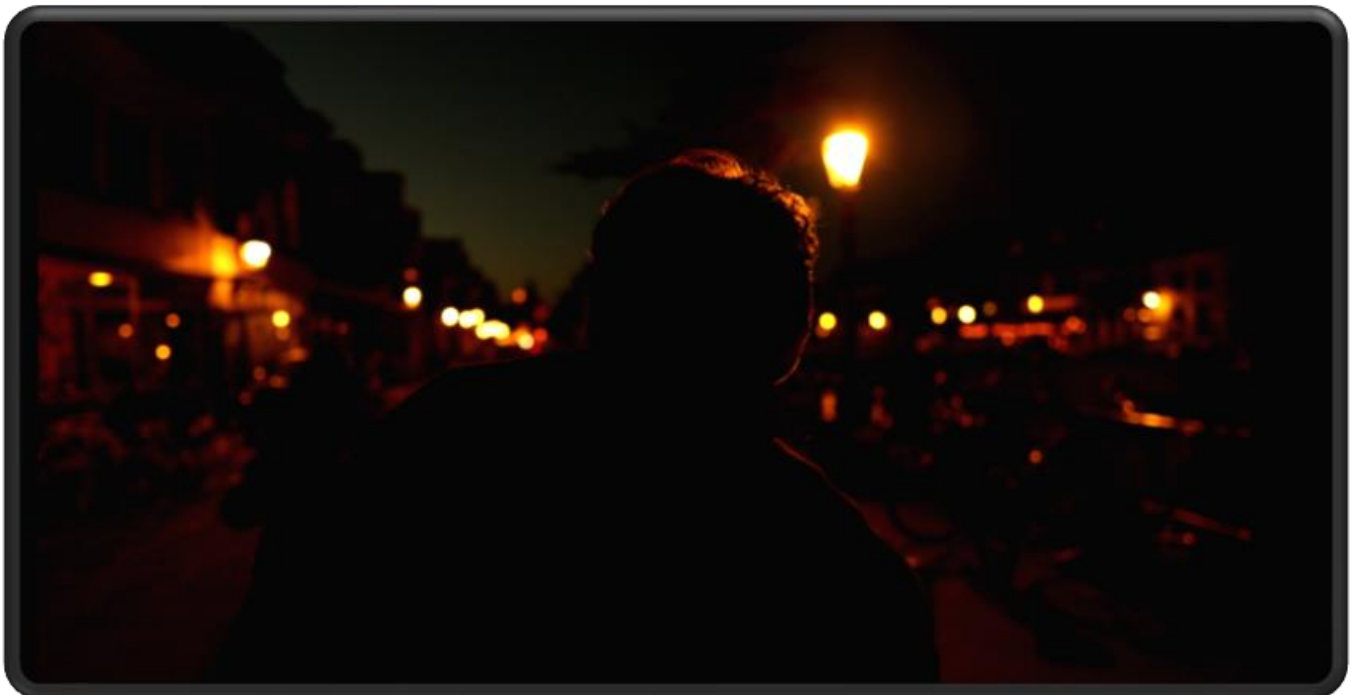# The Unseen Actor in Street Harassment: Analysing the Role and Awareness of the 'Buitenstaander'

Gijs op ten Noort, 6762891

Master thesis Organsing Social Impact

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(The above image is taken from the documentary that is part of this thesis.)

Preface

Before you lies the end result of half a year of toil, work, seeking creative solutions, and persistently pushing forward. This half year was a time during which many personal experiences reshaped, sharpened, and adjusted my perspective on the world. Just when I thought I knew everything about street intimidation and its associated aspects, I would hear a new story that completely changed everything again. It was also a busy half year due to my thesis, my internship at the municipality of Rotterdam, and producing a documentary. Nevertheless, I look back with a sense of pride on this time. A time in which I got to know myself better and realized that achieving beautiful and challenging results such as a documentary or Rotterdam Week Against SSI is possible through a good dose of dedication, self-confidence, and creativity.

Through this preface, I would like to express my gratitude to several people who have helped me. Firstly, I sincerely thank my thesis supervisor Eugène Loos for his assistance and guidance. Despite the initial challenges of making a documentary, he supported me throughout and helped me find the right way to integrate the documentary into my thesis. Additionally, I would like to thank my second reader Ozan Alakavuklar for his fresh perspective and help in shaping and reviewing my thesis. Furthermore, I extend my thanks to Charlotte Coenen for the trust and guidance during my internship. I also want to thank all the respondents who contributed to my research.

Another group of people who have greatly supported me are my friends. Whenever I needed help with my documentary, I could rely on them. Nothing was too much trouble for them, whether it was walking around with a large sign in the middle of the city, assisting with equipment, or recording voice-over scripts. Thank you all for that.

Finally, I want to explicitly thank my girlfriend, parents, and brothers. It's often said 'Gijs Eigenwijs' and this was true during my master's thesis and documentary. I could always count on your support and trust, which was incredibly valuable and helpful. Words fall short in describing how reassuring and helpful it feels when taking a leap into the unknown, knowing I have your support.

I wish you, dear reader, much enjoyment in reading this master's thesis, and I highly recommend watching the accompanying documentary as well.

Kind regards,

Gijs op ten Noort   Utrecht 28-6-2024

Abstract

This study examines the identification of a new actor within municipal approaches to street harassment, namely the 'buitenstaander'. It investigates the potential role of this 'buitenstaander' in municipal policies and their awareness of the phenomenon street harassment. The study employs discourse analysis of municipal strategies on street harassment and interviews with officials from various municipalities participating in the national Safe Cities program. The dominant discourse within municipal strategies revolves around three main pillars: Prevention & awareness, Victim support, and Street safety & enforcement. Of these, Prevention & awareness are prioritized targeting actors such as victims, perpetrators, and bystanders, with emphasis on the latter. However, there is ambiguity in municipal definitions concerning bystanders, typically viewed as those who intervene directly in incidents of street harassment. This aligns with definitions used by the national action program and Movisie, which describe bystanders as individuals who witness but are not directly involved as victim or perpetrator in misconduct/street harassment incidents. Nevertheless, this definition raises questions regarding individuals who indirectly influence social norms without directly witnessing incidents. This research identifies these individuals in the context of street harassment as 'buitenstaanders'. They are defined as follows: *"Individuals who are not direct witnesses to or directly involved in incidents of boundary-crossing behaviour."* Drawing on academic literature, including the work of Kimberley Fairchild, Bianca Fileborn and Tully O'Neill, my experience I gained during my internship at the municipality of Rotterdam and a documentary (that is part of this thesis) the study explores the role and awareness of these 'buitenstaanders' within municipal strategies. Theoretical insights indicate that 'buitenstaanders' can play both direct and indirect roles in reducing street harassment, distinguishing them from bystanders who primarily intervene directly. The direct role involves assuming a bystander role, while the indirect role influences social norms, even outside of specific incident contexts. The documentary, which I wrote, produced, filmed, and edited in addition to conducting this research, suggests the presence of a subgroup within 'buitenstaanders' who are less aware of street harassment and preventive coping mechanisms. Termed the 'unconscious buitenstaander', this subgroup unknowingly impacts municipal strategies. Their lack of awareness may prevent them from recognizing instances of street harassment and inadvertently trivializing the issue in conversations, thereby negatively influencing social norms. To mitigate these implications, the study recommends explicitly engaging the 'buitenstaander' in street harassment strategies. This involves conducting targeted actions in public spaces focused on their indirect roles and facilitating dialogues. By doing so, there is a greater likelihood of reaching the unconscious 'buitenstaander' and fostering awareness, for instance, educating them that street harassment occurs not only in dimly lit alleys at night but also in broad daylight on bustling squares.

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List of Abbreviations

- NAP   : Nationaal actieprogramma aanpak seksueel grensoverschrijdend gedrag en seksueel geweld   (National action programme tackling sexual transgressive behaviour and sexual violence)
- SSI   : Seksuele straatintimidatie (sexual street harassment)

1. Introduction

The statistic "But 2 out of 3 women experienced it" suddenly appeared in various newspaper headlines in early February 2022 (NOS, 2022; Schep, 2022). Initially, one might think it pertains to something like experiencing the sound of a partner snoring. Unfortunately, this is not the case. The aforementioned statistic actually originates from a study conducted by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) on street harassment, revealing that a staggering 2 out of 3 women in the age group of 12 to 25 had been harassed in the public space in 2021 in the Netherlands (CBS, 2022). While public space should ideally be accessible and safe for everyone, this is far from the reality, especially for women and the LGBTQIA+ community (CBS, 2022; *Straatintimidatie — BO Diversity*, n.d.). Catcalling, shouting, following, or verbal abuse, these are just a few examples of sexual street harassment that occur daily and nightly in public spaces, disproportionately affecting women and the LGBTQIA+ community (CBS, 2022; Plan International, n.d.)

The CBS study revealed that the majority of women who were harassed experienced unwanted catcalling, with a quarter of them even being followed (CBS, 2022). Street harassment has far-reaching consequences. It is important to note that men also experience street harassment. However, compared to women or the LGBTQIA+ community, the sexual harassment of men is of a smaller scale and mainly consists of verbal harassment (CBS, 2022). The CBS study indicates the following: "The Perceptions Survey shows that 42 per cent of all women aged 12 to 25 years in 2020/'21 have ever felt uncomfortable because they have been whistled at, sneered at or snapped at, shouted at or chased, 30 per cent have ever been angry or irritated by this and 34 per cent have ever felt unsafe or afraid. Of all young men, 6 per cent have ever felt unsafe or afraid because of street harassment"(CBS, 2022).

Although street harassment is a phenomenon that has been occurring for years, the CBS study in 2022 was the first nationwide research on this subject (CBS, 2022; Fairchild, 2023; NOS, 2022). The fact that a national study took so long to materialize reflects that street harassment was for a long time not seen as a societal problem in the Dutch society. Emmi Schumacher, board member at the Stichting Stop Straatintimidatie, succinctly summarizes the issue in the following quote: "It has always been a problem that wasn't talked about. It was a tradition that was long perceived as normal behaviour"(Schep, 2022). To illustrate, it was until 2014 that the term "straatintimidatie" was officially added to the Dutch dictionary (Woordenboek van Nieuwe Woorden, n.d.).

One of the reasons why street harassment was not seen as a societal problem for a long time stems from the prevailing and still influential perceptions. Scholar Kimberly Fairchild addresses

this issue by noting that street harassment, due to its daily occurrence, has become normalized and regarded as commonplace (Fairchild, 2023). This normalization of street harassment can be attributed to several factors (Fairchild, 2023; Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023). Firstly, victim-blaming continues to play a significant role in society. Researchers Benjamin Bailey and Bianca Fileborn demonstrate in their studies that women who speak about their experiences of street harassment are often blamed and told that the incident in question was merely a compliment or greeting (Bailey, 2017; Fileborn, 2019). The negative role of victim-blaming in society is also corroborated in other studies, where participants believe that women can provoke street harassment and are therefore feel bad for it (Spaccatini et al., 2019).

Moreover, the social norms minimize the seriousness of a street harassment incident and place the burden of proof on the victim rather than the perpetrator (Fairchild, 2023). Consequently, women may internalize these attitudes, leading them to question the validity of their own experiences and hesitate to seek support or report incidents (Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023). This dynamic reinforces the normalization of street harassment and contributes to the perpetuation of a culture of silence and disbelief, further marginalizing victims and hindering efforts to address the issue effectively. Consequently, street harassment is normalised among woman (Fileborn, 2019).

Furthermore, prevailing perceptions (primarily among men) regarding urban civility and associated norms also play a role. Scholars such as Bailey and Carol Brooks Gardner argue that street harassment violates norms of urban civility, targeting women as "open persons" vulnerable to unwelcome interactions (Bailey, 2017; Gardner, 1995). Therefore, certain interactions such as catcalling are perceived by some individuals as flirting when they are not.

The notion that prevailing perceptions within society, particularly among men, regarding urban civility contribute to the normalization of street harassment is corroborated by a recent study conducted by Ipsos I&O on behalf of Plan International (2024). Findings from the research reveal that nearly one-third of young men who exhibited unwanted sexual behaviour in the past 12 months did so because they perceived it as a form of compliment (Ipsos I&O, 2024). Besides, 7 out of 10 young men engaged in unwanted sexual behaviour without conscious consideration, with catcalling accounting for 70% of such instances (Ipsos I&O, 2024). To put it briefly, this study underscores that a significant portion of unwanted behaviour stems from unawareness and lack of understanding among young men. Mischa Dekker, sociologist at the University of Amsterdam and received his PhD with his research on street harassment, articulates this point, stating: "We must raise awareness among these boys that something they consider innocent can be very unpleasant for a woman"(Schep, 2022).

In the Netherlands, street harassment and sexual transgressive behaviour has increasingly become a focal point on the political agenda in recent years (Debbie, 2022; NOS, 2024; Onnink, 2021). This ultimately led to the launch of the national action program "Aanpak Seksueel grensoverschrijdend gedrag en seksueel geweld" (sexually transgressive behaviour and sexual violence) which also includes a focus on street harassment (Ministerie Algemene Zaken, 2023). This national program was established in early 2023 with the aim of effecting a cultural shift and changing societal norms regarding misconduct and street harassment (Ministerie Algemene Zaken, 2023). However, action had already been taken a couple of years earlier at the municipality level to address street harassment. A significant development occurred in 2017 and 2018 when the municipalities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam commissioned the first studies on this phenomenon (Fischer, 2017; gemeente Amsterdam, 2018). These were the initial scientific inquiries aimed at delineating the scope of street harassment. As a result of these studies, both the Amsterdam and Rotterdam municipalities began formulating policies specifically addressing this issue. Ultimately, around 2020, this culminated in an approach primarily focused on prevention, with bystander intervention playing a significant role. The primary objective is to change the social norm regarding sexual street harassment, hence the same as the goal of the national action program (gemeente Rotterdam, 2024; Ministerie Algemene Zaken, 2023).

To facilitate this change, municipalities receive support from the 'Veilige Steden' (safer cities) program, operated by Movisie (Movisie, n.d.). While the program's scope extends beyond street harassment, it serves as a central resource where municipalities can seek assistance in developing policies to tackle street harassment (Movisie, n.d.). For instance, municipalities can receive both financial support and in terms of knowledge. Movisie has developed an approach to effectively activate bystanders to intervene during incidents of street harassment (Movisie, 2022). This approach is based on the bystander intervention model by Latané and Darley (Darley & Latane, 1968). The model provides guidance how to activate a bystander to respond to incidents of street harassment and outlines the role they can play in such situations. Moreover, this model has become an important foundation and component in the preventive approach of municipalities (Movisie, n.d., 2022). Movisie's approach to effectively activating bystanders is particularly useful for municipalities that are new to addressing street harassment and are seeking successful methods to engage bystanders. This approach is especially beneficial for those municipalities that have not yet developed prevention policies on street harassment.

However, it is possible to add some criticism to the preventive policy in which the bystander intervention model of Movisie plays a significant role. While the policy aims to use bystander intervention to change a general societal norm regarding street harassment, this goal is inherently

almost unattainable due to the limitations of Movisie's bystander intervention theory (Movisie, 2022). Effecting a general societal norm change through encouraging bystander intervention is nearly unattainable because it assumes the presence of three distinct actors in relation to an street harassment incident: the victim, the perpetrator, and, as discussed earlier, the bystander (Movisie, 2022). Making bystanders aware and active is considered one of the most effective preventive solutions. Undoubtedly, bystanders are a crucial actor in preventive efforts. However, in the current approach, they are seen as the major group alongside the perpetrator and victim, which is inherently inaccurate or impossible.

The bystander is defined in Movisie's bystander intervention theory as follows: "Individuals who witness boundary-crossing behaviour but are not directly involved as perpetrators or victims"(Movisie, 2022). From this, it can be concluded that individuals who do not witness boundary-crossing behaviour/street harassment cannot be defined as bystanders. Furthermore, findings from the aforementioned study conducted by Ipsos I&O suggest that there is a significant portion of the population who are not directly witness to incidents of street harassment(2024). The study indicates that nearly half of the respondents had not witnessed any instances of unwanted sexual behaviour on the street whatsoever (Ipsos I&O, 2024). This indicates that, in addition to the group of direct witnesses (bystanders), there is a large group present in society that does not directly witness an incident or boundary-crossing behaviour in the public space.

Therefore, in my opinion, it is possible to define a fourth actor called the 'buitenstaander'. This 'buitenstaander' is not direct witnesses of an street harassment incident but has the potential to become a witness and thus a bystander. However, to fulfil this potential role as bystander the 'buitenstaander' has to be aware of street harassment and its associated aspects like where it can happen and what the effect on people's behaviour is to avoid it (coping mechanism). Unfortunately, this awareness is not always the case. As previously mentioned, it appears that there is a segment within society that is not fully aware of street harassment and its associated aspects (CCV, 2023; EUR Magazine, 2022). If this "buitenstaander" groups remain unaware that street harassment and its associated behaviours are not considered normal, there is a big chance that they are unlikely to recognize themselves as bystanders and intervene in such incidents. Therefore, it is crucial to address in municipalities policies this group of 'buitenstaanders' and create sufficient awareness regarding street harassment. However, this is hardly the case.

The issue here lies in the fact that the prevention policies as currently formulated in most municipalities are based on the bystander (Movisie, n.d.). However, little to no attention is paid to those who cannot be defined as perpetrators, victims, or bystanders. This fourth group called the 'buitenstaander' is huge and can potentially become a bystander. According to the bystander theory

that Movisie and municipalities use, it is assumed that individuals who witness a boundary-crossing event immediately recognize themselves as bystanders (Movisie, 2022). However, this assumption may not always hold true. Despite being physically present at the scene, individuals may not immediately perceive or acknowledge themselves as bystanders.

Additionally, it is possible that conversations about street harassment take place among individuals even when there is no street harassment incident nearby. These discussions still influence perceptions of street harassment and the social norms associated with it. However, if the conversation occurs among individuals who are not fully aware of what street harassment entails due to the fact that they belong to the group of unconscious 'buitenstaanders', there is a high chance that the discussion will not accurately address street harassment. As an effect, there is a change that a defective perception is created regarding street harassment that normalised it.

This study will focus on this new actor called the 'buitenstaander,' specifically examining a subgroup within this actor known as the unconscious 'buitenstaander.' This study investigates the implications this group has for municipal street harassment approaches. Before delving into these implications, the dominant discourse within municipal street harassment approaches will be analysed. Therefore, this study uses two main questions which each having sub-questions. The main questions are as follows:

A: *What is the dominant discourse in the policy domain regarding street harassment among municipalities?*

B: *What are the implications of an unconscious 'buitenstaander' on municipalities' street harassment approaches, as unveiled in the documentary?*

To address the main questions, this study utilizes the following sub-questions:

Sub-questions A:

- A1: *What discourses dominate in municipal policy documents related to tackling street harassment?*

- A2: *How do civil servants' discourses within municipalities influence concrete policies and interventions to combat street harassment, and what challenges do they encounter in this regard?*

Sub-questions B:

- B1: *To what extent are 'buitenstaanders' familiar with street harassment and related aspects as unveiled in the documentary?*

- B2: *What is the role of the 'buitenstaander' as revealed in the documentary in municipalities' street harassment approaches?*

In this study, a discourse analysis is employed at the policy level of municipalities in the Netherlands. At the policy level, municipal policy documents within the context of street harassment are analysed, alongside interviews conducted with civil servants. Furthermore, at the societal level, interviews are conducted with individuals in public spaces. Subsequently, the gathered data is analysed through the lens of academic theories of street harassment and bystanders. This analysis aims to determine the existence of a group of 'buitenstaanders' wherein a part of this group remains unconsciously regarding street harassment and to evaluate the implications of this unconscious group on municipal street harassment policy approaches. The four stages of competence model is utilized to provide insight into the positioning of the unconscious 'buitenstaander' relative to the bystander. Additionally, media studies theory is applied to elucidate the power of a documentary and the role it can play in raising awareness of an underexposed phenomenon, such as street harassment, among people who are not actively engaged with the issue (unconscious 'buitenstaander').

