

## **Justice Ministers launch photography & video competition to raise awareness of human trafficking among Third Level students**

The Department of Justice and Equality has joined forces with the Northern Ireland Department of Justice to raise awareness of human trafficking on the island of Ireland.

Irish Justice Minister Alan Shatter T.D. and Northern Ireland Justice Minister David Ford, MLA have today launched a photography & video competition on human trafficking for Third Level students. The competition is open to all Third Level students on the island of Ireland.

The idea of the competition is to encourage students to become aware of the issue of human trafficking and to consider what human trafficking really means, while at the same time showcasing their huge creative talents. Entrants are being asked to research human trafficking and present their understanding of the issue via photograph or short video. There are three prizes for each category as follows: 1st prize €1,000; 2nd prize €500; 3rd prize €250.

The judging panel will comprise Ms Amanda Byram, TV Presenter and Spokesperson for the anti-trafficking organisation Love 146; Irish Artist Colin Martin from the Royal Hibernian Academy and Journalist Eamonn Mallie. Judges' marks will account for 80% of the overall marks for each entry; the remaining 20% will be decided by members of the public through Facebook where they can vote on the 12 short-listed entries.

Launching the campaign Minister Shatter said: **"Trafficking of human beings for sexual and/or labour exploitation or the removal of organs is a heinous crime that has no place on the island of Ireland. Both David Ford and I recognise the importance of raising awareness of human trafficking and have decided to join forces on this initiative targeting students and the public in general through Facebook."**

Justice Minister David Ford said: **"It is incredibly important that we continue to make every effort to raise awareness of human trafficking. Understanding the issue, being aware of the signs and reporting information or suspicions to the police is vital if police are to bear down on the traffickers and recover victims."**

**I welcome this competition which is jointly sponsored by my colleague Alan Shatter. It is an opportunity for third level students to better their understanding of this issue."**

More details of the competition and information on the issue can be found at [www.blueblindfold.gov.ie](http://www.blueblindfold.gov.ie) and [www.octf.gov.uk](http://www.octf.gov.uk).

Members of the public can report suspicions of human trafficking anonymously to the Garda Síochána through Crimestoppers at 1 800 25 00 25 or via a dedicated email [blueblindfold@garda.ie](mailto:blueblindfold@garda.ie). Anyone with suspicions of human trafficking in Northern Ireland can report their concerns anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.