

National Women's Council of Ireland E-newsletter
Comhairle Naisiunta na mBan in Eirinn Nuachtlitir Leichtreonach

June 2006

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NWCI POLICY NEWS

Can the Law create Social Welfare Reform? Women's Economic Independence as a Right Seminar

3rd May 2006

The seminar looked at the Irish social welfare system from a women's rights perspective and examined what potential exists in the law to create changes in the system to make it more equitable for women. It brought together human rights and law experts, community groups, affiliate organisations and individuals that allowed for great information exchange and networking. The seminar was chaired by Noirin Clancy, WHRA and the papers were delivered by Orla O'Connor, Head of Policy, NWCI; Niamh Reilly, Transitional Justice Institute, University of Ulster; Partick O'Leary, Equality Authority; Noeline Blackwell, Director of the Free Legal Advice Centres (FLAC); Mary Murphy, author of the NWCI report 'A Woman's Model for Social Welfare Reform' Papers from the seminar can be downloaded from <http://www.nwci.ie/whatsup.html#3>

The advisory group for the seminar met in the weeks after the event. This group included representatives from community groups, academics, human rights organisations and legal organisations. The group met to discuss what actions could be taken following ideas generated at the seminar. The group agreed that exploring legal avenues regarding the marriage bar and access to social insurance for spouses of self-employed may provide a way forward for the campaign. This will be part of NWCI's work up to the end of 2006.

For further information contact Claire Dunne, claired@nwci.ie

Government Discussion Paper: Proposals for Supporting Lone Parents

In March 2006, the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA) published 'Government Discussion Paper: Proposals for Supporting Lone Parents'. You can download the report from http://www.welfare.ie/publications/prop_lp.pdf. The Discussion Paper has clear implications for NWCI's social welfare recommendations and individualisation of the social welfare system and affects all parents on social welfare.

Information was circulated to members and NWCI staff were involved in ongoing consultation with the national lone parent organisations OPEN and One Family. The Discussion Paper was also discussed at two focus group meetings in Kerry and one in Donegal.

The NWCI prepared a submission to the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA) during the months of April and May and spoke at the consultation in Farm Leigh on 27th April.

The NWCI sent in the submission to the DSFA in the beginning of June and had a meeting with Minister for Social and Family Affairs, Seamus Brennan T.D. and his policy advisors on 14th June 2006. In this meeting the NWCI Chairperson, Director and staff highlighted issues raised in the NWCI's submission regarding supports and resources, loss of income, qualified adults, mutual obligations and conditionality.

For further information, contact Orla O'Connor orlaoc@nwci.ie

Draft Pre-Budget Submission 2007

By now all members will have received the draft pre-budget submission 2007. The deadline for comments on the submission is Wednesday 12th July to orlaoc@nwci.ie.

Date for your Diary

Wednesday 13th of September 2006: Launch of The Pre-Budget 2007 Submission and the Lobbying Tool Kit, venue to be confirmed.

NWCI AGM 2006

The following Board Members were elected at the NWCI Annual General Meeting on Friday June 16th 2006:

Chairperson: Therese Murphy -ESB OA

Deputy Chairperson: Noirin Clancy- Women's Human Rights Alliance

Ordinary Members:

Marie Hainsworth - Donegal Women's Network

Isobel Butler - AIM Family Services

Aileen Heverin - Women of the North East (Galway)

Kathleen O' Sullivan - Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland

Clare Treacy - Irish Nurses Organisation

Stephanie Whyte - Cairde

Berta Armitage - Methodist Women in Ireland

Maura Butler - Irish Women Lawyers Association

Tara Droog - Action Breast Cancer

Breda Raggett - Irish Countrywomen's Association

Motions passed at the AGM 2006

1. HEALTH SERVICE

- That a properly funded public health service is an essential asset to every citizen in Ireland;
- That the privatisation of the health service is not included in the Government's programme;
- That any such move to privatisation contradicts and comprises the implementation of the National Health Strategy;

This Motion condemns, and calls for the immediate reversal of any and all strategies, which move to introduce privatized health care.

Explanatory note:

Privatisation of health service not a policy of current government, not in the programme for government – why is it happening? It is costing the tax payer more in tax breaks for the construction of private hospitals. It will result in worse service than we currently have and will have reduced bed capacity and job losses. It will have a negative effect on women and the socially excluded.