Ultimately, a part of the findings of this study are synthesized into a documentary, serving as a vehicle to disseminate the results to a broad audience. Therefore, a scenario, script and shot list are created by me. The reason to make a documentary is that a documentary possesses the power to engage and reach a larger audience within society compared to a traditional academic paper. As a result, more individuals come into contact with the importance of (unconscious) 'buitenstaander' related to street harassment and its implications. Furthermore, through visual storytelling, the documentary will hopefully create empathy, understanding, and critical reflection among viewers, ultimately prompting a shift in societal attitudes and behaviours towards street harassment.

Therefore, by incorporating a documentary component into this study, the aim is not only to disseminate academic findings but also to catalyse broader societal awareness, dialogue, and advocacy for meaningful change (Chattoo, 2020; Nisbet & Aufderheide, 2009). By leveraging the medium of film, this study seeks to transcend traditional academic boundaries and engage with audiences in a dynamic and impactful manner. A link to the documentary, screenshots and reflections on the responses of the individuals interviewed, will be part of the results section.

1.1   Societal and Scientific Relevance

This research study is of great societal importance as it examines whether the current preventive street harassment policy based on Movisie's bystander intervention model overlooks a crucial actor called the 'buitenstaander' (Movisie, 2022). By doing, it become very difficult to achieve a societal norm change. This study aims to shed light on the presence of an unconscious 'buitenstaander' within society and its implications. It seeks to explore the extent to which individuals who are not directly involved in street harassment incidents are aware of such occurrences and their responsibilities in addressing them. Understanding the dynamics surrounding the 'buitenstaanders' awareness and involvement in instances of street harassment is crucial for informing more comprehensive and effective intervention strategies. By examining the existence and impact of the unconscious 'buitenstaander', this research study endeavours to contribute to the development of more inclusive and impactful street harassment policies and interventions aimed at fostering societal norm changes.

Furthermore, this study holds significant scientific relevance. There is little to no existing knowledge in the scientific literature regarding the 'buitenstaander' with respect to preventive actions concerning street harassment (Fairchild, 2023; Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023). Several studies have a focus in the bystander and how to make him active. However, there are only three studies with an explicit focus on the bystander in the context of street harassment (Chaudoir & Quinn, 2010; Fileborn, 2017; Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023, p. 6; Stop Street Harasment, 2014). This is further elaborated in the methodology chapter.

Furthermore, the bystander intervention model from Movisie illustrates how bystanders can intervene in a street harassment incident, thereby facilitating a social norm change (Movisie, 2022). However, critical questions can be raised regarding whether individuals perceive themselves as bystanders. In step 1, it is stated that a bystander must notice an event and recognize it as crossing boundaries. Movisie articulates this in their report as follows: "Not always being able to assess whether and when there is boundary-crossing behaviour is an obstacle for bystanders to recognize boundary-crossing behaviour. In other words, they lack sufficient knowledge and awareness to recognize the situation as boundary-crossing" (Movisie, 2022). From this, Movisie concludes that knowledge is a necessary ingredient for intervention because it enables bystanders to notice and recognize an event as boundary-crossing behaviour (Movisie, 2022). However, it is assumed that individuals witnessing a boundary-crossing event immediately see and recognize themselves as bystanders. This may not always be the case. While they may be physically bystanders, this does not necessarily mean they immediately perceive or recognize themselves as such. Therefore, it is

important to research the group of individuals who do not witness a boundary-crossing event but potentially could. If these non-witnesses are unaware of boundary-crossing behaviour, they are unlikely to recognize themselves as bystanders and intervene in an incident. In short, research on the 'buitenstaander' is highly valuable in filling this gap in knowledge within the scientific field.

Finally, this study also makes an important contribution in practical terms. It demonstrates whether there is a group of individuals in the society who are not fully aware of street harassment and explicitly fall outside the current preventive approach of the municipalities in the Netherlands.

This study first elaborates on the theoretical framework. As previously mentioned, it discusses theories related to street harassment, bystanders, and 'buitenstaanders'. Each concept will be examined and argued for its added value, addressing various accompanying facets. Second, the methodology section of this research will be discussed, including the research design, case setting, data collection, and analysis. The quality of the research will also be elucidated. Third, the results of this research will be presented and discussed, with special attention to the documentary. Finally, the conclusion and discussion will be provided.

2. Theoretical Framework

This chapter elaborates on the theories underpinning this research. First, it discusses the theories related to bystanders and 'buitenstaanders'. The four stages of competence model is utilized to illustrate the positioning of the 'buitenstaander' in relation to the bystander. Second, the academic literature on street harassment is reviewed. This provides a comprehensive overview of the various perspectives and frameworks that exist within this field, offering a solid foundation for the study. Finally, theories from media studies are applied to explain the role of the documentary in this research. The documentary is analysed for its potential to raise awareness and educate viewers about the underexplored phenomenon of street harassment.

2.1 Bystander & 'buitenstaander

This study incorporates academic literature that is focused on the bystander. Within the academic realm, a significant body of literature exists on the bystander effect and strategies for its prevention (Fischer et al., 2011). Among the key pioneers in this field are Bibb Latané and John Darley (Darley & Latane, 1968). They systematically outline how a bystander can actively intervene. This has led to the development of the bystander intervention model, which Movisie uses as the foundation for their activation plan for bystanders in cases of boundary-crossing behaviour and street harassment (Movisie, 2022). The bystander intervention model consists of the following steps.

1. one must recognize that boundary-crossing behaviour is occurring.
2. one must assess the situation as serious enough to warrant intervention
3. one must take responsibility to intervene
4. one must know how to intervene
5. one must actively intervene

It is essential to highlight that there are cognitive obstacles at each step that a bystander must overcome to proceed to the next step. These obstacles are sometimes unconscious. Thus, there is a linear progression through the steps, where each step creates the prerequisite condition for the next, determining whether a bystander intervenes or not (Movisie, 2022, p. 11). In practice, certain steps may be skipped, as Ashburn-Nardo, Morris, and Goodwin (2008) have shown. A bystander may respond impulsively due to certain emotions, bypassing the conscious processing of each step.

This bystander intervention model plays a crucial role within Movisie and its guidance to municipalities regarding the activation of bystanders (Movisie, 2022). The bystander intervention model is integral to bystander interventions, and Movisie emphasizes the importance of

incorporating the steps of the model into training content. Without this incorporation, it is likely that the bystander behaviour of those participating in the training will not change (Movisie, 2022, p. 48).

It is important to note that the theory of Latané and Darley pertain to bystander interventions in a general sense and do not specifically address bystander interventions in the context of street harassment. According to Fileborn and O'Neill, there exists a significant gap in the academic literature regarding bystander intervention into street harassment (Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023) . Only three studies explicitly address bystander interventions in the context of street harassment (Chaudoir & Quinn, 2010; Fileborn, 2017; Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023, p. 6; Stop Street Harassment, 2014). First, an Australian-based study by Fileborn discovered that bystander intervention rarely occurs during street harassment incidents. et harassment and bystander interventions (Fileborn, 2017; Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023, p. 6). The participants in that study reported experiencing significantly more street harassment than instances of a bystander intervening in an incident. Secondly, an American-based study by Stephenie Chaudoir and Diane Quinn found that bystanders could also experience negative consequences from witnessing a street harassment incident (Chaudoir & Quinn, 2010). Finally, research form the Stop Street Harassment organisation showed that only 23% of surveyed men and 20% of surveyed women proactively intervened when they witnessed a street harassment incident (Stop Street Harassment, 2014). These studies indicate that individuals experience more street harassment than bystander interventions, and that street harassment can be harmful not only to the victim but also to the bystander. Furthermore, the effect of a bystander intervention is mixed; it can either end the harassment or lead to its escalation later (Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023, p. 6) . However, Fileborn asserts that a bystander intervention always holds practical and symbolic value (Fileborn, 2019).

Furthermore, there is no single unequivocal definition of the bystander in the literature (Fairchild, 2023; Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023). On one hand, the bystander is seen as anyone who is neither a victim nor a perpetrator. On the other hand, the official definition of the term "bystander" explicitly states that a bystander is someone who is present, a witness, or in the vicinity of an incident. According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, a bystander is an individual who is present but does not take part in an event or situation (Merriam-Webster, n.d.) . Synonyms include passerby, onlooker, witness, and spectator. In Dutch, the definition of the Dutch version of the word "bystander" (omstander) is identical. According to the website encyclo.nl, the following definition is given: 'iemand die ergens omheen of bij staat; 1) Getuige 2) Ooggetuige 3) Toeschouwer' ('someone around or near something; 1) Witness 2) Eyewitness 3) Spectator') (Encyclo, n.d.). Both the English and Dutch definitions emphasize that the bystander is always present or witnesses a particular incident.

In the context of street harassment, we also often think of bystanders as direct witnesses who have the opportunity to intervene. As mentioned earlier, Movisie and the National Action Program also use a definition along these lines. They define a bystander/omstander as follows:

'individuen die getuige zijn van grensoverschrijdend gedrag maar daar niet direct bij betrokken zijn als pleger of slachtoffer'(Ministerie Algemene Zaken, 2023, p. 37; Movisie, 2022, p. 6). Translated means it: *'individuals who witness cross-border behaviour but are not directly involved as perpetrators or victims*.

However, this perspective is quite limiting. This restrictive definition of a bystander is also noted in academic literature by Ann Stueve and colleagues (Stueve & Et all., 2006). While Stueve and colleagues write about the bystander role in relation to school violence, in my opinion is it applicable to my research. They argue that the definition of bystanders as individuals who are direct witnesses and have the ability to intervene in an incident is very limiting. They articulate this criticism as follows: "It focuses on altercations and aggressive events that bystanders observe in the 'here and now' and neglects situations about which bystanders may possess information (e.g., overheard conversations, veiled threats, changes in behaviour) that makes them believe that future violence is likely. (Stueve & Et all., 2006, pp. 118–119)" In my research, the perspective of Stueve and colleagues is valuable because it shows how the role of the bystander can be reevaluated, expanding beyond individuals who are direct witnesses of an incident and able to intervene in the present moment.

This opens up the possibility to introduce a new term called the 'buitenstaander'. This word is defined as follows on enclo.nl: "someone who does not belong to a group or field of expertise." 1) Third party 2) Someone who does not belong 3) Sideline member 4) Layperson 5) Non-participant 6) Non-initiate 7) Novice 8) Uninitiated 9) Outsider . From this, it can be concluded that a 'buitenstaander' is someone who is not directly involved in an incident or a witness. However, the fact that an 'buitenstaander' is not directly involved in an incident does not mean they cannot play a role in addressing street harassment. A 'buitenstaander' has the potential to become involved and thus transform into a bystander. Additionally, a 'buitenstaander' can contribute to the de-normalization of street harassment by discussing it with their social circles, such as friends and family.

Four stages of competences

The concept known as the "Four Stages of Competence" originates from the field of psychology and delineates the psychological progression of individuals from incompetence to competence while acquiring a new skill. It entails four distinct stages: unconscious incompetence, conscious

incompetence, conscious competence, and unconscious competence. Initially introduced by management professors in their book "Management of Training Programs" in 1960, this model was subsequently refined by various scholars (DePhillips, 1960). It was Noel Burch who in 1970 crystallized the model into the form that became widely recognized. Utilized by Gordon Training International, it was known as the "Four Stages of Learning a New Skill."

The Four Stages of Competence theory is useful for this research because it helps us understand how someone who doesn't know about street harassment and is unable to handle the right way when an incident happens. The theory also provides insight into the potential development that an unconsciously incompetent 'buitenstaander' can undergo to become more aware of the phenomenon street intimidation. By grasping these stages thoroughly, it is possible to see how an unconsciousness 'buitenstaander' move from not knowing anything about street harassment to recognizing it and becoming skilled at dealing with it. Moreover, The theory of the Four Competence Model assists in positioning the unconscious 'buitenstaander' relative to the bystander.' This understanding is essential for creating effective strategies to increase awareness and encourage proactive responses to instances of street harassment in society.

2.2 Street harassment

In the academic world, various studies have been conducted on the subject of street harassment. These studies share some commonalities but largely differ in their perspectives (Bailey, 2017; Bowman, 1993; Fileborn, 2019; Gardner, 1995; Laniya, 2005; Spaccatini et al., 2019; Tamar Fischer en Gabry Vanderveen, 2020). This research primarily draws on the works of Fairchild and Fileborn & Tully O'Neill (Fairchild, 2023; Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023). The reason for this selection is that both provide a comprehensive overview of the existing academic literature on street harassment. These studies were recently published and thus offer a broad and up-to-date overview of street harassment and the existing scholarship on the topic. These two works serve as foundational sources, allowing for orientation within the academic landscape of street harassment studies and enabling further exploration of specific authors and their contributions. Both studies were published in 2023, offering a current perspective.

Given that street harassment is a broad concept that can be approached through various scientific perspectives and concepts, this research focuses on specific aspects. The academic literature demonstrates that street harassment can be examined through sociological and psychological lenses. The following concepts are emphasized and analyzed through academic literature: terminology & definition, and the normalization effect in society.

2.2.1 Terminology & definition

It is crucial to acknowledge that scholars in the academic literature do not universally adopt a singular term or definition (Fairchild, 2023; Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023). Various terms and definitions are utilized, each with partial overlap yet also distinct differences. These variations stem from the diverse perspectives on street harassment. Despite similarities among the terms, they significantly influence perceptions and delineations of the phenomenon. Differences primarily arise in categorizing the perpetrator of street harassment, the location where it occurs, and whether the harassment is purely sexual or encompasses broader forms (Fairchild, 2023; Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023). For example, the term "street harassment" implies that incidents occur exclusively on streets and not in other public spaces, such as public transportation. Fileborn and Fairchild's literature review presents several applicable terms for street harassment, each with nuanced distinctions: catcalling, stranger harassment, street remarks, public sexual harassment, and stranger intrusion (Fairchild, 2023; Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023).

According to scholar Fairchild, recent academic literature has predominantly used the terms "street harassment" and "stranger harassment," with "street harassment" being slightly more prevalent. Fairchild explains, "Over the last 10 years, researchers have primarily used the terms 'street harassment' and 'stranger harassment'. These terms are essentially interchangeable, highlighting the location of harassment (streets and public spaces) and the relationship between perpetrator and victim respectively. Recent legal and psychological literature tends to favor the term 'street harassment" (Fairchild, 2023, p. 1143) It is important to note that stranger harassment is considered a form of gender-based violence.

Furthermore, there is considerable debate in academic literature regarding definitions, with numerous definitions offered that, like the terminology, exhibit both overlap and distinctions. Fairchild suggests that discussions often revolve around vague terms like unwanted sexual attention and unwelcome commoditization (p. 1144). Meanwhile, scholar Cynthia Bowman defines street harassment as encompassing both verbal and non-verbal behaviours, frequently of a sexual nature (Bowman, 1993). She articulates it as follows: "Street harassment includes both verbal and nonverbal behaviour, such as wolf-whistles, leers, winks, grabs, pinches, catcalls, and stranger remarks; the remarks are frequently sexual in nature and comment evaluatively on a woman's physical appearance or on her presence in public" (Bowman, 1993, p. 523).

Fairchild criticizes Bowman's definition for not addressing the negative impacts of verbal or non-verbal behaviour on women. Fairchild advocates for the definition proposed by Hutson and Krueger, which explicitly considers the negative aspects and public locations, thus not limiting it

solely to the street (Fairchild, 2023, p. 1145). Their definition states: "Street harassment constitutes unwanted attention in public, which psychologically, emotionally, and/or physically impinges on the target's well-being. Street harassment is an intrusion, often by a person unknown to the target, which may take a variety of forms, ranging from remarks on physical appearance to sexual touch to brutal physical assaults: no matter the manifestation, street harassment is commonly rooted in inequalities of gender and/or sexuality, and often intersects with the harassed person's race or ethnicity, nationality, religion, class, age, and ability" (Hutson & Krueger, 2019, p. 770). According to Fairchild, this definition also allows for an intersectional approach to street harassment (Fairchild, 2023, pp. 1145–1146).

In this paper, the term "street harassment" and the accompanying definition by Hutson and Krueger are utilized. The rationale behind this choice lies in the broad nature of the phenomenon, which cannot be confined to a specific location such as a street or to a particular group of victims. While women predominantly experience it, it is crucial to acknowledge and address its impact on victims from the LGBTQI+ community and men as well. The definition by Hutson and Krueger accommodates this inclusivity, which is why it is adopted in this study (Hutson & Krueger, 2019, p. 770).

2.2.2 Normalisation

Furthermore, the work by Fairchild and Fileborn & O'Neill demonstrate how various scholars have examined the normalization of street harassment and the effect of it (Fairchild, 2023; Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023). Due to its daily occurrence, street harassment is considered a pervasive aspect of everyday life. Researcher Fileborn examined the normalization of street harassment, where behaviours belonging to street harassment are often perceived as 'normal' in society, despite being entirely unacceptable (Fileborn, 2019). This normalization has various effects on the perceptions of victims, perpetrators, and others.

First, victims perceive experiencing street harassment as a routine part of daily life. As a result, they adjust their behaviour to avoid such harassment. For example, someone who repeatedly receives catcalls while walking through a park may choose to avoid that park and take a longer route instead. Fileborn and O'Neil, drawing on various academic sources, nte the following about it: "Street harassment can profoundly impact women's use of public spaces, leading to the avoidance of public spaces and modification of behaviour through 'safety work' to enhance their sense of safety" (Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023, p. 5)

Second, the normalization of street harassment also results in victim-blaming, which significantly affects the behaviour of victims. Studies by Bailey, Fileborn, and Spaccatini indicate that victim-blaming causes women to downplay their experiences of street harassment, leading them to be less likely to report incidents or seek assistance (Bailey, 2017; Fileborn, 2019; Spaccatini et al., 2019). These studies demonstrate that victim-blaming acts as a major deterrent for sharing experiences of street harassment, causing these experiences to go untold and suppressed. Fileborn argues that as women minimize their experiences, the perception that street harassment is not problematic or harmful is reinforced, thereby contributing to its normalization (Fileborn, 2019).

Third, additionally, the normalization of street harassment leads perpetrators to be unaware that their behaviour may be perceived as intimidating, despite not intending it that way. The researcher Mischa Dekker notes: As a result, some perpetrators are completely unaware that they are contributing to street harassment, believing instead that they are simply flirting (Schep, 2022).

Lastly, the normalizing nature of street harassment also affects bystanders and 'buitenstaanders' in their perceptions. As street harassment is perceived as normal and combined with the victim-blaming that occurs, victims often refrain from discussing their experiences of street harassment in public (Fairchild, 2023; Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023). Consequently, there are few public narratives about what street harassment entails, where it occurs, and its effects on individuals or the coping mechanisms people use to function in public spaces. This lack of discourse leads to questions about the awareness among those who do not directly encounter street harassment or hear about it indirectly. There is a possibility that individuals unaware of street harassment and its effects may discuss it with others or in public debates, potentially perpetuating incorrect or incomplete understandings of the phenomenon. In other words, social norms are shaped through discourse, but misinformation about street harassment due to some people's lack of awareness may lead to misconceptions or prevent constructive dialogue. For instance, in public debates, there may be a prevailing notion that street harassment only occurs in dark, secluded alleys, whereas in reality, it can occur openly in busy squares during daylight hours.

Thus, to conclude, the culture of silence and the normalizing nature of street harassment result in little to no discussion about it within society. This issue is particularly relevant to my research as it raises important questions about the level of awareness among 'buitenstaanders', who are not directly involved in street harassment incidents, regarding street harassment and its effects. The normalization of street harassment results in minimal discussion on the topic, contributing to a broader culture of silence. This absence of discussions around street intimidation may significantly affect the awareness and understanding of street harassment among individuals who are not directly

affected by it. This lack of discussion may obscure the awareness and understanding of street harassment among those who are not directly affected. Therefore, it is essential to investigate how aware a 'buitenstaander' is of street harassment and the effect on people due to the normalisation of the phenomenon.

