

The NGO perspective on prostitution and trafficking in Europe: the EWL campaign 'Together for a Europe free from prostitution'

Trafficking in women and prostitution: Bulgarian and European perspectives
Sofia, 13 July 2012



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Building an EWL's approach to prostitution and trafficking for sexual exploitation



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The EWL: the democratic voice of women at European level

- ✓ The largest umbrella organisation of women's associations in the EU
- ✓ Promoting women's rights and equality between women and men in Europe
- ✓ Members in all 27 EU member states and 3 candidate countries, as well as 20 European-wide associations → representing over 2000 women's organisations



The EWL position on prostitution and trafficking for sexual exploitation

EWL 1998 motion 'Prostitution and trafficking'

- ✓ Prostitution and trafficking in women constitute a fundamental violation of women's human rights
 - ✓ Prostitution and trafficking in women should not be associated with the terms "forced" or "free"
 - ✓ The definition of male violence includes all forms of sexual exploitation
- calling for protection of and access to services for women, and for education to equality



The EWL position on prostitution and trafficking for sexual exploitation

EWL 2001 motion ‘Make it a crime to buy women in prostitution and develop strong policies against pimping’

- ✓ Women are victims of a crime and of a system
- ✓ They should not in any way be criminalised
- ✓ Buying sex should be a crime
- ✓ Policies should help women to get out of prostitution (financial assistance, education, job training, housing and health care)

Pimping should be tackled



The EWL position on prostitution and trafficking for sexual exploitation

Other EWL motions

- ✓ Pornography is a form of male violence against women
- ✓ Zero tolerance towards all forms of prostitution, including 'services' for persons with disabilities
- ✓ Give women victims of trafficking a residence and/or work permit, psychological and psychiatric help, the opportunity to work and study, and compensation
- ✓ Advertising of sex services should be prohibited
- ✓ Need for prevention to women: education and vocational training and information



EWL's approach to prostitution

✓ The act of engaging in sexual relations for money →

Traditional image of the person in prostitution

✓ But it also implies prostitute-users, procurers and networks, the State and society → Several actors involved → **System of prostitution**



EWL's approach to trafficking

Trafficking in human beings

... exists because prostitution exists :

✓ 79% of reported trafficking in human beings is for sexual exploitation.

... exists because prostitution is profitable :

✓ The profits generated during the exploitation of victims of sexual exploitation reach US\$ 27.8 billion.

UNODC 2009 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, UNODC Preliminary findings of the human trafficking database (2003), Europol Mai 2007



Building EWL expertise

Three-year project 'Nordic-Baltic Network' (2005-08), with NGOs and government agencies

→ Concrete activities to **support and assist women victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation**



Building EWL expertise

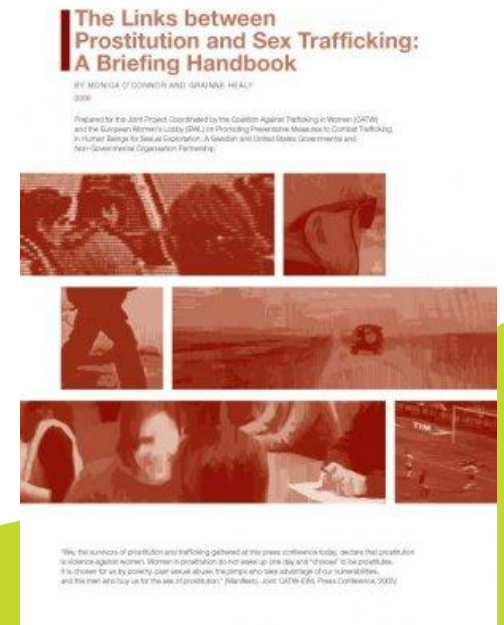
The links between prostitution and sex trafficking: a briefing handbook (2006, EWL-CATW)

EWL Briefing Trafficking in human beings in the EU: a gendered issue (2011)

EWL video clip 'Not for sale' (2006)



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Prostitution in Europe...

17 out of 27 EU member States
have ratified the **UN
Convention of 1949 for the
Suppression of the Traffic in
Persons and of the
Exploitation of the
Prostitution of Others.**



**What about your
country?**



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Prostitution in Europe...

