Prostitution is violence against women: the EWL campaign 'Together for a Europe free from prostitution'

PpDM Conference on prostitution and trafficking for sexual exploitation Lisbon, 20 October 2011



Pierrette Pape EWL Policy Officer and Project Coordinator

Prostitution and violence



Judicial violence

- ✓ In 2004 in France, a man was arrested for having raped and kept a prostituted woman locked up.
- ✓ He was condemned to... pay back the price of the 'service'! (100 euros)
 - → Are women in prostitution second class citizens?

La Dépêche du Midi, 7 October 2004



Media violence

- ✓ April 2009, in a French regional daily newspaper: 'A 20-year old man has been arrested after having robbed a prostituted woman but also gained a free sexual service under the threat of a knife'
- → A free sexual service under the threat of a knife, it is a RAPE!

La Dépêche du Midi, 13 April 2009





Social violence

✓ For 25% of men, the concept of 'rape' for women in prostitution is 'ridiculous'...

Melissa Farley, Julie Bindel and Jacqueline M. Golding, "Men who buy sex. Who they buy and what they know. A research study of 103 men who describe their use of trafficked and non-trafficked women in prostitution, and their awareness of coercion and violence",

Prostitution Research and Education and Eaves, 2009





Social violence

- √ 47% of buyers pursued the transaction even after explicit warnings that the girl was likely to be under 18
 - → a sense of impunity?



Shapiro Group., Men who buy sex with adolescent girls: A scientific research study. Atlanta: The Shapiro Group.



Economic violence

- "She gave up her rights when she accepted my money"
 - → Prostitution is not about sexuality, it is about power and domination

Durschlag, R., & Goswami, S. (2008), Deconstructing the demand for prostitution: Preliminary insights from interviews with Chicago men who purchase sex. Chicago: Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation.





Racist violence

- ✓ 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 demand drives the type of supply...

Farley et al., 2009 Macleod et al., 2008





Violence from the system itself

Extract from an ad for a strip club in Spain:

"If you sleep with a friend of hers, she won't say anything. She can wait for you twelve hours a day and be available. She won't ask you where you come from, nor with whom. You can ask her anything, she won't be upset. If you don't understand what she's saying, no importance."



Men's sexual and physical violence

√ 73% of women in prostitution report having been subjected to physical aggressions while in prostitution

✓ 62% of women in prostitution report having been

raped

Melissa Farley et al., "Prostitution in five countries: violence and post traumatic stress disorder", Feminism and Psychology, 8, 1998



Psychological violence

✓ 68% of women in prostitution meet the criteria for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in the same range

as victims of torture

Melissa Farley et al., "Prostitution in five countries: violence and post traumatic stress disorder", Feminism and Psychology, 8, 1998





A series of myths conveyed by the media:

- ✓ Women choose prostitution
- ✓ Prostitution is about sex, it is glamorous and sexy
- ✓ Prostitution is the oldest profession in the world
- Prostitution will never disappear
- ✓ Prostitution is a job like any other, and it brings freedom to women
- ✓ The sex industry is a business like any other
- Without prostitution, there would be more rapes



'Their choice'?

- ✓ Up to 95% of women in street prostitution are problematic drug users
- ✓ 9 out of 10 women in prostitution would like to exit the system of prostitution but feel unable to do so

Home Office, Paying the price, 2004





'Their choice'?

- ✓ Between 50 and 90% of women in prostitution in Eastern Europe big cities are foreign women
- √ 75% of women victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation are less than 25 years old

ICPMD, 1999





A job like any other?

- ✓ In Eastern Europe, up to 50% of persons in prostitution are believed to be minors. Children as young as age 11 work as prostitutes and are used to make pornographic films.
 - → There is a demand for children...

Eurojust News,
April 2010
(from 2005 CoE
Report on
organised crime)





A way to reduce rapes and violence against women?

✓ Nevada, where procuring is decriminalized, sees the highest rates of rape compared to all US states

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





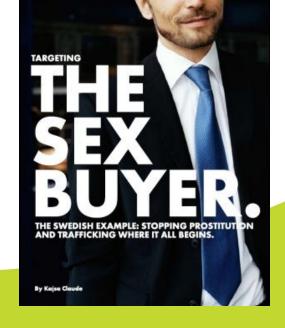
A solution for desperate men?

√ 43% of men were with friends when they engaged with prostitution, 65% had their first experience arranged by friends or colleagues

→ Peer pressure, linked to a stereotypical idea of

'masculinity'

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





A biological need?