One medium with the power to present untold stories to a wide audience is the media. The following paragraph explains how media, particularly through documentaries, possesses the ability to bring an underrepresented narrative to the forefront of public awareness, thereby breaking silence within society on a particular issue and stimulating perceptions.

2.3 Documentary and social memory

This study will employ cultural memory theories from media studies. These theories demonstrate how a media form, such as a documentary, can play a role in (re)shaping social/collective memory and thereby have an impact. The foundational figures of cultural memory theory are the German media scholars Aleida and Jan Assmann (Assmann & Czaplicka, 1995). They build upon Maurice Halbwachs' theory of collective memory and introduce the term 'cultural memory' for the first time (Assmann & Czaplicka, 1995). They do this by splitting the concept of *mémoire collective*, introduced by Halbwachs in the 1920s, into two forms. First, there is *communicative memory*, which is based on personal experiences and the transmission of individual thoughts through interaction with others. Second, there is *cultural memory*, which is objectified and stored in symbols and rituals within a society, making it independent of specific situations (Assmann & Czaplicka, 1995).

The concept of cultural memory entails that memories can be stored in symbols and rituals within a society, making them not contingent upon specific situations. With this, the Assmanns lay the groundwork for viewing media as an institution in which memories can be stored (Assmann & Czaplicka, 1995). Building upon the theory of cultural memory, the literature and media scholar Astrid Erll suggests that media are not merely repositories of memories but rather active agents that shape and reshape memories (Erll, 2008). However, Erll argues that not all media forms can play a role in shaping collective memory. This capability depends on intra-, inter-, and pluri-medial strategies.

Intra- and inter-medial strategies establish the conditions under which a medium, such as a documentary, can potentially influence collective memory. Intra-medial strategies refer to how memories are presented within a specific medium. According to Erll, a memory in a film narrative is shaped in relation to the unique characteristics of the film medium. Additionally, inter-medial strategies involve the concepts of remediation and premediation. Remediation refers to the repeated representation of a memorable event across different media. Premediation involves the

generalization of existing circulating media schemas about a historical event for society. These schemas provide people with a perspective on how to deal with the historical event and offer guidance for future representations of the event in the media (Erll, 2008). The pluri-medial strategy establishes a media network, including newspapers, around the film, thereby fulfilling intra- and inter-medial strategies. This network creates context for the film, helping the audience develop a shared reception. This awareness of the film's historical value and relevance enables it to impact cultural memory and the collective consciousness.

Although my research does not focus on memory or a historical event, the theory of cultural memory is highly valuable. It will demonstrate how a media product, such as a documentary, can play a role in shaping perspectives around phenomena like street harassment, providing people with tools and guidance on how to handle it in the future. A documentary, if it adheres to intra-, inter-, and pluri-medial strategies, can create, or enhance schemas regarding appropriate interpersonal behaviour concerning street harassment. This can be achieved by showing what street harassment is and its effects, thereby encouraging those who are unaware of it to adjust their perspectives.

The role of media in shaping and reshaping cultural memory, and thus collective memory, is affirmed by film scholar Alison Landsberg. (Landsberg, 2004). She employs the term "prosthetic memory" in this context. Prosthetic memory refers to the phenomenon where individuals can develop a memory of an event despite, they have never personally experienced it. Film plays a pivotal role in this process by providing a means for a large audience to engage with a particular event (or in this case a street harassment incident and the effect of it) (Landsberg, 2004). By creating a documentary about street harassment and its effects on people, there is a possibility that individuals who were never aware of or in contact with this issue may develop a prosthetic memory. This allows them to form an understanding of street harassment and its impact on individuals, even if they never experienced it by themselves.

In my research, the documentary will narrate the story of street harassment and its impacts on people's behaviour. This will be conveyed through compelling, personal narratives voiced by actors. Subsequently, the documentary will present stories collected on the streets to individuals, exploring their awareness of street harassment and its effects on people.

3 Method

This chapter discusses and explains the methodology of this research. First, the case setting and organization within which I conducted my fieldwork are explained. This took place within the municipality of Rotterdam, where I participated as an intern. It is important to note that my research is independent of my internship, and I did not conduct it on behalf of the municipality of Rotterdam. The research strategy, design, and methods are discussed and elaborated upon. This includes an in-depth look at the underlying rationale behind the discourse analysis conducted at the policy and societal levels. Additionally, the choice to create a documentary is explained. Thirdly, the qualitative quality assurance of this research is discussed. This chapter concludes with a reflection.

3.1 Case setting

Organisation

The municipality of Rotterdam is widely recognized as a leader in addressing street harassment in the Netherlands due to several key factors (*Straatintimidatie*, n.d.). First, Rotterdam was among the first municipalities to conduct research on this issue (Fischer, 2017). As early as 2017, they collaborated with the EUR to investigate the facts surrounding street harassment. Subsequently, they implemented one of the first specialized policies aimed at combating street harassment, setting a precedent for a comprehensive approach to reducing such incidents (Tamar Fischer en Gabry Vanderveen, 2020). Furthermore, Rotterdam was the pioneer in attempting to criminalize street harassment with the introduction of the 'Sisverbod' (catcalling ban), primarily targeting perpetrators (Tamar Fischer en Gabry Vanderveen, 2020). However, this initiative faced legal challenges due to concerns about freedom of speech, resulting in its reversal by judges. Despite this setback, it prompted a shift in focus towards prevention rather than enforcement. Consequently, Rotterdam shifted its focus towards empowering bystanders, thereby cementing its position as a frontrunner in the Netherlands with its emphasis on bystander engagement to combat street harassment (Movisie, n.d.; Tamar Fischer en Gabry Vanderveen, 2020).

Secondly, Rotterdam boasts the largest budget (1.000.050 Euro) in the Netherlands allocated to addressing street harassment(gemeente Rotterdam, 2024). This financial advantage allows the municipality to adopt creative and innovative strategies in tackling this issue. For instance, Rotterdam hosts the Rotterdamse week tegen SSI (Rotterdam Week Against SSI) for the second consecutive year, organizing numerous activities with local partners to foster discussions and raise awareness about street harassment. Thanks to this substantial budget, they also have the capability to finance and

develop a Stop App (Tamar Fischer en Gabry Vanderveen, 2020). This app serves as a central reporting platform where residents of Rotterdam can report incidents of sexual street harassment. Subsequently, if desired, the reporter can be connected with various organizations through the municipality to provide services such as victim support or follow-up discussions. Additionally, the app is valuable for the municipality as it provides insight into the locations where sexual street harassment occurs in Rotterdam.

Finally, Rotterdam is one of the municipalities where the new enforcement of the criminalization of sexual street harassment is being piloted. This pilot program aims to assess whether BOAs can effectively enforce the criminalization of sexual street harassment. The criminalization of sexual street harassment is being introduced nationally for the first time through the new Sexual Offenses Act. Under this legislation, sexual street harassment is explicitly defined as a criminal offense, and this criminalization comes into effect on July 1st. Therefore, alongside Utrecht and Arnhem, the municipality of Rotterdam is the only other city implementing this pilot program. In doing so, they are at the forefront and setting a precedent for other municipalities in addressing street harassment.

3.2 Research design

In this study, discourse analysis was employed at the policy level. The reason for using a discourse analysis lies in its capacity to unveil the underlying ideologies, social norms, and cultural conventions inherent within societal language. A pivotal figure in discourse theory is the French philosopher Michel Foucault (McHoul & Grace, 2002). According to Foucault, discourse refers to the speech of a particular group at a specific level, intimately entwined with power within a society . He posited that in society, discourse is closely linked with power, with power being wielded through language to disseminate knowledge (McHoul & Grace, 2002). Hence, discourse formation is governed by power dynamics and is inherently tied to language, shaping morality and truth within a society. However, Foucault also emphasized that not everyone can freely participate in a discourse due to its close association with power; certain topics may be taboo within a discourse, or speakers may lack the necessary qualifications (McHoul & Grace, 2002).

Through discourse analysis, this research endeavoured to explore the interconnectedness of language, power, and knowledge concerning street harassment in the Netherlands (Bryman, 2016, pp. 528–540). Therefore, it aimed to elucidate the prevailing power structures and the construction of meaning within policy documents of municipalities society. The discourse analysis was conducted at the policy level, the findings that resulted from interviews in the street were analysed with help of

the theory around street harassment and bystanders. The production of a documentary intended to broaden the reach and impact of this research.

3.2.1 Policy level

At the policy level, discourse analysis initially involved scrutinizing municipal annual plans. Additionally, a semi-structured topic list was developed through a literature review, which was utilized during interviews with civil servants responsible for addressing street harassment within their portfolios (Bryman, 2016, pp. 98–110). These civil servants were sourced from municipalities participating in the Safe Cities program. Subsequently, these interviews were coded and analysed (Bryman, 2016, pp. 565–585). The choice of semi-structured interviews with municipal officials was aimed at comprehending the underlying rationales behind policies targeting street harassment (Bryman, 2016, pp. 469–488). Therefore, the focus was particular on preventive measures and bystander intervention strategies as perceived and employed by these civil servants.

3.2.2 Societal level

At the societal level, a semi-structured topic list was created through a literature review (Bryman, 2016, pp. 469–488). However, experiences garnered within the municipality of Rotterdam were integrated into the development of this topic list. For instance, insights gained from accompanying BOAs during preventive street harassment enforcement actions were incorporated. Specifically, experiences from two such outings, one in the city centre and the other in Rotterdam-Zuid, informed the development of conversation techniques utilized by BOAs. Thus, these conversation techniques were integrated into the semi-structured topic list. Following street interviews, the gathered data was analysed and coded (Bryman, 2016).

Furthermore, insights gleaned from discussions with individuals within the municipality of Rotterdam and my own environment highlight street harassment as a challenging yet engaging topic. Therefore, it was necessary to consider a more approachable method of initiating conversations about street harassment on the streets. The BOA's have an advantage to engage with individuals due to their uniforms because the uniforms remove potential barriers. I don't have a BOA uniform thus I had to come up with a creative way to engage in a correct way with individuals on the street where I reduce the chances to trigger traumatic experiences with direct questions.

Therefore, this research proposed the use of art as a medium to indirectly engage passersby in conversations about street harassment (Barone & Eisner, 2011; Tumanyan & Huuki, 2020). I created a large notice board posing two questions one at each side of the board. The questions were "Are you familiar with street harassment?" and "What do you want to tell about your coping

mechanisms to avoid street harassment to other peoples that aren't familiar with street harassment and the effects on the behaviour on people?". The participant had the opportunity to write down one or two words on the board to express themselves and to give answer to the questions. In addition to answering the two questions on the board, I asked the participants if they were familiar with the previously written responses from other participants regarding the question about coping mechanisms.

The board invited individuals to share their experiences or thoughts on the topic using sticky nots. This approach allowed individuals to self-select their participation in discussions about street harassment, mitigating any discomfort they may feel when directly approached. It is important to note that while this method incorporated elements of art-based research, it primarily served as an indirect invitation for conversation through artistic means (Barone & Eisner, 2011). Therefore, the methods of this research cannot be qualified as an art-based research method.

3.2.3 Documentary

This research incorporated visual storytelling in the form of a documentary. Producing a documentary not only yields a visual output but also engaged me in a different and deeper approach to my thesis. Several researchers argue that filmmaking for documentary purposes constitutes an academic exercise due to its alignment with qualitative research methodologies (Gbambu et al., 2023; Nisbet & Aufderheide, 2009). According to them: "academic research follows a replicable procedure to explain a particular phenomenon in the social world. Documentary production follows the same procedure with more complicated activities, including capturing images in video form and recording voice narrations to present research findings convincingly" (Gbambu et al., 2023, p. 26).

In this study, I will write a scenario and script for a documentary, followed by the production of a film based on a shot list . After I got green light from the university about my script, I worked it out to a shot list. After I had a shot list, I began to shoot scenes. In this documentary, I had set the goal for me to try to make the best film I can. Therefore, I used a film technique that is really familiar to me due to other projects I have done the last couples of years. This film technique was inspired on the neo-realism of the Italian cinema and has the goal to show the reality thought the film lens (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013).

The reason I chose this style, which is based on realism, is that it does not depict reality with various fancy elements. For example, instead of an elaborate chase scene with multiple rapid film shots, there is simply a long take of a street where people are walking by. Street harassment is neither fancy nor smooth, and it does not occur like an exciting chase scene in movies. It happens on

an ordinary street or in a public space in the middle of the day. The choice of this style influenced various aspects of the documentary film. For instance, I did not use multiple tripods or gimbals, as these tools make the footage very stable. Instead, I filmed most of the scene's handheld. This created a realistic effect and ensured that the film did not appear too smooth in terms of style. Additionally, I used as few actors as possible and allowed the real world and people on the street to function as the actors.

Hence, I filmed with a small but powerful camera in the streets of different cities in daylight and night and tried to capture the raw vibe of it . Street harassment happens in the public space and for this reason I filmed mostly on public locations where street harassment happens. Besides the public location shots, I filmed indoor when it comes to the interview with an expert. Moreover, I filmed in the different streets of different cities but mostly I filmed in Utrecht and Rotterdam due to the following reasons. First, those cities have both a in depth approach of street harassment (Movisie, n.d.). Secondly, I lived in Utrecht and worked in Rotterdam. Hence it is more practical to select those cities. However, I also filmed in cities as Amsterdam, Tilburg or Nijmegen due to practical reasons. Finally, I edited and enhanced the footage into a film lasting a maximum of 30 minutes (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). When I took interviews with people, I worked with a quitclaim that ensures that the peoples I interviewed are aware of the places where the documentary is shown.

3.2.4 Power of documentary

the reason why I chose to make a documentary is that a documentary possesses the power to engage and reach a larger audience within society compared to a traditional academic paper. As a result, more individuals come into contact with the theories presented in a documentary, amplifying its impact. Building on this notion, scholars such as Caty Borum Chattoo argue that documentaries serve as powerful tools for effecting social change by exposing injustices within society and inspiring the audience to act (Chattoo, 2020).

By harnessing the emotive and narrative potential of visual storytelling, documentaries have the ability to evoke empathy, provoke critical thinking, and motivate individuals to become agents of change. Through compelling storytelling and visual imagery, documentaries can shed light on pressing social issues, challenge prevailing narratives, and mobilize collective action towards addressing systemic injustices (Chattoo, 2020; Nisbet & Aufderheide, 2009). Therefore, by incorporating a documentary component into this research, the aim is not only to disseminate academic findings but also to catalyse broader societal awareness, dialogue, and advocacy for meaningful change. By leveraging the medium of film, this study seeked to transcend traditional

academic boundaries and engage with audiences in a dynamic and impactful manner. (Chattoo, 2020).

Finally, a key rationale for creating a documentary based on my thesis is to alter the prevailing societal perceptions surrounding street harassment in the Netherlands. In this regard, I draw upon the theory of collective memory briefly discussed in the theoretical framework.

3.3 Data collection

The data collection for this research took place at both the policy level and the societal level. At the policy level, various municipal street harassment approaches were collected online . Documents were selected from municipalities participating in the Safe Cities program, which includes the following 20 municipalities: Almelo, Almere, Amsterdam, Arnhem, Assen, Breda, Den Haag, Dordrecht, Eindhoven, Enschede, Groningen, Hengelo, Leeuwarden, Leiden, Maastricht, Nijmegen, Rotterdam, Tilburg, Utrecht and Zaanstad (Movisie, n.d.). After an initial broad analysis, it has been decided to focus on the policy documents of the municipalities of Almelo, Almere, Amsterdam, Arnhem, Den Haag, Eindhoven, Leiden, Rotterdam, Tilburg and Zaanstad (gemeente Almelo, 2023; gemeente Almere, 2023; gemeente Amsterdam, 2023; gemeente Arnhem, 2020; gemeente Den Haag, 2021; gemeente Leiden, 2023; gemeente Rotterdam, 2024; gemeente Tilburg, 2023; gemeente Utrecht, 2022; gemeente Zaanstad, 2023). Therefore, the most up to date policy documents from these municipalities were included in the corpus, totalling 10 pieces.

The rationale behind this choice lies in these municipalities having developed specific action plans on street harassment, clearly outlining their objectives and demonstrating longstanding engagement with the issue of street harassment. Notably, emphasis was placed on policy documents from the municipalities of Rotterdam, Utrecht, and Tilburg, recognized as pioneers in street harassment policy development within the Netherlands (Movisie, n.d.). These municipalities have been actively crafting street harassment-specific policies for an extended period and are regarded as leaders in the field.

It is noteworthy to mention that the municipality of Amsterdam is also recognized as a pioneer in addressing street harassment. However, unlike Utrecht, Rotterdam, and Tilburg, Amsterdam's approach to street harassment is part of a broader strategy encompassing 'Seksuele intimdatie en seksueel geweld' (gemeente Amsterdam, 2023). This comprehensive approach aligns its principles and pillars with addressing various forms of sexual misconduct, harassment, and violence, both offline and online. Therefore, comparing the pillars and principles of this approach with those of strategies solely focused on street harassment poses challenges due to their broader

scope. Therefore, this study chose to put the emphasis on the municipalities documents that focus solely on street harassment.

In addition to policy documents, data was also collected through qualitative interviews with municipal officials who are involved in addressing street harassment within their municipalities. Here, too, municipalities that are part of the Safe Cities program were selected. Ultimately, I conducted interviews with 15 out of the 20 municipalities. These municipalities were as follows: Almelo, Almere, Amsterdam, Arnhem, Den Haag, Eindhoven, Enschede, Groningen, Leeuwarden, Leiden, Nijmegen, Rotterdam, Tilburg, Utrecht and Zaanstad.

At the societal level, data was collected using a large board and a series of questions that were discussed earlier. The target group was the 'buitenstaander', which meant that anyone who was not a direct witness to a street harassment incident at the moment I interviewed them, was part of the target group and could participate in this research. This resulted in a total of 36 participants. The conversations with these participants were recorded on camera or audio for both analysis and potential material for the documentary.

3.4 Data analysis

The data obtained from the municipal approaches and the interviews were analysed using discourse analysis. Discourse analysis involves examining how language is used in texts and communication to understand social and power dynamics, ideologies, and meanings within a particular context (Bryman, 2016). This method helps to uncover underlying patterns, themes, and narratives that shape the way street harassment is addressed at the policy level. In summary, the municipal policy documents were analysed to uncover the underlying thought processes. This analysis focused on the pillars and target groups evident within the municipal approaches.

The interviews were first transcribed, and then the data was categorized using the following codes: general organization info, street harassment approach, bystander, and other (see figure 1 in the result section). Additionally, subcodes were created for each main code. Under general organization info, the following subcodes were present: Department, Team, Collaboration, Term street harassment, Duration of Policy. Under the code "Street harassment approach," the subcodes were as follows: Main focus, Effects, Concrete actions, Challenges, and Strengths. For the code "bystander," the subcodes included: Role, Definition, Attention to non-direct witness on incidents individuals, Actions/reasons, and lack of recognition of the bystander's role. The code "other" had the subcodes: Interesting, Safe Cities programm, and Perceptions. After coding, patterns were

analysed, with particularly interesting findings under the "bystander" code. These findings will be discussed in more detail in the results chapter.

The data obtained at the societal level were analysed using the theories discussed earlier in the theoretical framework. This analysis aimed to test the theoretical assumption that there exists an 'buitenstaander' who is unaware of street harassment and its effects. If this hypothesis is supported by the analysis, it may have implications for municipal approaches to addressing street harassment.

3.5 Quality of research

3.5.1 Quality standards

To maintain the quality of this qualitative research, the concepts of reliability and validity were employed. These terms are typically associated with quantitative research and can be challenging to apply to qualitative research due to the dynamic nature of reality (Bryman, 2016, pp. 389–398). However, several researchers have discussed methods to uphold reliability and validity in qualitative research, despite the constantly changing circumstances of reality (Bryman, 2016; Lincoln & Guba, 1990; Tracy, 2010). In this research, the trustworthiness theory proposed by Lincoln and Guba is utilized (Lincoln & Guba, 1990). Additionally, the theory proposed by Alan Bryman and Michael Lynch is employed to reflect on my position as a researcher in relation to the social challenge and the organization in which I conduct my fieldwork (Bryman, 2016; Lynch, 2000)

The trustworthiness theory consists of four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Bryman, 2016, pp. 389–398; Lincoln & Guba, 1990). Firstly, according to Lincoln and Guba, is the criterion credibility similar n to the internal validity criteria in quantitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1990). It requires the researcher to demonstrate a correct understanding of the social world to ensure the credibility of the results. Triangulation were utilized in this research to meet this criterion (Bryman, 2016, pp. 392–398). Various sources such as policy documents, interviews with officials, academic literature, and street interviews were used to understand the social world comprehensively.

