

# HOTEL HEART – A POLICY FOR PREVENTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEX PURCHASE AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Men's violence against women is considered a global public health problem. National security investigations show that most victims of domestic violence never report to the police. Many are thus forced to live with violence every day. On average, 20 people are murdered as a result of domestic violence in Sweden each year. The majority of victims are women, but victims can also be men or children. More than 50 cases of domestic assault are reported daily in Sweden.<sup>1</sup> Women, men and non-binary individuals can all be victims of domestic violence, but in most cases, the perpetrator is a man who uses physical and/or sexual violence against a woman. The violence typically occurs within the home or in other indoor environments like hotel rooms.

Save the Children estimates that 1 in 10 children in Sweden are exposed to domestic violence, amounting to over 200 000 children. Children growing up with violence in the home are at greater risk of becoming violent in the future. We can end this cycle of violence by making the vulnerability of both children and adults visible.

Over 100 rapes are committed against women each day in Sweden. Of these, only 20 rapes are actually reported.<sup>2</sup> The majority of all rapes (especially those that remain unreported) are committed by an intimate partner, an acquaintance, or someone the victim had recently met. It is thereby mostly common for rapes to occur in the home environment or at hotels. Together, we can prevent the rapes that happen right next door – if we choose to act. Research shows that victims of rape are much more likely to resist their perpetrators (audibly or visibly) when they know that someone will come to their aid. Knowing this, we have the opportunity to make a difference for the people around us.

A particularly vulnerable group to physical and sexual violence are women and others in prostitution. One in four instances of sex purchase occur at hotels<sup>3</sup>, where prostituted persons face an additional risk of assault, rape and

other types of violence. Since 1999, it is illegal to purchase sexual services in Sweden. The crime is punishable by fine or imprisonment. By contrast, selling sexual services is legal. To reduce the risk and incidence of physical violence, sexual violence, sex purchase and human trafficking, take action when you feel concerned!

When we decide to act, lives can be saved, and children and adults can receive the support needed for a brighter future.

Choose to act by:

1. Listen to your instinct when you feel concerned. Try to locate the hotel room.
2. Knock on the door. You can always knock and leave if it feels unsafe to remain at the door.
3. Contact the front desk or other hotel staff and tell them your concerns.
4. Call the police directly if the situation is urgent or threatening.

**REMEMBER THAT NO ONE CAN DO EVERYTHING, BUT EVERYONE CAN DO SOMETHING**



<sup>1</sup> BRÅ, "Anmälda brott 2019", 2019

<sup>2</sup> BRÅ, NTU 2018 samt BRÅ, "Anmälda brott 2019", 2019

<sup>3</sup> Kartläggning av tidningen Mitti, 2014