Proposed by: **Irish Nurses Organisation**

Seconded by: **Electricity Supply Board Officers Association**

2. GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS FOR LONE PARENTS

The Fingal ICTU Centre For the Unemployed believes that the requirement of conditionality in the Department of Social and Family Affairs proposals is unnecessary and premature.

However in the event of conditionality we wish to call on the NWCI to lobby government to ensure that:

- There should be legal safe guards to protect the social rights of claimants.
- Such safeguards should be developed in consultation with representative groups.
- The mothers right to parent is protected;
- People are not forced into unreasonable working conditions and in work poverty.
- Statutory agencies are obliged to provide quality appropriate services.
- Staff making discretionary services have effective training.
- A right to appeal is guaranteed and a system is in place to monitor regional standards and trends.

Explanatory note:

While welcoming the proposed abolition of OPFP, qualified adults and limitation rule and the introduction of parental allowance the Centre is concerned about proposals to extend conditionality to lone parents and qualified adults. Given the high number of low income women currently unable to access quality appropriate education training and childcare the focus needs to be on obliging state agencies to deliver quality, relevant, accessible education, training and childcare services.

Proposed by: **Fingal Centre for the Unemployed**
Seconded by: **Ballymun Women's Resource Centre**

3. FAMILY REUNIFICATION

Migrant women in Ireland are consistently being denied the right to family life by the Irish Government's restrictive policies on family reunification. The NWCI should support and participate in the ICI's campaign to government to lobby for changes in legislation, procedures and practice on family reunification so that these injustices and inequalities are eliminated and the basic right to family life is respected.

Explanatory note:

From both a fundamental rights perspective and a pragmatic perspective, the importance of family reunification for both migrants and host-countries cannot be understated and this has been widely recognised at an international level. This is an issue, which particularly affects women within the family structure. The ICI will be undertaking a campaign in the coming year to lobby government for changes in legislation, procedures and practice on family reunification. This will initially involve the launch of a paper dealing with the current situation regarding family reunification and recommendations around same and will be followed by a campaign to lobby for the implementation of key recommendations.

Proposed by: **Immigrant Council of Ireland**
Seconded by: **Migrants Rights Centre Ireland**

4. THE GIRL CHILD

We call on the NWCI to lobby the Irish government to ensure that all member states in attendance at the CSW meeting next March implement measures to guarantee girls the full enjoyment of their human rights, particularly in relation to education.

Explanatory note:

The theme of the next meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2007, in New York is the Girl Child. There is persistent discrimination against the girl child. Overall, girls' school attendance lags behind that of boys since daughters are often kept at home because the social and economic value of educating girls is not recognised. Among the world's exploited child workers, girls outnumber boys. Without access to education, girls are denied the knowledge and skills needed to advance their status.

Proposed by: **Women's Human Rights Alliance**
Seconded by: **ESB Officers Association**

5. HUMAN TRAFFICKING

We call on the NWCI to lobby the government for the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive strategy to combat trafficking of women and girls into Ireland, which should include the enactment of specific legislation in the area, encompassing preventive measures, the prosecution and punishment of offenders and a strong human rights based approach in responding to victims, as recommended by the CEDAW Committee in their Concluding Comments, July 2005.

Explanatory note:

There is evidence of a rise in the number of women being trafficked into Ireland for sexual exploitation. Yet, the problem remains hidden and there is no comprehensive strategy to address this growing problem. Ireland is the only country in Europe with no legislation to combat trafficking.

Proposed by: **Women's Human Rights Alliance**
Seconded by: **Ruhama**

6. RAPPORTEUR ON LAWS THAT DISCRIMINATE AGAINST WOMEN

We urge NWCI to lobby the Irish Government to support, at EU level, the resolution to the Commission on the Status of Women for the appointment of a Rapporteur on Laws that Discriminate against Women.

Explanatory note:

This resolution is strongly supported by the NGO's of Africa, Asia, South America and the Middle East. One of the reasons it has not yet got full support is because of the lack of clarity around the role and responsibilities the post might entail. The European Women's Lobby (EWL) is drawing up a proposal for the responsibilities the role might cover. There is already a precedent for such a role – a special Rapporteur on Violence against Women. The role of Rapporteur on

Laws that Discriminate against Women would be similar. The EU votes as a single block at the UN and would be influential in promoting this issue.

