaign was designed as follows: perceived government performance, institutional responsiveness, and political will. It also reflected on the tensions observed between political commitment and practical implementation capacity.

The findings highlighted that the legitimacy of the campaign partly depends on the municipality's commitment to develop concrete action in response to a publicly recognised issue. This aligns with Mishler and Rose's (2001) theory that institutional trust rests upon perceived performance. In this case, the ultra-local implementation of the campaign helps building the perception of a responsive local government in accordance with public needs. The relationship between territorial proximity and trust is particularly noticeable at the arrondissement level. Direct interactions with the local municipal authority generate stronger public trust. This suggests that successful gender-based violence prevention policies require not only political will but also territorial anchoring to ensure legitimacy.

It also seems important to note that well-established associations are an essential factor in the efficacy of the *Ask for Angela* campaign as it acts as a mechanism to measure and assert trust and legitimacy. The municipality can count on the network of local associations to support and help implement the programme at the territorial level. We saw that all municipal governments allied with associations to carry out the programme. This observation lends support to the concept of delegated trust (Linde & Peters, 2020), whereby institutional legitimacy is consolidated through the help of associative actors who have a locally grounded credibility.

An additional factor which stood out is the important but limited role of political will in the implementation of the *Ask for Angela* campaign and thus in its efficacy. The commitment of the municipality to address the issue of GBV in the public space indeed demonstrates that they take it seriously and are dedicated to ensuring its efficacy. However, while political commitment is necessary to prioritise GBV prevention policies it does not secure a successful implementation.

The interviews showed that a structural gap exists between political commitment and concrete policy delivery. The centralised organisation of the municipality even though having its benefits, also slows down the operationalisation of certain programmes. This then may affect public trust in the institution. Although political visibility and public signalling contribute to the campaign's legitimacy, their effectiveness depends on their ability to translate into concrete, timely measures. In the absence of such operational follow-up, political engagement risks remaining performative and undermining both institutional credibility and the campaign's perceived impact.

The perceived effectiveness of the campaign is closely related to how government performance is evaluated by the public as well as its responsiveness to an acknowledged social issue such as GBV in the public space. The interviews demonstrated that legitimacy is not only due to the campaign itself but also to the municipality's commitment to prioritise the policy. Therefore, *Ask for Angela* is twofold; a tool to a prevention measure and a political wave to contemporary social issues. It represents an institutional response and uses the campaign as an expression of municipal commitment to women's safety. The campaign's efficacy thus has a broader implication. It is the campaign's role to reflect the municipality's priorities to its citizens by being responsive and acknowledging gender inequalities in the public space.

The findings support the theoretical framework laid out and is particularly strong when it comes to how perceived institutional performance and responsiveness impact trust. Throughout the interviews trust in the municipality is even more relevant when it comes from direct and local engagement, that is when actors are visible and embedded in the realities of the citizens. Trust comes from the individuals' assessment of whether their municipal government is acting effectively and responding to public needs. The role of ultra-local actors in this case associative actors or local development teams came across as even more important than anticipated. Their legitimacy comes from their territorial anchoring and also their capacity to be recognised as part of the community. This also shows the limits of political will as it does not necessarily guarantee success without this local support. In this sense, legitimacy is not just institutional but also relies on the trust of the citizens at the ultra-local level. What seems to be successful is to foster trust in the institution and trust through those who are a key factor to the efficacy of *Ask for Angela*. It suggests that making public space safer also means securing a trusted relationship with actors at the local level, where the campaign will be most relevant.

To conclude, the aim of this research was to focus on the perceived efficacy of the *Ask for Angela* campaign run by the municipality and moreover, the role institutional trust plays in the success of public policies in preventing and fighting gender-based violence in the public space. In response to the sub-questions as well as through the understanding of the three core mechanisms of institutional trust, this thesis evaluated how they represent a condition for the campaign's perceived success.

The findings drawn from interviews and document analysis allowed to assess the relevance and influence of perceived government performance, political will and institutional responsiveness have on the efficacy of the campaign. The legitimacy and efficacy of the campaign are closely

tied to its territorial anchoring. Trust in institutions appears strongest at the ultra-local level, where the proximity between citizens and municipal actors allows for more direct engagement and responsiveness to public concerns. The campaign's implementation in district-level neighbourhoods reinforces its credibility, especially when supported by associative actors with well-established local legitimacy.

