



Immigrant Council
of Ireland

GLOBALISATION, SEX TRAFFICKING AND PROSTITUTION: THE EXPERIENCES OF MIGRANT WOMEN IN IRELAND

*The Immigrant Council of Ireland
in collaboration with
the Women's Health Project (HSE)
and Ruhama*

Globalisation, Sex Trafficking and Prostitution

The Experiences of Migrant Women in Ireland

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Workshop 67

Metropolis Copenhagen

16th September 2009

International Context

- **800,000 people are trafficked across national borders**
- **80 per cent of victims of trafficking and forced labour are women and girls**
- **50 per cent are minors**
- **The majority are trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation**

U.N. Palermo Protocol

‘..the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs’

Research Components

- **Context of Migration, Trafficking and Prostitution**
- **Estimate numbers and profile of trafficked women and women in indoor prostitution**
- **Organisation and operation of the sex industry**
- **Experience of women and health impacts**
- **International best practice and analysis of prostitution regimes in other countries**
- **International instruments, Irish legislative framework and recent Irish initiatives**
- **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Trafficked Women and Girls

- **102 women over a 21-month period, Jan 2007 and Sep 2008**
- **26 aware of a further 64 women who were trafficked into Ireland**
- **11 per cent were children**
- **Vast majority from impoverished regions in Africa and Central European/ non-E.U. countries**

Conducive Environments for Trafficking

- **Extreme poverty (for all women)**
- **Family pressure/dislocation including being orphaned**
- **War and violence**
- **Childhood sexual abuse**
- **Fleeing from a forced marriage**

Targeting, Coercion & Deception

At the age of 17, Suzan from Sierra Leone was raped by soldiers. At 19, she was offered work in Europe in the hotel sector, by a 'family friend' who arranged a false passport and other documents for her. The friend accompanied her to Ireland. When she arrived in Ireland she was taken to a house and raped by his friends and forced into prostitution.

Transportation

Vita's recruiter was a Moldovan woman from her village. The agents in the Czech Republic were Romanians. The agent in Dublin was Romanian. The woman who met her in London and forced her into prostitution was a Lithuanian national who had connections to recruiters in Moldova, Belarus and other Eastern European countries.

Sexual and Physical Violence

Violence	Number	Percentage
• Physical violence	45	71.4
• Rape	35	55.5
• Gang rape (origin)	14	22.2
• Gang rape (trafficked)	4	6.3

Total number on whom information was available = 63

Control and Captivity

Julia, aged 17, was given clothes and boots and a bag of condoms and was told to do anything that clients wanted. She was forced to have sex with a minimum of four men per night

Lidia from Poland, was chaperoned daily to a brothel in Italy and her movements were controlled. When she returned each day from the brothel, her trafficker raped her in the apartment. She was subsequently brought to Ireland and forced into prostitution

Kiky from Nigeria was held in total captivity in a house in Ireland for two years

Debt

On arrival in Ireland at the age of 15, Angelle from Nigeria was told that she owed €65,000 to the traffickers

On arrival in Ireland, Ruth from Nigeria was told that she owed her traffickers €55,000. She is controlled by a Nigerian gang who also control other women

THE IRISH SEX INDUSTRY: Research methods

- **An internet audit of women advertised as ‘escorts’. Details in relation to age, country of origin, locations of where sex is sold, sexual acts offered and price were documented on 425 women**
- **Content analysis of Punter.net reviews to document the views of men who buy sex. This was complemented by data provided by the *Irish Escort Client Survey* and *The Irish Study of Sexual Health and Relationships***
- **Interviews with the co-ordinator and staff of the Women’s Health Clinic which provides sexual and reproductive health care to women in prostitution**
- **Interviews with 12 migrant women in indoor prostitution**

PROFILE OF WOMEN

- **1,000 women in indoor prostitution in Ireland at any one time**
- **Internet advertises at least 800 women, sexually explicit pictures of each woman and detailed lists of the sexual acts which can be bought**
- **51 different nationalities of women advertised**
- **3 to 13 per cent of the women are Irish, 97 per cent are migrant women**
- **Age range is 18 (with some evidence that girls as young as 16 years are involved) to 58 years. Average age is 25**
- **Apartments hotels and call outs to the home of the buyers are the main locations (19 of the 26 counties were named)**
- **Women can now be ordered to his home on a detailed form outlining her body, nationality and the sexual acts the buyer wants**

PROFILE OF MEN

- **One in 15 men in Ireland reported that they buy sex**
- **Tend to be highly educated, incomes in the middle range, professionals**
- **61 per cent are married or in a relationship**
- **High proportion buy sex during the daytime and in the evenings after work**
- **16% buy sex every two weeks or more frequently, 46% less than monthly**
- **37% also pay for sex with women in street prostitution**
- **54 per cent visit pornographic sites on the internet**
- **Vast majority of the men are Irish and white**

