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Ira Emke-Poulopoulos

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*Ira Emke-Poulopoulos\**

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## TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN AND GIRLS FOR THE SEX TRADE: THE CASE OF GREECE

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### ABSTRACT

*Trafficking in women and children for the commercial sex industry and pornography exists in all societies. Greece is an important destination and to a lesser degree transit country. After presenting estimates and statistics on legal and undocumented status, nationality, age, educational and family status, this paper analyses the causes of trafficking in the countries of origin and destination as well as the role of the traffickers. Trafficking is examined as a) a violation of fundamental human rights of the victims and as a lucrative business of the criminal traffickers. The yearly profits were estimated at 1130 million euros in the year 2000 and b) a crime committed by the traffickers and supported by corruption of the public officials, especially police with participation of the clients and the Mass Media. Policy on trafficking and forced prostitution is also presented.*

### INTRODUCTION

In all societies to a lesser or greater degree, women and girls are subjected to physical, sexual and psychological abuse that cuts across lines of income, class and culture (United Nations, 2001b: 73). However trafficking for the sex trade is the most hideous form of abuse and the worst form of women's and child labour.

According to the Convention on transnational organized crime and its Protocol on trafficking<sup>1</sup> (United Nations, 2001a), trafficking in persons means «the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of

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\* Dr, Member of the New York Academy of Sciences. Vice President of the Greek Society for Demographic Studies.

1. The Convention and the Protocol were not satisfied by Greece by February 2003.

persons, by means of threat or use of force or other form of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other form of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to services, servitude or the removal of organs». The consent of a victim is irrelevant. A similar definition has been given by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (US Department of State, 2002) adding a commercial sex act in which «the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age».

Trafficking in children for the commercial sex industry and pornography is even more pronounced than that of women. Around the world, children are being sought for a variety of illicit purposes, (e.g. forced work, forced begging sometimes after mutilation by unscrupulous traffickers) and are being bought, abducted or lured away from their families, often to be transported across borders and then sold for adoption (especially children from Latin America and Eastern Europe with emphasis on war orphans) or for the removal of their organs, tissues and other body material, although information on this activity is limited. The United Nations (1996: 218-219) consider the commercial sexual exploitation of children as invisible, mobile, global, escalating, and a highly profitable business. UNICEF (2000c, 2002) reports indicate that international criminal organizations in Eastern Europe and Russia are becoming increasingly involved in trafficking children from these areas into Western Europe for use in many of the richer nations' child prostitution and pornography markets. As the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2001) points out «Forced labour, slavery and criminal trafficking in human beings – especially women and children are on the rise world-wide and taking new insidious forms». Child prostitution means the use of a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other form of consideration. Child pornography means any representation by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purposes (UNICEF 2002).

Trafficking in women and children is not a new phenomenon. Over centuries, women and children were bought, sold and sexually exploited. However, recent developments have led to its promotion and expansion: since the 1970s and especially during the 1990s it has become a flourishing and lucrative industry in Asia and Europe. The problem is acute in Eastern

Europe and especially in the Balkan countries. The above mentioned conditions continue at the beginning of the 21st century often in a highly organized and systematic manner, resulting in a modern form of slavery under which conditions currently live thousands of women and children, especially girls but also boys, in the European Union countries.

Trafficking in children presents some particularities, noted by the Council of Europe (1993): a) A high degree of invisibility. Sexual exploitation of children is hidden and the victims are terrorized and without defense. Sexual exploitation is also operated legally: for instance, respectable travel agencies organize trips in countries where child prostitution is flourishing. b) The invisibility of the problem is increased by its international character, e.g. the pornographic material is produced in one country with children originating from another, and the destination of the product is a third country. Child pornography on the Internet (Grant, 1997: 171-178) increases every year. In the sex sites thousands of photos of naked, sexually abused and often tortured children and adolescent girls and boys, with legends referring to very expensive children-lovers, and hard pornography with children, advertisement of porno-cassettes, multimedia packets, and special web sites only for subscribers, are at the disposal of perverted pedophiles around the world. Without any control, without difficulties through the Internet and E-mail, the exploiters of children's bodies and souls satisfy their abnormality and gain enormous amounts of money. The users are hidden behind the anonymity of an e-mail address; they feel safe behind their computer. They are protected by the chaotic organization of the Internet, although the FBI, estimating that about 100.000 web sites exist, employs hundreds of specialists and powerful computers in order to find the «heads» of these operations.