Furthermore, the results demonstrate that political will although it is necessary does not always ensure the campaign's efficacy. The gap between political will and operational follow-through reveals a tension within the municipal structure. This challenge could affect the success of the campaign's implementation and the public's perception of institutional effectiveness, and thus their trust in the municipality's ability to address the issue of GBV in the public space.

The coordination between institutional and associative actors emerges as an essential mechanism to foster trust. Associations are a source of field-based knowledge and act as a facilitator between the municipality and local neighbourhoods. Their contribution strengthens the campaign's efficacy in adapting to the social realities of the territory and enhances the municipality's responsiveness to public needs.

This research thus contributes to a better understanding of how trust operates as a central mechanism in the development and efficacy of GBV prevention policies. By addressing public safety concerns through visible and locally embedded initiatives, the municipality responds to the need and expectation for safer public spaces and consolidates institutional legitimacy. The *Ask for Angela* campaign is a meaningful illustration of how the prevention of GBV becomes a means enabling political institutions to assure their commitment to equality in the public space and integrate gender-responsive policy making.

Once implemented, the follow-up part of the campaign is one important challenge to address. Most interviewees and elements from documents pointed out that the initiative's follow-up can

be a potential issue when looking at the sustainability of the campaign. As it depends on the resources, both financial and human resources, dedicated to the programme's development, its monitoring is a crucial factor in its efficacy.

On a more general and prospective note, the continuity of the *Ask for Angela* campaign may be questioned in the near future. The political orientation of the Paris Mayor's Office strongly determines the kind of public policies and priority areas it will be committed to. In September 2025, the municipality will enter an electoral reserve to prepare for the election in 2026. The political affiliation of the Paris municipality will be a key factor in establishing whether the gender-based violence prevention campaign and public policies regarding sexual harassment in the public space will remain a priority to the next cabinet and thus be maintained or even strengthened or on the contrary if its implementation may be questioned.

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Appendices

The following documents include supporting material referenced in the research, including the roadmap, cartography, and interview questions.

Appendix A: Interview questions (translated from French)

Ask Angela is a campaign to prevent and fight GBV in public spaces at night. It is currently run by the City of Paris, specifically by two local development teams, the SEII and the Night Policy Department.

- What were the main motivations behind the implementation of this initiative ?
- Several initiative to prevent GBV in public spaces already exist in Paris. Based on your experience, can you explain how they are supported by the SEII?
- Do they stem from a general demand for identified needs? Or from public policies decided at the central level? In your opinion, what are the necessary/ideal conditions to ensure the success of an initiative such as *Ask for Angela* and, more broadly, of policies to prevent and combat VSS?
- Is collaboration between the City of Paris and local resources such as neighbourhood associations (e.g. in Belleville or La Goutte d'Or) essential to the support and success of initiatives to prevent GBV?
- In Paris, it was the Paris municipality that launched this project and is responsible for it. This is not the case everywhere, particularly in Rotterdam, where the city provides subsidies to associations and businesses that wish to set up *Ask Angela*. In your opinion, what is the role of the City of Paris in developing this approach?
- Are there advantages to the municipality being the project leader?
- My thesis topic addresses the notion of citizens' trust in political institutions. I would like to ask you whether you think that trust in local authorities, particularly the Paris City

Council and the arrondissements, is a factor that facilitates or limits the mobilisation of the groups concerned, such as businesses and community organisations ?

- Indicators are used to evaluate the success of GBV prevention measures. What indicators could be useful in assessing the success of the *Ask for Angela* scheme (number of partner locations, visibility, behavioural changes, etc.)?

Interview questions for Worm *Ask for Angela* campaign manager - Rotterdam

Ask for Angela is a safety campaign to help people feeling unsafe in a social setting (bars, clubs) in a discreet way. It is currently being developed in several European cities. My thesis explores the effectiveness of public policies to prevent sexist and sexual violence. Through the study of the *Ask for Angela* campaign in Paris, it seeks to understand the conditions that make this campaign credible, useful and effective.

Here are a few questions on how the campaign came about in Rotterdam, the specificities of its implementation and monitoring of the programme.

