

# Police raid homes of men accused of New Year's Eve sexual assault in Milan

From the [Telegraph](#)

Italian police are investigating 18 men and teenage boys on suspicion of sexually assaulting young women who were celebrating New Year's Eve in Milan.

Police said most of the suspects were foreigners or Italians of North African origin, evoking disturbing parallels with the sexual violence perpetrated on New Year's Eve by men of Middle Eastern or North African background in the German city of Cologne in 2015.



Police on Tuesday raided the homes of 15 young men and three boys, aged between 15 and 21, in Milan and Turin. They were identified with the help of mobile phone footage and CCTV images, as well as the testimony of alleged victims and analysis of social media content. Facial recognition software was also used to find the suspects.

So far, nine women have come forward to say they were sexually assaulted, but police believe there may be more.

"We tried to push them away, my girlfriend punched them and slapped them but they just laughed and continued molesting us, I had 15 hands on me." (one of two German women who were alleged victims of the assaults told ANSA, Italy's national news agency) She claimed that there were police officers in the piazza but that they did not intervene. "The police saw us and did nothing, I don't know why. It was shocking because they must have seen us."

Another woman said a group of youths ripped off her bra, forced her to the ground and grabbed her breasts. She had worn a pair of leggings beneath her skirt to ward off the cold – without those she fears she would have been raped.