

# British band Mumford & Sons boycott Swedish music festival over its 'disgustingly high rate of sexual violence' following reports that at least 35 girls were assaulted at the event

The British band headlined Bravalla festival in Norrköping on the weekend, but have vowed not to return after music lovers reported five rapes and a number of sexual assaults.

On their official Facebook page, the band announced it would not be returning to Sweden,

'We're appalled to hear what happened at the Bravalla Festival last weekend. Festivals are a celebration of music and people, a place to let go and feel safe doing so. We're gutted by these hideous reports.

'We won't play at this festival again until we've had assurances from the police and organisers that they're doing something to combat what appears to be a disgustingly high rate of reported sexual violence.'

It follows 35 sexual assaults on girls aged between 12 and 17 at the country's Putte i Parken festival in Karlstad Friday and Saturday including Alexandra Larsson, who spoke exclusively to [MailOnline](#).

Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven described the situation

as 'totally unacceptable' and said that laws on sexual assault would be tightened. 'We are in the process of reviewing them,' he said in a speech at a political seminar. 'It's also important that we continue to ensure that police, prosecutors and other officials are better equipped to investigate such crimes and actually catch the perpetrators.'

Police handed out anti-groping bracelets ahead of the festival season in Swedish aimed at raising awareness and quashing sexual harassment, but the efforts were in vein and campaigners are calling for more to be done.

Swedish police press spokesman Thomas Agnevik, who was present at the Bråvalla festival, told The Local: 'I can understand that criticism. As long as these serious crimes are happening, of course not enough has been done. Nobody should have to go to a concert and leave as a rape victim.'

Alexandra Larsson, who waived her right to anonymity, she was molested on Friday night having been looking forward to attending the festival for months.

She said: 'Everything was okay at the beginning of the evening. But things got out of hand during the last concert with John de Sohn that started at midnight. At first we were pushed right up against the stage by the massive crowd. Everyone around us behaved really badly and my friends told a couple of boys to quieten down.

'They were then threatened by the boys who said 'you will die, b\*\*\*h'. But the verbal abuse was just beginning. It would become much worse. We managed to walk away from those boys after a while and started watching the concert. That was when I felt the first touch against my bottom.

'Then someone took the liberty of grabbing my butt really hard. I turned away and said to the group of boys behind us that this was not okay, but I did not know who had done it. After a while, I felt someone running his fingers between my

legs touching my genitals. Luckily, I had jeans on me.'

After the harassment, she turned around and said to the group of young men standing next to her that they should stop what they were doing. But everyone around her claimed to be innocent.

It then happened again, she said. 'I turned around and screamed right out that 'whoever it was – you're a pig!' I told my friends what had just happened and they were all shocked. Me and my girlfriends decided to leave the concert, because we could not see who it was. It was just a sea of people.'

Ms Larsson described a feeling of powerlessness as the festival she and her friends had been looking forward to was completely destroyed. 'It was creepy. Someone stood around me and groped me and I had no idea who it was. It was sick. We had come there to have fun, but the festival only lasted 20 minutes for us because it was so uncomfortable.

She said that the boys around them were about 17 or 18-years-old but 'those standing behind me were not from a Swedish background. They were probably immigrants. I hate to say it. But it is the truth,' she said. 'I have reported this to the police, but it feels like a drop in the ocean. I saw girls that came crying from the audience, including an old childhood friend who is two years younger. She cried so much that it broke my heart. The same thing had happened to her in front of the stage. A bunch of teenagers hidden in the crowd had grabbed her bottom, breast and genitals. I think that at least hundreds were molested at the festival. There are probably loads of unrecorded incidents....

'I could see crying girls everywhere around me when I left the festival. I don't know if they all had been groped, but most of them probably had been violated in front of the stage.

'I do not know what to think, it is so wrong. Everyone thinks

it's wrong but nothing happens. There are large festivals with several thousand people and these mass incidents create a powerlessness for both the police, security guards and especially for visitors who become victims.

'The perpetrators will be so anonymous in the audience that they will get away with sex crimes. That is the main problem, that the perpetrators get away with it.

'It's not okay. I should be able to go to festivals and have fun like everyone else without being afraid. It is wrong, really wrong, but that's the feeling I have after yesterday. It's damn hard that ordinary people who just want to have fun should have to suffer just because someone thinks it's fun to violate.

She said that she believed the problem was spreading 'because attackers know they will not get caught'.