- ✓ In the USA, the states with higher circulation rates of pornographic magazines have higher rape rates
- ✓ "Watching pornography has shaped my sexual desires"

Baron & Straus (1984), in Mary Anne Layden, 'Pornography and Violence: a new look at research', 2009 Farley et al., *Men who buy sex*, 2009, p.7





Our approach to the system of prostitution has an impact on society as a whole, and on the relationships between women and men



Prostitution is a form of male violence against women

- ✓ Prostitution is not a question of 'choice' What is 'free choice'?
- ✓ Prostitution is not a question of sexuality There is nothing sexually new in prostitution!
- ✓ Prostitution is about patriarchy: it is the ultimate way in which men control women's bodies and sexuality, through an exchange of money or an abuse of unequal economic relations



Prostitution is 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 system of prostitution remains as the ultimate place for male domination, legitimised by a distorted representation of equality in commercial exchange money exchange is all but an expression of equality



Prostitution is violence against women

- ✓ Refusing prostitution is about setting a standard of human dignity for all women and girls around the world
- ✓ Refusing prostitution is about calling for free, genuine and respectful sexuality – We are 'pro-sex'!
- → There won't be real equality as long as there is prostitution of some women by some men



Prostitution in Europe



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?



Prostitution in Europe...

There are nowadays 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 prostituteusers (Croatia)



The regulationist approach

Impact on prostituted persons

- ✓ Still poor conditions
- Decrease of well-being (emotional, social, legal...)
- ✓ No alternatives provided

Impact on trafficking

- ✓ Increase of trafficking and organised crime
- √ 50 to 90% of women in prostitution being trafficked
- ✓ Increase of child trafficking and prostitution



The abolitionist approach

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



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 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



The work of the European Women's Lobby on prostitution



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 gender equality in Europe
- ✓ Members in all 27 EU member states and 3 candidate countries, as well as 21 Europeanwide associations → representing over 2500 women's organisations



The EWL: the democratic voice of women at European level

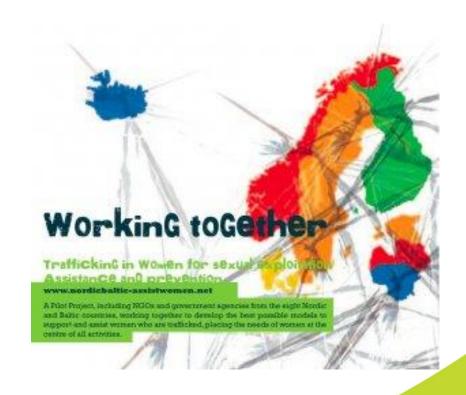
- ✓ Monitoring of European, national and international policies and legislation
- Advocacy on women's rights
- ✓ Projects on specific areas
- Awareness raising / mobilization campaigns, communication, media, at international and European levels
- Building effective partnerships



EWL work on prostitution and trafficking

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





EWL work on prostitution and trafficking

Nordic Baltic Network - Standards for implementation of a victim-centred approach

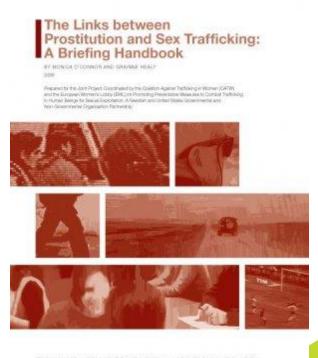
- √ Identification of women victims of THB
- ✓ Residence status and Reflection delay
- ✓ Shelter and specialised services
- ✓ Referrals and Safe returns
- ✓ Victim protection and data protection
- ✓ Compensation and Financial assistance





EWL work on prostitution and trafficking

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







EWL work on prostitution and trafficking

Film 'Not for sale' (2006, EWL-CATW)

Awareness raising tool on survivors of the system of prostitution





EWL campaign 'Together for a Europe free from prostitution'



To get a world free from prostitution, we need...

- ✓ To raise awareness, open spaces for debates and questions, allow people to discuss, exchange, learn more about what prostitution really is
- ✓ To support women survivors of prostitution and make their voices heard
- ✓ To involve men who are not prostitute-users and change peer pressure into positive attitude towards equality and respect for women's rights
 - → We need social and political change!



