

TRAC (Raising Awareness & Campaigning) grew from members of the religious congregations involved in the founding of the Medaille Trust*. We come together to:

- Raise awareness of trafficking among the UK public
- Highlight root causes
- Address the factors creating DEMAND
- Campaign for changes in the law

TRAC has links to many worldwide anti-trafficking networks.

* The Medaille Trust was founded in 2006 by a number of religious congregations in response to the plight of thousands of people who are being trafficked into the UK each year. The Trust was established as a charity and opened its first safe house in January 2007 to promote the recovery of survivors and on-going support on their rehabilitation.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- ◆ *Be aware and make others aware. Read the leaflet "Help Free People Enslaved by Human Trafficking" (available from Chigwell Justice and Peace Centre).*
- ◆ *Pray for a change of heart on the part of the Traffickers.*
- ◆ *Invite someone to speak on Human Trafficking in your Parish, Community, School etc.*
- ◆ *Support the Medaille Trust. Funds are desperately needed. Please make cheques payable to "The Medaille Trust," P.O. Box 119, Darlington DL1 9BX. Or donate on-line at the address below.*
- ◆ *Pray for those whose lives are being destroyed by Human Trafficking.*
- ◆ *Pray for those who are raising awareness of Human Trafficking.*

There are many useful websites for more information on Human Trafficking, any search engine will find them! You might like to start with some of the following: www.medaille.co.uk www.stopthetraffik.org www.paceuk.info www.soca.gov.uk/about-soca/about-the-ukhtc www.blueblindfold.co.uk

For information/resources please contact us:

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TRAC An inter-congregational initiative
Raising Awareness & Campaigning
Working to end sex trafficking

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE UK SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Sexual Exploitation is happening in your neighbourhood! Behind closed doors, women are held captive and abused both sexually and physically by as many as 50 "clients" every day.

The trafficking of persons into the UK is big business.

*"You can buy a woman for \$10,000 and you can make your money back in a week if she is pretty and she is young. Then everything else is profit."*¹

Global criminal gangs prey on poor and vulnerable women around the world, seducing them with promises of good jobs and a new life. The gangs bring the women to the UK, confiscate their passports and make them slaves. The women are then subjected to a period of de-sensitisation - beatings, rape, threats to their families and often forced drug use - until they agree to do whatever is asked of them. This is their introduction to a life of sexual slavery and forced prostitution. They might become models for pornographic literature and films, escorts or masseuses, ultimately, objects for sexual exploitation.

New research shows *"there are an estimated 2,600 trafficked migrants in the England and Wales off-street prostitution sector, and a further 9,200 vulnerable migrants, amongst whom there may be further victims of trafficking."*²

These figures are a snapshot taken during a 12-month research period by The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). According to the ACPO Report, police said the estimate was based on face-to-face interviews with women found to be working in brothels and on police anti-trafficking operations. Given the secret nature of this hideous crime and the very specific parameters of the research, it is likely that these figures underestimate the true scale of the problem.

¹ "The Natashas" Victor Malarek - Vision Paperbacks - 2004

² Project Acumen - ACPO Migration and Associated Matters - Setting the Record - August 2010

Second Biggest Business in the World! The Business - Demand and Supply

The sex business is thriving and growing because there is a demand for pornography, lap dancing clubs, massage parlours, escort services, stag and hen parties, all so easily promoted through advertising and on the internet. The profits run into billions.

The Business is able to thrive because the cultural climate is amenable to those who want to buy sex. It's acceptable, it's affordable. There are no strings attached and "it's only sex after all", the argument goes. But is it?

"I am from India, a Punjabi girl. My heart was broken by the traffickers. I felt that everyone hated me and I started to hate myself. I felt very weak in my heart. I was in a dark place, lonely, without hope and no love. What hurt me the most was the fact that my own people were my traffickers". *Medaille Trust Safe House Resident*

How is it possible for this Exploitation/Trade to flourish?

At the root of this "trade" are the exploitative, patriarchal values that drive our economic, political and social relations. These create a deepening global poverty, powerlessness, lack of opportunities for education, gender injustice, the breakdown of family and community and the vulnerable status of migrants.

All these factors contribute to people being duped, or even sold by a parent into a tortured future.

In the 2006 annual statement on Migration, entitled "Migrations: A Sign of the Times," Pope Benedict XVI deplored the "trafficking of human beings -- especially women -- which flourishes where opportunities to improve their standard of living or even to survive are limited".

International Response

- ◆ To mount an international approach to prevent and combat trafficking, the Palermo Protocol was drawn up at the UN in 2000. It sets out a framework to punish the traffickers and protect the victims. The UK ratified the protocol in February 2006
- ◆ In 2005, the Council of Europe, which has as a primary concern, the safeguarding and protection of human rights and human dignity, published the Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings. This makes further provision for the care of survivors, and was ratified by the UK government in December 2009. The Convention came into force in the UK in April 2010.

- ◆ The EU Directive on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Protecting its Victims was proposed by the European Commission in March 2010 to replace the EU Framework Decision on Combating Trafficking of 2002. It sets out minimum standards to be applied throughout the European Union. The new Directive was endorsed by the European Parliament on 14 December 2010 and formally adopted by the Council on 21 March 2011. Member States will have to implement the new Directive by March 2013.

The UK Response

- ◆ The police launched Operation Pentameter in February 2006, which involved all 55 police forces in the UK, Ireland and the Channel Islands. The aim was to obtain an accurate profile of the scale of trafficking.
- ◆ The government established SOCA, the Serious Organised Crime Agency in April 2006. Meanwhile, a public consultation on Proposals for a UK Action Plan was held. The report emerged in June 2006, and led to the opening of the UK Human Trafficking Centre which is a multi-agency unit working within SOCA. Go to www.ukhtc.org for the aims, and objectives of this dedicated police-led unit.
- ◆ In October 2007, Operation Pentameter II was launched. 43 Police forces arrested suspects and 67 people were charged with trafficking in Human Beings. 150 women and 13 children (aged 13-17) were rescued.
- ◆ On 22 March 2011, the UK Government announced its intention to opt in to the new EU Directive (as mentioned above) on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, and Protecting its Victims. This should mean that the environment in Britain will remain hostile to trafficking gangs.

Role of the Faith Groups

Faith Groups have begun to respond in a variety of ways. The Catholic Church has been active in the denunciation of this crime and in the pastoral support of survivors. In June 2005, the conference of the Pontifical Council for Migrants, "Pastoral Care for the Liberation of Women of the Street" issued a 10 page document with recommendations for all Church members. *"The Church has a pastoral responsibility to promote the human dignity of persons exploited through prostitution and to advocate for their liberation and economic, educational and formative support. The Church must take up the defence of the legitimate rights of women."*