

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Over 1,000 women and girls are for sale for sex in Ireland daily. (Kelleher et al. 2009)
- 80% of women in prostitution reported physical abuse and over 60% had been sexually assaulted. (Raymond et al. 2002)
- The vast majority - 89% - of women involved in prostitution want to stop. (Farley et al. 2003)
- 500,000 women are victims of trafficking across Europe. (Claude & The Swedish institute 2010)
- 11% of those trafficked into Ireland for sexual exploitation are under 18 years. (Kelleher et al. 2009)
- The majority of women who enter prostitution first do so as minors. (Ekberk 2002)
- 1 in 15 men in Ireland report having paid for sex. (Kelleher et al. 2009)
- 61% of them are married or in a “committed” relationship. (Kelleher et al. 2009)
- Sex buyers come from all parts of Ireland and all socio-economic backgrounds. (Kelleher et al. 2009)
- Surveys of men highlight the greatest deterrent to buying sex is a criminal sanction and/or risk of public exposure. (Mc Leod et al. 2008)



“  
MEN WANT TO BELIEVE THAT YOU  
ARE ENJOYING IT. YOU HAVE TO  
PRETEND THEY ARE FANTASTIC.  
”

(Susan)

## SUPPORT THE TURN OFF THE RED LIGHT CAMPAIGN

The Turn Off the Red Light Campaign believes that prostitution is not inevitable. It is fuelled by the willingness of men to pay for sex.

The campaign is calling on the Irish government to introduce legislation to end the exploitation of women, men and children in the sex industry.

In Ireland, it is not illegal to buy sex away from public places. Most of the sex industry operates indoors in Ireland. In countries, like Sweden, where the purchase of sex is illegal, there has been a massive decline in prostitution and a significant reduction in sex trafficking and organised crime.

We believe that the most effective solution is to tackle the demand for paid sex that fuels prostitution and trafficking.

### WE ARE CALLING FOR:

- The criminalisation of the purchase of sexual acts, in addition to criminalising pimping, procuring and trafficking of persons for sexual exploitation. This would make it illegal to buy sex.
- In recognition of the vulnerability of those involved and exploited in prostitution this campaign is also calling for legislation that decriminalises the persons who are prostituted.
- By supporting the campaign you are calling for the end of sexual exploitation in Ireland.

Quotes from research in Ireland in 2009 (Kelleher et al. 2009)

## WHAT IS THE CONTEXT IN WHICH WOMEN END UP IN THE SEX INDUSTRY?

The means by which women and girls become exploited in the sex industry can vary but in most cases coercion and/or exploitation of their vulnerability are key factors. Some are trafficked, while a significant number of women end up in prostitution as a result of poverty, debt, homelessness, addiction or being groomed by a partner, family member or ‘friend’. A large number will have experienced serious abuse or neglect in childhood or youth.

Although a small group compared to females, boys and men who are prostituted will have similar experiences and are also a highly vulnerable group.

Those involved in prostitution suffer significant long-term harm, with negative physical and psychological health impacts from involvement in prostitution.

The mortality rate of these women is many times higher than the national average (Farley 2004 & HWWA 2004).

More than half of those in prostitution have been raped and/or sexually assaulted and at least three-quarters have been beaten up by pimps or buyers. Some women and girls in prostitution are murdered.

“  
THIS IS NOT A NORMAL LIFE OR A JOB. I WANT TO BE  
SURE MY DAUGHTER WILL NEVER HAVE TO DO THIS.  
”

(Vanessa)

## WHY NOT LEGALISE PROSTITUTION?

Countries like the Netherlands that legalised prostitution have had an explosion in organised crime, prostitution and trafficking.

Amsterdam with a population of 750,000 people has over 20,000 women and girls in prostitution compared with 200 in Stockholm, a city with a population of 1.3 million.

Non governmental organisations, Irish civil society organisations, unions and individuals have formed an alliance to raise public awareness about the harm of prostitution and sex trafficking.

“IT FELT LIKE A PRISON. NO TIME FOR LUNCH AND I WAS ON CALL 24/7. I SAW BETWEEN 5 AND 7 MEN A DAY. THERE WAS NO CHOICE ABOUT WHICH MEN YOU SAW, AND SOME MEN WANTED SEX WITHOUT CONDOMS.

IF YOU REFUSED TO HAVE ANAL SEX YOU HAD TO PAY A PENALTY OR THE “SECURITY” MEN WOULD BEAT YOU UP.

(Isobel)

”

## WHAT CAN I DO?

- Learn more - find out about the relevant legislation and read about real experiences of women affected by prostitution on our website **[www.turnofftheredlight.ie](http://www.turnofftheredlight.ie)**
- Sign the online petition and/or download a form letter which you can send to your local TD.
- Speak out! Talk to family, friends and colleagues about the harsh reality of prostitution and sex trafficking in Ireland. Share the campaign on Twitter and Facebook.
- Support an organisation working on this issue with your time and/or financially.
- Inform the Gardaí if you suspect a brothel is operating in your area or that a woman has been trafficked, or a child sexually exploited.

**TURN OFF THE RED LIGHT IS AN ALLIANCE  
MADE UP OF ORGANISATIONS INCLUDING:**



For the complete and growing list of alliance members, please see

**[www.turnofftheredlight.ie](http://www.turnofftheredlight.ie)**

# TURN OFF THE RED LIGHT

End prostitution and sex  
trafficking in Ireland