EWL Campaign goals

- ✓ Raise awareness on prostitution as a form of male violence against women
- ✓ Give **visibility** to NGOs working on prostitution and/or with prostituted persons
- ✓ Provide for European-wide campaign material and support national actions and strategies
- ✓ **Advocate at EU level** for the abolition of the system of prostitution
- ✓ Engage **allies and supporters**, from the political world and civil society networks, but also individuals



Raising awareness

Film and clip

'Not for sale'

(EWL-CATW, 2006)

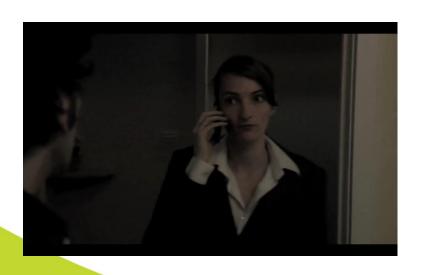
Ensure that the voices of the survivors are heard





Launching the debate

'For a change of perspective'
(EWL, 2011)





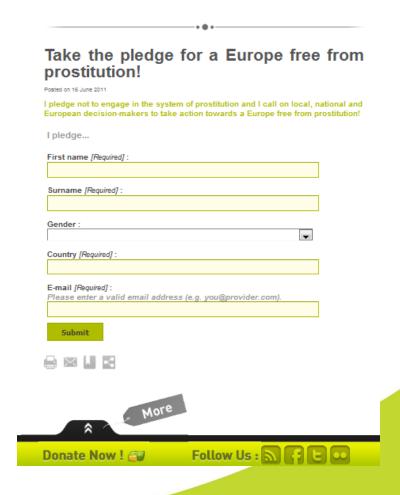
Call on men to not be a party to the system of prostitution



Involving

EWL pledge

I pledge not to engage in the system of prostitution and I call on local, national and European decision-makers to take action towards a Europe free from prostitution!





Giving visibility to NGOs

Internet webpages dedicated to the campaign



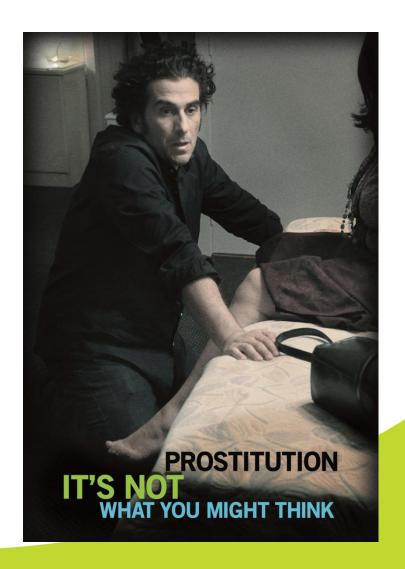


European campaign material

Campaign postcard



gramme for Employment and Social Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007-2013)





European campaign material

Campaign PPT presentation

- ✓ Facts and figures
- ✓ Comparison of legislations
- ✓ Presentation of EWL position and campaign
- ✓ Examples of national campaigns
- ✓ Resources and links





European campaign material

Campaign logo



TOGETHER FOR A EUROPE FREE FROM PROSTITUTION







Launch of the European campaign 17 June 2011, Brussels



PRESS CONFERENCE TO LAUNCH EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY CAMPAIGN

> 'TOGETHER FOR A EUROPE FREE FROM PROSTITUTION'

PRESS PACK

17 June 2011 Social Platform, Square de Meuûs 18 1050 Brussels

19 FUE HYDRAULIQUE - 1210 BRUSSELS / BRUNELLES - BELORUM / BELORUE - T (-22) SEZT 7 N 20 F (-22) SEZT 7 N 31 N EVALINOMENLOBY ORD - WWW.MEMERACORY.ORD



PRESS RELEASE

Date: 17 June 2011 (Embargo 17 June 12:00) Issuing organisation: The European Women's Lobby (EWL)

European Women's Lobby launches campaign to put an end to prostitution with video clip calling for a change of perspective

'If I had to have sex ten times a day with strangers for a living, at what point would I start to feel sick? From the beginning surely." So concludes the voice-over of a thought-provoking video clip launched today by the European Nomen's Lobby (EWL) as part of its campaign to put an end to prostitution in Europe, which it considers a form of violence against women.

The one-minute clip is the work of French film director Frédérique Pollet Rouyer and Belgian film director, Patric Jean, whose 2007 documentary 'La domination masculine' won critical acclaim. In the clip, a steady stream of women visit a young male prostitute, leaving money on a table in payment for his submission to their desires. What we are appealing for is a moment of reflection and empathy,' says Patric Jean. 'We are asking viewers to imagine themselves in the place of a prostituted person and how it feels to rent out one's sexuality and body for money. If this basic reality of prostitution makes them feel uncomfortable or worse, they should take a stand

The EWL campaign, entitled 'Together for a Europe Free from Prostitution', calls on individuals, national governments and the European Union to take concrete actions to bring about an end to societal tolerance for videspread sexual and economic exploitation of persons in prostitution, the vast majority of whom are women. 'As far as the members of the European Women's Lobby are concerned, the system of prostitution represents a backwater of inequality, a place where violence and oppression are thinly veiled by a distorted image of equality through commercial exchange,' says Rada Boric, Executive member of the EWL, representing more than 2500 women's associations throughout 30 countries.

