



Inspections in several Brussels nightlife venues: a disproportionate action that raises concerns in the nightlife sector

Last Saturday night, several emblematic venues in Brussels were subjected to police raids conducted in disregard of standard procedures. While the inspections appeared to focus on administrative aspects, these interventions resulted in the abrupt interruption of the events, impacting not only the affected establishments but also their clients and the artists performing there.

Police officers carried out these checks by cutting the music for extended periods, creating an atmosphere of undue pressure on clients and artists who had no connection to the purpose of the inspection. Additionally, the intervention was marked by a disproportionate deployment of resources: the presence of 40 officers in a club for an administrative inspection lacks any rational justification. This show of force contributed to a sense of insecurity and confusion, both at the scene and on social media in the aftermath.

The impact of such an action is twofold. On one hand, it led to a temporary closure and a suspension of activity at clubs during peak hours, resulting in massive financial losses. On the other hand, it caused unnecessary panic among clients, putting at risk their experience and trust in these nightlife venues.

Beyond these immediate consequences, this type of intervention sends a disastrous signal to the entire Brussels nightlife sector. Nightlife is a key factor in the capital's appeal, a job-creating industry, and a driving force of local dynamism. It also plays a crucial role in the well-being and mental health of young people, particularly in a post-pandemic context where social spaces are more necessary than ever. Should we understand that the only acceptable alternative is for young people to stay confined at home?

We call on the authorities responsible for these inspections to provide an explanation for this disproportionate intervention and to commit to preventing such excesses in the future. We are fully available to engage in a constructive dialogue with them. The Brussels nightlife scene should not be stigmatized or unfairly hindered. We urge better collaboration between law enforcement and nightlife stakeholders to ensure both administrative compliance and the smooth running of events.