Proposed by: **ESB Officer's Association**
Seconded by: **Women's Human Rights Alliance**

7. HUMAN RIGHTS ENTITLEMENTS FOR ALL CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS

ESBOA welcomes commitment of Minister for Justice, Equality & Law Reform to introduce Civil Partnership Rights and asks that any form of Civil Partnership legislation should include the full range of human rights for same sex couples.

Explanatory note:

Same sex couples should be given the same value in the civil partnership legislation as any other co-habitees, including

- Rights for same sex partners to Force Majeure Leave
- Rights to Pensions and Death in Service Benefits
- Social Welfare rights and entitlements
- Tax treatment
- Immigration Work Permits, Visa/Authorisation and Family reunification
- Adoptive Leave

Proposed by: **ESB Officer's Association**
Seconded by: **CPSU (Civil and Public Service Union)**

Emergency Motions passed at the AGM 2006

ENHANCED LABOUR STANDARDS FOR MIGRANT WOMEN EMPLOYED IN THE PRIVATE HOME

In the context of the current Social Partnership negotiations and the uncertain future of labour standards MRCI believes now more than ever there is a pressing need to raise the issue of protection for migrant women employed in the private home.

MRCI calls on the NWC to support their campaign to put in place enhanced terms and conditions for domestic workers employed in the private home, and sanctions for those in breach of these rights.

Explanatory note:

The continued isolation and invisibility of this group of women in Ireland has led to their ongoing exploitation and violation of their rights. The

unique nature of their work and living arrangements means that further protections need to be legislated for as a matter of priority. MRCI believes that the work carried out by this group of women is extremely valuable and that the minimum rate of pay does not adequately reflect the skills and tasks carried by them.

Proposed By: **Migrant Rights Centre Ireland**
Seconded By: **Immigrant Council of Ireland**

STATUTORY RAPE LEGISLATION

As a response to the recent emergency legislation on Statutory Rape the Government has set up an All Party Committee to look at the wider implications of this legislation. A number of organisations working in the area of sexual violence against children have expressed concern that this Committee currently has no representation from organisations with expertise in this area.

The Executive Board of the NWCi calls on the NWCi to lobby the All Party Committee to ensure inclusion of external agencies that have expertise in addressing sexual violence against children. We would also call on them to ensure that any recommendations arising from the committee prioritise the interests and rights of children

Proposed By: **The Executive Board of the NWCi**
Seconded By: **Women's Human Rights Alliance**

HEALTH

Launch by Minister of NWCi Health publication rescheduled to September 26th 2006

The NWCi Report 'Women's Health: Meeting International Standards' launch has been rescheduled. The Tánaiste & Minister for Health & Children, Mary Harney TD will launch the report on Tuesday 26th September 2006. Further information and invitations will be circulated shortly.

Fundraising Campaign - 'Fashion Targets Breast Cancer Ireland'

The campaign launched on June 28th once again aims to raise funds through sales of a specially designed T-shirt available in Brown Thomas,

BT2 and selected A Ware Stores. Proceeds go to Action Breast Cancer (ABC) and Europa Donna Ireland; both are affiliate members of NWCi. ABC is a project of the Irish Cancer Society (ICS), which provides breast cancer information and support, and funds breast cancer research. Its services are free, confidential and accessible and include a national helpline, publications, one-to-one support, breast awareness talks, and advocacy. The Action Breast Cancer Health Line is a toll free number **1 800 30 90 40** Website: <http://www.cancer.ie/action/> Europa Donna Ireland lobby at national and local level, campaigning for the best possible diagnostic and treatment services for all women, raise awareness regarding breast cancer, make submissions to relevant government commissions and working groups and publish EDI News. For information see: <http://www.europadonnaireland.ie/>

Launch of The Irish Mental Health Coalition

The Irish Mental Health Coalition was launched on 29th June. The mission is to improve the lives of people with mental health difficulties by advocating for people's rights to the highest attainable standard of mental health and mental healthcare.

Organisers of the campaign include Amnesty International (www.amnesty.ie), Bodywhys – The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland (www.bodywhys.ie) GROW in Ireland (www.grow.ie), the Irish Advocacy Network (www.irishadvocacynetwork.com) and Schizophrenia Ireland (www.sirl.ie)

Appointment of Elder Abuse Officers by HSE

On Thursday, June 16th the HSE announced that it will be appointing 30 new Elder Abuse Officers to provide support to vulnerable older people in the community. See <http://www.hse.ie>

Strategy For Cancer Control Published in June Minister announces amalgamation of BreastCheck and ICSP

The National Cancer Forum has published a strategy for cancer control in Ireland (2006) In launching the report the Tánaiste & Minister for Health, Mary Harney TD announced that the Irish Cervical Screening Programme (ICSP) would be rolled out nationally by 2008 and that a National Cancer Screening Board would be established to amalgamate BreastCheck and ICSP to deliver both programmes nationally.