Secondly, transferability, compared to external reliability by Lincoln and Guba, presents a challenge in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1990). The challenge is that it is difficult to generalize a specific social reality and the results of a research about the reality. According to some researchers is it even impossible. To address this challenge, several researchers propose employing thick description, allowing readers to determine the applicability of the research outcomes to their context (Bryman, 2016, pp. 389–398; Geertz, 2008; Tracy, 2010). This study employed thick description, providing detailed and extensive descriptions to meet this criterion.

Lastly, dependability and confirmability are compared to reliability and objectivity of the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1990). This research met both criteria by maintaining transparency throughout the process. During data collection, records were kept in a logbook detailing the search terms used to find an object and where it was located. Furthermore, each interview was recorded and carefully stored for later reference. Through this high level of transparency in the research process, the above criteria were fulfilled.

3.5.2 Positionality and Reflexivity as a researcher

Lynch (2000) argues that the term reflectivity is quite broad and thus should be used cautiously. He contends that there is often an assumption that a reflective position is superior to a non-reflective one. Additionally, he points out that the term reflectivity carries various meanings. Bryman provides a brief overview of these different terms in his book (Bryman, 2016, pp. 393–394). They are as follows: Philosophical self-reflection, Methodological self-consciousness and Methodological self-criticism. This research will use the Philosophical self-reflection and the Methodological self-consciousness terms. These will be elaborated on in the following paragraphs. It should be noted that this reflection pertains to my current situation. As the research progresses continues, it is likely that events will occur that may alter the reflectivity.

Firstly, there is reflectivity as Philosophical self-reflection. This entails reflecting on one's own beliefs and assumptions as a researcher (Bryman, 2016, pp. 393–394). Regarding this research, I reflect as follows: This study focuses on street harassment, and various scientific studies indicate that primarily women and LGBTQIA+ individuals experience this phenomenon. Therefore, I am acutely aware of being a man, which initially makes it challenging to engage with these groups on this topic, as they may not see me as someone who can empathize with street harassment. To address this issue, I ensure that I fully immerse myself in the phenomenon of street harassment and its associated aspects. This involves engaging in discussions about this topic with individuals of diverse backgrounds (including women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and men) and extensively reading documents within the Rotterdam municipality. These documents range from testimonies of victims to policy documents and research studies.

Additionally, I have the opportunity to walk with BOA's and speak with stakeholders in the field tackling street harassment. This enables me to gain firsthand knowledge about street harassment and its practical experiences. However, a BOA has a different power dynamic with a citizen due to his position. This allows him to more easily initiate conversations on sensitive topics such as street harassment because he holds a position of authority over the citizen. In contrast, my power dynamic with a citizen is equal, making it more challenging to start a discussion on a sensitive

subject like street harassment. Therefore, I had to come up with a way to address my respondents on the street in a correct way. This will be discussed in the Method chapter. In summary, through my connections, I acquire information about street harassment at both grassroots and professional levels, allowing me to form and adjust my own beliefs and assumptions. Consequently, I am well-informed about street harassment and its associated aspects. Therefore, this enables me to conduct thorough research on this topic despite being a man.

Secondly, there is reflectivity as Methodological self-consciousness. This involves considering the individuals under study as a researcher (Bryman, 2016, pp. 393–394). In this research, reflection takes the following form: The groups under investigation in this study are civil servants and the 'buitenstaander' on the street. Concerning civil servants, my relationship as a researcher is somewhat complex due to my role as an intern in the SSI project team at the Rotterdam municipality. There is a possibility of a perceived conflict of interest, but clear communication with civil servants clarifies that I am engaging with them as a researcher on the topic of street harassment As an effect, this will distinct me from my role as a municipal intern. This communication applies both internally within the Rotterdam municipality and externally with other municipalities. Furthermore, as this research will produce a documentary, which is not standard practice, communication with the Rotterdam municipality ensures clarity regarding the purpose of the documentary and its exhibition locations.

Conversely, my relationship with the "'buitenstaander'" group is straightforward. Reflecting on this relationship, I realize the importance of approaching this group with caution and sensitivity. This is because it is impossible to predict in advance whether individuals have had negative or traumatic experiences with street harassment before engaging with them on the street. To mitigate this, a method is employed to allow bystanders to choose whether they want to interact with the topic of street harassment. For instance, a bulletin board with a question allows passersby to decide whether to engage with the question or continue on their way. This approach ensures that the "buitenstaander" group is approached with care and caution.

4. Findings

In this chapter, the findings of this research are discussed. First, the analysis of the municipal approaches to street harassment is reviewed, focusing on identifying the dominant discourse within these approaches. This analysis addresses sub-questions A1 and A2. Second, the documentary is discussed, and sub-questions B1 and B2 are answered based on insights from the documentary.

4.1 Dominant discourse municipalities

To address research question A, "What is the dominant discourse within municipal approaches to street harassment intervention?" two sub-questions are posed:

- A1: *What discourses dominate in municipal policy documents related to tackling street harassment?*
- A2: *How do civil servants' discourses within municipalities influence concrete policies and interventions to combat street harassment, and what challenges do they encounter in this regard?*

4.1.1 Sub question A1: policy documents

4.1.1.1 Three dominant pillars

In the policy documents studied, three dominant target groups or actors have emerged in municipal approaches to tackling street harassment: perpetrators, victims, and bystanders (gemeente Almelo, 2023; gemeente Almere, 2023; gemeente Amsterdam, 2023; gemeente Arnhem, 2020; gemeente Den Haag, 2021; gemeente Leiden, 2023; gemeente Rotterdam, 2024; gemeente Tilburg, 2023; gemeente Utrecht, 2022; gemeente Zaanstad, 2023). Municipalities have structured their interventions around these actors, focusing on various pillars aimed at addressing specific needs and challenges. In the table below (Table 1), each municipality's pillar is listed. The pillars are presented from left to right in accordance with their order in the policy documents.

Table 1

Pillars of municipalities:

Municipalities	Pillars				

Utrecht	Awareness & social norm setting	Approach on the street	Approach offender	Support victim	
Rotterdam	Prevention	Victim	Approach on the street	Communication	
Tilburg	Awareness raising & campaigns	Prevention	Safety & legislation Enforcement	Enforcement	Promoting safety of public spaces
Amsterdam	Increase prevention and awareness in the city	Increase access to help	Promotion of expertise	Rosa approach	
Den Haag	Prevention & awareness	Reporting willingness	Street safety		
Leiden *	Insight and scope	Prevention & awareness	Assistance	Implementation	
Eindhoven	Awareness & prevention	Victim support	Approach on the street		
Almere	Insight	Willingness to report	Prevention & awareness	Action Perspective	
Zaanstad	Prevention, education and awareness	Safe streets	Communication, investigation and reporting		
Arnhem	Preventing sexual harassment (preventive)	Fighting sexual harassment (curative and repressive)			

First, notably, all municipalities have at least one pillar dedicated to prevention. The municipalities of Rotterdam, Tilburg, and Amsterdam explicitly label their pillars as such. Interestingly, the prevention pillar often aligns with creating awareness about street harassment and/or establishing a social norm. Consequently, the "Bewustwording" (awareness) pillar in some municipalities like Utrecht is similar in content to the pillar "Preventie" (prevention) of municipalities like Rotterdam and Tilburg. For illustration, the municipality of Utrecht outlines the following content for their "Awareness and Norm-Setting" pillar in their action plan**:**

"*We discuss the problem in a direct and sometimes confrontational way. From there, we enter the conversation in a positive, constructive way to tilt the perspective on what we accept and offer new norms and courses of action. Here, awareness is essential, both among potential perpetrators and bystanders. Education, information and awareness campaigns should make it clear that this behaviour is not normal."* (gemeente Utrecht, 2022, p. 9)*.

This section on creating awareness partially aligns with the "Prevention" pillar of the municipalities of Rotterdam and Tilburg. For example, the municipality of Rotterdam provides the following content for their "Prevention" pillar:

"This involves in particular raising awareness of sexually transgressive behaviour and the effects this behaviour has on people. Men are also a specific target group in this pillar, as it is precisely with them that awareness and behavioural change must take place. We create this by talking to them about sexually transgressive behaviour. In this way, we prevent sexual street harassment. We also give young people, for example, tools on the ways in which they can show positive behaviour." (gemeente Rotterdam, 2024, p. 3)*.

The municipality of Tilburg explicitly distinguishes between the pillars "Prevention" and "Awareness and Campaigns" within their approach. Nevertheless, it is observable that the Tilburg "Prevention" pillar also contains elements that partially correspond with the aforementioned passages from the municipalities of Utrecht and Rotterdam. The municipality of Tilburg describes their "Prevention" pillar as follows:

"A preventive approach against street harassment is necessary because it helps set a new, healthy norm. By teaching young people about boundaries and respectful behaviour, we can prevent them from unknowingly becoming perpetrators of street harassment. In addition, we can encourage bystanders to intervene, which can help reduce its impact. A preventive approach therefore ensures that we can contribute to a change in society in a positive way, with respect and equality at its core." (gemeente Tilburg, 2023, p. 18).

Second, upon analysing the policy documents, it is notable that municipalities have a pillar dedicated to supporting victims. This typically involves making it easier for victims to report incidents and ensuring follow-up on these reports. The municipalities of Utrecht and Rotterdam have respectively designated the pillars "Ondersteuning slachtoffer (Support for Victims)" and "Slachtoffers (Victims)," where both emphasize their reporting points and appropriate follow-up actions (gemeente Rotterdam, 2024; gemeente Utrecht, 2022). Although the municipality of Tilburg does not explicitly name their pillar as "supporting victims" like Utrecht and Rotterdam, their pillar "Safety and Legislation" aligns with the aforementioned pillars in terms of content. Within the "Safety and Legislation" pillar, the reporting mechanism for victims and bystanders plays a significant role. Thus, this pillar can also be viewed as a form of support for victims.

Third, the policy documents reveal that municipalities have at least one pillar related to enforcing measures against street harassment. The name of this pillar usually varies between municipalities, but it generally pertains to street safety and the enforcement of measures against street harassment. For example, the municipality of Utrecht has two pillars named "Street Approach" and "Offender Approach," which align with Rotterdam's pillar "Street Approach" and Tilburg's pillars "Enforcement" and "Promotion of Public Space Safety." One of the common elements across these pillars is the establishment of actions following the reporting of incidents. Below are various passages from these pillars that demonstrate their alignment:

Municipality of Utrecht: "Where necessary, we take targeted measures at those locations where this behaviour often occurs, for instance by rearranging the public space and using surveillance in a more targeted way. Based on the reports, we can make even more targeted physical adjustments here." (gemeente Utrecht, 2022, p. 11).

Municipality of Tilburg: "The reports we collect can be a reason to explore whether we can make locations safer. Especially when we discover patterns at certain locations (and at certain times) and see that reports are concentrated there, we can investigate whether these locations offer enough safety." (gemeente Tilburg, 2023, p. 19).

Municipality of Rotterdam: "Data from the StopApp is optimally used to organise the deployment of enforcers. Outcomes from the 2023 neighbourhood profile are used to set up deployment in specific neighbourhoods." (gemeente Rotterdam, 2024, p. 5).

Moreover, another substantive similarity is that these pillars focus on enforcing measures against sexually transgressive behaviour. The enforcement aims to ensure that perpetrators understand the consequences of their actions. Municipalities emphasize the new criminal law coming into effect on July 1, 2024, which targets such behaviour. However, there are nuances in terminology, with Utrecht explicitly referring to the "offender" in their approach, whereas municipalities like Tilburg use the term "perpetrator."

In conclusion, from the various municipal approaches, three dominant pillars can be identified. These are:

1. **Preventie & bewustwording (Prevention & awareness)**: Focused on creating awareness about street harassment and establishing social norms.
2. **Ondersteuning slachtoffer (Victim Support)**: Aimed at supporting victims through accessible reporting channels and appropriate follow-up actions.
3. **Veiligheid op straat & handhaving (Street safety & enforcement)**: Concentrated on maintaining public safety and ensuring that perpetrators face consequences for their actions.

4.1.1.2 Prevention & awareness pilar

Within this pillar, the focus is on preventing street harassment. Municipalities aim to achieve this by raising awareness about street harassment and establishing a social norm to bring about cultural change. Although the specific actions and their implementation vary slightly between municipalities, and each may have specific regional initiatives, there are some common dominant actions that can be observed across different approaches and fall under the prevention pillar. These actions include:

1. **Public Campaigns**: Aimed at informing the public about the issue of street harassment, its impact, and how to respond to it.
2. **Offering Trainings**: Providing training sessions for various groups, including local authorities, professionals, and community members, to equip them with the knowledge and skills to address street harassment.

3. **School Presentations**: Conducting educational sessions in schools to inform young people about street harassment, its consequences, and ways to intervene safely.

The table (Table 2) below summarizes these actions, their objectives and have examples of municipalities:

Table 2

Municipalities concrete actions

Action	Objective	Utrecht	Tilburg	Rotterdam
Public Campaigns	Raise public awareness and inform about street harassment	*"With awareness-raising campaigns, we generate attention to the subject so that all residents can recognise street harassment and discuss it. And the norm really changes in the long run. We also use communication to help victims feel supported and bystanders feel jointly responsible. To this end, we will continue to publicise the reporting centre for street harassment."* (gemeente Utrecht, 2022, p. 9).	*"Creating awareness is a continuous process that requires time and repetition. By regularly highlighting the problem of street harassment and the importance of a safe and respectful environment, we can raise awareness and encourage people to take action."* (gemeente Tilburg, 2023, p. 16).	*"Create awareness and contribute to changing the social norm. Publicising action perspective to bystanders of SSI."* (gemeente Rotterdam, 2024, p. 6).
Offering Trainings	Equip individuals and groups with skills to address and	*"We improve knowledge sharing and accessibility of information on street harassment and cross-border behaviour in public spaces for Utrecht*	*"With prevention trainings, we aim to prevent or treat street harassment by making young*	*"A minimum of 15 bystander intervention trainings will be organised"* (gemeente Rotterdam, 2024, p. 3).

	prevent harassment	*residents, professionals and partners. This ranges from sharing examples and experiences, tools for bystanders to intervene, a basic workshop for professionals, an overview of care providers who can help victims further, to organising network meetings."* (gemeente Utrecht, 2022, p. 10).	*people and professionals - but not exclusively - aware of boundaries, the impact of street harassment, how to avoid committing harassment and encourage bystanders to intervene. In addition, we critically examine the image of masculinity and femininity and discuss how these stereotypes contribute to the problem of street harassment."* (Municipality of Tilburg, 2023, pp. 18-19).	
School Presentations	Educate young people on recognizing and responding to street harassment	*"A module on street harassment will be added to the range of teaching materials of the Peaceful School. Lesson series are being developed for primary and secondary schools. The lessons will cover forms of street harassment, such as non-verbal and verbal street harassment, language use, peer pressure and*	*"Having conversations with young people about boundaries and respect, and providing education on the impact of street harassment and what you can do about it."* (gemeente	*"The activities in this pillar focus on providing education and engaging in dialogue on sexual cross-border behaviour and sexual street harassment. In doing so, we also specifically target the education field (primary education up to university). We ensure that the activities match the perceptions of diverse age*

		about responding and asking for help. The lessons establish links with the basic Vreedzaam curriculum, in order to make connections with the self-confidence that is worked on in all years of school." (gemeente Utrecht, 2022, p. 9).	Tilburg, 2023, p. 19).	*groups."*(gemeente Rotterdam, 2024, p. 3).

As observed, the general aim of these actions is to increase awareness about street harassment and provide bystanders with the tools they need to intervene in an incident. It is important to note that the actions within the prevention pillar are not solely focused on the bystander. Preventive actions target all residents of a municipality, including victims and perpetrators. However, the bystander is often considered the most crucial actor. This is evident in policy documents where municipalities frequently mention the bystander in the context of recognizing and intervening in incidents (gemeente Rotterdam, 2024; gemeente Tilburg, 2023; gemeente Utrecht, 2022).

4.1.1.3 Victim Support Pillar

Within this pillar, the focus is on supporting victims of street harassment. Generally, this support is provided by making it easy to report incidents and ensuring that these reports are appropriately followed up. For illustration, the municipalities of Rotterdam and Utrecht describe this as follows:

Municipality of Rotterdam: "Within the victims pillar, the StopApp and the follow-up of reports are central. In the StopApp, victims can report sexual street harassment in an accessible way. The StopApp provides the municipality with valuable information, such as insight into hotspots of SSI and the nature of the reports. These can be used again in the rest of the approach, as well as in enforcement actions." (gemeente Rotterdam, 2024, p. 4).

Municipality of Utrecht: "We raise awareness of the hotline, We lower the threshold to report, We respond to every report and offer support if needed." (gemeente Utrecht, 2022, p. 13).

These descriptions underscore the commitment of both municipalities to making it as straightforward as possible for victims to come forward and ensuring that they receive the support and attention they need once they do. However, what stands out is that even within this pillar, a role

is designated for the bystander, despite the primary focus being on supporting the victim. The municipality of Utrecht describes this nicely in concrete terms as follows:

"*Utrecht has a hotline (via www.utrecht.nl/straatintimidatie) where both victims and bystanders can report (also anonymously) any form of (street) harassment.*" (gemeente Utrecht, 2022, p. 13).

4.1.1.4 Safety streets & enforcement Pillar

Similar to the other two pillars, there are nuanced differences between municipal approaches and the specific actions that result from them in relation to street safety and the enforcement of street harassment. Nonetheless, a general trend can be observed concerning street safety and the enforcement of street harassment. Common concrete actions include implementing the new criminalization of street harassment and improving the safety of public spaces based on data. Enhancing public space safety relies on reports received by municipalities through their reporting mechanisms. The new legislation criminalizing street harassment effective from July 1 provides municipalities with enhanced enforcement capabilities. However, municipalities view enforcement not as a holy grail but as a valuable tool to reinforce social norms and raise awareness among perpetrators about their behaviour. In municipal approaches, it is expressed as follows:

Municipality of Tilburg: "The purpose of enforcement on street harassment, in addition to prevention, is to counter this form of cross-border behaviour. Enforcement should ensure that offenders realise the consequences of their behaviour and also prevent street harassment from escalating" (gemeente Tilburg, 2023, p. 20)*.*

Municipality of Rotterdam: "However, enforcement through this article of law is the final piece of Rotterdam's SSI approach. Therefore, preventive actions from Stadsbeheer will continue until the new section of the law comes into force. When determining locations for these actions, the data from the StopApp will be used." (gemeente Rotterdam, 2024, p. 5)*.*

Municipality of Utrecht: "From the newly to be developed expertise on the subject of street harassment, for example, enforcers address offenders on undesirable behaviour in public spaces. An ideal situation would be to create social control over such behaviour and not look away. This means that bystanders are aware of what is happening and reject it and know what they can do to play a role in this in a safe way." (gemeente Utrecht, 2022, p. 13)*.*

4.1.2 Answer sub question A1

In summary, the answer to sub-question A1 can be formulated as follows: within municipal policy documents focused on addressing street harassment, a dominant discourse is evident. This dominant discourse comprises three pillars: Prevention & Awareness, Victim Support, and Street Safety & Enforcement. Each of these pillars specifically addresses at least one of the following three actors: perpetrator, victim, and bystander. In the Prevention & Awareness pillar, every resident is considered the target audience, but ultimately, actions are primarily focused on the bystander. The Victim Support pillar primarily targets the victim, while also considering the bystander. Lastly, the perpetrator is generally the central actor within the Street Safety & Enforcement pillar.

