



Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Combating the Sexual Exploitation of Children (18-19 October 2007)

Side Event organized by the OSCE/ODIHR Anti-Trafficking Programme

‘Boys in the Sex Industry’

Bibliotheksaal

Friday, 19th October: 12.00 – 14.00

Given the dramatic expansion of the sex industry on an international scale in recent years, it is not surprising that there is now an extensive academic, legal and policy literature on prostitution, pornography and sex trafficking. Yet, as valuable as such discussions have undoubtedly been, it is quite striking how the focus remains firmly on women and girls. Indeed the sex industry is frequently presented in gendered and heterosexual terms, with most commentators referring as a matter of course to sex workers as 'women' or 'women and children'. This serves not only to marginalise the significant number of sex workers who are male but also to shape the way in which debates about sex work are framed. Research in different countries on the prostitution of boys has revealed that it is a much larger problem than previously recognized. It has also revealed a degree of silent acceptance at all levels of society, on the sexual exploitation of boys. As such, initiatives to address these violations and to provide support for boy victims remain peripheral to other efforts that address gender violence in these countries. There is an urgent need to challenge the social indifference that allows these practices to continue unquestioned. More targeted actions in the area of prevention and victim's assistance are required to address this serious violation of children's rights.

This event brings together researchers and NGOs from Italy, Russia, South Asia and the UK to present their views on the issues affecting boys in the sex industry.

Refreshments will be provided