To read the Minister's speech <http://www.dohc.ie/press/releases/2006/20060612.html>

To download or view a copy of the report see http://www.dohc.ie/publications/cancer_control_2006.html

Increase In The Means Test For GP Visit Card (GP Only Card)

The income guideline for the GP Visit Card has been increased to 50% above the medical card level. Of the 200,000 GP only cards allocated by the Government last year only 18,000 people have registered. The Government originally promised to deliver 200,000 full medical cards, which has not been done. The Irish Medical Organisation (IMO) suggest that the reason for the poor uptake is that it does not cover the cost of medicines and community services such as physiotherapy and speech therapy. The IMO argue that there is a need for 200,000 full medical cards originally promised but not delivered by Government rather than GP Only cards.

For more information on eligibility for GP Visit Card go to www.hse.ie/en/GPVisitCards/

Report Finds Ireland's Health Care System Ranks Low In Providing Value For Money And Consumer Friendliness

Ireland's health systems has been ranked amongst the least consumer friendly and lowest in relation to value for money in an annual survey of the public health care systems of the EU 25 and Switzerland. The Euro Health Consumer Index 2006, which ranks European health care systems in terms of their responsiveness to patients states that Ireland's low score is related to severe waiting lists and poor outcomes quality and suggests that current health service reform may improve the situation. Ireland did score top marks in one or the 28 performance indicators, namely the subsidy offered for prescription medicines. The report notes that:

- Three out of four national systems cannot treat your cancer within three weeks.
- In only one out of three you have direct access to a medical specialist, the same goes for the right to a second opinion.
- Every second country blocks the patient's access to her own medical record.

To view a synopsis of the report in table form click on [EHCI 2006 grid](#) or to see a full copy of the report click on [EHCI 2006 Report](#)

Health Website of Interest:

Women & Poverty Low-income women Speak out (Canada)

Low-income women are often subject to careful scrutiny and surveillance by others. Rather than putting them under the lens,

photovoice puts them behind the lens and allows others to see the world through their eyes. To learn more and see a selection of images from these photovoice exhibits, visit the Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence website at: http://www.pwhce.ca/program_poverty_photovoice.htm

EDUCATION

ZONTA International Funds Final Round of ZEST

ZEST means ZONTA Empowering Self-Development & Transformation. A final round of funding from ZONTA International has enabled NWCI to run the Zest 4 Programme, which will allow funding for three projects. Project selection is currently underway and project activity will be funded from July 2006 – April 2007.

The programme targets women, particularly those living in disadvantaged communities and will resource initiatives that support women's empowerment and capacity building through education and training opportunities that are women friendly, women and community focussed, provide support and progression, are innovative and able to make a positive impact on women and their communities.

Further information will be posted on the updated NWCI website or contact Annie Dillon e-mail annied@nwci.ie For information on ZONTA International see their website: <http://www.zonta.org/site/PageServer?pagename=homepage>

Call for papers for The Adult Learner

AONTAS are calling for papers for The Adult Learner: The Journal of Adult and Community Education, which aims primarily to serve the needs of the adult education community in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland by providing a forum for critical reflection on the practices of teaching and learning. The journal gives priority to subject matter that addresses disadvantage, social exclusion, equality, workplace learning and the study of the teacher/student relationship. Community education, literacy, citizenship and access issues are also included. Papers for consideration should be sent before 8th Sept. 2006. For more information e-mail AONTAS adultlearner@aontas.com
See: <http://www.aontas.com/callforpapers/index.html>

Education Website of Interest

**NIACE – The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
(England & Wales)**

<http://www.niace.org.uk/Default.htm>

NIACE works to support adult learning through Advocacy, Campaigns, Conferences, Courses, Research and Development. This is a comprehensive website which could be useful as a resource, particularly the publications and an online bookshop. There is a specific section of the website, which includes publications relating to women's adult education. See: <http://www.niace.org.uk/research/women.htm>