4.1.3 Sub question A2: civil servants' interviews

4.1.3.1 Choice of Terminology for Street Harassment:

The terminology used to describe street harassment varies across municipalities, influencing how it is perceived and addressed within policy documents. This diversity aligns with academic theories that acknowledge substantial variation in the discourse surrounding street harassment.

Fairchild demonstrates in her academic work that various terms are employed, which, on the one hand, overlap but on the other hand, differ from one another (Fairchild, 2023, pp. 1143–1145). Nonetheless, it is evident in the literature that the term 'street harassment' is the most commonly used (Fairchild, 2023, pp. 1143–1145). This is also visible in the data from the interviews. The data form the interviews show that the majority of municipalities use the Dutch translation of street harassment (straatintimidatie), while some municipalities opt for a term that supports either a broader or a narrower focus. The following table (Table 3) illustrates which term each municipality uses, with the broadest term ('boundary-crossing behaviour') on top and the most specific ('sexual street harassment') at the end.

Table 3

Terminology municipalities:

Municipality	Used terminology
Groningen	Grensoverschrijdend gedrag
Leiden	Seksueel grensoverschrijdend gedrag
Nijmegen	Seksuele intimidate
Almelo	(seksuele) intimidate
Arnhem	Seksuele intimidatie in de openbare ruimte
Zaanstad	Straatintimidatie
Den Haag	Straatintimidatie
Almere	Straatintimidatie
Tilburg	Straatintimidatie
Eindhoven	Straatintimidatie
Leeuwarden	Straatintimidatie
Enschede	Straatintimidatie
Amsterdam	Straatintimidatie

Utrecht	Straatintimidatie
Rotterdam	Seksuele straatintimidatie

As can be seen, the majority of municipalities use the term "straatintimidatie" (street harassment). The reason for this is that street harassment is addressed in general within their approaches and is not limited to just sexual street harassment. For example:

"Because the approach is not just about sexual street harassment. If you look at our report form, you can report various forms of street harassment and that includes, for example, sneering, shouting, chasing and that doesn't necessarily have to be sexual, but that also falls under harassment, so it's quite a broad approach." - Policy officer, municipality of Tilburg, personal communication, 17-4-2024.

However, according to Fairchild, the term "street harassment" has several limitations concerning location and the nature of the harassment (Fairchild, 2023, pp. 1143–1145). The term suggests that the harassment only occurs on the street and not in other public places, and that the harassment is not necessarily sexual. The data shows that these limitations are noted by civil servants of municipalities. For example, the municipality of Leeuwarden states the following about the choice of the term street harassment:

"There is indeed a kind of limitation in that you often have to explain it further. On the other hand, we don't want to limit it to sexual street harassment, because that's not always what it is. - Policy officer, municipality of Leeuwarden, personal (online) communication, 28-5-2024.

Some municipalities explicitly address these limitations by using both the terms "street harassment" and "sexual street harassment." Municipalities such as Utrecht and Amsterdam employ this approach, as clarified by the following quote of Utrecht:

We actually call it street harassment and sexual street harassment." "But it is always important to stress that it is In public spaces, because sexual harassment at work is already punishable. There are already channels for confidants there. But once you hit the streets, it falls away." - Policy officer, municipality of Utrecht, personal communication, 1-5-2024.

In contrast to other municipalities, Rotterdam, Leiden, Groningen, Almelo, and Arnhem do not use the term "street harassment" in their approaches to addressing public harassment. Each municipality adopts a distinct approach to terminology:

- **Rotterdam**: Focuses explicitly on sexual street harassment (SSH) within its strategy, using the term "sexual street harassment" (SSH) to narrow the focus.
- **Leiden and Groningen**: Embrace a broader term, "grensoverschrijdend gedrag" (boundary-crossing behaviour), with Leiden explicitly mentioning "seksueel grensoverschrijdend gedrag" (sexual boundary-crossing behaviour). This broader terminology reflects their integration of street harassment into a larger, overarching municipal approach.
- **Almelo**: Uses the term "(seksuele) intimidatie" ((sexual) harassment), emphasizing that harassment can occur in various settings, including online and in public spaces.
- **Arnhem**: Refers to "seksuele intimidatie in de openbare orde" (sexual harassment in public order), following a municipal council motion to adopt this specific term. This term underscores the focus on sexual harassment specifically within the context of public spaces.

The following quotes reflect the underlying thoughts regarding the choice of terminology:

"Because the council put forward a motion with sexual harassment In public space tackling. And then we adopted that." -Policy officer, municipality of Arnhem, personal communication, 24-4-2024.

"Mostly sexual harassment and then in brackets sexual, because it doesn't always have to be sexual. And we do target public space,[…..]but also actually not necessarily on 'only public space', just everywhere, also digitally" Therefore not necessarily made streets out of it." -Policy officer, municipality of Almelo, personal (online) communication, 22-5-2024.

In summary, the vast majority of municipalities employ the term "street harassment" within their interventions. This choice aims to address the phenomenon broadly, not solely focusing on its sexual components. The specific terminology adopted by municipalities carries significant implications, influencing how the issue is framed, and which administrative department takes responsibility for addressing it. For example, the use of terms like "grensoverschrijdend gedrag" in Leiden and Groningen integrates street harassment into overarching programs. In contrast, Rotterdam's specific use of "sexual street harassment" enables a targeted focus and allocation of resources toward addressing this specific aspect.

4.1.3.2 Normalisation of street harassment:

In the academic literature, street harassment is portrayed as a normalized issue in society. This perception arises due to several reasons, as previously mentioned. Although this academic literature

is generally applicable, it is also relevant to Dutch society. Research conducted by CCV indicates that municipalities have observed their residents perceiving street harassment as a normalized issue, a sentiment corroborated by the interview data from this study (CCV, 2023). Municipalities contend that there is insufficient public awareness regarding street harassment, which contributes to it not being widely recognized as a societal problem.

"Yes, I think still a lot of people underestimate how big the problem of street harassment is. {...} that not everyone is already so far indeed that it is a problem, that we have to do something against it."- Policy officer, municipality of Utrecht, personal communication, 1-5-20204.

"we think it that it is a society-wide problem, But that it is not necessarily seen as a society-wide responsibility." - Policy officer, municipality of Amsterdam, personal communication, 4-6-2024.

"Because it is for example when I hear my my mayor about it that when he comes to their school and every girl indicates that it bothers her. That is of course yes, a terrible shame, But that also often means that girls very often keep it to themselves. Yes, people whistle at you more often and it is seen a bit as normal, while it is actually very important to enter into that dialogue." - Policy officer, municipality of Zaanstad, personal communication, 22-5-2024.

What is interesting is that municipalities observe a distinction among people regarding their awareness of the effects of street harassment. Specifically, some men may lack awareness of the coping mechanisms of victims or women in order to avoid steer harassment, resulting in their inability to recognize certain images in campaigns, whereas women readily identify them. For example, the municipality of Arnhem included an image of a key in hand in a public campaign, which was immediately recognized by women but raised questions among men:

"We have a number of posters of which one is with a girl, yes, I think about 16, 17 years old, with keys between her hands of which all the women said, Oh, So that's recognisable. And to the men that then raised questions of: Huh?" - Policy officer, municipality of Arnhem, personal communication, 23-4-2024.

Moreover, what is also interesting in the interview data is that street harassment is normalized to such an extent in society that even victims sometimes do not realize they have experienced it. They often perceive harassment as something normal and part of daily life. This finding is consistent with the studies of Fileborn and Bailey (Bailey, 2017; Fileborn, 2019).

"But I do notice that in conversations with victims too, then I say, have you ever experienced it? And then, 'No, yeah, no, not like that, yeah so then I say, oh, so you've never been stared at or chased or chased? Oh no, that no, that every day' so you notice that the term street harassment at all is really not clear." - Policy officer, municipality of Utrecht, personal communication, 1-5-2024.

4.1.3.3 Dominant Pilar:

Analysis of interview data indicates that municipalities predominantly prioritize prevention as the primary focus when developing actions against street harassment. Nearly all municipalities highlighted prevention, with occasional mentions that other pillars are also important but would prioritize prevention if forced to choose. It is noteworthy that nuances exist across municipalities, where prevention forms a central part of a comprehensive approach, complemented by other pillars. Delving deeper into the data reveals various reasons behind this emphasis on prevention.

Firstly, some municipalities prioritize prevention primarily for practical reasons. Emphasizing prevention and reducing incidents of street harassment ultimately decreases the need for enforcement. Municipalities argue that enforcing street harassment laws is complex due to existing legislation. Until July 1, 2024, street harassment was not criminalized in the Netherlands, posing challenges for enforcement. While its criminalization from July 1, 2024, simplifies enforcement to some extent, challenges remain. Moreover, smaller municipalities often operate with limited budgets allocated for addressing street harassment. Focusing on prevention allows them to achieve more with the limited funds available.

"Being proactive in responding to these issues is, of course, about reducing your problems in the future, and that's really the approach here. But with the small budget we have, we prefer to invest as much as possible upfront, so that we can get the most out of it for as long as possible." - Policy officer, municipality of Zaanstad, personal communication, 22-5-2024.

"There's more manpower In prevention, also Because that, well, The more you can prevent it, the more you, the less you have to enforce that actually no one deals with that, so the focus is on prevention. That's also the reason we moved from mayor to alderman." - Policy officer, municipality of Arnhem, personal communication, 24-4-2024.

Second, municipalities prioritize prevention as the key approach for substantive reasons. Municipalities aim to foster a cultural shift regarding street harassment in society. For this reason, municipalities generally focus on raising awareness, establishing social norms, and promoting

behavioural change. An important motivation for most municipalities to create awareness, establish social norms, and promote behavioural change is to enable bystanders to recognize instances of street harassment and intervene. By educating bystanders about what constitutes street harassment and equipping them with tools to intervene, municipalities aim to reduce incidents of street harassment. This approach often utilizes the bystander intervention model, which is promoted, among others, by Movisie through the Safe Cities program (Movisie, 2022). However, it is important to note that this represents the dominant perspective on prevention and awareness within the context of bystanders. Some municipalities may have differing views/nuances on this topic, which will be explored further under the section titled 'Bystander'.

"In Rotterdam, more than 50% of the budget goes towards the prevention pillar because we generally focus on a younger target group, where behavioral influence is often still possible." - Policy officer, municipality of Rotterdam, personal communication, 27-5-2024.

"We are really mainly trying to broaden awareness on the subject actually yes huh? That it yes that it exists sexual harassment and that it has very nasty consequences or is very unpleasant for people it happens to. Also, from the idea that People are not so aware of it." - Policy officer, municipality of Nijmegen, personal communication, 7-5-2024.

"Yes, social norm campaigns so really indeed propagate those norms that it is not okay and what kind of behaviour we do expect, so do focus more on the positive norm. Since it also turns out that that works better, and negative norm is actually counterproductive." - Policy officer, municipality of Almelo, personal (online) communication, 22-5-2024.

"I think that that awareness of that it's a problem that it's something of all of us, that it's not just a women's problem and that's a very important step in that." - Policy officer, municipality of Groningen, personal (online) communication, 1-5-2024.

4.1.3.4 Concrete actions & challenges:

The actions stemming from the dominant preventive principles are generally similar across municipalities. While nuances may vary, municipalities typically shape their preventive approach through public campaigns, training sessions, participation in existing initiatives/events, and school education programs. Some municipalities also organize neighbourhood dialogue sessions and/or have special subsidies for projects on street harassment available. Municipalities with longer-standing approaches to street harassment naturally have developed more extensive and diverse

actions. In addition to the aforementioned activities, these municipalities have in some cases implemented specific actions. Examples include Utrecht's catcalling screen action and Rotterdam's Rotterdam Week Against SSI. To illustrate: here are some examples of concrete actions taken by municipalities, including public campaigns, training sessions, participation in existing events, and school education:

"Then from communications, they had put such a screen in the city with one with a woman who then called men and boys to it. There were a lot of opinions about it. Some thought it was a very good action, others didn't. But it is daring to put your action plan into action like that, but of course it doesn't stop there. It doesn't stop at a playful action, because on the other hand, we work very closely with emancipator, which really starts discussions with men and boys to bring about a change in behaviour. So, on the one hand, we are playful in our actions, but we make sure there is good content on the back end." - Policy officer, municipality of Utrecht, personal communication, 1-5-2024.

"Well, that, we also see that with the student associations who also ask us in the conversation from time to time: 'can you guide us or what should we do? We would like to be trained again.' Our answer is: ' Yes, we would then be happy to contribute to that'" - Policy officer, municipality of Enschede, personal communication, 8-5-2024.

"Last year, for example, we joined the Orange The World campaign. At the end of November to sometime in December that takes place. Well, that's where we linked up with a few activities, together with Social domain, we organised for example a theme afternoon for schools with a documentary Belaagd." " - Policy officer, municipality of Eindhoven, personal communication, 29-5-2024.

Furthermore, newer municipalities often operate with smaller budgets and look to more established municipalities and knowledge institutions like Movisie for guidance. This learning process often occurs through programs such as the Safe Cities program under Movisie's supervision (Movisie, n.d.). Newer municipalities aim to leverage national best practices in their street harassment strategies, adapting their approaches based on this knowledge. One example if a common action among (newer) municipalities is participation in Rutger's poster campaign ("Ben je Oké?"). By 'newer municipalities,' we refer to those that have developed an approach to street harassment from 2022 onwards. These municipalities include Leiden (2023), Nijmegen (2023), Zaanstad (2023), Eindhoven (2023), Leeuwarden (2023), and Almelo (2022).

"You also see that all municipalities in the country do have something, especially the big ones have something of an approach, but everyone is still really looking for of what really works? So, what we do is: try to link up with what is being used a lot and what does seem to work."- Policy officer, municipality of Leiden, personal communication, 23-4-2024.

"What's great is that we are also affiliated with safe cities, so that we can share experiences. Yes, and of course there are municipalities that have just been working on this subject much longer and have real experience in this, know what works and know what doesn't work, so we did try to link up with that."- Policy officer, municipality of Leeuwarden, personal (online) communication, 28-5-2024.

"Been around the country looking at what was there, right? We also talked to other municipalities. Utrecht, in particular, inspired us, because they, yes, they were quite far along in their approach, so well several conversations carried along, Documents sent to them, looked at what else was in the country, connected to the safe cities programme through the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. " - Policy officer, municipality of Eindhoven, personal communication, 29-5-2024.

In terms of challenges, interview data reveals that new municipalities primarily struggle to gain a comprehensive overview of the network they are part of. This issue is less prevalent among municipalities with established approaches. However, both newer and older municipalities find it difficult to effectively reach various communities within their jurisdictions. Moreover, limited budgets and capacity and the cooperation with the nightlife sector are frequently cited as challenges. Additionally, several municipalities highlight the sustainability of their street harassment strategies as a significant challenge.

"I also think more perhaps the cooperation with the communities... I think that you do partly do that with that subsidy scheme now, If you see that we get subsidy applications from quite local organisations, for example, But I think that could be a bit more." – Policy officer, municipality of Den Haag, personal communication, 3-5-2024.

"I don't have the idea yet... Yes, having a full picture of what partners still exist here in Eindhoven or in the region that we don't know about at all yet." - Policy officer, municipality of Eindhoven, personal communication, 29-5-2024.

4.1.3.5 Bystander:

4.1.3.4.1 Role bystander

Across all municipalities, the bystander plays a role that is often identified as crucial. Several municipalities emphasize that the bystander is the ideal third party to focus on in addition to the victim and perpetrator. The reason for this is that perpetrators are unlikely to easily recognize themselves as such, and focusing solely on the victim can inadvertently contribute to victim-blaming.

> *Well, actually, we see the bystander as one of the 3 groups that we target the approach as it were, right? We have the group of potential perpetrators. We have the group of potential victims, and We have the group of bystanders and the group of bystanders is huge and we think bystanders can play a hugely important role in stopping situations of sexual street harassment." - Policy officer, municipality of Rotterdam, personal communication, 27-5-2024.*

> *"The bystander is actually also a bit of the golden balance within the approach, Because targeting victims is obviously very difficult, and most perpetrators don't feel addressed or immediately pigeonholed. So, the bystanders I personally think are really key in that." - Policy officer, municipality of Zaanstad, personal communication, 22-5-2024.*

> *"So, it turns out that perpetrators do not recognise themselves in the word commit or as perpetrator." "But so that you don't accuse anyone, so that anyone can be. It's a positive role. You can be of added value. Or how do you say that? You can really help what People generally like, so the role of bystander does matter in that sense." - Policy officer, municipality of Almelo, personal (online) communication, 22-5-2024.*

> *"You target bystanders is very effective though, because If you only do it on victims, it doesn't actually make sense, because they can't, there's no behavioural change in that, so if you only target perpetrators, so they are often hard to reach too of course, because not Everybody just admits that, right?" "Yes, so indeed that bystander group which is very large and you can also reach them a little easier. And if a bystander intervenes then that also makes 1 big impact." - Policy officer, municipality of Utrecht, personal communication, 1-5-2024.*

4.1.3.4.2 Definition bystander

What immediately stands out from analysing the results is that no municipality uses the same definition for the bystander, and most found it challenging to define this role (see table 4). The reason for this is the limited understanding of the bystander. In recent years, the focus has primarily been on perpetrators and victims, with little to no attention given to the bystander in research. While some research has applied the bystander intervention model to street harassment to activate

bystanders during incidents, the actual role of the bystander has been scarcely studied. This gap is also reflected in academic literature; for instance, Fileborn and O'Neill note that only three studies specifically address the bystander (Chaudoir & Quinn, 2010; Fileborn, 2017; Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023, p. 6; Stop Street Harasment, 2014). In the context of research on street harassment in the Netherlands, studies either do not include or only marginally cover the bystander as a distinct actor. Some policymakers also acknowledge and experience this knowledge gap regarding the bystander actor in their daily practices.

"I also think that at the same time we just know a little too little about it (bystander) yet. But that it's just an important role. So, we're putting in effort on it anyway, because we believe in its in effectiveness." "But we want to know more about that bystander piece. We do ask about the perpetrator: 'how many people? Was it one person? Were he several?' But we actually have at the moment, not in that way information about the bystander and we do want to collect that." - Policy officer, municipality of Amsterdam, personal communication, 4-6-2024.

Table 4

Municipalities view on the bystander, note: All responses are derived from personal communication

Municipality	Quote on definition 'bystander'
Den Haag	"I find it difficult to really give a definition to that. I don't know if we really give a definition say to that. Yes, they are indeed People who then. Yes, who witness, for example, huh? When something happens. Can be a bartender, of course also someone on the street."
Arnhem	I would say, Everyone who can see it and then certainly In public spaces. I was walking, the other day for example, through town. And then I saw a group of guys looking like that I think, 'what are you going to do? Because I'm watching you guys for a minute', because I see Someone walking by that I think, I'm, then I'm a bystander."

Leiden	"That's difficult though, because well, You can of course define it as someone who sees it happening, But that's that could of course be someone who sees it happening from a distance. Someone who sees their own friends committing it, or someone who is with the victim, i Yeah, I wouldn't really know how I would give a definition then."
Utrecht	"Yes, Anyone who sees something happening that you think, I think it's not okay,"
Nijmegen	"The bystander is the one who sees it and yes stands by it and yes actually just the one who sees it. That's how I would define it at the moment, But we haven't really defined it, "
Tilburg	"I think it's really literally Everyone she is on the street, yes that you can come across it"
Rotterdam	"We see the bystander as someone who could potentially witness a situation of sexual street harassment. And in our view, that's anyone, anyone who moves in the outdoor space"
Amsterdam	"The bystander as we define it: 'Someone you don't necessarily have a direct relationship with, but that that is just an eyewitness to that'"
Eindhoven	"Yes, we have not defined, But that can only be as far as I am concerned Everybody." "For me not only to be on the street huh? Because that can also be at that sports club. Or that can also be in the nightlife somewhere inside a pub or well in education all doesn't matter to me, does it? So that so the bystander could, could also be the teacher. Or also the coach at the football team who hears in the

	dressing room I don't know what of everything."
Leeuwarden	"Yes, That is indeed a big concept and also quite variable I think, depending on the situation what I just pointed out: You have a bystander who can actively do things, A bystander who maintains situation, a bystander, who does not address his friends, so that is indeed very broad, so we address then also a broad target group that is correct."
Almelo	"Physically present is, I think, such a person who can identify, or how do you say, can identify that there is sexual harassment or intimidation. So, who also sees through that and who also sees that as negative, so not as normal behaviour."
Enschede	"Everyone walking outside" "yes actually everyone".
Groningen	"Yes, Everyone present on the street, or in a catering establishment at that time (of an incident)."