Three main approaches to the system of prostitution :

- ✓ **Regulationism:** prostitution is a job, procuring is decriminalised (Germany, the Netherlands)
- ✓ **Abolitionism:** prostitution is considered as violence against women, procuring and prostitute-users are criminalised (Sweden, Norway, Iceland)
- ✓ **Prohibition:** 'Just hide it!' Persons in prostitution and procuring are criminalised, sometimes also prostitute-users (Croatia)



Ten years of abolition (SE)

Impact on prostituted persons

- ✓ Reduction of street prostitution (halved)
- ✓ No evidence of Swedish sex tourism abroad

Impact on trafficking

- ✓ Decrease of trafficking and organised crime

Impact on society

- ✓ Increased support to the law
- ✓ Decrease of the number of prostitute-users



Ten years of regulation (NL, GE)

Impact on prostituted persons

- ✓ Still poor conditions (NL & GE)
- ✓ Decrease of well-being (emotional, social, legal...)
- ✓ No alternatives: only 6% of cities provide help (NL)

Impact on trafficking

- ✓ Increase of trafficking and organised crime: half of the owners of legal brothels have a criminal record (NL)
- ✓ Increase of hidden prostitution: 83% of ads for prostitution relate to illegal brothels (NL)
- ✓ 50 to 90% of women in 'legal industry' being forced (NL)



To end trafficking in women, we need to end prostitution

By tolerating the systems of prostitution, we support traffickers and organized crime.

All forms of prostitution are a violation of human rights.



EWL abolitionist principles

The prostitution of women and girls constitutes a **fundamental violation of women's human rights** and a serious form of **male violence against women**. The tolerance of the EU and its member states for the system of prostitution allow for **men's use of and control over women's body and sexuality**, and fuels trafficking in women for sexual exploitation. The persistence of systems of prostitution in EU member states demonstrates the **failure at European level to reach gender equality and promote women's rights**.



EWL's abolitionist principles:

- Prostitution is violence against women**
- Prostitution is an obstacle to equality between women and men**
- Abolition is a progressive and realistic policy project**



Prostitution is violence against women

- ✓ Between 80 and 95% of persons in prostitution have suffered some forms of violence before entering the system of prostitution (rape, incest, pedophilia)
- ✓ 62% of women in prostitution report having been raped
- ✓ 68% of women in prostitution meet the criteria for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder like victims of torture
- ✓ **The repetition of a sexual act without any desire is a form of violence**



Prostitution perpetrates male domination and legitimises it

- ✓ For 25% of men, the concept of 'rape' for women in prostitution is 'ridiculous'...
- ✓ "She gave up her rights when she accepted my money"
- ✓ Around 50% of buyers have paid for sex in other countries. They cite a variety of reasons for traveling to other countries for prostitution, including price, variety and exoticism.

→ The system of prostitution comprises all oppressions: patriarchal, racist, and economic...



The abolition of prostitution...

- ✓ ... is about **pursuing the struggle against all forms of violence against women**: prostitution is part of the historical continuum of male violence against women; incest, rape, marital rape are outlawed thanks to women's NGOs.
 - the abolition of the system of prostitution must be the next step to **stop men's control and use of women's and girls' bodies and sexuality**



The abolition of prostitution...

- ✓ ... is about **extracting sexuality and bodies from the market**: there is no equality in an sexual relation based on money
- ✓ The system of prostitution perpetuates patriarchal views on women's sexuality
 - **It is about real sexual freedom!**



The abolition of prostitution...

- ✓ ... is about **deconstructing the liberal discourse about choice**: 9 out of 10 women in prostitution would like to exit the system of prostitution but feel unable to do so
 - We cannot build a project for society by adding individuals consents, we can build a strong policy project by **setting a standard of human dignity for all women and girls around the world**



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The abolition of prostitution...

- ✓ ... is about **changing mentalities** and setting clear norms: it's not possible in the 21st century to buy access to a woman's or a girl's body and sexuality
 - ... is about **making equality between women and men a serious issue and reality!**



EWL political demands

No repression towards **persons in prostitution** / No taxation of their incomes / Concrete alternatives / Unconditionality in the deliverance of residence permits to foreign persons in prostitution / Equal treatment when victims of male violence

Make it a crime to buy sexual 'services' / Campaigns on accountability and deterrence towards **prostitute-users**

Prevention of prostitution / Education to a respectful sexuality / **Awareness raising** on the reality of prostitution and break stereotypes

Condemn all forms of **procuring and pimping** and refuse its decriminalisation / Restitution of all procuring benefits and funds



Let's put an end to the myths about prostitution!