PROSTITUTION AND TRAFFICKING

The NWCI position on prostitution and trafficking

The NWCI views prostitution as a form of oppression of women, and trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation as a modern form of slavery. We share the understanding of prostitution as explained by the Coalition of Trafficking in Women:

'We believe firstly, that prostitution is not so much about random, individual women who may or may not choose to sell their bodies, but is an institutionalisation of men's right to access women's bodies. Globally, prostitution is a huge industry, and it procures women regardless of their choice or inclination. Where women consent the industry is happy to absorb them, but even when they do not, the industry makes sure that there are enough women to meet the huge demand. It is an industry that always makes sure its so-called needs are met. It is impossible to imagine that there can ever be enough supposedly consenting women to satisfy all the prostitute-users in the world: the violations of women's human rights are thus integral to its operation. Secondly, prostitution is made possible by other human rights violations: through lower wages for women than men; the commodification and objectification of women in pornography, advertising and other forms of popular culture; homelessness; and of course rape, including, and most especially incest. Without these violative preconditions, prostitution could not operate. Prostitution both leaches off and strengthens discrimination against women. Thirdly, we see prostitution as a human rights violation because even within prostitution women experience horrifically high rates of related violence: rape, battery, verbal abuse, murder, and the list can go on. And fourthly, because it is an industry that violates the rights of all women. It says that women are a class of people set aside to serve men sexually and in many other ways of course.

So the Coalition believes that prostitution is violative of all women's human rights, and most especially of women directly involved in it. Concretely, in legal terms, that means that we advocate the complete decriminalisation of women in prostitution – that is, not legalisation, and most definitely not criminalisation – with the continuing criminalisation of those who really benefit from women's prostitution – from the pimp, pornographer, trafficker, to the prostitution business

owner, and the client. In this way, we try to take the focus off the woman, stop talking either about her criminality, her dirtiness, her weakness, or about how women want it, benefit from it, and we talk instead about those who benefit in this multi-billion dollar, multi-national industry.

<http://www.huridocs.org/catwen.htm>

Update on NWCI Trafficking Campaign

The NWCI online petition, to say no to the sexual exploitation of women and girls during FIFA World Cup 2006, gathered over 3,500 signatures. We are sending these to the Minister for Justice as evidence of the strong rejection of this modern form of slavery that the global sex industry has created; and will be calling for specific legislation to tackle the growth of the sex industry in Ireland.

The NWCI wrote in March to the Minister for Justice Equality and Law Reform Mr Michael McDowell regarding trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, particularly in connection to international sporting events. The NWCI requested that the Minister raise the issue of trafficking at the Justice and Home Affairs Council Meeting in Luxembourg on 27th and 28th April 2006. During the Austrian Council Presidency, the EU adopted an Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings (December 2005).

We received a letter from the Minister outlining how his Department is planning to address the issue. The Department 'hopes to publish legislation' later this year so that Ireland will comply with the EU Framework Decision on combating trafficking, taking account of the UN Protocol to prevent trafficking (currently Ireland is the only EU country not signed up to it).

At the meeting of Justice and Home Affairs Council April 2006, 'With regard to trafficking in human beings the Council adopted the following conclusions:

The Austrian Council Presidency and the Commission will jointly organize **an expert conference by June 2006 to assess the state of implementation of the EU Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings**. As requested by the Action Plan, issues to be addressed will be the foster of existing links and the building up of a more solid network of NGOs and International Organisations providing support and reintegration services to the victims as well as the collection of best practices in the identification of victims and the possible drawing up of a broad list of criteria with respect to best practice.

The Council established that the **support functions of Europol should be maximized** and Europol, Eurojust, Frontex and the Police Chiefs Task Force should regularly address the fight against trafficking in human

beings in order to provide for the appropriate cooperation measures. Within this framework EU MS should improve their collaboration with Europol, including providing information, asking for support etc. Likewise EU MS should afford each other and the relevant agencies the widest possible cooperation in providing intelligence and information for the elaboration of an assessment.

The Council called on the Member States to fully implement the two Framework Decisions, on combating trafficking in human beings and on the strengthening of the penal framework to prevent the facilitation of unauthorised entry, transit and residence, adopted in 2002.

