

The National Survey on Prostitution

The Ministries of Social Affairs and Public Security recently conducted the first national survey on prostitution in Israel. The survey sought to provide an accurate picture of the scope and nature of prostitution in Israel. It refers to data collected up to the year 2014. While the results have yet to be published in full, select findings have been released to public:

- There are between 11,200 and 12,000 people in prostitution in Israel. 95 percent of them are females.
- The survey was conducted among a sample of some 600 adults females in prostitution.
- 1,260 minors were found to be active in prostitution or at risk of prostitution.
- 62% of women surveyed reported being mothers, 80% of whom have children under the age of 18.
- 65% of women surveyed reported having up to 12 years of education.
- Although 52% of women surveyed were born in the Former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, 97% are Israeli citizens and 86% are Jewish.

From the data we see that while Israel has succeeded in minimizing the trafficking of foreigners into the country, Israeli women of low socio-economic status continue to be drawn into the world of prostitution.

- The primary reason reported for entry into prostitution was economic hardship.
- More than 80% of the women, operating in brothels, "discreet" apartments, massage parlors and on the street have expressed a desire to leave prostitution.

29% of the women who participated in the survey reported having some sort of connection with one of the treatment programs. The percentage is much higher among street prostitutes and among minors.

The survey also found that there were about 670 "sex websites" meant for the Israeli audience.

The "industry" was estimated as bringing in NIS 1.3 billion a year, while the state allocates only NIS 30 million for prevention and rehabilitation.