Greece, according to studies and surveys (e.g., Lazos, 1997, 1998, 2002a and b; Non Aligned Women's Movement, 1995, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c; Lazarides, 1998; Marangopoulos, 1998a, 1998b; Papantoniou et al., 1998; Psimmenos, 1997, 1998a, 1998b; Tsingris, 1998a, 1998b; Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001) is an important destination and to a lesser extent transit country for women and children trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation (US Department of State, 2002). The focus of crime syndicates is not only the sexual exploitation of foreign women and children but other forms of exploitation as well, such as false marriages, domestic non-declared labour and forced labour under unacceptable working conditions. Trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation is, worldwide and in Greece, a very serious and complicated social, economic, penal and police problem.

Although statistics are imprecise, estimates in other countries and in Greece have to be mentioned before analyzing the trafficking of women and girls as a violation of human rights, as a lucrative business with vast profits and minimum danger and as a criminal act of the procurers and other intermediaries. The particularities of Greece as a destination and transit country in the context of the EU will be examined.

## I. EVALUATION AND CAUSES OF TRAFFICKING

### 1. Estimates and Statistics

UNICEF (1999) has estimated that trafficking in women and children for commercial sexual purposes in Asia and the Pacific alone has victimized over 30 million people during the last three decades. Documentation of the European Union and of the International Labour Office and expert studies (Emke-Pouloupoulos, 2001: 10, 68) conclude that there is a flourishing of violent or non-violent transportation of women and children in the EU countries but no real data are available. Because of the clandestine, hidden and criminal nature of these activities, statistics are imprecise, the collection techniques differ among countries and women who have been trafficked are reluctant to identify themselves. The Human Development Report 2000 (UNDP, 2000) estimates that worldwide about 1,2 million women and girls under 18 are trafficked for prostitution each year. The US Department of State report (2002) estimated that during 2001 at least 700,000 and possibly as many as four million men, women and children worldwide were bought, sold, transported and held against their will in slave like conditions. Women, children and men are trafficked into the international sex trade for the purposes of prostitution, sex tourism and other commercial sexual services. More than 500,000 teenage girls – out of a population of 3 million – are believed to have fallen prey to migrant traffickers and were forced into prostitution in Western Europe. According to ECPAT,<sup>2</sup> one million children, most of them from Asian countries, are forced into prostitution each year. Visitors from Europe to Asia amount to 250,000 per year.

Surveys carried out in Greece and in the other EU countries have collected data about trafficked women from various sources: police statistics

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2. Background Document for the World Congress against the commercial sexual exploitation of children, UNICEF and ECPAT, NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child (<http://www.acapa.org.za/back.html>) quoted by Shannon.

and files of criminal cases, information from the Ministry of Justice, and Public Order and other public sources, qualitative material from open interviews with victims, police, public prosecutors, pimps, social workers and prostitutes. Journal publications, referring to cases ending tragically (death, suicide, trafficking in underage girls), to conferences and usually unpublished studies, complete the information.

The extent of the problem is unknown because of tremendous constraints on the victims to remain silent and hidden: few of the trafficked girls can or want to explain their experiences to police. The known victims cannot be considered a random sample of all women. Those women had the courage to report their exploiters to the police or to solicit help from government agencies and NGOs.