The implementation of *Ask for Angela*

- What were the main motivations for setting up the *Ask for Angela* campaign? Can you develop how the idea of *Ask for Angela* emerged, and thus how you put it in place at Worm?
- How would you assess the overall effectiveness of the *Ask for Angela* campaign in Rotterdam? In your opinion, what are a few factors that contributed to its success?
- Was the implementation of the programme driven by feedback from the local community, a decision made by venue managers, or was it introduced through collaboration with the municipality?
- Since the campaign launched, what are some of the most noticeable changes in terms of community awareness, venue participation, or safety measures?

Involvement of the municipality of Rotterdam:

- What role did the municipality play in supporting *Ask for Angela*?
- Did you receive funding from the public sector, private organisations, or other stakeholders? If so, could you provide details about the involvement of the city and funding?

Challenges:

- Throughout the implementation of the campaign, were there any unforeseen challenges or risks that arose? How did you navigate these, and looking back, is there anything you would have approached differently?
- How do you monitor the effectiveness of the *Ask for Angela* campaign at Worm? Do you use a follow-up tool to assess how well the campaign is being used and its impact on safety?

Appendix B: *Ask for Angela* campaign roadmap (translated from French)

Citizens' Democracy and Territories Department

City Policy Department

Local Development Team 18th Faubourgs

04/04/2025

Subject: Women's use of public space in the context of local urban management - development of the *Ask for Angela* initiative in Goutte d'Or

This note presents a project aimed at experimenting with the creation of a network of players at the foot of buildings, identified as reassuring by neighbourhood users. It is being run by the

EDL du 18^{ème} Faubourgs in partnership with the Mission nuit (DDCT) and the Service Intégration et Inclusion (SEII), in the working-class neighbourhoods of Goutte d'Or and Belleville (20^{ème}). In 2016, a women's exploratory walk led by the A Places Egales association encouraged women to participate in urban projects, particularly as part of the Boris Vian NPNRU. As part of the Urban Neighbourhood Management (Gestion Urbaine de Proximité - GUP) programme, the EDL has identified women's strategies for avoiding public space. The *Ask for Angela* initiative is therefore a tool for feeding this diagnosis and mobilising a network of players made up of associations and shopkeepers with a direct link to the public space.

Objectives

- Developing a local diagnosis of the gendered use of public space at night
- Raising awareness and providing training on issues relating to gender-based and sexual violence (GBV)
- Networking local players (associations and shopkeepers) and promoting their knowledge of victim support schemes
- Trialling the deployment of the *Ask for Angela* initiative on a micro-local scale (rue de Chartres, rue de la Charbonnière and rue Myrha) in the heart of the working-class Goutte d'Or district.

I. Setting up the group of women (January - March)

In particular, the EDL mobilised associations working with women:

- EGDO: supporting the appropriation of public space by promoting women's sports activities

- Centre social accueil Goutte d'Or (AGO): creates links between women through the women's group that has been meeting every Friday for over ten years.
- Collectif 4C: promotes women's solidarity through cooking workshops and food distribution for women living in social housing.

II. Organisation of an exploratory walk (April)

This walk with local residents is planned for the evening with an intergenerational group. It will be organised in two parts: mapping and identifying the route, and a time for collective surveying. During the walk, it may be possible to visit some of the shops and talk to them. In 2024, the EDL took part in a training course on exploratory walks offered by the A Places Égales association, and has drawn inspiration from this to propose its own. The exploratory walk is used because it encourages residents and users to get involved and take ownership of public space. It will enable the women themselves to identify reassuring places, in order to build up a network of reassuring places. A reassuring place is a place where a person in danger could ask for help and receive support in order to be directed to the appropriate services (police, social services, etc.).

The perimeter

The area covers Rue de Chartres, Rue de la Charbonnière and Rue Myrha. It was chosen in line with the GUP approach. However, the perimeter may be called into question during the mapping study with local residents, if they feel changes are necessary.

Retroplanning

- 10/02: Participation in the exploratory walk organised at Porte Montmartre (18th arrondissement)
- 09/04: Exploratory walk in Goutte d'Or

- Walk on 9 April:
 - 6.30pm to 6.45pm: Presentation
 - 6.45pm to 7.45pm: Cartography workshop
 - 7.45pm to 9pm: Exploratory walk
 - 9pm to 9.15pm: Feedback and snacks

III. Creation of a network of reassuring places and training of stakeholders (May-June)

Creation of a network of retailers

- Contacting and coordinating shop owners to set up the network
- Training for shop owners by Consentis: 4-hour training module tailored to five participants

The EDL has also contributed to a training catalogue initially produced by the DJS in 2024 following a training course on gender equality for youth professionals offered by the Dans le genre égal association, by adding resources on SGBV and gender in the public space. This catalogue could be distributed more widely to community groups in the area.