Associations working with women in prostitution and survivors of the system agree and point to pervasive inequality between women and men as the key root cause for prostitution. 'Society has a duty to find alternatives for women so that they can live in dignity and not fall into prostitution," insists Pascale Rouges, a survivor from

A range of official reports and academic studies back up this harsh assessment. According to the UK Home Office, up to 95% of women in street prostitution are problematic drug users. Nine out of ten women in prostitution would like to exit the system of prostitution but feel unable to do so. In the Netherlands, where procuring was decriminalised in 2000, up to 90% of women working in brothels in 2008 were victims of trafficking.² An

18 FUE HYDRAULIQUE - 1210 BRUSSELS / BRUSELLES - BELBIUM / BELDIQUE - T 1-32 02/217 90 20 F 1-321 02/217 94 51 @ EVILRWOMENLOBBY.ORG - WWW.WOMENLOBBY.ORG

A press conference in **Budapest** on the same day!



³ UK Home Office 2004, Paying the price
³ Korps landelijke politiediensten, Schone Schijn: De signalering van mensenhandel in de vergunde prostitutiesector, Driebergen, 2006

Towards a European abolitionist movement



Abolitionist mobilisation in Europe

Building alliances with NGOs

- √ 32 EWL member organisations involved in the campaign, in 18 countries
- ✓ 6 partners in Europe and USA.







End Prostitution Now Scotland



STOP DEMAND END PROSTITUTION

"I felt guilty. I had used her.
You shouldn't pay a woman,
I classed it as just as bad as rape"

A Scottish male, 2008. (Challenging Men's Demand research)



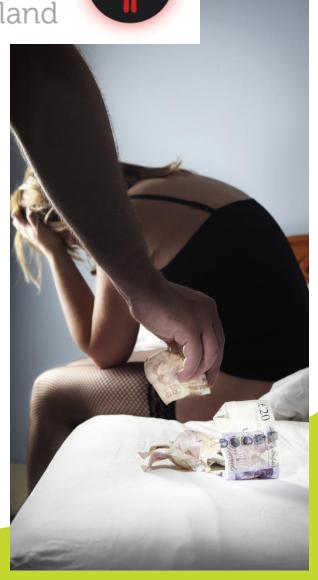
Turn Off the Red Light

End Prostitution and Sex Trafficking in Ireland

Turn Off the Red Light *Ireland*

Watch the videos of engaged men!







FONDATION SCELLES

Connaître, comprendre, combattre L'exploitation sexuelle

France

Watch the video 'Prostitution is violence'







Collectif Alouette France

Collectif Alouette - Rosen pour la pénalisation des clients



Sign the petition and watch the video of Rosen, a survivor of prostitution calling for criminalisation of prostitute-users

Mouvement du Nid France



Abolir le système prostitueur

Participate to the actions and/or become a volunteer

Discover the resource website www.prostitutionetsociete.fr



Standing Against Global Exploitation (SAGE) *United States*



Discover SAGE programmes for persons in prostitution and for prostitute-users



Abolitionist mobilisation in Europe

Building a network of supporters

- ✓ MEPs
- ✓ Supporters from the cultural world







Supportive MEPs























Abolitionist mobilisation in Europe

Events in EU member states in 2011

- ✓ Paris, press conference, 21 September
- ✓ Budapest, conference, 23 September
- ✓ Lisbon, conference, 20 October
- Finland
- Cyprus







Participate in the campaign!

If you are an NGO:

- ✓ Join the network of abolitionist NGOs
- ✓ Get visibility through EWL website
- ✓ Share information with other NGOs all over Europe
- ✓ Inform us of your actions
- ✓ Find new partners for the campaign
- ✓ Liaise between national and European levels by meeting MEPs or giving us names of good MEPs
- Organise a national event to foster your national advocacy



Participate in the campaign!

If you are an individual:

- ✓ Sign our petition!
- ✓ Join an NGO active in the campaign!
- ✓ Spread information and campaign tools
- Raise awareness around you
- ✓ Write to your Members of Parliament and Members of the European Parliament to call for the abolition of prostitution
- ✓ Write to your government to ask for the ratification / implementation of the UN 1949 Convention



Thank you!