According to the estimates and the survey carried out by the Non Aligned Women's Movement (1995, 1999a, 1999b), trafficking and prostitution is impeded by the enormous profits made by some individuals or crime syndicates and by the taboo and hypocrisy of the population, making it difficult to obtain data. A survey in Athens (Tsingris, 1998a: 34) has shown that 36.8% of the victims of procurement and 60% of the victims of white slavery were of foreign nationality and most of them were in Athens illegally. The Greek Police report (2000a) on organized crime in Greece showed that trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation and prostitution in general has greatly increased with the passing of time, especially during 1999, but it is not clear whether there is a real increase in this phenomenon as compared with other years, or if this increase is due to the more vigorous presence and activity on the part of the Police Authorities and to the measures that have been taken in this respect. The prostitution of minors and pederasty seem to have decreased. However, it is a fact that these two crimes are covert and not denounced to the authorities, whereas the cases that come to light are much fewer than those that actually take place.

The most important figures are those given by the survey effectuated by Lazos (See Table 1).

According to a survey (Lazos, 2002a: 222-230) the period of 1990-1992 is defined as the «phase of the first installation». The number of foreign women trafficked in Greece increased rapidly. During the period 1993-1996, defined as the «phase of take-off», the population of the forcibly prostituted foreign women exploded. During the period 1997-2000, defined as the phase of «stabilization», trafficking has become an «unquestionable social reality». The society has been accepting, the state has been declaring ignorance and the clients have been funding trafficking.

**TABLE 1**  
*Forcibly and non-forcibly prostituted women in Greece, 1990-2000*

Year	Forcidity prostituted Woman (FPW)	Difference of Population	Difference of population %	Non forcidity prostituted woman % (NFPW)
1990	2,100			3,400
1991	3,000	900	43%	3,250
1992	4,500	1,500	50%	3,250
1993	8,400	3,900	87%	3,200
1994	11,550	3,150	37%	3,200
1995	16,500	4,950	43%	3,250
1996	20,150	3,650	22%	3,300
1997	21,750	1,600	8%	3,300
1998	19,700	-2,050	-9%	3,400
1999	20,300	600	3%	3,350
2000	19,400	-900	-4%	3,800

Source: G. Lazos, *Prostitution and Trafficking in Modern Greece*, Athens, Kastaniotis, p. 221.

### ***By legal or undocumented status***

There are women legally residing in Greece either engaged and brought to Greece as «artists» or entering legally as tourists. For instance, on the basis of data from the police during the period 1991-1995, 13,677 immigrant women were engaged and brought to Greece as «artists» and of those 1,277 were arrested for prostitution. The police ascertained that later on there was a decline in the number of foreigners introduced into the country as «artists». There are also prostitutes illegally residing in Greece, either having crossed the frontier clandestinely or having entered the country legally as tourists, but who subsequently remained in Greece illegally when the three-month tourist visa period had expired. According to estimates these constitute some 24% of the total number. (Lazos, 1998b:17-22). The Police Report (Greek Police, 2000a) has shown that in 1999 a significant number of foreign women were working illegally in bars (521 women) and other establishments subject to health control such as cafeterias (282) cafe-bars (179). These figures represent only a part of the unknown reality of foreign women working under exploitative conditions and show a part of the so-called «hidden prostitution», which is covered by socially accepted occupations

such as waitressing, hostessing and dancing in public and private establishments. Other forms of hidden prostitution are masseuses, strippers, pornographic video actresses, entertainers and beauticians. In other words, an unknown number among them are victims of trafficking, and forcibly prostituted. The same Report (Greek Police, 2000a) has mentioned that 88 foreign women, working in brothels without a license, had been arrested.

### ***By nationality***

After the fall of the communist regimes and the emergence of the new independent States, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former USSR have become source and/or transit countries of trafficking in women and girls, supplementing and sometimes replacing previously significant sources of women from Asia and Latin America. At the beginning of the 21st century, major countries of origin include Ukraine, Russia, Bulgaria, Albania, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and Romania. Women from North Africa (Tunisia and Algeria), Asia (Thailand and the Philippines), the Middle East and other countries (Moldova, Georgia, Poland, and Kazakhstan) are also trafficked to Greece (US Department of State, 2002).