Referring back to the data from this research, it is evident that municipalities do not provide an explicit definition for the bystander, contrary to what the NAP and Movisie do (Ministerie Algemene Zaken, 2023; Movisie, 2022). However, the perspective and treatment of the bystander by most municipalities are similar. Most municipalities consider the bystander as someone who is a direct witness to an incident. Consequently, municipalities view a bystander as someone who can intervene directly during an incident. For this reason, municipalities structure their actions to enable bystanders to recognize such incidents and provide them with tools to intervene. They utilize various initiatives ranging from public campaigns to themed meetings to activate bystanders from passive observers to active interveners, based on the bystander intervention model proposed by Movisie, based on the theory of Latané and Darley (1968).

For this reason, it can be argued that most municipalities in their approach view bystanders similarly to Movisie and the NAP, namely as individuals who a direct witness of an incident. This approach allows municipalities to see bystanders as individuals who witness an incident, distinct

from being the victim or perpetrator, thereby enabling them to play a direct role in addressing street harassment

"That's why we also just try to approach bystanders very actively by, for example, using a campaign of 1 That they get awareness about the phenomenon of sexual street harassment, 2 That's getting awareness or being able to recognise what sexual street harassment is and 3 Then giving tools on how to act if you witness such a situation." - Policy officer, municipality of Rotterdam, personal communication, 27-5-2024.

"Yes, so indeed that bystander group which is very large, and you can also reach them a little easier. And if a bystander intervenes then that also makes 1 big impact." - Policy officer, municipality of Utrecht, personal communication, 1-5-2024.

4.1.3.4.2.1 Dual role bystander

However, not all municipalities view the bystander solely as an actor who witnesses an incident and needs to be activated to intervene directly. Municipalities like Tilburg, Amsterdam, Eindhoven, and Leeuwarden also recognize the indirect roles and actions that individuals/bystanders who are not directly involved in an incident or are neither victims nor perpetrators can undertake. This perspective aligns with the arguments put forth by researcher Stueve and colleagues (Stueve & Et al., 2006). They argue that defining a bystander solely as someone who is a direct witness and has the ability to intervene is overly restrictive. According to Stueve and colleagues, focusing solely on the incident narrows the scope and neglects the broader social context. Thet say state the following: ""It focuses on altercations and aggressive events that bystanders observe in the 'here and now' and neglects situations about which bystanders may possess information (e.g., overheard conversations, veiled threats, changes in behaviour) that makes them believe that future violence is likely". (Stueve & Et all., 2006, pp. 118–119). Although Stueve developed this theory in the context of the bystander role during school shootings, I find it highly applicable to the bystander role in street harassment policy. The reason for this is that the academic literature on street harassment also supports that street harassment is not an isolated phenomenon but interweaved in society, highlighting the importance of considering the broader social context.

As previously mentioned, municipalities like Tilburg, Amsterdam, Eindhoven, and Leeuwarden recognize the broader role of the bystander. This expanded role involves viewing the bystander not only as having a direct impact in incidents but also as having an indirect, societal role. The following quotes from Amsterdam and Leeuwarden municipalities underscore this broader societal perspective:

"You don't solve this with a project. It is something that is really of long, long duration. So, Amsterdam is also 1 big city. It's a very diverse city, every city so completely different. So how do you get, how do you get the Amsterdam community into that conversation? And how do you really get that turnaround that we take that responsibility together? " - Policy officer, municipality of Amsterdam, personal communication, 4-6-2024.

"There are really clear handles offered there with what you can do. And so that's a role of the bystander. Another role of the bystander is of course that we as a community find this behaviour normal to a certain extent. And that therefore there also needs to be a kind of culture change there precisely among bystanders of 'This is not how we deal with each other in Leeuwarden then." - Policy officer, municipality of Leeuwarden, personal (online) communication, 27-4-2024.

4.1.3.4.2.2 Examples dual role bystander municipalities Tilburg & Amsterdam

Although municipalities like Eindhoven and Leeuwarden acknowledge the broader/dual role of the bystander, they are still exploring concrete actions. In contrast, Tilburg and Amsterdam municipalities are more advanced in this area, although they also differ from each other in their approaches.

Municipality of Tilburg: The municipality of Tilburg explicitly emphasizes its attention to indirect individuals who are not directly involved in an incident. This sets them apart significantly from other municipalities, as evidenced in Table [insert table number]. Other municipalities do not specifically include or indirectly involve individuals who are not direct witnesses, whereas the municipality of Tilburg explicitly does. This approach stems from their view that street harassment extends beyond the moment of an incident, aligning with Stueve's theory. To illustrate:

"I think we focus on that anyway, so it's not just about it, it's not just about: 'what do you do at the moment you see something happen', but that you make sure that the awareness piece can also ensure that you are more alert preventively or so. It's then also about the conversations you have huh with your group of friends that kind of thing. It's not just specifically about those moments (incident of street harassment) itself, but actually everything around it as well. So yes, It's a small nuance difference, But I think we draw it a bit wider than just on the moment itself." - Policy officer, municipality of Tilburg, personal communication, 17-4-2024.

The approach of the municipality of Tilburg has resulted in their actions having certain nuanced differences compared to the rest of the Netherlands. Through their public campaigns,

Tilburg not only focuses on recognizing and providing action perspectives for direct bystanders but also explicitly addresses individuals not directly involved in incidents. They encourage those individuals to engage in conversations about street harassment to eliminate it from their surroundings. A concrete example of an initiative stemming from this approach is Tilburg's poster campaign. While other municipalities also develop and implement various poster campaigns, Tilburg's stands apart due to its broad attention to individuals not directly involved in incidents. The emphasis here is on promoting a positive norm where people look out for each other and address each other's behaviour regarding street harassment.

"That it focuses mainly on: 'What is being said that you recognise a little bit, but underneath that also of what can you do with it?' What can you do against it?" - Policy officer, municipality of Tilburg, personal communication, 17-4-2024.

Another example of this approach is evident on the municipality of Tilburg's website, where explicit distinctions are drawn between providing bystanders with actionable perspectives and offering tips on how individuals can contribute to eradicating street harassment. While the actionable perspectives focus on the 5 D's, the tips aimed at addressing street harassment differ (Tilburg, n.d.). These tips are as follows:

1. *Inquire about the experiences of people in your surroundings with street harassment. Listen attentively, empathize with their stories, and learn from them.*
2. *Initiate conversations about this issue with others in your community; break the taboo. Discuss setting boundaries, sexuality, and flirting.*
3. *Avoid running or walking closely behind someone, especially in the dark. Adjust your speed or cross the street if necessary.*
4. *Ensure your face is visible (for instance, remove your hood) and maintain a friendly demeanour.*

Municipality of Amsterdam: Similarly to Tilburg, the municipality of Amsterdam explicitly considers the broader social network in which street harassment occurs. However, there are nuanced differences between the two municipalities. While Tilburg focuses on the (potential) bystander in relation to engaging and observing the wider social network around street harassment, Amsterdam addresses the (potential) perpetrator. This distinction arises because Amsterdam is in the process of developing an approach targeting potential perpetrators. Under this initiative, attention is directed towards the social networks of potential perpetrators with the aim of achieving sustainable

behaviour change. In this context, a potential perpetrator is viewed as (typically male) individuals not directly involved in a sexually inappropriate incident. The following quote explains:

"We are now in the process of looking at the perpetrator, what influences a perpetrator, the by directly addressing it, is it the bystanders or is it say the social network around it. And that that's the friends, the student clubs, the parents, or whoever." - Policy officer, municipality of Amsterdam, personal communication, 4-6-2024.

Due to this perspective, the municipality of Amsterdam focuses on the broad social network surrounding street harassment and thus acknowledges the broader role of individuals who are not direct witnesses to an incident. An example of a specific action stemming from this approach is that Amsterdam explicitly facilitates opportunities for societal partners and initiatives to comprehensively address the phenomenon of street harassment and the social networks surrounding individuals/potential perpetrators.

"I honestly think it's just related to other initiatives. It's also about sex education in education, about teaching people what their wishes and boundaries are, to respect them, including their own and those of others, in order to prevent sexually transgressive behaviour. Not to accept it, but also to recognise it and speak out about it." - Policy officer, municipality of Amsterdam, personal communication, 4-6-2024.

4.1.4 Answer sub-question A2:

The sub questions A2 is as follows: *How do civil servants' discourses within municipalities influence concrete policies and interventions to combat SSI, and what challenges do they encounter in this regard?*

The dominant discourse among municipal civil servants indicates that the preventive pillar is considered the most important, due to both practical and substantive reasons. Consequently, the bystander actor is assigned a significant role in interventions. Municipal officials argue that the bystander is the ideal target group since it is challenging to focus directly on the perpetrator and the victim. Within this dominant discourse, the bystander is seen as someone who directly witnesses an incident and thus has the potential to intervene immediately. This perspective leads to the development of concrete actions aimed at making bystanders aware of the phenomenon of street harassment so they can recognize it and be provided with the means to intervene during an incident. However, it is evident within this dominant discourse that there is no consistent definition for the

term 'bystander.' The limited knowledge about this actor contrasts sharply with the significant role they play within this dominant discourse.

It is visible in the interview data that new municipalities often face difficulties in obtaining a clear understanding of their networks, a problem that is less common among municipalities with more established programs of tackling street harassment. Regardless of their experience, both new and established municipalities encounter challenges in engaging diverse communities effectively. Additional recurring issues include restricted budgets, capacity constraints, collaboration with the nightlife sector, and ensuring the long-term effectiveness of street harassment strategies.

4.1.5 Answer research question A

This research question can be answered as follows: Both the policy documents and the data from interviews with officials reveal that the dominant discourse within municipal approaches to street harassment centres around three key actors, translated into three general pillars. These pillars are Prevetnion & awareness, Victim support and Street safety & enforcement.

The interviews with officials highlighted that the prevention pillar is considered the most important within the interventions, partly for practical reasons and partly for substantive ones. Within this prevention pillar, the focus is on creating awareness about street harassment, establishing social norms, and encouraging behavioural change. While all actors are targeted, the 'bystander' actor is considered by far the most important.

However, within the dominant discourse, there is no clear definition of the bystander and the bystander is mainly viewed as someone who plays a role during an incident. Therefore, awareness-raising efforts and associated actions of municipalities are generally aimed at helping bystanders recognize incidents and intervene, providing them with tools and perspectives for action. From this, it can be inferred that within the dominant discourse prevalent in municipal approaches, the emphasis is on the bystander as a direct witness. There is no explicit attention given in this dominant discourse to individuals who are not directly witnessing an incident but still play a role in shaping social norms, and thus, there are generally no specific actions targeted towards them (with exceptions noted). To put it in other words, the limited knowledge that municipalities have about the bystander stands in stark contrast with the significant role the bystander plays within the preventive strategies of municipalities. Additionally, some municipalities explicitly recognize the broader role of bystanders/non-directly involved individuals in an incident. However, the majority of municipalities have not yet explicitly focused on this aspect.

4.2 Documentary: The 'buitenstaander'

In this chapter, we delve deeper into the concept of the new actor, the 'buitenstaander'. The focus will be on examining their positionality in relation to the other three actors. Additionally, we will explore how an unconscious 'buitenstaander' comes into existence and the consequences of this. Furthermore, this chapter will discuss the documentary to address research question B and its two sub-questions. This will be done through the analysis of selected screenshots.

B: " *What are the implications of an unconscious 'buitenstaander' on municipalities' street harassment approaches, as unveiled in the documentary,* " two sub-questions are posed:

- B1: *To what extent are 'buitenstaanders' familiar with SSI and related aspects as unveiled in the documentary?*
- B2: *What is the role of the 'buitenstaander' as revealed in the documentary in municipalities' street harassment approaches?*

4.2.1 'The buitenstaander'

### 4.2.1.1 Definition buitenstaander

As previously described, the NAP, Movisie, and the dominant discourse in municipal approaches define bystanders as individuals who are directly witness to an incident and/or can directly intervene. However, this definition is problematic if one aims for a general behavioural change in society regarding street harassment. Specifically, by stating that bystanders are those who directly witness an incident and basing actions on this premise, a group of people is not addressed (those who are not directly witnessing an incident but still influence social norms through conversations (or the lack of) within their environment.

I refer to this group of non-direct witnesses as "buitenstaanders" and define them in the context of street harassment as follows: *"Individuals who are not direct witnesses to or directly involved in incidents of boundary-crossing behaviour."* In Figure 2, the positionality between the 'buitenstaander' and the other three actors is depicted. As illustrated, the victim and perpetrator are positioned in the centre, where the incident occurs. The 'buitenstaander' is shown in close proximity to the incident, indicating their role as a direct witness. Conversely, the 'buitenstaander' is depicted outside the box, signifying their lack of direct witnessing and immediate ability to intervene in the incident. However, the 'buitenstaander' remains part of the larger circle labelled 'society/making

social norms,' along with the other actors. This placement signifies that all four actors contribute to the social norms surrounding street harassment, even though an 'buitenstaander' may theoretically never have directly experienced an incident.

Figure 2:

Positionality of the 'buitenstaander' compared with the other actors around an incident
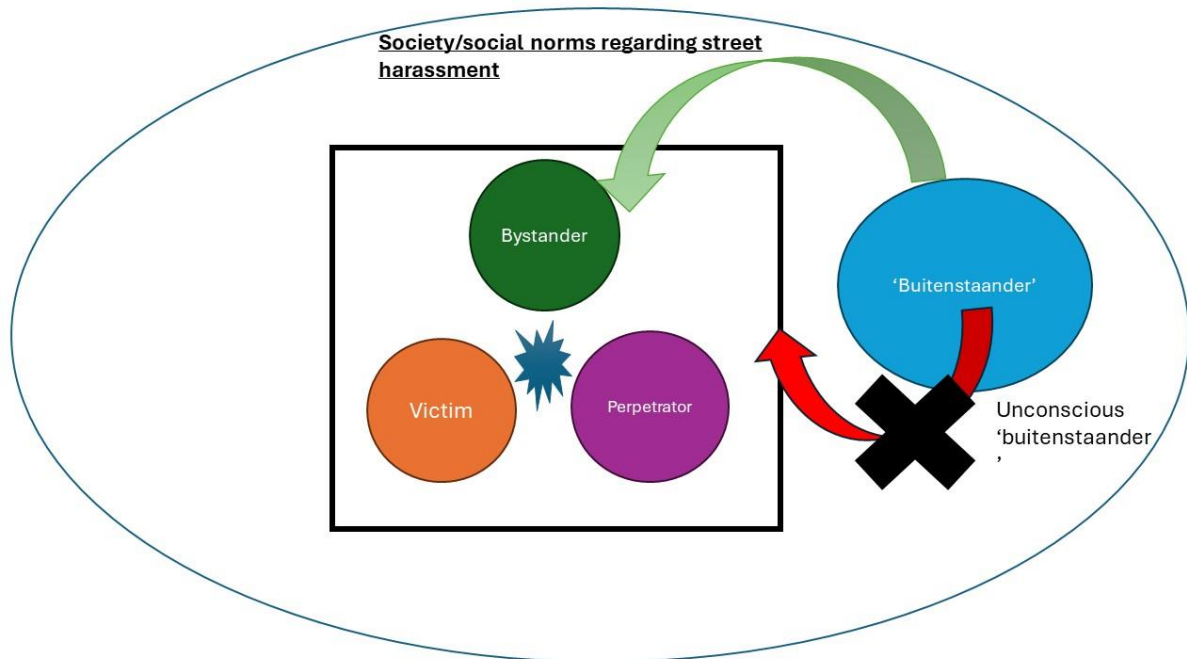
4.2.1.2 From 'buitenstaander' to bystander

A 'buitenstaander' can indeed become a bystander, as illustrated by the green arrow in figure 1. An 'buitenstaander' may suddenly witness an incident in a public space, thereby becoming a bystander who can intervene. According to the Movisie bystander intervention model, the first step before individuals assumes the role of a bystander and intervene in an incident is noticing an event and subsequently recognizing the behaviour as inappropriate (Movisie, 2022, p. 13).

Movisie emphasizes the importance of a bystander being able to identify certain signals as boundary-crossing behaviour to decide whether or not to intervene after observing an event. Therefore, according to Movisie, recognizing and assessing a situation requires relevant knowledge about street harassment and inappropriate behaviour. They outline five key points for this purpose By incorporating these five points, individuals can better recognize and assess situations involving street harassment and inappropriate behaviour(Movisie, 2022, p. 13):

1. **Understanding Various Forms and Contexts**: One must be familiar with the different forms of inappropriate behaviour and street harassment, as well as the contexts in which they occur. For instance, it is important to understand that street harassment can happen at noon in a busy square, not just in dark alleys at night.

2. **Recognizing Attitudes and Behaviours**: It is crucial to understand the different attitudes and behaviours associated with specific inappropriate behaviours, as well as the inequalities that manifest within these contexts.

3. **Awareness of Facts and Figures**: Being aware of the facts and figures related to the problem is essential. For example, it is important to know that two out of three women experience street harassment.

4. **Understanding Effects on Victims**: Awareness of the effects of inappropriate behaviour and street harassment on victims helps in recognizing these situations. Movisie argues that this awareness creates a better understanding of the issue.

5. **Insight into the Bystander Effect**: Understanding the bystander effect is also important as it facilitates earlier intervention.

To return to the concept of the "buitenstaander" in Figure 2, if a 'buitenstaander' possesses sufficient relevant knowledge and awareness about street harassment, they will recognize a situation as an incident of inappropriate behaviour or street harassment. This recognition allows them to assume the role of a bystander and proceed to step 2 (Treating the incident as an emergency requiring intervention) of the Movisie bystander intervention model (Movisie, 2022, p. 15).

However, the Movisie bystander intervention model also posits that individuals who lack sufficient knowledge and awareness about street harassment or inappropriate behaviour will not recognize a situation as an incident. Consequently, they do not assume the role of a bystander and fail to intervene in the incident. Movisie state the following (Movisie, 2022, p. 13):

"When people do not know when 'something is wrong' in a situation, it means that they are unable to pick up relevant signals from their environment (Nickerson et al., 2014). Not always being able to properly assess whether and when transgressive behaviour is occurring is an obstacle for bystanders to recognise transgressive behaviour. In other words, they have insufficient knowledge and awareness to recognise the situation as being transgressive."

If an unaware 'buitenstaander' (lacking knowledge and unfamiliar with street harassment, its common locations, and its effects on people) suddenly becomes a direct witness (bystander) to a

situation involving street harassment, one might question the extent to which this group will recognize the situation as an incident of street harassment. Consequently, they may not assume the bystander role and intervene. As a result, there is a chance that an unconscious 'buitenstaander', despite being physically present during an incident, does not recognize or perceive themselves as a bystander. This lack of recognition and awareness prevents them from seeing or acknowledging the incident as an instance of street harassment or boundary-crossing behaviour, thereby inhibiting their intervention.

4.2.1.3 The unconscious 'buitenstaander'

The theory surrounding the competence model provides further structure around the unconscious 'buitenstaander'. Within this model, there are four stages that individuals go through when learning a new skill (DePhillips, 1960). The first stage is unconscious incompetence, where an individual is unaware of what they do not know. In other words, they don't know what they don't know. The second stage is conscious incompetence, where an individual is aware of their lack of knowledge but cannot yet perform the skill. The third stage is conscious competence, where an individual knows they possess a skill and can perform it. Finally, the fourth stage is unconscious competence, where an individual can perform a skill effortlessly without conscious thought (DePhillips, 1960).