Communication

To publicise the *Ask for Angela* initiative and raise awareness on GBV among as many people as possible, the En avant toutes association will be organising stalls in public places, including Square Léon, from summer 2025. The association has already confirmed its agreement to take part in the Goutte d'Or festival.

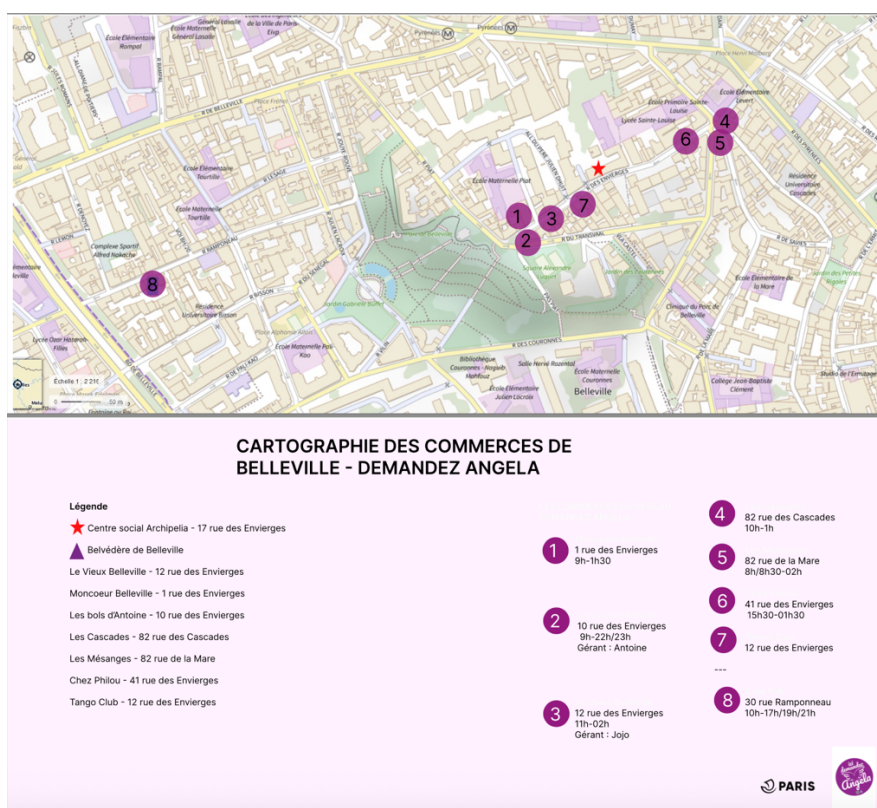
IV. Valorisation, monitoring and evaluation (from June)

A meeting to share experiences between the groups of women who took part in the exploratory walks in the Belleville and Goutte d'Or neighbourhoods is planned.

Creation of communication and promotion tools:

- Produce a map showing the location of shops that have been awarded the label, so that they can be more easily identified in the district.
- Creation of a map or podcast highlighting women's participation in the project and enabling them to keep a record of their involvement.
- The creation of a booklet to disseminate the methodology and approach to other arrondissements. The scheme is initially being run by the 18th and 20th arrondissements, but it could be useful to share it with other EDLs, borough councils, etc.

Appendix C: Cartography of Belleville identified safe locations for *Ask for Angela*



Appendix D: Report on discussions about the Ask Angela initiatives in France and Belgium - 10 April 2025 (translated from French)

Participants

Last name, First name	Organisation
DRAPS, Pauline	Brussels by night
RESSON Marine	Nantes Town Hall
BRACHET, Aude	Nantes Métropole
JEGOU Sarah	City of Bordeaux
Le Carrer, Yann	City of Lannion
GUERAIN, Claire	City of Lyon
KACEL, Nadhia	City of Nanterre
GONET, Anaïs	City of Nanterre
EL HERDMI, Nawel	City of Nanterre
GUERIN Julien	City of Nantes
DUJARDIN Valérie	City of Nice
Constant, Alice	City of Paris
Lévy-Soula, Sarah	City of Paris
Rodriguez, Julie	City of Paris

I. General overview

The *Ask for Angela* initiative, which aims to create safe spaces for people who feel unsafe, is at various stages of deployment in several French cities and in Brussels. However, the effectiveness and sustainability of the scheme are compromised by a lack of national coordination, funding problems and monitoring difficulties.