- ✓ Nevada, where procuring is decriminalized, sees the highest rates of rape compared to all US states
→ **Prostitution is not a solution to rape!**

<http://www.prostitutionetsociete.fr/politiques-publiques/legislations-nationales/nevada-les-bordels-exemplaires-d>

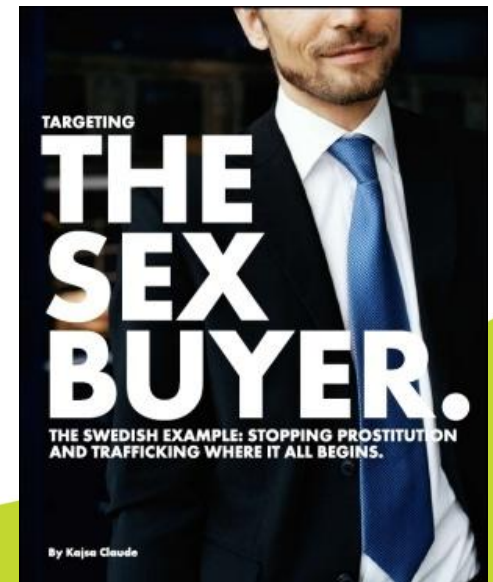


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Let's put an end to the myths about prostitution!

- ✓ 43% of men were with friends when they engaged with prostitution, 65% had their first experience arranged by friends or colleagues
- **Prostitution cannot be justified as the only solution for desperate men**

Anderson & O'Connell Davidson,
2002. Farley et al., 2009



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Let's put an end to the myths about prostitution!

- ✓ The average age of entry into prostitution is 13-14 years
 - How can prostitution be about sexual freedom?



Benson, C. and Matthews, R. (1995), Street prostitution: Ten facts in search of a policy in *International Journal of Sociology of the Law*, Vol. 23, p395-415



Let's put an end to the myths about prostitution!

- ✓ Up to 95% of women in street prostitution are problematic drug users
 - **Prostitution has nothing to do with economic independence for women**

Home Office (2004a).
Paying the Price: A Consultation Paper on Prostitution. London: UK Government.



EWL campaign 'Together for a Europe free from prostitution'



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EWL campaign goals

- ✓ To raise awareness on the reality of prostitution
- ✓ To inform about the legal choices made in European countries and advocate for the abolitionist vision
- ✓ To support abolitionist NGOs active at national level
- ✓ To initiate a European abolitionist movement
- ✓ To support women survivors of prostitution
- ✓ To involve men and change peer pressure into positive attitude towards equality and respect for women's rights

→ We need social and political change!



EWL campaign

‘Together for a Europe free from prostitution’

- ✓ **Film and clip** ‘Not for sale’ (2006)
- ✓ **Clip** ‘For a change of perspective’ (2011)
- ✓ **Pledge** → sign it!
- ✓ **Campaign webpages** with information and resources
- ✓ **Postcard**
- ✓ **Common logo**



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TOGETHER FOR A EUROPE
FREE FROM PROSTITUTION



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Abolitionist mobilisation in Europe

- ✓ **32 EWL member organisations** involved in the campaign, in 18 countries
- ✓ **11 partners** in Europe and the USA
- ✓ **31 MEPs** stating their support to the campaign
- ✓ **3 personalities from the cultural world**
- ✓ **Support to national actions:** Hungary, Portugal, France, Belgium in 2011 / Denmark, Finland, Portugal, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Italy, Spain, Luxembourg in 2012



Abolitionist mobilisation in Europe

- ✓ **First event gathering supportive MEPs: 30 May, EP**
- ✓ ‘Be a sport. Keep it fair... Say NO to prostitution’
- ✓ Video clip ‘Sport, sex and fun’
- ✓ Group photo of MEPs + press release + press briefing
- ✓ **Clear message:** prostitution is violence against women, sporting events cannot be an excuse to tolerate/justify prostitution, we need to change the perception of masculinity



Les eurodéputé-e-s donnent un **carton rouge à la prostitution** lors des événements sportifs.

