

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Media Briefing

AI Index: EUR 70/013/2004 (Public)
News Service No: 108
6 May 2004

Embargo Date: 6 May 2004 11:00 GMT

Kosovo: Facts and figures on trafficking of women and girls for forced prostitution in Kosovo

Women and girls trafficked into Kosovo come from some of the poorest countries in Europe, where they face discrimination in access to social and economic rights and have experienced domestic or other gender-based violence.

Women are trafficked into Kosovo predominantly from Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine. According to the International Organization for Migration, (IOM) a majority of the women and girls from Moldova trafficked into Kosovo had been promised a job in Italy.

Increasing numbers of local women, the majority of them girls, are being internally trafficked within Kosovo.

Women are often sold several times in transit. According to the IOM women have been sold for prices ranging from €50 to €3500.

Women and girls are now being trafficked out of Kosovo into countries in Western Europe, including Italy, Netherlands and the UK.

In 2002, it was reported that 36 percent of the trafficked women and girls in Kosovo were denied any medical care, while only ten percent were provided with regular health care; the majority of trafficked women were forced to have unprotected sex.

To date, no trafficked women or girls have obtained reparations for the physical, emotional and psychological damage they have suffered as a result of these abuses of their human rights.

UNMIK (UN Interim Mission in Kosovo) police and other UNMIK personnel, KFOR (the NATO-led international military force in Kosovo) personnel and contractors enjoy a general immunity from prosecution, unless explicitly waived by the UN Secretary General, or in the case of NATO, by their respective national commanders.

Waivers were requested and granted in one case in 2002 and another in 2003, enabling the prosecution of two police officers.

No KFOR personnel suspected of trafficking or of using the services of trafficked women or girls

can be prosecuted in Kosovo. Amnesty International has been unable to find any evidence of any criminal proceedings related to trafficking against members of KFOR in their home countries.

From January 2002 to July 2003, between 22 and 27 members of KFOR troops were suspected of offences related to trafficking, according to the UNMIK Police Trafficking and Prostitution Unit (TIPU). TIPU was unable to provide further information to Amnesty International as to whether any disciplinary proceedings had been taken against these individuals.

Following the arrival of the international community in Kosovo in 1999 there was an unprecedented escalation of the sex-industry based on trafficked women and girls. In 1999-2000 it was estimated that internationals comprised 80 percent of the clients of trafficked women and girls. In 2002 the figure decreased to around 30 per cent, but at the same time the internationals generated some 80 percent of the industry income. Today an estimated 20 per cent of the client-base come from the international community, which constitutes only about two percent of the population in Kosovo.

Relevant legislation and protocols

Trafficking of persons, in particular women and girls, in situations that amount to enslavement is included among the most serious crimes in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The UN Protocol to prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (Palermo protocol) was signed by 120 states in Italy in year 2000. The protocol recognizes the need for effective prevention of trafficking with the prosecution of traffickers and the protection of human rights and assistance to victims of trafficking. Trafficked women and girls for forced prostitution are also exposed to a series of human rights abuses that violate a number of international human rights treaties including the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Children's Convention.

In January 2001, UNMIK passed Regulation 2001/4, On the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons in Kosovo, which criminalized both the traffickers and persons who knowingly use the "services" of trafficked women. The regulation also includes a number of measures to protect the rights of the trafficked women and girl.

These facts and figures are taken from Amnesty International's report: *"So does that mean I have rights?" Protecting the human rights of women and girls trafficked for forced prostitution in Kosovo.*

For the full report go to **news.amnesty:**
<http://news.amnesty.org/library/index/engneur070102004>

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