



Disrupt Demand

Welcome to the first EZINE for *Disrupt Demand*. Here, you can explore the new project, our activities so far and what to expect in the coming months.

What is *Disrupt Demand*?

Disrupt Demand is a project designed to support efforts to prevent human trafficking for sexual exploitation by reducing demand. To achieve this aim, we use a combination of legal strategy research, and fostering cooperation among key stakeholders.



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Who are we?



[The Immigrant Council of Ireland \(ICI\)](#) is an organisation where migrant and Irish people work together to provide information, support and legal advice to immigrants and their families. The ICI is very active in lobbying for legislative and policy reforms and has contributed to some very significant changes and improved the understanding of issues facing migrants in Ireland.



[The Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies, Cyprus \(MIGS\)](#) is a non-profit organisation which promotes and contributes to projects of social, political, and economic themes relating to gender focusing on the Mediterranean region. It is committed to the elimination of gender discrimination using a combination of research, advocacy and lobbying, as well as trainings, conferences, and other activities.



[Klaipėda Social and Psychological Services Center, Lithuania](#) is a non-governmental and non-profit organisation. Its main goal is to provide psychosocial help for victims of violence (physical, psychological, sexual, economical and institutional), including trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation for the purposes of prostitution.



[Mouvement du Nid \(MdN\)](#) is a grassroots organisation and a social movement in France which acts in support of prostituted persons and is in opposition to the prostitution system that exploits their precarious conditions and vulnerability. MdN concentrates on the causes and consequences of prostitution.



[Institute for Feminism and Human Rights \(IFHR\)](#) brings valuable expertise and knowledge from Sweden, a country that has implemented legal change to effectively reduce demand and prevent human trafficking. The implemented reforms have also been evaluated. The lessons from Sweden in effecting demand reduction through legal change will be core to the work programme.



[The Exit Prostitution Association](#) (Exit - pois prostituutiosta ry) is a Finnish NGO working to diminish prostitution and sexual maltreatment by focusing on preventive and advocacy work and participating in the public debate. Youth Exit (Nuorten Exit) works on the domain of primary and secondary prevention of sexual maltreatment and paid sex with a focus on adolescents and young adults. The Exit Prostitution Association also works with substance abusers aged 18-25, providing counselling regarding sexual violence, different forms of maltreatment and prostitution.

What have we accomplished so far?

Kick-off meeting in Dublin – 30 January 2017

The kick-off meeting, hosted by the Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI) in Dublin, started with a discussion of the main aims of the project and also the coordination of the varying activities the project foresees for each partner. It was also a good chance for all the partners to meet and discuss any updates on the implementation of laws targeting demand or any developments towards legal change in the area of demand in their respective countries.

Parliamentary briefings at the Irish Parliament, Leinster House – 30 January 2017

As part of the kick-off meeting, there was a political briefing held at the Irish Parliament, with Senators in attendance. The briefing was hosted by Senator Ivana Bacik, a member of the Labour Party, and addressed by **Kajsa Wahlberg**, Swedish National Rapporteur on trafficking in human beings, **Linda Latham**, head of the Irish Health Service Executive's Anti-Trafficking team, and



Denise Charlton, Chair of the Turn off the Red Light campaign. The briefing offered Irish Senators a timely opportunity to hear important information on the current situation in Ireland concerning human trafficking and prostitution, and the operation of laws targeting demand for sexual services in Sweden, prior to voting on the proposed Sexual Offences Bill, containing measures for the criminalisation of the purchase of sex.

Disrupt Demand launch roundtable, Dublin – 31st January 2017



The project was officially launched with a roundtable meeting at the Morrison Hotel in Dublin, attended by the project partners, key Irish stakeholders, as well as national and international experts. The main focus of the launch meeting was to discuss the structure and mechanisms which need to be in place within the key individual services and agencies and at an inter-agency level to ensure an effective implementation strategy for legislation that criminalises the purchase of sex and targets demand for human trafficking.

The session was opened by **Denise Charlton**, project researcher, who gave an overview of the project's importance in the specific context of Ireland, at the point in time where the Sexual Offences Bill was about to be introduced. It was highlighted that the project's focus on the implementation of legal measures targeting demand offered a timely opportunity to positively contribute towards implementation of the above law.

Next, there was a detailed introduction of the project given by **Brian Killoran**, CEO of the Immigrant Council of Ireland. **Kajsa Wahlberg**, the Swedish National Rapporteur, gave a presentation on the law criminalising the purchase of sex in Sweden, describing the measures that have ensured the effective implementation and success of that law, including the presence of someone in



government with the power to 'point fingers' and encourage stakeholder cooperation with regards to implementing the law. **Professor Liz Kelly CBE**, of London Metropolitan University presented the different approaches taken in Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden to targeting demand. This included a description of the policy imperative to target demand, the different understandings of 'demand' which have emerged in the specific context of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, and the distinct prostitution regimes found in Europe. Closing the session, **Fiona Broadfoot**, of SPACE International and the Build a Girl Project, spoke of her experiences in prostitution, including how she entered into prostitution and the circumstances surrounding her exit. She also spoke about the campaigning and advocacy work in which she has since been involved and reiterated the importance of legislation targeting demand.



The participants of the roundtable on strategies for legal change and survivor participation in campaigns for legal change, Dublin – 1st February 2017

The final day of the launch saw a roundtable on effective strategies leading to legal change in the area of demand reduction. Another roundtable was carried out regarding the role of survivors in such campaigns. Each was hosted in the European Union buildings in Dublin.

The first roundtable meeting on strategies leading to legal change was attended by legal experts, including **Catherine Cosgrave** of the Immigrant Council of Ireland. Participants who had been involved in successful campaigns for legal change, including **Denise Charlton**, Chair of the Turn Off the Red Light Campaign, **Catriona Graham** of the Immigrant Council of Ireland, and **Stéphanie Caradec** of Mouvement Du Nid addressed the roundtable. The participants discussed the role of the arts, political engagement, and social mobilisation in successful campaigns for legal change. **Mia De Faoite**, an activist and a survivor, and **Fiona Broadfoot** of SPACE International and the Build a Girl Foundation spoke at the second roundtable regarding their own experiences as survivors in campaigns for legal change.

[New legislation on the criminalisation of sex buyers passes in Ireland](#)

On Tuesday 14 February 2017, the Criminal (Sexual Offences) Act 2015, which includes provisions criminalising the purchase of sex, finished its passage through both houses of the Irish Parliament. The act is now on the Irish statute book and introduces into Irish law a provision whereby *“a person who pays, gives, offers or promises to pay or give a person (including a prostitute) money or any other form of remuneration or consideration for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity with a prostitute shall be guilty of an offence”*. In addition, the act shifts the burden of proof onto defendants being prosecuted for purchasing sex from a trafficking victim. Thus, it is now the buyer who must prove they were unaware of the status of the seller, as a trafficking victim. The passing of the act can be attributed to the successful campaigning of the 70+ partners of **Turn off the Red Light campaign**, of which **the Immigrant Council of Ireland** is a leading partner.

Upcoming

The production of reports from the six participating countries on the various approaches and campaigns for legal change targeting demand are currently under way along with the project website. Also, the next thematic roundtable discussion with all partners is to be held in the coming months in Paris.

For more news and updates, follow the **Disrupt Demand project on [Facebook](#)**

Twitter hashtag: #DisruptDemand