



## Situation of Human Trafficking in Poland

---

Paulina Konarska

Stowarzyszenie Po MOC, Katowice, Poland

Young People Against Prostitution and Human Trafficking:

The Greatest Violence Against Human Beings

Casina Pio IV

Vatican City, 15-16 November 2014

### **Who are the Polish victims of human trafficking?**

Women, men, children from different areas

### **The groups in the most danger:**

- young people under 30 years old
- people who would like to work abroad and earn money
- women, girls who would like to work in the sex business
- people who are in difficult situation in life

The youngest victim – 9 years. The oldest victim – 59 years

### **Poland is the country of:**

Destination for victims from: Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Vietnam, Philippine, Moldova, Belarus, Russia

Origin of victims for countries such as: Germany, Belgium, Croatia, Finland, France, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom

Transit for victims from: Ukraine, Bulgaria, Moldova, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Romania, Nigeria

In Poland we help more foreign victims than Polish ones. In 2013 we helped 119 victims – 29% Romanian, 11% Bulgarian, 10% Vietnam, 5% Ukrainian, 109 Poles

### **PoMOC Mary Immaculate Association**

Initiator of this work is Congregation of the Sisters Mary Immaculate, founded in the nineteenth century in Wrocław. The Charism of the Congregation is to work for the benefit of women.

In 1998 the President of Katowice appealed to the Mother of the General Assembly to delegate one of the sister to create alternative for women in crisis situation and offer practical help in an atmosphere of mutual respect, discretion and approval. Sister Anna Bańchan took over the duties of the Head of Association together with the Sister Barbara Zawia.

The Association is one of the few organizations in Poland and the only such organization in Southern Poland, which takes action to prevent “human trafficking” and provides comprehensive assistance for abused women, victims of violence and victims of human trafficking.

PoMOC Association has existed since 2001.

### **Who do we help?**

- abused women and women and their children
- experiencing violence
- sexual harmed
- victims of forced prostitution
- victims of trafficking

- living in crisis situation

### **How do we help?**

- safe accommodation – “own” room
- basic needs (clothes, food)
- accompanying the testimony, contact the police, prosecutors, institutions
- “social” – documents, insurance
- individual therapy, group therapy
- rebuilding relationships with the children, learning parenting
- training of housekeeping
- professional activation
- help in finding a home, become independent

### **Areas of operation**

#### **Streetworking**

Streetworkers are present on the streets of Katowice and their goal is to:

- establish and maintain contact,
- understand the needs of beneficiaries,
- give information on where to get help

In the years 2001-2013 we worked on the streets 160 hours on average each year, which gives us 1920 hours.

#### **Consultative point and office**

- free of charge
- consultations to prepare for individual assistance plan
- legal advice
- individual therapy
- professional activation
- help to find work, courses, training

#### **24-hour center – SHELTER**

In 2004 we opened a center in Katowice, which offers comprehensive assistance:

- social, material
- therapeutic, psychological
- spiritual
- participation in a support group

2003-2013: 306 individuals, 167 women, 139 children. 213 victims of violence, 102 victims of human trafficking

#### **Re-adaptation housing**

#### **Preventive activities/trainings**

- Preventative platforms for teenagers “working abroad; human trafficking in danger”
- Classes, conferences, prayer days, concerts
- Trainings in areas:
  - what is the procedure of human trafficking, victims’ work
  - work by the STREETWORK method

#### **Publications**

- *Being a Woman Is Not a Sin*

### **Guidebooks**

- Streetworker guide
- Help them get a new life

We receive many letters from readers of our books. They write that in the books they have found their own stories. They have found an answer how to face the problem. And how to take the first step to get out of the problems of human trafficking and prostitution. They also learn how to recognize human trafficking and how to work safely abroad.

### **Our Experience**

#### **Story of Agnieszka 34**

She started working as a prostitute when she was a teenager, pushed by her sister. She married a customer and finished with prostitution. They went to Italy to work and spent around 10 years there. Unfortunately she started dealing with people from the mafia. Again she became a victim of forced labour. The worst of it was that her husband took all her money and left her. She managed to escape from Italy and came back to Poland. She looked for help directly in our Association. She knew Sister Anna from Streetworking. When she came to our shelter she looked very scared, with big eyes full of fear. We gave her comprehensive help. After 2 weeks she found a job as a cleaner. She is taking a part in our group meetings in the shelter, such as art therapy and cinema evenings where she can speak about her feelings. Now I see her smiling. The next step for her is to find a flat.

#### **Story of Dorota 23**

She arrived at our center referred by a social institute. She was an alcoholic. We helped her to stop drinking, and brought her back to our shelter. She received comprehensive help. She lives in a Re-adaptation house with her son. She has been sober for 3 years and took part in our activity project for women. Now she works with a disabled people and is very good at it. She is doing theatre activities with them. We still have contact with her and we are helping with little things.

#### **Story of Ola 32**

She was a Victim of Human trafficking. She was recruited to England for a fake marriage with a Pakistani man. At the beginning she thought that it would be easy money. Then she recognised that the traffickers wanted to sell her. She managed to escape and call the police. She got help from IOM (International Organization for Migration) and in Poland from KCIK (National Consulting and Intervention Center for the Victims of Trafficking). When she came to our shelter we gave her comprehensive help including medical, social, material assistance. She had professional cooking classes. We helped her to find a good job. In cooperation with Renate she received financial help. Thanks to that she found a flat and pays for it.

It was very hard to refer her to meet a psychologist. But the best way to work with her was through prayer meetings and art therapy in our shelter.