This includes a clear distinction between trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling as different forms of crime, while recognising the overlaps in practice. Moreover, EU MS are urged to ensure an effective detection and prosecution of cases of trafficking in human beings in practice, taking into account the needs of victims in regard of protection and assistance. For both Framework Decisions still not all Member States have transmitted the relevant information to the Commission and the information provided by some Member States does not allow for a quick and efficient evaluation, particularly with regards to children.

Accordingly the EC will need to further look at relevant Member State legislation in order to analyse the need to improve legislation at EU level ensuring appropriate protection of and assistance for victims in accordance with the best interest of the child and will evaluate the practical application and efficiency of the legal framework to prevent the exploitation of especially women and children.

Finally the Council and the Commission discussed the issue of preventing and combating trafficking in human beings in connection with major international events, including sports events. Accordingly the EU Action Plan on Trafficking should be updated, including the specific measures against trafficking in human beings in connection with major international events.'

NWCI Campaign Focus on Legislation

The focus of the NWCI campaign will be to target the demand side of the sex industry, and we will be advocating for the introduction of legislation into Ireland that makes it illegal to purchase, or attempt to purchase, sexual services. Such legislation has been introduced in Sweden since 1999 and has proved successful in combating trafficking and dramatically reducing prostitution, as well as influencing public opinion to regard prostitution as a harmful social problem.

In Germany prostitution has been legalised since 1 January 2002. The National Council of German Women's Organisations supported the introduction of this legislation. It is clear that the legalisation of prostitution in Germany, the Netherlands and in parts of Australia has led to an increase in trafficking and a growth in the sex industry. The

distinction is made in Germany between forced prostitution and legal prostitution.

A recently published Handbook on the **Links between Prostitution and Trafficking**, written by Grainne Healy and Monica O'Connor, identifies the very different outcomes that result from how prostitution is viewed – as a form of violence against women, or as a choice or form of work. This report is available on the NWCI website and also at www.catwinternational.org

UCC 17th June, 2006 – Buying Sex is not a Sport – A Seminar on Trafficking in Women and Children: Challenges for Ireland

On 17th June Women's Studies in UCC hosted a seminar entitled Buying Sex is not a Sport – A Seminar on Trafficking in Women and Children: Challenges for Ireland. Speakers included **Simon Coveney** (T.D. and M.E.P.); **Dr Joanna McMinn** (Director, National Women's Council of Ireland); **Dr Eilis Ward** (National University of Ireland, Galway); **John O'Reilly** (Speaking in a personal capacity, John is a Garda Inspector who worked with a UN anti-trafficking team in Bosnia); **Kathleen Fahy** (Director, Ruhama); and **Mary Crilly** (Sexual Violence Centre, Cork).

Prime Time's 8th May programme on sex trafficking raised questions about the traffic in human beings into Ireland for the purpose of sexual exploitation. It also recounted the experience of a woman, identified as having been trafficked into this country, who was given the alternatives of either immediate deportation or a prison sentence followed by deportation instead of assistance and counselling.

The 2005 EU Action Plan on Trafficking recognises that its root causes are 'poverty, exclusion and gender inequalities' and suggests that there is a need to strengthen the economic, legal and political position of women and children if this issue is to be addressed. In the meantime, introducing specific legislation on trafficking and putting in place protection and counselling services for trafficking victims are matters of urgency for Ireland.

At the seminar a decision was made to hold another meeting in the offices of NASC in Mary Street, Cork on Monday 3rd July at 8 p.m. to discuss how this issue might be taken forward at a local level, whether by lobbying for legislation, demanding that the state take on board international agreements on the issue, getting involved in further research and making specific proposals from a local base, or consciousness raising projects designed to reduce demand for trafficked women and children.

If any NWCI affiliate group would like to organise a seminar in their local area on this social problem the NWCI will be happy to support by way of

participating in the event and/or providing contact details for potential speakers.

The campaign Final Whistle – Stop Forced Prostitution, initiated by the National Council of German Women’s Organizations

Below we reproduce information about the campaign initiated by the National Council of German Women’s Organisations, taken from their website.

The campaign Final Whistle – Stop Forced Prostitution, initiated by the National Council of German Women’s Organizations (NCGWO), is using the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany as a stage to increase public awareness of the problem of trafficking. The campaign is targeting ‘forced’ prostitution; it is not opposed to legal prostitution.

