

Nightlife, verbal and physical violence among young European holidaymakers: what are the triggers?

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Abstract

Objectives There is an established relationship between nightlife, substance use and violence. This study investigated this relationship when people are on holiday, and explored the differences in experiences between physical and verbal violence.

Study design A survey of young tourists at seven airport departure areas in Southern European resorts.

Methods Questionnaires from 6502 British and German tourists were analysed exploring demographics, violence (verbal and physical), substance use, and reasons for resort and venue selection.

Results Over two-thirds of respondents reported being drunk on their holiday, 12.4% had been involved in arguments and 2.9% had been involved in fights. Logistic regression highlighted more violence amongst visitors to Mallorca [arguments: adjusted odds ratio (AOR) 2.7; fights: AOR 2.0] compared with those visiting Portugal, males (arguments: AOR 1.3; fights: AOR 1.7), those who had used illicit drugs (arguments: AOR 1.5; fights: AOR 2.9), those who had been in fights at home in the last 12 months (arguments: AOR 2.2; fights AOR 2.9), and those who had frequently been drunk abroad (arguments: AOR 2.4; fights: AOR 2.5). Those aged 16-19 years, visiting Italy or Crete, who were drunk for fewer than half of the days of their stay, and who chose bars because they were frequented by drunk people were more likely to report having an argument. Fights were associated with cannabis use and were negatively associated with choosing bars with a friendly atmosphere. Economic status or frequency of visiting bars had no relationship with arguments or fights.

Conclusions Understanding and addressing the variables involved in violence when holidaying abroad is critical in targeting appropriate health promotion and harm reduction measures.

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