

Human Trafficking

In November 2007 the IrFUW responded to an appeal from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform for submissions on a *National Plan to prevent and combat Human Trafficking*.

The IrFUW President referred to the June 2005 UWE Conference [Cork] seminar on “Trafficking of Women” and looked forward to the ratification by Ireland of the Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking in Human Beings in the letter sent with the following submission:

The National Plan to prevent and combat Human Trafficking should include

1. A Human Rights Approach

- The protection and not the penalisation of the victims must be the priority.
- Consultation with victims should include language translation.
- Include all forms of trafficking, ie trafficking for enforced domestic work as well as for the sex industry, and trafficking of children.
- Action to prevent trafficking should proceed in parallel with action against traffickers.

2. Victim Support

- Permission for a six month residency to enable the victims make an informed decision on co-operation with prosecutions.
- Provision to facilitate the protection and recovery of all victims irrespective of age, gender, religious belief, sexual orientation or disability, including housing and government funding for support groups, ie housing, health and rehabilitation.
- Ensure the safe return of vulnerable victims to avoid re-trafficking.

3. Differentiate between smuggling and trafficking

- Coordination and communication between all agencies, governmental and non-governmental, involved in combatting human trafficking.
- Work with all groups already involved in combatting human trafficking, national and international, particularly those in Northern Ireland.
- Awareness of all the indicators of all forms of human trafficking must be essential training for all staff.

4. Raise public awareness

A campaign to educate the public, as well as the agencies involved, to recognise the indicators of trafficking.

5. Monitoring

- Establishment of an expert group to review the implementation and operation of the National Plan would increase transparency and accountability.
- An annual review of the efficacy of the legislation.
- This would also provide a platform to nominate a member for GRETA, the Group of Experts which is being established by the Council of Europe to monitor the implementation of the Convention against Human Trafficking.