The campaign’s goal is to raise broad social awareness that trafficking of women for forced prostitution takes place day by day, in Germany and in all other countries throughout Europe. This violation of human rights committed in our own country and in the European community has to be discussed after the World Cup by a much wider public and on a much higher level than before. For this purpose, we are seeking signatures of visitors to the World Cup to support a range of concrete measures to combat forced prostitution and to improve the protection of those affected by it. These demands are targeted primarily at the Federal Government and Governments of the German Länder.

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is a serious crime that affects at least 2.4 million women, men and children at any given point in time. According to estimates of the International Labour Office (ILO), published 2005 in a global report on forced labour, profits made from trafficking are as high as 32 billion US\$ per year. About half of these profits are made in industrialised countries. Human trafficking is often linked to organised crime and goes hand in hand with other serious crimes.

New Law since 2006

In Germany, human trafficking is a criminal offence as part of offences against personal liberty. Relevant provisions in the penal code were revised and regulated comprehensively based on new international standards. The new law entered into force on February 19, 2005. Article 232 of the penal code defines trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, and article 233 trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation. Human trafficking can be punished with imprisonment between six months and ten years. Aggravating circumstances (e.g. trafficking in children, serious bodily harm, organized crime, violence, threats of serious harm) punishment ranges from 1 year to 10 years of imprisonment.

Blurring boundaries

The boundaries between illegal and forced prostitution, illegal employment and forced labour are blurred. Many women especially from Eastern Europe work illegally in the sex industry. They came for a limited period of time, hoping to earn as much money as possible and to return home quickly. Some have worked as prostitutes in their country of origin, others not. Some women were recruited with false promises; for example, they were offered a well paid job as waitress. They were deceived with the intention to place them in prostitution. Once arrived in Germany, they are forced into prostitution with various means. The law defines this as trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

False promises

Another group of women is directly recruited in their country of origin for sex work, but are then deceived with regard to working conditions and salaries. A large part of their earnings has to be paid to the traffickers as “recruitment fee”, which according to initial promises could be earned quickly. This can also be seen as a form of trafficking that is penalised by law. Wherever there is an element of coercion and deception, it is likely to be a case of trafficking. Coercion can also mean debt bondage, for example, debts to repay the “recruitment fee”. These debts can be manipulated or used to threaten the person and loved ones back home.

Taboo in society increases the level of threats

Most women are forced to live a “double life” since their families are not informed about their type of work in the destination country. The taboo in society is thus extended to the family. Many of these women are aware neither of immigration regulations nor of the harsh working and living conditions. Brothels are often in a deplorable state and working conditions are harmful to the health of the women.

Many women work isolated from the outside world and can rarely leave the premises of their work. High costs for rent, lawyers and other “fees” deprive them of their desired salaries. Their vulnerable legal status combined with a lack of information and language skills facilitates exploitation. Irregular migrants are under constant threat of denunciation to authorities, which makes them even more dependent on their employer. Trafficked victims can be found in all economic sectors, especially where there is a need for cheap and flexible labour, such as restaurants, domestic service, construction and agriculture.

Further information:

www.ilo.org/forcedlabour

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

“Building Community Capacity to Protect Victims of Domestic Abuse”

A one day seminar exploring the characteristics of communities that effectively address violence against women.

Keynote speaker: Dr. Ellen Pence – Duluth Domestic Intervention Programme

Monday July 17th 10.00 a.m.– 4.30 p.m. Southern Hotel Sligo

(Funded by the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform, Violence Against Women Unit and the National Network of Women’s Refuges and Support Services)

Dr. Ellen Pence is the author of several books and numerous articles on public responses to domestic violence. She has worked with communities in the U.S., Canada, England, Scotland, Ireland, New Zealand, Australia, and a number of European and Latin American countries. Her consultations focus on developing inter-agency responses that coordinate the crucial intervention work of police, the courts, human service providers, child protection workers and victim advocates as they act on domestic abuse cases.

Ellen will talk about how practitioners are organised to think about domestic abuse cases. This involves defining key words and concepts and identifying operative theories and assumptions and beliefs operating in your community about violence between intimate partners. Ellen’s input and the discussion will address:

- 1) Understanding how institutional responses are structured to maximize or marginalize attention to victim safety.
- 2) Concrete steps to better coordination and intervention in domestic abuse cases.
- 3) Why inter-agency work often fails and how some inter-agency projects succeed.

Panel discussion

Participants will have an opportunity to query and explore the experience of practitioners who are involved in integrating responses to domestic violence both north and south of the Border. Panel members are yet to be confirmed but will include members of the Gardai and/or P.S.N.I. and the Probation and Welfare services north and south.

