



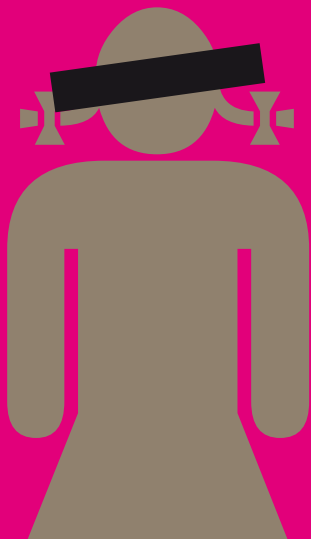
Holidays promise relaxation, fun and new encounters. And the economic impact of the tourist industry opens up new prospects for locals at the holiday destinations, with new jobs being created and infrastructure expanded.

But tourism has its dark sides too. One of these is the commercial sexual exploitation of children.



> 2 million

children are forced into prostitution worldwide.
And the number is rising.



Children as a commodity

Children, girls and boys, are sold like cheap commodities. Frequently, they end up in the sex trade, a highly lucrative and growing area of business for organised crime.

There are many reasons for the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Poverty, ignorance and discrimination against women and children are just one side of the coin – with growing demand constituting the other. In many locations, tourists are the driving force behind child prostitution. Even if they are not the sole perpetrators, it is frequently the tourist infrastructure, such as hotels or bars, which is used.

Robbed of their childhood

Sexual abuse of children deprives the victims of any chance of having a normal childhood and of leading a fulfilled and dignified life. Sexual abuse severely harms its victims both outwardly and inwardly – for the rest of their lives. Victims run the risk of contracting AIDS. Their entire existence is shadowed by mental and physical violence. And it frequently hap-

pens that they end up paying for their abuse – or for rebelling against their exploitation and escaping – with their lives. It must never be assumed that a child has the choice and is participating voluntarily. In most cases, the minors themselves do not even earn anything from their prostitution.

Demand dictates supply

The perpetrators – the overwhelming majority of whom are men – are perfectly normal citizens from all cultures and social strata. Sometimes they take the deliberate decision to seek out children as sexual partners and, at other times, they simply seize the opportunity and don't find anything reprehensible about it. A number of people believe the myth that sex with children will cure them of illnesses. They are misguided and are committing a serious crime that is subject to prosecution worldwide.

One US dollar

is what is paid for the commodity "child" in the sex trade.



"If we accept a world in which children are bought like goods in a supermarket, we have lost the right to call ourselves civilised." Ron O Grady, co-founder of ECPAT

Criminal prosecution and corruption

Many countries lack an effective system to follow up child abuse, collect evidence and arrest the perpetrators. The children are totally at the mercy of their tormenters. In many cases, corrupt police officers are even involved in this organised and profitable crime.

Code of Conduct

An increasing number of tour operators and hotels have decided to take action against the commercial sexual exploitation of children. By signing the **code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism** they are committing themselves to taking preventive action to stop child prostitution. They inform their customers, include clauses in their contracts with suppliers and train their employees how to react if they become aware of child abuse in the course of their work.

Further information may be found at: www.thecode.org

But, most importantly:

look and see what is going on and don't turn a blind eye!

Child abuse is never right, never tolerable and never forgivable.

Child abuse is also not a matter of local culture but is a criminal offence worldwide and ought to be punished accordingly!

If you see something, summon up the courage to report it:

- to the hotel management
- to your tour guide
- to your embassy
- to the local police

Don't turn a blind eye!

"Saying nothing about an atrocity that one is aware of is probably the most common form of complicity we engage in." Max Frisch

We are committed to the fight against child abuse.

www.kuoni.com

Information issued by Kuoni Group