II. Focus by City

Brussels

- **Status:** Launched then stopped.
- **Structure:** Run by the Brussels by Night Federation (BNN), which has encountered financial and management difficulties.
- **Issues:** Lack of resources, high printing costs for visual aids and training, high turnover of trained staff, making it difficult to maintain an active network.
- **Funding:** The City of Brussels funds a post dedicated to this issue, but the actions undertaken are not visible to the public.
- **Feedback:** Feedback from the public was generally positive, with a greater sense of security thanks to the communication surrounding the scheme. However, doubts remain as to its long-term viability, as there is no strong municipal involvement in the project.

Bordeaux

- **Status:** Launched in 2021, structured around the Night Council, which has made it easier for local players to take ownership.
- **Partnerships:** With 149 partner establishments, Bordeaux has set up partnerships with the CACIS to run the training courses (financed to the tune of €500 per course) and with Consentis to design the courses. Partnership with TBM (Transports Bordeaux Métropole), whose tram drivers are trained, and the national police force, which takes part in the training courses to explain the role of the police and the procedures for filing a complaint. The police receive the list of establishments.
- **Training:** 36 3-hour awareness-raising sessions were given, reaching around 450 people.
- **Tools:** Digital files, interactive mapping of partner establishments on the city's website (with address, telephone number and link to social networks), communication media (logo, flyers).
- **Problems:** The main problem lies in the monitoring of partner establishments, carried out via a Google form sent out every 6 months, with a response rate that is often insufficient.

Lyon

- **Progress to date:** Initially trialled in one arrondissement, then extended to the whole city. 320 organisations trained.
- **Training :** Delivered by the CIDFF (2.5 to 3 hours). The town wishes to retain control of the training.
- **Partnerships:** A partnership has been set up with UMay to create an application for listing safe locations.
- **Expansion:** The scheme has been extended to other types of establishment (cultural establishments, libraries, hotels, the Carrefour group, etc.).
- **Follow-up:** UMay is responsible for checking the presence of the "Ask Angela" badge in establishments.
- **Visual:** No national visual, each city has its own logo.
- **Difficulties:** Difficulty in monitoring closed establishments.

Nanterre

- **State of progress:** Reflection in progress.
- **Aims:** Communicate about street harassment and encourage shops to become safe spaces.
- **Training:** Training provided by associations (3-hour awareness-raising session or one-day training course).
- **Question:** The question of communication arises: broadly to residents or to businesses?

Nice

- **Status:** Launched in 2023 as part of the CLSPD (Local Security and Crime Prevention Council) and a European project to combat street harassment.
- **Approach:** Launch with an exploratory walk, followed by trials in a specific area (old town and town centre) with 40 retailers (now 120).
- **Follow-up:** Provided by municipal mediators (10 people, 8am-10pm) who visit the shops once a week to evaluate the scheme and maintain the link.
- **Training:** Mobile awareness-raising sessions (the project manager visits retailers).
- **Tools:** Logo, fact sheets, posters, flyers, business card with QR code (linking to the town's page with all the resources and maps), alert button for the municipal police installed in the trained establishments (response in 1 minute per km).
- **Actions:** One-off events (e.g. Equality Bus), work with the Ratapignates (young people involved in RDR in the evenings), specific actions aimed at young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods (who then run stalls).
- **Original feature:** shopkeepers equipped with an alarm button linked to the municipal police, enabling rapid intervention.

Other cities

- **Nantes :** No mention of an existing project.
- **Lannion:** Reflection underway, working on a nightlife charter.
- **Other interested parties:** Lille and Toulouse.

Outlook

- **Objective:** To develop a shared framework, institutional support, long-term funding, and a pooling of tools and feedback.
- **National coordination:** France Urbaine or the State could be contacted to set up this coordination.

Appendix E: Communication instances

Communication and poster campaign to raise awareness for the Olympics safe places in the summer 2024, from July 26th to September 8th. Translation “*Here, there is no room for sexist and sexual violence*”.



The safe places programme has been set up to offer immediate support to victims of sexual violence. There was one safe place per arrondissement.