Regarding an incident of street harassment, a 'buitenstaander' can learn how to assist as a bystander. It can be argued that a 'buitenstaander' who is not aware of what street harassment is, where it occurs, and its effects on people, is in the unconscious incompetence stage of the competence model. This individual does not know what they can do against street harassment because they are not even aware of the phenomenon; they simply don't know what they don't know.

The reason an unconscious 'buitenstaander' may be in the unconscious incompetence stage is due to the normalizing nature of street harassment in society. As evident in academic literature and in the data of the interviews, street harassment is normalised in society. As a result of this, there is minimal discussion in public discourse about street harassment. This can potentially cultivate a culture of silence. Various studies, such as those by the CCV, illustrate how municipalities perceive the normalizing nature of street harassment and its effects on policy (CCV, 2023). Some policymakers receive no signals from society, leading to the erroneous reasoning that it does not exist.

Due to the lack of discourse surrounding street harassment and the prevailing culture of silence, a 'buitenstaander' may not encounter conversations about it. This is generally not problematic if a 'buitenstaander' is aware of street harassment, its occurrences, and its effects. A conscious 'buitenstaander' is thus aware of potential occurrences, increasing the likelihood of intervention as a bystander if they witness an incident. However, issues arise when a 'buitenstaander' is unaware of street harassment. An unconscious 'buitenstaander' lacks knowledge about street harassment, its locations, and its effects on individuals. As previously mentioned, the unconscious 'buitenstaander' is situated in the unconscious incompetence stage of the four stages competence model, where they do not know what they do not know. Due to the prevailing culture of silence and normalization of street harassment, this unconscious 'buitenstaander' is less likely to engage in discussions about the realities of street harassment. Consequently, they do not hear stories or facts about street harassment that they are unaware of. In other words, the unconscious 'buitenstaander' remains unaware of their lack of knowledge due to the normalizing nature and culture of silence surrounding street harassment, making it difficult for them to realize their own ignorance.

In essence, due to the normalizing nature of street harassment, there are few societal discussions about it. Consequently, an unconscious and uninformed 'buitenstaander' may not engage in conversations about street harassment. This lack of awareness prevents them from realizing their lack of knowledge and ability to intervene in incidents of street harassment. It is crucial, therefore, to explore the extent to which 'buitenstaander' are conscious of street harassment and the potential roles they can play. To investigate this issue, I took to the streets and engaged with individuals who were not direct witnesses to incidents ('buitenstaander'). The results of these inquiries are featured in a documentary. In the following chapter, this will be illustrated using several screenshots.
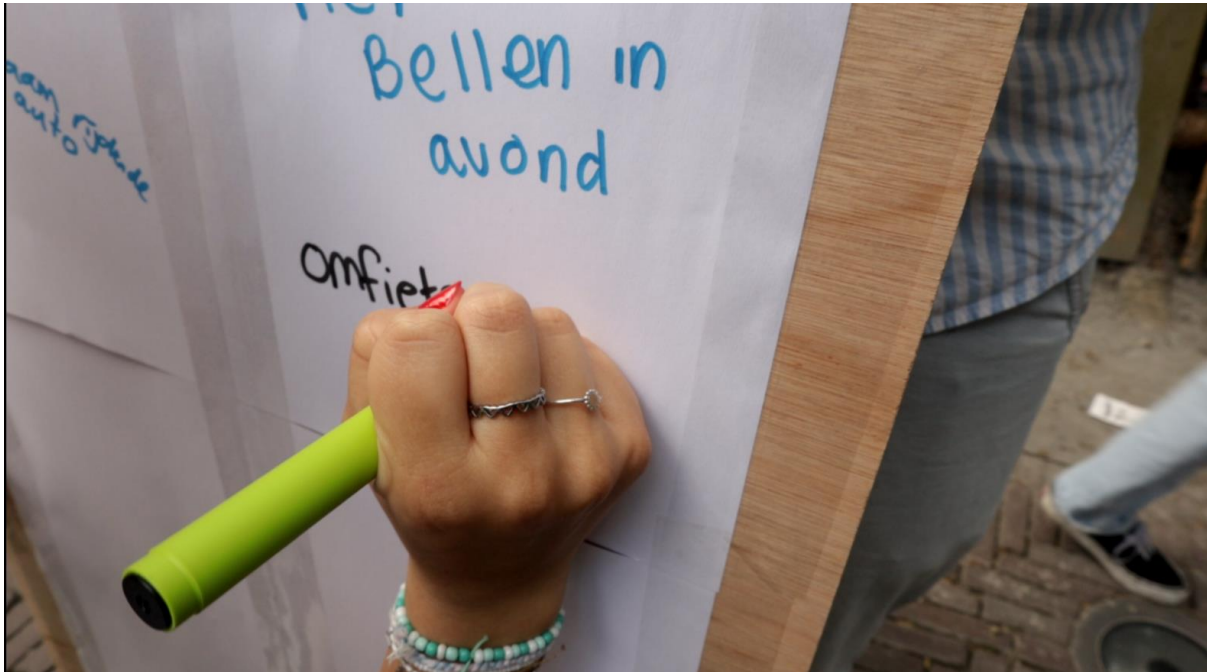
4.2.2 Documentary

In addition to analyzing policy documents and conducting interviews with civil servants, I also created a script and shot list for the documentary during the same period. Over the course of six months, I filmed various scenes in different locations, including stations, parks, streets, and roads in several cities.As outlined in the methodology chapter, a large board was used to collect responses from the 'buitenstaander'. In the documentary, it is initially shown how people respond to the question of what they would say to an unconscious 'buitenstaander' who is unaware of the effects of street harassment, particularly concerning the coping mechanisms some people use to avoid it.

The documentary reveals that respondents could almost immediately identify examples of coping mechanisms they themselves employ to prevent street harassment, such as cycling around certain areas or seeking crowded places.

Screenshot 1

Example of a 'buitenstaander' giving answer

Screenshot 2

*Example of another 'buitenstaander' giving answer*

What is not visible in the documentary but occurred off-camera is that some respondents were initially unsure about the precise meaning of the question. They hesitated to consider actions like 'cycling around' as coping mechanisms because these behaviours seemed completely normal to them. This illustrates the normalizing nature of street harassment.

After the board was filled with various inputs from different respondents, other 'buitenstaanders' were approached and asked if they were familiar with street harassment and which of the written coping mechanisms they recognized. This yielded interesting responses, which are visible in the documentary. The following screenshots have been selected to effectively illustrate these responses:

Screenshot 3

Example of a 'buitenstaander' who recognise some coping mechasime, but realises that he never knew some

"Omfietsen, ken ik sws, nepbellen ook wel"

"Deze is wel heftig, nooit gerealiseerd"
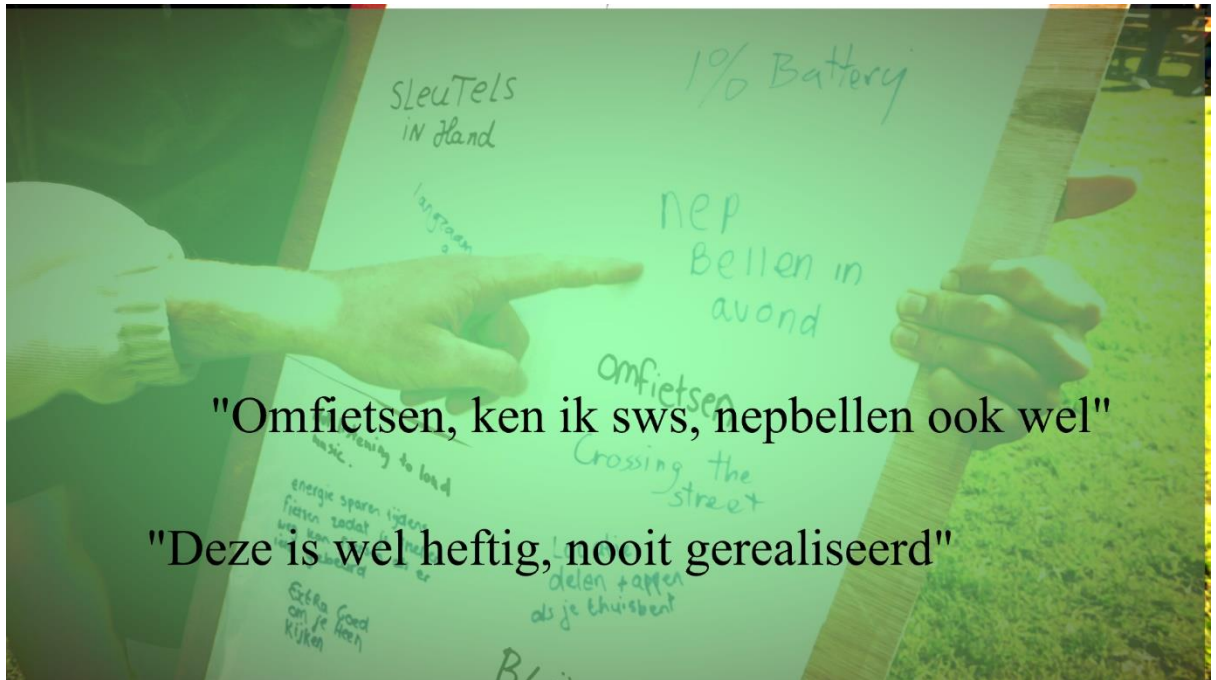
What is noteworthy is that some 'buitenstaanders' immediately recognized the written words as coping mechanisms, although this was not the case for all respondents. Screenshot 3 shows that the respondents recognized 2 to 3 effects of street harassment and the coping mechanisms used by people, but simultaneously, there was a lack of awareness about many others. This group of 'buitenstaanders' had not realized or considered many of the listed words. Not realizing these coping mechanisms does not imply malicious trivialization; rather, they were simply unaware that these were coping mechanisms used by people.

Screenshot 4

Example of a 'buitenstaander' who remember a coping mechanism because he talked once with a friend about it

Screenshot 4 shows another 'buitenstaander' who recognized a few of the written words but not the majority. Interestingly, this respondent could write down an example of a coping mechanism because they had learned about it through conversations with a female friend. This example beautifully demonstrates how discussing street harassment and its effects on people helps break the culture of silence, allowing 'buitenstaanders' to become more aware of these issues.

Screenshot 5

Example of 'buitenstaanders' who knows nothing of the coping mechanism that are written down on the board

"Ik ken eigenlijk helemaal niks,
misschien heel naief hoor
maar ik voel mezelf niet geintimideerd"

Screenshot 5 provides a different perspective from other 'buitenstaanders'. In this fragment, a group of 5 to 6 people was interviewed. What stands out, as shown in the screenshot, is that none of the respondents recognized any of the written words. One reason given for this was that they did not feel intimidated on the street. In other words, these 'buitenstaanders' had never encountered street harassment themselves, so they were not aware of its effects on people and, therefore, did not recognize any of the words on the board.

Screenshot 6

Example of 'buitenstaanders' who don't have enough relevant knowledge and awareness about street harassment

"Ik herken er geen, we komen uit een drop
dus straatinntimidatie komt niet bij ons voor"

Screenshot 6 is in line with Screenshot 5. In this fragment, it is also visible that the respondents were not familiar with the written words on the board. The reason given by the respondent was that they came from a village where street harassment, unlike in a city, does not occur. This is factually incorrect, as literature shows that street harassment does occur in villages, suggesting a possible lack of relevant knowledge that prevents the recognition of street harassment and its effects listed on the board. The following table shows all the respondents and their responses:

Table 4

Overviews screenshots documentary and comments

Respondent	Screenshot	Recognized coping mechanisms	Comments
1	1	Yes (2 – 3 words)	Many written words were not realized or considered.
2	2	Some	

Group (5-6 people)	3	No	None recognized the words due to never feeling intimidated on the street. Lack of personal experience with street harassment.
Respondent 3	4	None	Believed street harassment does not occur in villages, indicating a lack of relevant knowledge.

The documentary illustrates that there are indeed questions regarding the extent to which a 'buitenstaander' is familiar with street harassment and the effects/coping mechanisms used by individuals. This indicates that not everyone within the 'buitenstaanders' group is aware of street harassment and its effects. In most cases, respondents recognized some words on the board, but many were not aware of them because these concepts did not enter their realm of experience. They simply did not know what they did not know. Additionally, there were respondents who did not recognize or know any of the written words on the board. This stemmed from their limited relevant knowledge of the phenomenon of street harassment and/or its absence from their lived experiences.

4.2.3 Answer sub question B1

In conclusion to sub question B1, it can be deduced that to a certain extent, 'buitenstaander' are familiar with street harassment and its associated aspects. The majority of 'buitenstaanders' have a certain level of awareness of what street harassment is and the effects/coping mechanisms people use to prevent it. However, it is also evident that not all 'buitenstaanders' are equally familiar with these aspects. Once the threshold of awareness about street harassment is surpassed, differences become apparent. It can be argued that there is a subset within the 'buitenstaander' group that is,

to a certain extent, unfamiliar with street harassment and its associated aspects. This subset is unconscious and lacks relevant knowledge about street harassment, resulting in situations where they may recognize some (but sometimes none) of the effects listed on the board, yet remain unaware that they lack knowledge about the topic.

In summary, the documentary suggests that there is reason to believe that within the 'buitenstaanders' group, there exists a segment that is unconscious about street harassment. This lack of awareness stems partly from not encountering it and thus not incorporating it into their experiences, as well as not being aware of their own lack of knowledge on the subject.

4.2.4 Answer sub question B2

What was evident in chapter 4.1 Dominant discourse municipalities is that individuals who are not directly involved in an incident are not explicitly addressed within municipal policies. Consequently, 'buitenstaanders', including unconscious 'buitenstaanders' depicted in the documentary, do not play a significant role in the dominant discourse on municipal strategies for tackling street harassment. It is important to note that most municipalities do indeed consider the (unconscious) 'buitenstaander' indirectly and/or implicitly in their actions; however, this is not done explicitly. The documentary suggests that there is a subset of 'buitenstaanders' who are, to some extent, unaware of street harassment and the effects/coping mechanisms of those affected. This group could potentially play a significant role in municipal strategies. This role could be both direct (as witnesses to an incident) and indirect (as 'buitenstaanders' are not present during an incident).

The 'buitenstaander' can play a direct role in municipal approaches by more easily perceiving and recognizing instances of boundary-crossing behaviour, thereby more readily assuming the role of an active bystander. According to the bystander theory, individuals are more likely to recognize a situation as an incident of street harassment if they possess sufficient relevant knowledge and awareness. In other words, if an 'buitenstaander' acquires enough relevant knowledge and becomes more aware of the issue, they are more likely to perceive and recognize an incident of street harassment, and consequently, intervene as a bystander.

Additionally, the 'buitenstaander' can play an indirect role in municipal approaches by influencing the social norms surrounding street harassment. As illustrated earlier in Figure 1, a 'buitenstaander', like the actors of bystander, victim, and perpetrator, impacts the social norm. If an unconscious 'buitenstaander' lacks sufficient knowledge about street harassment or is not sufficiently aware of it, this influences negatively the social norms. For example, in the documentary,

a 'buitenstaander' is shown in screenshot 6 stating that street harassment does not occur in villages. Such a statement can contribute to the normalization or trivialization of street harassment in village communities. This can result in individuals who experience street harassment in villages being taken less seriously, being less inclined to share their experiences, or believing that their experiences are rare. Consequently, this can lead to a lack of attention and resources to address the problem, both from the community and policymakers. In short, disseminating incorrect information about the prevalence of street harassment can reinforce misconceptions and hinder effective solutions.

Another example of negative influence on social norms by an unconscious 'buitenstaander' is evident in screenshot 5 of the documentary. It shows someone who is unfamiliar with or does not recognize any of the coping mechanisms mentioned, citing lack of personal experience with intimidation. This attitude can reinforce the perception that street harassment is a marginal issue, thereby trivializing its severity. This can lead to feelings of isolation and misunderstanding among those who experience street harassment, discouraging them from seeking support or sharing their experiences. As a result, the problem may be overlooked on a broader societal scale, leading to insufficient collective efforts to address it effectively.

Moreover, another example not visible in the documentary but relevant, involves friend groups. When friends gather to socialize at someone's home, they are often not direct witnesses to incidents of street harassment. Consequently, they may be classified as 'buitenstaander'. However, if someone within the group lacks sufficient knowledge about street harassment, conversations during these gatherings where street harassment is discussed may trivialize the phenomenon. This contributes to negative social norms because trivializing street harassment diminishes the perceived seriousness and impact of the issue within the group. This can foster a culture where street harassment is not taken seriously, potentially discouraging victims from sharing their experiences and seeking help. Moreover, such conversations can perpetuate misinformation, undermining overall awareness and responses to street harassment in the community.

In summary, an 'buitenstaander' can indeed play an indirect role in shaping municipal approaches. However, what is observable in the dominant discourse of municipal approaches is the lack of explicit attention to the indirect role that individuals ('buitenstaanders') who are neither victims nor perpetrators can have in addressing street harassment. Explicitly focusing actions on 'buitenstaanders' can prompt them to recognize their indirect role. An example of a municipality doing this is Tilburg, which explicitly addresses the indirect role of 'buitenstaanders' in their campaigns and on their website, as previously noted.

4.2.5 Answer research question B

Research question B can be answered as follows: The documentary and the theory regarding the 'buitenstaander' demonstrate that a new actor, termed the 'buitenstaander'. can be identified and can play a role in municipal strategies for addressing street harassment. A 'buitenstaander' can play both a direct and an indirect role in combating street harassment.

First, a 'buitenstaander' can assume the direct role of a bystander, as outlined in the Bystander Intervention Model by Movisie. For doing this, a 'buitenstaander' should have enough sufficient relevant knowledge and awareness about street harassment, its common locations, and its impact on people's behaviour. Second, a 'buitenstaander' can play an indirect role by promoting the correct social norms in discussions about street harassment, even when no incident is occurring. For example, by correcting friends who make dismissive or inaccurate comments about street harassment, the 'buitenstaander' helps maintain the integrity of social norms.

As can be concluded, a 'buitenstaander' can play a both a direct role as indirect role within municipal approaches to street harassment. However, both the documentary and the theory indicate that there are questions regarding the extent to which all 'buitenstaanders' are aware of street harassment, its occurrence, and its effects on peoples. The theory suggests that there is a subgroup within the 'buitenstaander' category that is to some extent unaware of street harassment. Academic literature shows that street harassment is a normalized issue within society. Consequently, it is rarely discussed in the public sphere. For instance, researchers as Spaccatini proofed that victims often feel that they are not taken seriously due to factors such as victim blaming, which leads them to share their experiences and stories less frequently (Spaccatini et al., 2019). Additionally, for some individuals, street harassment has become so commonplace that they no longer find it unusual, and it has become a part of their daily lives

Due to the lack of talking about street harassment, individuals who have never experienced or been familiar with street harassment are less likely to encounter discussions about it. As a result, they are less likely to be aware of or understand what street harassment entails and its effects on individuals. This subgroup is referred to in this study as the unconscious 'buitenstaander'. The unconscious 'buitenstaander' does not realize their own ignorance, which, according to the four competence model, categorizes them as unconsciously incompetent in learning about street harassment and intervening in incidents. The documentary confirms this notion, showing that the unconscious 'buitenstaander' simply does not know what they do not know. In the documentary, it is

evident that some interviewees recognized a few effects of street harassment but had never realized or reflected about the other effects. Some respondents did not recognize any effects at all. In summary, it is possible to indicate that there is a subgroup, the unconscious 'buitenstaander', which should be considered in municipal approaches to street harassment.

The indication of the presence of an unconscious 'buitenstaander' in society regarding street harassment has implications for municipal policy and the potential direct and indirect role of the 'buitenstaander' within it. The unconscious 'buitenstaander is unaware of their lack of knowledge. This situation can result in unconscious 'buitenstaander failing to perceive and acknowledge instances of street harassment due to their inadequate knowledge and awareness. Consequently, they may not take on the direct role of bystander and intervene. Moreover, their lack of understanding might contribute to downplaying street harassment or disseminating inaccurate information, which can adversely affect social norms. For these two reasons, explicit attention to the 'buitenstaander' is essential in municipal approaches.