DEMAND

- **Average price paid for sex is €150 for half an hour and €250 for an hour with some agencies being more expensive**
- **Dangerous, unprotected sexual activities are commonplace with high proportion of buyers stating they had unprotected oral sex, vaginal and anal sex**
- **Increasing pressure on women to put their own health at risk and engage in high risk activities with bodily fluids**

Punter Reviews

- Good Value for money
- Physical attributes
- Details of sexual acts
- Sexual gratification
- Expectation that she enjoys it
- 'Girlfriend experience'

Women's Experience

RECRUITMENT

- **A friend offers to pay flight**
- **Contact with a club/entertainment**
- **Arrive in Ireland with debt**
- **Prostitution Agency**
- **Moved around to different apartments**
- **Available 24/7**
- **Offered cocaine and alcohol**
- **No money paid for six weeks**

PROSTITUTION AGENCIES

I was in the first agency for eight months. There were two girls in each apartment and you were available 24/7 to clients. Whether you were sleeping or cooking dinner, it did not matter; you had to answer the phone. The men were told they could do anything and if you refused they complained and you were fined €400.

PROSTITUTION AGENCIES

The second agency was cheaper and different one. There were about 10 girls in the apartment. You worked from 7pm to 5am, mostly after 2am. We would walk up and down and men would come and choose which girl they want. It was quicker, more normal sex and the men were younger but you could see up to 10 men a night

(Anara)

DEMAND

***‘Men are constantly looking for sex without condoms, including anal sex, which I do not do... Men want more and more thing... not just normal sex. I have to move around... I do not stay in any one place for too long as they will get to know by the reviews that you will not do these things’
(Floria)***

HEALTH IMPACTS

- **37 per cent had bacterial vaginosis**
- **31 per cent had candida infections (thrush).**
- **22 per cent had hepatitis A.**
- **20 per cent had hepatitis B.**
- **14 per cent had Chlamydia. 10 per cent had urinary tract infections**
- **6 per cent had cervical cell abnormality (CIN 1-3)**
- **14 per cent had vaginal/genital warts**

Fear and Violence

- Constant anxiety and vigilance
- Violence from pimps and agencies
- Violence from buyers
- Intrinsic sexual violence of prostitution

ISOLATION

I have a life and family at home. Ireland is only about work. I take the odd day off, a Sunday, and have dinner out but then I think that is one day longer here and in this work I do not want to be in (Vanessa)

I am very lonely here at times. I really want to go home. I have no home here as I work in the apartment I live in. I am paying for a small house in a village and hope to finish paying it off in two years (Nadia)

LONG TERM IMPACTS

‘I feel like nothing. I feel dirty. I feel confused and upset all the time. I want to get out of this work. I want a normal life. I am tired of all the lies... lies, lies, lies to everyone, to my family, my friends in Brazil. How could I go back? What would I say I had been doing? I do not want to lie but how can I tell the truth. I have lived inside this world, this universe and the normal world outside is lost to me. I feel I have no future’. (Anara)

Continuum of Exploitation

- Different Tactics of traffickers and Pimps: *Violence, Coercion, deception, enticement*
- Same Intention: *Supply of women and girls to the sex industry*
- Result: *sexual exploitation, harm, abuse*

Research recommendations

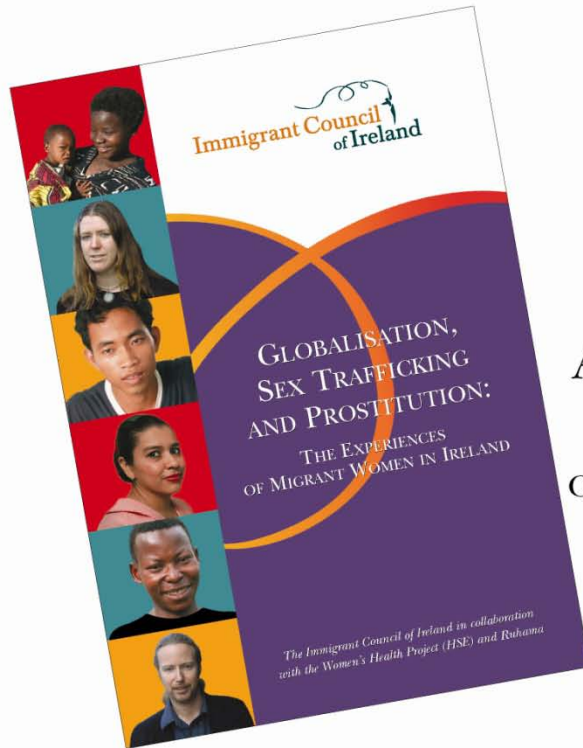
- Protective environment for disclosure and identification
- Exit Routes
- Regularising immigration status
- Inter-agency strategy
- Legislation and enforcement
- Changing attitudes and addressing growth of sex industry
- Trafficking of minors
- Prevention in origin countries
- Compensation
- Research, evaluation and monitoring

ICI priority areas

- Develop a protective environment for disclosure and identification.
- Identification mechanisms
- Services - -Health services, Independent legal advice, safe accommodation
- Mechanisms to regularise immigration status
- Immunity from prosecution
- Tackle Demand



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