



Disrupt Demand

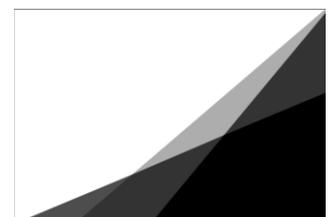
Welcome to the third EZINE for the Disrupt Demand project.
Here you can find out more about our activities so far and
what to expect in the coming months.

What is the Disrupt Demand project?

Disrupt Demand is a project designed to support efforts to prevent human trafficking for sexual exploitation by reducing demand, through researching successful strategies involving legal changes, 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.



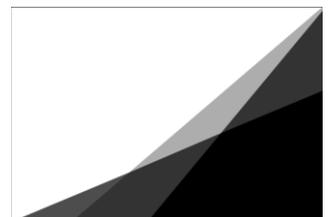
[Mouvement du Nid \(MdN\)](#) is a grassroots organisation and a social movement in France which acts in support of prostituted persons and is in opposition to the prostitution system that exploits their precarious conditions and vulnerability. MdN concentrates on the causes and consequences of prostitution.



[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 are core to the work programme.



[Exit - off prostitution](#) (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?

Seminar on “Collaboration between law enforcement and NGOs to prevent and discourage demand: practical aspects”

The **Institute for Feminism and Human Rights** and the **National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings** hosted a one-day working seminar focusing on prostitution and trafficking in human beings in Stockholm, on Monday, 5th March. The seminar focused on a discussion around good practices in the course of NGO and law enforcement collaboration, in order to develop and implement legislative reforms in the context of demand reduction.

Law enforcement representatives and NGOs from Ireland and Sweden presented case studies documenting good practices followed in the course of police and prosecution services collaborating with front line service providers in human trafficking investigations. The case studies promoted mutual learning and exchange between the two countries that continue to build experience in a legal context where the demand for sexual services has been criminalised.

Swedish NGOs and frontline service providers for victims of prostitution and trafficking for sexual purposes also shared their experiences. Participants included representatives from the **Swedish Salvation Army** and **Talita**, as well as representatives from NGOs active in advocacy for legislative change from France, Finland, Cyprus, Ireland and Lithuania.

Third coordination meeting: national updates from partners – Stockholm, 6th March 2018

The third coordination meeting was hosted by the **Institute for Feminism and Human Rights (IFHR)** in Stockholm and was dedicated to discussing the current situation in each partner country concerning legal measures targeting demand.



In **Ireland**, it was highlighted that there has been little in the way of implementation of the recent law, with just two files reportedly sent to the DPP (i.e. the Irish Public Prosecutor). The Immigrant Council, with a focus on the Sexual Offences Act's 3-year review period, are putting their efforts on data

collection, and, on that same topic, coordinating a high-level working group involving NGOs and state agencies active in the area. This is to ensure a comprehensive review of the law and its impact during the review.

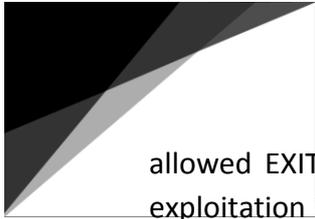
Next, the partners discussed the **French** law targeting the purchase of sex, which is facing significant difficulties pertaining to the 2-year period for assessing the law. In recent months, there have been increased reports of violence against women in prostitution, which the pro-prostitution lobby attributes to the new law, as well as claims that clients are becoming more violent. Moreover, some influential organisations, including Médecins Sans Frontières, are currently opposing the law. In terms of the actual implementation of the law, a number of exit programmes have begun operating, currently numbering 50 participants. This highlights that the law has a lot of potential when it will be fully implemented. In addition, there have been over 2,000 arrests and MdN has been involved in sex buyer programmes with positive results. While difficulties are being faced in the implementation of the law on a local level, the impact and positive potential are clear and hinge upon more effective implementation.

In **Lithuania**, official figures suggest that the majority of trafficking victims are currently done so for the purposes of exploitation in criminal activities. In terms of developments around laws targeting demand, a recent visit from the Secretary General of MdN and a delegate from CAP international to Lithuania, to discuss demand, seems to have gained support on the issue from a minister. Finally, there is also some discussion around the possibility of introducing prostitution into the debate on sexual abuse of women by men in the context of the #MeToo movement.

In **Sweden** there has been a similar move where a minister met with campaigners; for many, the link between demand and prostitution already exists. It was emphasised, however, that in Sweden it has been a struggle to ensure that legislation around demand remains a government priority, as commitment to the law has not always been evident. In particular, during the reign of the Conservative coalition 2007-2014, commitment to the approach was not always evident. In addition, a recent National Action Plan on trafficking appears to lack the required detail. There seems to be an overall support for the law, despite some lobby groups still opposing it, but the need to educate and bring awareness about prostitution and challenge is still of utmost importance. The importance of training, and the need to ensure support amongst high ranking officials within the police force was highlighted. Finally, it was noted that the Swedish police is doing good work in enforcing the law.

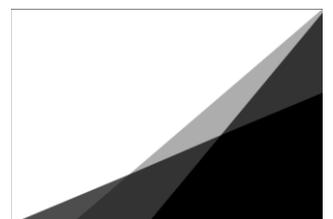
In **Finland**, the debate around the issue of exploitation continues. This debate has been fuelled by a recent visit of the Finnish National Rapporteur to Italy in order to investigate the cases of asylum seekers who have been sent back under the Dublin Regulation. Consequently, an article on sexual exploitation of asylum seekers was published. This





allowed EXIT to respond and publish an article that highlighted the need to also discuss exploitation in the context of prostitution, a discussion also supported by the social workers' union.

Finally, in **Cyprus**, human trafficking and demand reduction is not on the political agenda. This was evident in the recent Presidential elections, during which human trafficking was not included on the agenda of any candidate. The issue relies heavily on the Committee on Human Rights and on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women for advancement.



Upcoming

The comparative report is currently being finalised and will soon be available online and in print. Another forthcoming project deliverable is the toolkit which will act as a guide for activists and campaigners. The toolkit should be available online by late September 2018. In the final months of the project partners will be hosting a seminar in their respective countries to share outputs from the project with national stakeholders. Finally, the next thematic roundtable discussion featuring all partners is to be held in the coming months in Finland and a final conference will take place in Dublin on October 23rd, 2018.

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

