

# Safety & the City: Mapping Gender Inequality in Public Space

This project will explore gendered perceptions of safety in Limerick City by collecting 1) map-based survey data and 2) carrying out pop-up co-design workshops in city spaces to engage citizens in imagining a safer, fairer future.

## Introduction

Public outrage and alarm across Ireland following the murder of Ashling Murphy in January 2022 has called attention in new ways to an area of longstanding public concern – gendered experiences of public safety. Women often report feeling unsafe engaging in activities or being in spaces that are often experienced as ultimately safe by men. In the academic literature, little attention has been paid to gendered experiences of public safety in Limerick City.

## Objective

This project invites citizens to share their perceptions of their safety on streets in the city using an online interactive map-based survey. This will be combined with a series of pop-up events in Limerick City, allowing participants to discuss their experiences of safety in depth through creative exercises, as well as imagining safer futures for the city. We will compile our findings into an online, visual, interactive report that will make recommendations for urban and social design recommendations in the city.

## Mapping survey

Our survey will ask participants to indicate, on an online interactive map, in which areas of the city they feel safe & unsafe. We'll gather the following data:

- rating of perceived safety
- any precautions taken
- demographic data
- any additional comments

We'll integrate this data with other open datasets to produce a series of design recommendations for the built environment.

## Co-design workshops

We'll also carry out pop-up design events in Limerick City to ask citizens to reimagine safety products and services through creative workshop methods. We'll use prompts like...

- Fill out an address book of all the people you've called (or pretended to call) when walking home alone
- If you could wave a magic wand, and make Limerick City streets safer, what might happen? How would the world change?
- How would you redesign existing personal safety devices (alarms, reporting systems) to make them more effective in Limerick?

ADAPT Domestic Abuse Services in Limerick works to address the needs of women survivors of domestic abuse and their children and to challenge the silent tolerance of domestic abuse in society.

Councillor Elisa O'Donovan represents Limerick City West and is a passionate advocate for gender equality and Feminism in the city. She was a founding member of Limerick Feminist Network and Limerick Pro Choice.

GOSHH provide prevention, care and support services relating to LGBT, HIV/AIDS and Sexual Health in Limerick City.

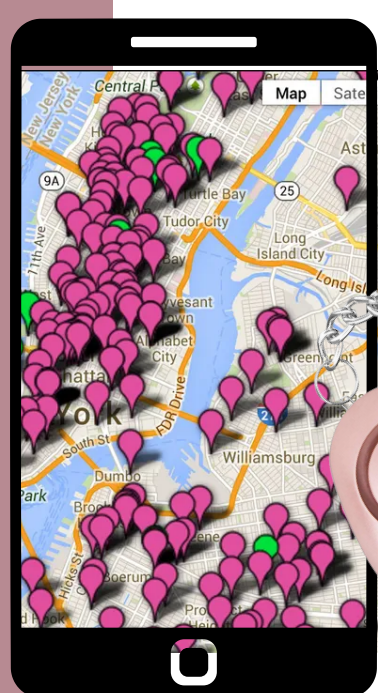
Women's Collective Ireland supports grassroots women through women's community development locally and nationally.

The Community Wellness, Empowerment, Leadership and Life skills (CWELL) diploma has been co-designed with local Limerick communities to address their community-identified needs. The group offers strong links to existing community groups.

## Community partners

## Outputs & impact

We're planning several outputs from this project, including 1) an interactive digital report of our findings, 2) a policy document addressed to local and national governments, 3) three academic papers, and 4) significant social media coverage of the project.



Our project will also explore and problematise existing strategies for feeling safe in the city, such as harassment reporting systems, personal alarms, and makeshift defense product configurations.



**Kirsten R.** @kristenbeth38  
Replying to @KaitlinCurcio  
It is a given. Every time. I also look to make sure there is no one following me and even take out my ponytail because ponytails (supposedly) makes it easier for a guy to grab it and use it to pull you his direction. All this, just for trying to get from a building to my car.