Un événement visuel du LEF au Parlement européen.
30 mai 2012, 13h – ASP balcon G, 3e étage



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Campaign of MONA Foundation: 'I am responsible' (2010-11)

Awareness
raising in
Hungary



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Abolitionist mobilisation in Portugal

Petition of the Portuguese Platform for Women's Rights (2011-12)



Plataforma Portuguesa para os Direitos das Mulheres

Respeitar a diversidade | Unir forças | Realizar a Igualdade de Género

[ÍNICIO](#) [SOBRE NÓS](#) [ORGANIZAÇÕES MEMBRO](#) [AÇÕES DE LOBBYING E PARTICIPAÇÕES](#) [FILIAÇÕES INTERNACIONAIS](#) [COMO ADERIR](#) [PONTO DE CONTACTO: GÉNERO !](#) [PARTICIPE!](#) [CO](#)

Janeiro 2012

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30	31					

«Dez» Fev»

Publicações

CEDAW: O Estado da Arte em Portugal | A CEDAW fez 30 anos no final de 2009 mas continua absolutamente actual, fornecendo um conjunto de directrizes que permitem orientar o trabalho de todas as pessoas e organizações que intervêm em defesa dos Direitos Humanos das Mulheres. Esta publicação contém as recomendações feitas pelo Comité CEDAW ao nosso país em 2007 e o Relatório Alternativo EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY EUROPEEN DES FEMMES

« Seminário "Prostituição e Tráfico de Seres Humanos para Fim de Exploração Sexual em Portugal e na Europa"

18 de Outubro: Dia Europeu contra o Tráfico de Seres Humanos »

Petição - Junt@s por uma Europa livre de prostituição

A prostituição, enquanto sistema de exploração sexual de pessoas, incluindo crianças e jovens, é uma realidade de violência extrema e de violações graves de direitos humanos.

Não é uma questão moral, é uma questão de Direitos Humanos!

Pagar por sexo é inaceitável! Pagar por sexo é impor sexo!

O Ser Humano não é para venda!

Eu declaro que não apoio o sistema de prostituição e exijo aos decisores políticos, a nível local, nacional e europeu, que tomem medidas para erradicar os factores que a influenciam de forma a se alcançar uma Europa livre de prostituição!

Junte-se à Campanha! Assine a petição [aqui](#).

Outubro 20th, 2011 | Category: Junt@s por uma Europa livre de Prostituição | [Leave a comment](#)

Responder

Nome (obrigatório)



Addressing men in Spain

How much is
your ass?
Your mouth?
Your genitals?

APRAMP (2008)

¿CUÁNTO
VALE TU
CULO?
¿Y TU BOCA? ¿Y TU SEXO?
Más de 600.000 personas al año son vendidas,
compradas y forzadas a comerciar con su cuerpo.
Si el cuerpo de una persona puede ser comprado,
todos estamos vendidos.

www.23septiembre.blogspot.com

23 de septiembre
Día Internacional contra la explotación sexual
y la trata de mujeres y niñas.

GRUPO 23 sept

APRAMP

asociación de mujeres



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Demonstration in Denmark



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Addressing men in Lithuania

It's shameful to buy
a woman.

By the way, people
will get to know
about it...



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PIRKTI MOTERĮ – GĖDINGA!
Be to, anksčiau ar vėliau VISI tai sužinos*

Dabar baudžiamas ir **PERKANTIS** prostitucijos paslaugas asmuo:
*Tiesiogiai, su šiuo skelbimu susijęs ar netiesiogiai, su šiuo skelbimu susijęs asmuo. Šis skelbimas yra tik informacinis ir neturėtų būti laikomas paskaita.

8900-01
Pareigos mums klubas organizacija
Socialinio apsaugos ir laisvės ministerija

SILVAINIS: (8 5) 2629 003
Moteriu ir žmonių teisių centras
Klaipėdos apskr. ir apskr. teisėsaugos depart. Liaudies Ceptai, Laisvės alėja 11, Klaipėda

Are you so worthless that you need to pay?
The price of prostitution includes: humiliation, mistreatment,
violence...



Campaigns
from public
authorities
in Spain



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Building partnership in France

Awareness raising
campaign co-organised
by the City of
Strasbourg and EWL
partner Mouvement du
Nid (2011)



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Strasbourg.eu
& COMMUNAUTÉ URBAINE

UNE FEMMIE

n'est pas un
OBJET

**La prostitution est rarement un choix,
toujours une violence.**

Plus d'infos sur : www.strasbourg.eu/prostitution

EN PARTENARIAT AVEC:
MOUVEMENT
DU NID

www.strasbourg.eu

To find out more:

www.womenlobby.org

Thank you!



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