



**Organisers:** AEGEE

**Day and time:** Thursday 5 December, 16.00

**Room:** European Parliament - Room ASP  
5G375

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## **Towards safe (youth) organisations for everyone**

### **Concept**

In 2017, the #MeToo movement brought the issue of sexual harassment to the foreground of the public debate. In an environment where women have been socialised to accept and endure harassment, and where molestations and maltreatments are regularly trivialised, the #MeToo movement started a conversation about how to build safe spaces and how to educate women and men alike to values such as consent and respect. From the workplace, this debate spread to different settings. Discussing sexual harassment and consent in the youth sector is especially crucial, as educating the new generations and accustoming them to different values and principles can have a much bigger impact on our societies. Fighting against sexual harassment is not only about preventing traumatic experiences: it is part of building an inclusive environment that fosters the participation of everyone. A safe space empowers people to use their voice and thus contributes to democratic values within an organisation.

AEGEE [SMASH \(Structural Measures Against Sexual Harassment\)](#) was conceived specifically to address these issues. It sets out to develop a set of guidelines that can be adopted by any (youth) organisation to immediately start implementing measures to tackle sexual harassment. The strategy is built upon two core concepts of education: on one hand, to inform everyone in the organisation about consent and active bystandership; on the other hand, to intensively train a selected group of youth workers to act as “Safe Persons”: volunteers that know how to prevent, detect and react to sexual harassment. This dual approach of both general education and targeted training complement each other.

During the session, we will go through the lessons learnt during the project and present the guidelines developed as an outcome of it. In the first part, there will also be a presentation of the trainer’s toolbox that has been created, with which any organisation can train their own safe persons. Moreover, one of the Safe Persons will share their first-hand experience of tackling harassment in youth work.

After this, a panel discussion of experts and policymakers will dive into the topic and explore the current state of affairs around sexual harassment and look for future steps.

We will conclude with a reception where everyone is invited to informally discuss best practices and how they (plan to) deal with the topic in their own organisation.

## Agenda

- 15:30 Registration and welcome coffee
- 16:00 Welcome words by
  - President of AEGEE-Europe
  - MEP Melchior
- 16:10 Presentation of the SMASH Guidelines to implement measures against sexual harassment in any (youth) organisation. Recommendations and experiences from:
  - Peer educator in responses to sexual harassment victims
  - Trained Safe Person youth worker
  - SMASH Project team member
- 16:45 Panel discussion with experts in the field of sexual harassment, MEPs and youth organisation representatives. Together with the audience, we will address at least the following topics:
  - Sexual harassment measures after the #MeToo period. Where are we now and where should we go?
  - What is the influence of non-inclusive environments on democratic participation?
  - What is the role of (non-)formal education in the fight against sexual harassment?
  - What is the role of policymakers?
- 17:50 Final remarks
- 18:00 Best practice sharing & Networking Cocktail