As observed in the dominant discourse, municipalities generally do not explicitly address the 'buitenstaander', let alone the unconscious 'buitenstaander', in their approaches. It should be noted that in the dominant discourse, municipalities indirectly or unconsciously address the 'buitenstaander' with their actions, but this is not done explicitly. The preventive pillar that is visible in the dominant discourse of municipalities approaches regarding street harassment, focus already on raising awareness and has the correct principles applicable to the unconscious 'buitenstaander'.

Explicitly involving the (unconscious) 'buitenstaander' in this preventive strategy has significant implications for the concrete actions that need to be taken in municipalities approaches. The unconscious 'buitenstaander' must be made aware of their own ignorance. While some municipal actions already reach indirect the (unconscious) 'buitenstaander', explicit actions targeting the unconscious 'buitenstaander' would be an enhancement. The goal of these explicit actions is to move the unconscious 'buitenstaander' up a step in the four competence model, so they become aware of their ignorance about street harassment and how to intervene in an incident. In other words, the objective concerning the unconscious 'buitenstaander' is to transition them from unconscious incompetence to conscious competence.

Like said, actions explicit on the 'buitenstaander' should be considered besides the already existing actions. An example of a valuable action within the preventive pillar, yet one that raises questions regarding its effectiveness in reaching unconscious 'buitenstaanders', is the organization of themed meetings that require prior registration. While themed meetings constitute a potent and beneficial strategy within municipal approaches, it cannot be assumed that they effectively reach the

unconscious 'buitenstaander'. Typically, such events attract individuals who are already somewhat familiar with the subject of street harassment. These attendees may have gained knowledge through personal experiences or direct contact with friends, prompting them to seek further information at a themed meeting. However, an unconscious 'buitenstaander' is unaware of their ignorance. Therefore, the likelihood of them attending a themed meeting to learn more about street harassment is low, as they do not realize their lack of knowledge on the subject.

For instance, if an individual is only aware of street harassment as a nocturnal issue in deserted areas, they are unlikely to attend a themed meeting focusing on broader and less familiar aspects of street harassment. Another example involves someone who believes that street harassment only occurs in large cities and not in smaller communities or villages. This person may see no reason to participate in a themed meeting on street harassment, assuming the issue is irrelevant to their local context. They are unaware that street harassment can also occur in smaller communities, which diminishes their motivation to engage with the topic.
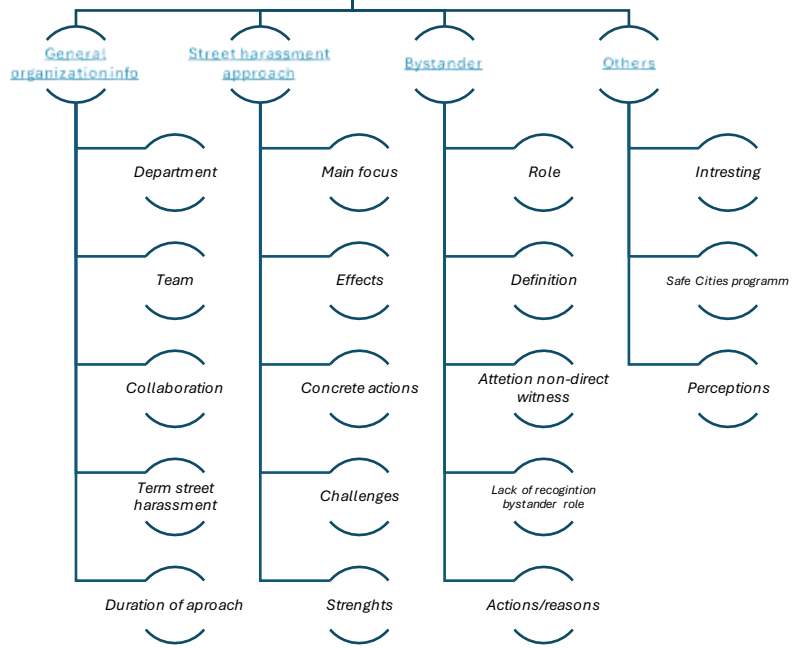
Therefore, to effectively address the unconscious 'buitenstaander', explicit actions should be directed towards the actor 'buitenstaander'. .A recommendation is to focus on promoting the indirect role of 'buitenstaanders' and breaking the silence surrounding street harassment in society. Additionally, it is advisable to conduct these actions in public spaces where multiple communities gather. By taking this approach, there is a high likelihood that the unconscious 'buitenstaanders will be reached, either directly during the event or indirectly through subsequent conversations among 'buitenstaanders'. Consider, for instance, a cultural festival integrated with awareness activities, or a sporting event featuring explicit signage highlighting various aspects of street harassment. This way, an unconscious 'buitenstaanders' can be confronted with the realization that they were unaware of certain aspects of the phenomenon.

Figure 1

Concept indicator model:

The following coding tree illustrates the codes used to structure and analyse the data from interviews with civil servants

How do civil servants' discourses within municipalities influence concrete policies and interventions to combat street harassment, and what challenges do they encounter in this regard?

General organization info
- Department
- Team
- Collaboration
- Term street harassment
- Duration of aproach

Street harassment approach
- Main focus
- Effects
- Concrete actions
- Challenges
- Strenghts

Bystander
- Role
- Definition
- Attetion non-direct witness
- Lack of recogintion bystander role
- Actions/reasons

Others
- Intresting
- Safe Cities programm
- Perceptions

5 Conclusion, discussion and future research

5.1 Conclusion

This research investigated whether a new actor, termed the 'buitenstaander', can be identified within municipal approaches to street harassment and examines the implications of a group of unconscious 'buitenstaanders for these approaches. Therefore, this study used two research questions, each with two sub-questions.

In addressing Research Question A '*What is the dominant discourse in the policy domain regarding street harassment among municipalities*?', sub-questions A1 and A2 were employed. Sub-question A1 was as follows: *What discourses dominate in municipal policy documents related to tackling street harassment?* and it can be concluded that there is a dominant discourse within municipal approaches to street harassment interventions that revolves around three general pillars: Prevention & Awareness, Victim Support, and Enforcement & Safe Streets.

Sub-question A2 was: *How do civil servants' discourses within municipalities influence concrete policies and interventions to combat street harassment, and what challenges do they encounter in this regard?* The answer to this sub-question reveals that civil servants generally consider the prevention pillar to be the most important. Although all three actors are addressed within this pillar, the bystander was considered the most crucial. Civil servants argued that the bystander is the ideal third actor since it is challenging to address the perpetrator and the victim directly. The bystander is seen as playing a significant role in solving and preventing street harassment because they can intervene directly during an incident. For this reason, concrete actions within municipal approaches are designed to ensure that bystanders recognize street harassment incidents and intervene when they occur. This leads to actions aimed at increasing bystander awareness and providing intervention perspectives.

However, what stands out is the lack of a clear, unified definition of the bystander within this dominant discourse. The interview data with civil servants and the policy documents show that no municipality officially defines the bystander, and each offers a different unofficial definition. One reason for this is the limited knowledge regarding bystanders and street harassment. According to scholar Fileborn and O'Neill, only three concrete studies have been conducted (Chaudoir & Quinn, 2010; Fileborn, 2017; Fileborn & O'Neill, 2023, p. 6; Stop Street Harasment, 2014). This limited knowledge contrasts sharply with the significant role municipalities attribute to bystanders

In conclusion, Research Question A can be answered by stating that there is a dominant discourse within municipal approaches, wherein the Prevention & Awareness pillar is deemed the

most important. Within this pillar, the actor of the bystander holds significant importance, indicating that the bystander also plays a crucial role in the dominant discourse. within the dominant discourse of municipal approaches, the bystander is viewed as a direct witness. Consequently, preventive actions are designed to help bystanders more easily recognize a street harassment incident and provide them with tools to intervene. This approach is based on Movisie's bystander intervention model, which is itself based on the bystander intervention model of Darley and Latané (Darley & Latane, 1968; Movisie, 2022). This model asserts that individuals need to be aware of their ability to intervene in street harassment incidents. Concrete actions include public awareness campaigns and other initiatives aimed at raising bystander awareness.

Addressing the bystander in municipal street harassment interventions raises critical questions. Firstly, defining the bystander solely as a direct intervenor reflects a narrow viewpoint on the role of a bystander, as Stueve et al. argue (Stueve & Et all., 2006). A broader social network surrounds any incident and significantly influences the problem. Secondly, by restricting bystanders to direct witnesses, individuals who are not present during an incident are excluded from strategies addressing street harassment. This omission is evident in both interview data and the dominant discourse, where there is no explicit focus on non-witness individuals.

This presents a paradox: municipal preventive strategies emphasize cultural change towards street harassment through awareness campaigns, establishing social norms, and fostering behavioural change. Achieving such shifts requires engaging a broad spectrum of residents. However, what visible in the dominant discourse is that approaches focus predominantly on direct actors (victims, perpetrators, and bystanders) overlooking a significant portion of the population who are indirect witnesses.

This study defines this group of non-direct witnesses as 'buitenstaander and is defined as follows: *"Individuals who are not direct witnesses to or directly involved in incidents of boundary-crossing behaviour."* A 'buitenstaander' also contribute to shaping social norms and possess the potential to transition into active bystanders, but it is possible question the amount of awareness of this buitenstaander regarding street harassment and the aspects around it. The new actor was investigated in this study based on research question B: *What are the implications of an unconscious 'buitenstaander' on municipalities' street harassment approaches, as unveiled in the documentary?*

Research question B was explored through sub-questions B1 and B2. Sub-question B1 was as follows: *To what extent are 'buitenstaanders' familiar with street harassment and related aspects as unveiled in the documentary?* The documentary revealed that 'buitenstaanders' are generally somewhat aware of street harassment and its effects on people's behaviour, manifesting in various

coping mechanisms. But the documentary showed also that not all 'buitenstaanders' are fully aware of the phenomenon street harassment and the coping mechanism people use to avoid it. IN some cases that were even not aware of it. Therefore, the existence of an unconscious 'buitenstaander' subgroup can be indicated. This subgroup is limited and/or partially aware of street harassment, the locations where it occurs, and its effects on human behaviour.

Scholars such as Fileborn argue that victims often refrain from sharing their experiences due to societal stigma and victim-blaming attitudes (Fileborn, 2019). The routine nature of street harassment leads to its acceptance as a part of everyday life, where unwelcome behaviour is increasingly normalized. Additionally, coping mechanisms adopted by individuals, such as altering travel routes or using headphones, are also normalized in society. . The normalization of street harassment minimizes public discourse around it. Consequently, individuals who have never experienced street harassment may also not encounter conversations about it in their surroundings. For instance, if person A has never experienced or witnessed street harassment in their life, the normalization and surrounding culture of silence may prevent person A from encountering or learning about the phenomenon through social interactions.

Sub-question B2 was as follows: 'and B2 : *What is the role of the unconscious 'buitenstaander' as revealed in the documentary in municipalities' street harassment approaches?* Based on this sub-question, it can be asserted that an (unconscious) buitenstaander can indeed play a role in municipal approaches to street harassment. This role can be both direct and indirect. The direct role involves observing and recognizing an incident, thereby assuming the role of a bystander who may intervene. The indirect role pertains to situations where no incident occurs, but the formation of socials norm regarding of street harassment are formed.

In summary, Research Question B can be answered by concluding that an unconscious 'buitenstaander' has implications for the concrete actions implemented in municipal approaches to street harassment. As this study shows, an unconscious 'buitenstaander' can be classified as unconsciously incompetent concerning street harassment, according to the four-stage competence model (DePhillips, 1960). This means they are unaware of their lack of knowledge. Negative consequences of this can include the unconscious 'buitenstaanders's' failure to perceive and recognize street harassment incidents due to insufficient relevant knowledge and awareness, resulting in not assuming the bystander role. Additionally, a lack of relevant knowledge and awareness can lead to the trivialization of street harassment or the spread of misinformation, negatively impacting social norms.

Therefore, it is crucial to make the unconscious 'buitenstaander' aware of their knowledge gaps. This primarily has implications for concrete actions within municipal approaches. To reach this subgroup of unconscious 'buitenstaanders', it is advisable to explicitly involve the 'buitenstaander' in the approach. From here, the indirect role that a 'buitenstaander' plays in shaping social norms can be emphasized, with the hope that this approach will expose the unconscious 'buitenstaander' to the phenomenon of street harassment through conversations. In summary: In addition to current preventive actions, explicit actions should be focused on the 'buitenstaander', emphasizing their indirect role and initiating conversations about street harassment. It is recommended to conduct these activities not in isolated events but in public spaces where diverse communities converge.

5.2 Discussion

The presence of signs indicating an unconscious 'buitenstaander' in society regarding street harassment has implications for municipal policies. As evident in the dominant discourse, municipalities generally do not explicitly focus on the buitenstaander actor, let alone the unconscious 'buitenstaander. It should be noted that municipalities, in their approach, implicitly or indirectly address the buitenstaander through their actions, but currently, this is not done explicitly. The (unconscious) 'buitenstaander' can indeed play an explicit role within municipal strategies. This role can be both direct and indirect in nature.

This study recommends making an explicit distinction in municipal approaches by introducing a new actor called the 'buitenstaander 'alongside current preventive actions. I can imagine that some may consider this unnecessary and redundant, suggesting that a term like "potential bystander" suffices to engage those who did not directly witness an incident. Indeed, "potential bystander" describes a group capable of taking direct action through targeted interventions. However, I believe the strength of the term 'buitenstaander' lies in explicitly highlighting the indirect role regard the social norms individuals who did not witness an incident can play. Actions targeting potential bystanders focus solely on their potential to intervene directly in an incident, which this research shows is a limited perspective. Furthermore, the term 'buitenstaander' provides a framework to identify and explore an unconscious group of 'buitenstaanders'. This research demonstrates indications that there is indeed a group of unconscious individuals who did not directly witness an incident but may inadvertently contribute to a negative social norm regarding street harassment. This group of individuals has not yet been explicitly addressed within the dominant discourse of municipal street harassment interventions, while in my view, explicitly engaging this group would be enriching.

Moreover, a clear distinction between bystanders and 'buitenstaanders' should be maintained using precise definitions, ensuring clarity about which group is being targeted during actions. As shown in this study, newer municipalities are seeking best practices to shape their street harassment strategies. It is anticipated that in the coming years, more municipalities will join the Safe Cities program. By using consistent definitions, these newer municipalities can better compare the various actions of existing street harassment strategies, avoiding the issue of comparing apples to oranges due to differing interpretations of individuals who are neither victims nor perpetrators.

In addition to investigating the new actor called the 'buitenstaander', this research also aimed to raise awareness about street harassment through the production of a documentary. As outlined in the theoretical framework of cultural memory, a media product has the potential to (re)shape social and collective memory about a (historical) event. Therefore, a documentary is able to reshape the social and collective memory, integrating a less dominant perspective about the phenomenon street harassment into collective memory, with the effect that people get another or new perspective about street harassment. By presenting experiences of individuals regarding coping mechanisms to avoid street harassment to those who have never encountered such situations, the documentary can foster an empathetic understanding and perspective on what street harassment entails, thus potentially developing a prosthetic memory, as described by Landsberg (Landsberg, 2004).

Furthermore, the documentary meets intra- and inter-medial strategies as described by Erll by addressing the phenomenon of street harassment through the medium of film and providing schemas related to street harassment (Erll, 2008). However, only time will tell whether this documentary can incorporate a less dominant perspective on the effects of street harassment on individuals and their coping mechanisms into collective social memory. To achieve this, the plural-medial strategy of Erll is necessary, which involves creating a media network around the documentary within society (Erll, 2008). This strategy aims to position the film as an important narrative presenting a significant perspective on street harassment. In conclusion, while the documentary currently may not fulfil this role, with appropriate distribution in the right contexts and settings, it has the potential to do so. Therefore, I recommend distributing and promoting this documentary in such a way that it can fulfil this potential in the future.

5.3 Recommendation future research

It is important to note that this research has described the actor 'buitenstaander' and examined whether it was possible to question the extent to which this 'buitenstaander' is aware of street harassment, potentially identifying a subgroup termed the unconscious 'buitenstaander'. As

the results of this study demonstrate, it is indeed possible to raise questions about the awareness of '' buitenstaanders' regarding the topic of street harassment, indicating the presence of a subgroup of unconscious 'buitenstaanders.' However, due to the limited scale of this research, it is challenging to conclusively assert that there is a significant number of buitenstaanders who lack sufficient relevant knowledge and awareness of street harassment to warrant labelling them as unconscious 'buitenstaanders'.

Recommendations for future research include delving deeper into the group of 'buitenstaanders' and their awareness to ascertain where the threshold of awareness lies. Academic literature reveals a notable gap in knowledge in the context of street harassment about individuals who do not fit into the categories of perpetrator or victim, emphasizing the need for further exploration into this area. Future research could explore the extent to which 'buitenstaanders' discuss the effects of street harassment on individuals, its prevalence, and related topics. Additionally, it would be beneficial to investigate the level of awareness among 'buitenstaanders' regarding the potential roles they can play in addressing street harassment. Finally, I recommend studying effective strategies to reach and engage unconscious 'buitenstaander' with concrete actions that are efficient and impactful.

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Apendix

Appendix 1 My engagmenten within the organisation

During my engaged field research at the Municipality of Rotterdam, I was involved in the sexual street harassment (SSI) project team as an intern. This project team operated within the larger Zorg van Kwetsbare Gezinnen & Huishoudelijk Geweld team, which is part of the MO (Public Health) cluster. This was a crucial detail because being part of the MO cluster directed the team's focus more towards prevention rather than punishment and enforcement. Until around 2020, the SSI project team was part of the Safety Directorate cluster, emphasizing enforcement and addressing offenders. However, the relocation to the MO cluster shifted Rotterdam's approach towards prevention and bystander engagement, distinguishing it from many other municipalities where street harassment initiatives often fell under Directie Veiligheid and prioritized enforcement. Furthermore, the SSI project team comprised members with diverse backgrounds, including city inclusiveness, education, sexual violence, and city management, as well as members from the Directie Veiligheid cluster. This multidisciplinary composition ensured a comprehensive approach to tackling street harassment.

Within the SSI project team, I had the opportunity to actively participate in various meetings with both partners in the field and other municipalities. Moreover, it also provided me with insights into different perspectives related to street harassment and its mitigation strategies. Additionally, my field research gave me street-level experience, such as accompanying BOAs during prevention actions. This afforded me the opportunity to observe the impact of policy measures at the street level and how civilians engaged with the issue. During this internship, my main task was to organize the Rotterdam Week Against Street Harassment, scheduled from May 13 to May 19, 2024. This was the second edition, and for the first time, there was a significant focus on organizing the week. My objective in organizing this event was to apply the knowledge I gained from my master's program in a practical setting. I aimed to collaborate extensively with local partners to shape the content of the activities and I tried to give enough room for creative ideas like the postcards as promo. Additionally, I sought to raise awareness among individuals unfamiliar with the topic of street harassment and engage them in the activities. Notable examples included hosting a live podcast on the youth floor and setting up an anti-street harassment square on the campus of Erasmus University.

With the municipality of Rotterdam, I made various arrangements regarding my engaged fieldwork. Firstly, my engaged fieldwork commenced on January 8th, wherein I contributed 16 hours per week to the SSI project team. It was agreed that the engaged fieldwork would be referred to as a

'meewerk' internship rather than a thesis internship. This resulted in the understanding that I was not conducting research or deliver findings to the municipality of Rotterdam regarding my thesis.

Picture 1

A picture of the Live podcast activity of Chicks and the city during the Rotterdasme week tegen SSI

Picture 2

A picture of the Square against street harassment during the Rotterdamse week tegen SSI

Picture 3

A picture of the promo for Rotterdamse week tegen SSI