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SafeHost

A project designed to ensure safer hospitality, prevent, and combat gender-based violence in the tourism sector in Venice and Mestre.

Starting Context

SafeHost – Safer Hospitality Against Gender-Based Violence – is a project co-funded under the **European Union**'s "Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values" program, Priority 2 of the CERV-2025-DAPHNE call.
The project addresses the **early detection** and **prevention** of gender-based violence, by activating the hospitality sector as a strategic ally.
Women in **mobility** contexts – tourists, migrant women and seasonal workers – face specific obstacles due to lack of familiarity with local services, language barriers, precarious legal or employment status, and greater exposure to social isolation. In these contexts, accommodation staff are often the closest point of contact for accessing support services.

Where We Started

In a territory with a very high tourism vocation such as Venice and its metropolitan area, accommodation facilities represent a widespread and capillary presence. When a woman in mobility (whether a visiting tourist or a seasonal worker) finds herself experiencing a situation of violence or abuse, asking for help can be extremely complex. The lack of local points of reference, language barriers, and the fear of compromising one's stay or job risk blocking any request for support.

In this scenario, accommodation staff – particularly frontline workers in reception, housekeeping, and concierge services – are largely female and often represent the closest and most immediate human point of contact for guests. However, hospitality workers do not always have the necessary skills and procedural tools to recognize early warning signs or to direct the person toward a safe and protected response. Hence the need to structure training pathways and build a solid bridge between the accommodation sector and the network of Anti-Violence Centers and local services.

The Idea

SafeHost was created to develop a **transnational model**, based on concrete data, capable of connecting accommodation facilities with specialized support services for women experiencing gender-based violence.
The project uses a **trauma-informed methodology** and involves **Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Spain, and Denmark** through structured **training** and the creation of reference **protocols** and **digital tools** – designed in collaboration with hospitality professionals, NGOs, and survivors – necessary to recognize indicators of abuse and **safely** direct the person toward appropriate resources.

The project is built on four operational and scientific pillars:

- **Survivor-Centered**: every intervention prioritizes the dignity, safety, confidentiality, and freedom of choice of the woman;
- **Trauma-Informed**: staff training to recognize the impact of trauma and avoid re-traumatization;
- **Co-Design**: tools, protocols, and technological solutions co-designed with hospitality staff, social and territorial services, Anti-Violence Centers, and women survivors of gender-based violence;
- **Intersectionality**: specific attention to vulnerabilities related to language, status, and disability

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Key Project Actions

- **Mapping of needs and Baseline Research:** conducting interviews and focus groups with tourist accommodation staff and local services to identify good practices and systemic barriers;
- **Capacity Building and Training:** delivery of free training modules (in-person and e-learning) aimed at receptionists, cleaning staff, and hotel management;
- **GBV Focal Point:** qualification of internal hotel reference figures for the confidential and correct management of reports;
- **Technological Innovation (SafeHost App):** development of a mobile app and digital platform with an AI-powered multilingual chatbot and quick orientation buttons accessible via QR code, to guarantee guests discreet, 24/7, and completely anonymous support;
- **Inter-Institutional Protocols and Safe Referrals:** signing of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) between hotels and Anti-Violence Centers to define transparent reporting procedures and emergency accommodation solutions.

Timeline

SafeHost is a **two-year** project running from May 2026 to April 2028.

Impact

The various project actions and operational phases will make it possible to:

- Strengthen the capacity of frontline hospitality staff to **identify** early signs of gender-based violence, **interact** with sensitivity, and **respond** appropriately;
- Establish **systematic collaboration** between hotels and local NGOs, creating solid referral pathways to services and, where necessary, emergency accommodation solutions;
- Institutionalize early **detection** and **intervention** protocols within the operational standards of hospitality organizations;
- Strengthen public **awareness** and the **accessibility** of support services through targeted and culturally sensitive communication.

How to Participate

If you are an accommodation facility, a tourism professional or belong to a local association/service in the metropolitan area of Venice and wish to join the SafeHost network or participate in free training courses, you can contact the project team for information and expressions of interest:

Email: safehost@laesse.org
Official Website: https://safehostproject.eu/

Territory

Venice