**TABLE 2**  
*Forcibly prostituted women 1990-2000 by trafficking networks*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Russian</b>	<b>Networks Ukrainian</b>	<b>Albanian</b>	<b>Balkan</b>	<b>Polish</b>
1990	710	390	0	10	970
1991	1,150	540	330	390	590
1992	2,190	1,130	450	490	240
1993	4,240	2,330	980	840	30
1994	5,360	3,740	1,490	930	11
1995	6,930	5,770	2,600	1,160	17
1996	7,970	7,370	3,250	1,560	18
1997	7,930	7,630	4,400	1,790	15
1998	7,050	6,810	3,730	2,110	14
1999	6,740	6,640	4,180	2,730	12
2000	6,290	6,540	3,940	2,620	17

Source: G. Lazos, *Prostitution and Trafficking in Modern Greece*, Athens, Kastaniotis, 2002, p. 237.



The study by the Non Aligned Women's Movement (1995: 39; 1999: 6) showed that in 1991 there were 15,000 Filipino women in Greece, of which 20% practiced prostitution as their main or partial means of livelihood. Most of them were live-in servants taking care of children, elderly and invalid persons; in their free time, about 5% worked as prostitutes. Most of the women from Thailand worked as prostitutes and only 10% of the 1,200 Ethiopians. A general rise in prostitution was marked among women from Eastern European countries during the 1990s though no data is available. After 1991, trafficked women came from almost all Eastern European countries and the countries of the Former USSR.

During the period 1990-2000, the Russian trafficking network had 40% of the foreign forcibly prostituted women under control, the 30% of the Ukrainian, 14.5% of the Albanian and 9.5% of the Balkan.

#### ***By age and educational status***

Foreign and Greek sources (*Trafficking in Migrants*, Quarterly Bulletin, IOM, different issues; Psimmenos, 1995: 172; Lazos, 1997, 1998, 2002a and b; Non Aligned Women's Movement, 1995, 1999a, b, c; Emke-Pouloupoulos, 2001) point out that young girls aged 12-15 years old are the preferred «commodity» of the pimps. Prostitution rings procure young adolescents, including boys from East European countries and the Balkans, to work in the brothels and sex clubs of Athens. According to the Police Report (Greek Police, 2000a) child prostitution is limited in Greece: however, few cases are reported to the authorities or covered by the press, many fewer than those in reality. A Greek survey for the period September 1995- September 1997 (Lazos, 1997) has shown that among 2,930 forcibly prostituted underage girls and boys about 55-60% were of Greek nationality and that there was a great minority from the Balkan states, Middle East, and countries like Uzbekistan and Abhazia.

In Greece, about 5,800 children under 16 years of age live in the Greek streets according to UNICEF's data. Among them, 55% are children of refugees. A survey with a sample of 955 children has shown that few among them go to school and a large proportion of them live in Athens without their parents. Those children are the victims of forced labour, forced begging and sexual exploitation (UNICEF, 1999, 2000a, 2000b).

Table 3 shows the girls aged under 18 years forcibly prostituted in Greece.

**TABLE 3**  
*Underage forcibly prostituted persons in Greece during the period 1990-2000 by trafficking network*

Year	Russian	Networks Ukrainian	Albanian	Balkan	Total
1990	40	20	-	-	60
1991	65	30	25	25	145
1992	120	65	35	30	250
1993	250	140	80	55	525
1994	325	225	125	65	740
1995	425	355	225	85	1,090
1996	505	470	275	115	1,365
1997	515	495	580	130	1,720
1998	440	450	485	160	1,535
1999	460	425	585	210	1,680
2000	420	420	555	205	1,600

Source: G. Lazos, *Prostitution and Trafficking in Modern Greece*, Athens, Kastaniotis, 2002, p. 252.

Several studies (*Trafficking in Migrants*, different issues; Psimmenos, 1995: 172; Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001) have shown that women from less developed countries tend to be older and less educated, compared with women from Central and Eastern Europe who tend to be very young, most of them under 25 and many underage. In many cases they are well educated and sometimes multi-lingual.

#### ***By family status***

Some studies have shown that women from less developed countries tend to be married and have children (IOM, 1995: 21; Caldwell et al., 1997: 44-50; Bruinsma, Meershoek, 1997: 107-108; Ghosh, 1998: 27-28; Tsingris, 1998a: 28-31; Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001). As women from Eastern and Central Europe are very young, this is less likely to happen.