Closing date for registration July 5th 2006
For further information please contact
Phone: 071-9141515; E-mail: infowaves@eircom.net

Equality for Women Measure Wexford Town Women's Festival July 21st and 22nd 2006

July 21st 2006

A conference looking at the issues that face women today, topics will include:

- Women's Health
- Equality
- Domestic Violence
- Women in Leadership
- Community Education

(Places are limited)

July 22nd 2006

An event for all the family on Wexford Quay's with music, drama dance arts and crafts exhibitions and children's entertainment.

There is no cost for attending either the Conference or the events on July 22nd.

For further information please contact Patricia Mc Cann On 053 9126477.

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre Training Workshops

Training Workshops in Issues of Sexual Violence

Autumn/Winter 2006/7

Venue: Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, 70 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2

- A one day training workshop **Issues in the Aftermath of Rape** which will be held at the Rape Crisis Centre, 70 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2 on Thursday 31st August 2006 from 9.30 am to 4.30 pm. This course is for staff or volunteers who want to increase their understanding of the impact of rape and their ability to respond appropriately in its aftermath.

- ☒ A one day course '**Preventing and Dealing with Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace**' for Managers, Human Resources Personnel, Equality Officers, Members of Boards of Management. This course would be helpful also to those in a counselling role, but please note the focus is on issues for the manager rather than on counselling issues. This course will be held on Thursday 7th September 2006.

- ☒ A one day workshop on **Working with Issues of Child Sexual Abuse** which will be held at the Rape Crisis Centre, 70 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2 on Thursday 28th September 2006 from 9.30 to 4.30 pm. This workshop is for staff and volunteers who want to increase their understanding of the dynamics and impact of child sexual abuse, and to enhance their capacity to deal with this issue.

- ☒ A twelve day **Post Graduate Certificate Course: Issues in Sexual Violence: the Counselling Process** for those working or beginning to work as counsellors and psychotherapists and wanting to enhance their understanding and skills in working with issues of sexual violence. This course will run for twelve days from September to December 2006.
Dates: September 26th and 27th, October 10th and 11th, 24th and 25th, November 7th and 8th, 21st and 22nd, December 5th and 6th
 The course will explore issues arising in working as a counsellor with adolescent and adult clients who have experienced child sexual abuse, rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment.

- ☒ A four day training course **Sexual Abuse: the Counselling Process** which will be held at the Rape Crisis Centre, 70 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2 from Monday 26th February to Thursday 1st March 2007. This course is for those in a counselling role, and focuses on the therapeutic process with adolescent and adult clients.

To enquire, contact: Leonie O'Dowd, Head of Education and Training,
 Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, 70 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2.
 email: leonie@rcc.ie Website: www.drcc.ie
 Telephone: 01 6614911

Fine Gael Women's Group

Fine Gael Women's Group are accepting associate members application forms can be downloaded from the Fine Gael website <http://www.finegael.com> . Select the option Women's Group from the menu on the left hand side of the screen.

People of the Year Nominations

The People of the Year Awards offer members of the public a unique opportunity to honour those who they believe have made an outstanding contribution to Irish society, either on a national or community level. You, or your organisation, can nominate people whose achievements have made an impact in areas such as:

- **Business**
- **Service to the Community**
- **Peace and Reconciliation**
- **Courage**
- **Arts and Culture**
- **Medicine**
- **Public Service**
- **Sport and Entertainment**

Click on the link below for further information

<http://www.rehab.ie/about/peopleoftheyear.aspx>

Women of the World: Cultural Diversity Awareness Workshop

“Understanding of Cultural Diversity as it relates to Health Care”

Facilitated by Marie Ellis & Anita Mukherjee

Killyhevlin Hotel, Enniskillen Co. Fermanagh

Thursday July 6th 10.30 a.m.–1.00 p.m.

Who is the training for?

- Health Care Providers
- Support Workers in the Health Care Profession
- Service Users
- Community groups with a focus Health

Aims of the training

Participants will be able to:

- Identify areas where misunderstandings may occur due to cultural differences and how to prevent them
- Explain how stereotyping can have an effect on cultural competent health care

- Compare characteristics of culturally diverse groups to enhance understanding of cultural diversity

If you wish to attend this training please register with Colette at Triskele on 042-9663706 by Monday July 3rd 2006.