Consent form

Title of the Study: Exploring the implementation of public policies regarding gender-based violence in the public space : A case study of the *Ask for Angela* campaign.

Researcher:

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Introduction

You are invited to take part in a research project conducted at the Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam as part of a thesis requirement. No personal or identifiable data will be shared with the municipality or any external parties. This study will explore the efficacy of gender-based violence prevention policy and how there are implemented at the municipal level. For more information, contact Sarah Lévy-Soula (689629sl@eur.nl) or the EUR Data Protection Officer (privacy@eur.nl).

Data Collection

The interview will take place online or at the Mayor's office of Paris and will last approximately an hour. It will be audio recorded and transcribed. Your contact details will be replaced by a code and stored in a secure environment and will not be shared with anyone.

Potential Risks & Voluntary Participation

There are no physical, legal, or financial risks involved in participating in this study. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you are free to skip any question you do not wish to answer. You may withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or consequence.

Reimbursement

This research does not provide financial compensation.

Data Sharing & Confidentiality

No confidential or personal identifiable information (such as your name or place of residence) will be disclosed at any point—your participation remains anonymous. The anonymised data collected will be used solely for this thesis and for any related scientific publications. Only the researcher and thesis supervisors from Erasmus University Rotterdam (Michael Giffin: giffin@essb.eur.nl) will have access to the data. Anonymised data may be made available to other researchers at Erasmus University Rotterdam for academic purposes. However, it will never be sold or used for commercial purposes. In all cases, your data will be handled with strict confidentiality and remain anonymous. The data gathered for this master's thesis will be deleted after the final assessment, unless it is needed for further academic publications or follow-up research conducted within the university.

Your rights

You have the right to:

- Request information about access to the data collection process and analysis;

- Rectify, erase or restrict the processing of personal data;
- Withdraw consent at any time of the study;
- If unsatisfied, lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority Data Protection Officer (fg@eur.nl)

Consent Statement

By signing below, I confirm that:

- I have been informed of the purpose, data collection process and storage of this research
- I have read this form (or had it read to me)
- I understand that my participation is anonymous and that I may withdraw at any time without any negative consequences
- I explicitly consent to the processing of potentially sensitive data

Participant's Name :.....

Date:

Participant's Signature.....

Appendix F: Code book

Theme	Code	Description
Governance and institutional coordination	Democratic representation	How public institutions reflect and include citizens, in this case gender-based safety issues
Governance and institutional coordination	Government responsiveness	Whether the municipality reacts and prioritise public concerns, here GBV
Governance and institutional coordination	Implementation in nightlife venues	How <i>Ask for Angela</i> is implemented in nightlife establishments
Governance and institutional coordination	Inter-city comparisons	Analysis of how the campaign differs across

		cities such as Paris, London, Rotterdam...
Governance and institutional coordination	Municipal documentation	Official reports and other documents related to the campaign's development
Evaluation and operational challenges	Challenges in training implementation	Difficulties related to delivering, scheduling, or maintaining campaign training sessions
Evaluation and operational challenges	Semi-structured interviews	Interviews conducted with campaign managers to gather qualitative data on the campaign
Civil society and local knowledge	Role of associations	How associations support the implementation and legitimacy of the campaign
Civil society and local knowledge	Role of municipal staff	The involvement of local officials in campaign coordination
Civil society and local knowledge	Night mission coordination	Involvement of the night mission in the coordination of the campaign
Civil society and local knowledge	Territorial anchoring and adaptation	implementing the campaign to specific neighbourhoods based on local dynamics
Symbolic and strategic framing	Ask for Angela as discreet tool	The use of the campaign as an accessible means for individuals to find help discreetly
Symbolic and strategic framing	Public reception of campaign	How citizens and community actors perceive the campaign.
Symbolic and strategic framing	Political visibility	The degree to which municipal leaders prioritise the campaign
Symbolic and strategic framing	Policy agenda-setting	How the campaign fits into broader institutional strategies and commitments to safety
Trust and legitimacy	Institutional trust	Trust in the competence and commitment of public institutions to respond effectively
Trust and legitimacy	Perceived effectiveness	Whether the public perceive the campaign to be successful
Trust and legitimacy	Trust in municipality	Trust in the municipal government to prioritise

		gender-based safety policies
Trust and legitimacy	Citizen-institution link	The relationship between citizens and their government to be responsive and accountable