In Greece, data and studies referring to the family status of trafficked women do not exist. A survey on the judicial practice of the phenomenon of procurement (Tsingris, 1998a: 28-31) shows that most of the victims are unmarried women. According to Greek newspapers, some have contracted

false marriages, and some married women practice or are forced into prostitution, even by their own husbands.

There are indications that foreign women and girl prostitutes were employed in the sex industry in their country of origin or at some point in transit. A study (Psimmenos, 1995: 172) registered the experiences of 30 women and young girls from Albania working in prostitution or sex clubs. Most of them were dependent on drugs and other chemical substances and they did not come to Greece in order to work in the sex industry. A minimal number had worked as prostitutes in Albania. Newspaper information coincides with scientific studies abroad indicating that often women and girls are employed abroad in the sex industry before coming to Greece. Those originating from villages work as prostitutes in big cities of their own country, and in different transit countries. In Greece, they work in the provinces, even in small villages, having previously come to the large towns, especially Athens.

## **2. The Main Causes of Trafficking**

Trafficking is not a national but a world phenomenon, affecting countries of origin, transit and destination. The causes of trafficking explained by the miserable situation in the countries of origin described below, is one but not the only reason explaining white slavery. The role of the traffickers is more important.

### ***A. In the countries of origin***

Economic and political instability greatly increases the likelihood that the country will become origin of victims (US Department of State, 2002).

#### *a) Development gaps between states, economic and social inequalities.*

Differences in affluence in the country of origin and destination are frequently the root causes of certain migratory flows involving trafficking. As a result of the development of communications and increased travel and international business, differences between rich and poor are more visible. Fast population growth is another factor. Forced prostitution is a result of lack of economic and social participation, economic degradation that alienates women's labour through processes of rapid urbanization and migration resulting in underdevelopment and chronic unemployment. All these factors lead some women to seek a better life elsewhere, in industrialized nations. In countries of South East Asia, Thailand, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan, economic crisis has led

to the deterioration of political conditions and the enlargement of geographical, economic, political and social inequalities, producing refugees and missing persons, including vulnerable groups of women and children who are victimized by procurers. Within the Central and Eastern European countries, the former USSR and the Balkans, great income inequalities between rich and poor, lack of employment opportunities, high unemployment with women being more severely affected than men, and marginalisation of women are the main factors (IOM, 1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1998, 1999; US Department of Labour, Bureau of International Labour Affairs, 1996: 34-35; Savona et al., 1996: 8-9; Beare, 1997: 21-22; Caldwell et al., 1997: 43-73; Phongpaichit, 1997: 74-104; Shannon, 1997a: 123; Williams, 1997a: 2-3; Williams, 1997b: 154, 161; Gery, 1999; Omelaniuk and Baerten, 1999; di Nicola, 1999; Salt, 2000: 6; Skeldon, 2000: 7-30; United Nations, 2000a, 2000b; Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001; US Department of State, 2002; *Trafficking in Migrants*, Quarterly Bulletin, IOM, different issues, 1995-2002).

*b) Poverty.* In Russia (Caldwell, 1997: 42-73) almost one quarter of the population lives below the poverty line, women account for nearly two thirds of the unemployed, and as much as 85-90% in some regions. The combination of poverty, urbanization, absolute and relative overpopulation, unemployment and the development of mafia are the main causes of trafficking concerning the countries of origin. UNICEF's reports point out that i) «debt has a child's face»: external debt as percentage of GDP is much higher than the regional average (11%) in countries facing trafficking in children (Thailand 63%, Philippines 53%) (UNICEF, 1999); ii) millions of «lost children» from the less developed countries, primarily girls, are forced into the world of commercial sexual trafficking and exploitation (UNICEF 2000a: 28-29). Poverty alone provides an insufficient explanation for trafficking: Trafficking fees are too high for the very poor and many trafficked women and children do not originate from the poorest regions of the developing world. However, widespread poverty in rural areas can lead the villagers to sell their daughters; desperation in urban areas can draw young girls into prostitution as a means of survival. In many poor regions of the world, the sale of a woman or a child provides food and clothing for the family. Poverty is linked with single parent families, unemployment, low salaries and social expenditure as well as tax policy in each country (IOM, 1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1998, 1999; United Nations, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c; Williams, 1997b: 161; Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001: 16; *Trafficking in Migrants*, Quarterly Bulletin, different issues, 1995-2002).

