

**The Irish Federation of University Women is happy to copy the following page from the website of the Irish Government's Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform :**

## **Anti-Human Trafficking Measures**

A number of measures have been introduced in Ireland to combat human trafficking including:

- the enactment of legislation
- the establishment of an Interdepartmental Group
- the establishment of the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit

### **Legislation**

The Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) Act 2008 – effective since 7 June, 2008 – makes it an offence to sell or offer for sale or to purchase or offer to purchase any person for any purpose. Penalties of up to life imprisonment apply in respect of these offences. It is also an offence for a person to solicit a trafficked person for the purposes of prostitution. In addition, the Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill will provide for a recovery and reflection period of 45 days (to be amended to 60 days at report stage) and periods of temporary residency. Details of an interim administrative framework effective from 7 June, 2008 reflecting these provisions can be found on the [INIS website](#).

### **Interdepartmental High-Level Group**

An Interdepartmental High-Level Group was established by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform to draw up a national action plan and recommend the most appropriate and effective responses to tackle trafficking. The Group comprises representatives from various Government departments and public service bodies. It is co-chaired by the Director General of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) and the Assistant Secretary in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform with responsibility for crime issues. The Group is supported by five interdisciplinary working groups dealing with issues related to:

- Development of a national referral mechanism
- Awareness raising and training
- Child trafficking
- Labour exploitation
- Sexual exploitation

## **Anti-Human Trafficking Unit**

The Anti-Human Trafficking Unit was established in February 2008 to ensure that the State's response to trafficking is co-ordinated, comprehensive and holistic. It works closely with both State and non-governmental organisations. The Unit is also responsible for the development and implementation of the national action plan to prevent and tackle human trafficking. The National Action Plan focuses on:

- Prevention and awareness raising
- Prosecution of traffickers
- Protection of victims
- Child trafficking

The Plan, when finalised, will set out the structures to facilitate ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings and the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. The main aim of the national action plan will be to ensure that Ireland's response to trafficking in human beings is appropriate to the nature and scale of the problem and in line with international best practice. The Unit maintains close links with the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB), which is actively involved in the fight against the trafficking of human beings into and within Ireland.

A continuous professional development training course for members of An Garda Síochána has been developed with the assistance of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and is designed to provide the necessary skills to identify victims of trafficking and provide a range of specialist investigative techniques. The Unit has organised, in conjunction with IOM, for the delivery of Awareness Raising Training covering legislation, the difference between trafficking & smuggling and the indicators of trafficking. This course has been delivered to in excess of 100 persons from various organisations, including labour inspectors from the National Employment Rights Authority (NERA), inspectors from the Private Security Authority (PSA), HSE personnel, and staff of INIS, ORAC, Victims of Crime Office, the Crime Victim's Helpline, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, and the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

## Blue Blindfold Campaign

Ireland participates in a European initiative known as the G6 Human Trafficking Initiative, which includes the UK, Poland, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands along with Interpol, Europol and Eurojust. These six countries agreed to run awareness-raising campaigns in their countries to raise awareness of the problem of human trafficking with the public and law-enforcement agencies. The Irish campaign commenced with a joint press launch by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Garda Commissioner on 21 October, 2008. The key theme of the campaign is 'Don't Close your Eyes to Human Trafficking', and the image of the blue blindfold represents the risk of people having their eyes closed and being unaware of the crime that may be going on around them. Given the nature of the crime, victims may be reluctant and frightened to come forward. In order to combat this form of modern-day slavery, both the public and the authorities need to be vigilant and aware that the crime may exist in our communities, not just down alleys. The campaign is designed to encourage the public to share any suspicions or information with the Garda Síochána, who will then investigate them accordingly.

## Contact Details

The Anti-Human Trafficking Unit can be contacted by post, telephone, fax and e-mail:

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For more information on the Blue Blindfold campaign, visit [www.blueblindfold.gov.ie](http://www.blueblindfold.gov.ie).

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For further information on the IrFUW please contact [irishfuw@gmail.com](mailto:irishfuw@gmail.com)