c) *Major political events.* Conflicts or post-conflict situations, war, oppressive political power, the disruption of traditional, legal or social structures, political, national, religious conflicts civil unrest, internal armed conflicts and natural disasters, destabilize and displace populations and have resulted in many vulnerable women and children across several countries. As a result of increased communications, differences between safe and unsafe societies are more visible than ever. The trafficking from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union and the Balkans began with the break-up of the Soviet Union and has spread rapidly in recent years due to socio-economic decline, growing economic hardship and the chaotic post-communist situation in the newly independent states. In specific instances the demand has been related, at least in its early stages, to military bases overseas or to large scale military involvement in regional conflict: the mass presence of civilian and military international personnel has been shown to increase demand in the sex market, as happened in Bosnia-Herzegovina after the Dayton Agreement, in Kosovo and Afghanistan. Asylum seekers and refugees fleeing war and political persecution across the world are not a new phenomenon. New and unprecedented in the 1990s are the historic changes in Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and Albania, as well as the ethnic war in former Yugoslavia (Beare, 1997: 21-22; Caldwell et al., 1997: 42-73; Savona et al., 1996: 8; Hemeldonck, 1998: 14; Omelaniuk and Baerten, 1999; Esdas, 2000; Thomey, 2000: 11-12; Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001: 16; *Trafficking in Migrants*, Quarterly Bulletin, different issues).

d) *Gender roles and practices.* Very limited opportunities for education and marginalisation render many women easy targets for professionally-organized networks that recruit women and assist them in their migration. The problem also stems from women's dependence on men and from the lack of awareness of potential victims of the dangers. Cultural attitudes also play an important part in the prosperity of the sex business and sex tourism. In many societies, women and children are still viewed as second-class citizens or even inferior beings who do not deserve the same rights and liberties. Discriminatory attitudes and patriarchal perspectives extend to the belief that one of the main purposes of the female is to please the male, especially sexually. Sexism and gender roles are taught from childhood and in some countries are intensified by traditional religious doctrine. In other countries social and cultural practices contribute to trafficking. For example the low status of women and girls by not valuing their lives as highly as those of the male population or the practice of entrusting poor children to more

affluent friends or relatives may lead to abusive and exploitative situations. In many cultures, child sex abuse and the commercial sex trade in children are wholly abhorrent. In some countries, however, there is a far greater level of tolerance. The resulting asymmetries in what is or is not permissible behaviour, the desire of developing countries to attract tourists and the desire of potential consumers of child sex to move beyond the moral restrictions and legal prohibitions of their own communities, have all contributed to the growth in trafficking children (Beare, 1997: 21-22; Caldwell et al., 1997: 42-73; Savona et al., 1996: 8; Hemeldonck, 1998: 14; Omelaniuk and Baerten, 1999; Esdas, 2000; Thomey, 2000: 11-12; Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001: 16; *Trafficking in Migrants*, different issues).

e) *Government policies.* Some government policies support the export of labour in general, including women for sex services, as a way to solve local unemployment problems and to attract foreign exchange. The example of Thailand is pertinent. Two major factors have contributed to the rise in the global trafficking of Thai women: the domestic sex trade (including sex tourism) and the national labour export policy (Savona et al., 1996: 9; Phongpaichit, 1997: 96-87; di Nicola, 1999; Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001: 17; *Trafficking in Migrants*, 1995-2002, different issues).

### ***B. In the countries of destination and transit***

All the rich countries, and also many poor ones, are countries of transit and destination. Trafficked women and children work in sex services in Japan, the USA, Australia and the industrialized countries of western and northern Europe as well as in other developed and less developed countries. In many countries, surveys and studies (Emke-Poulopoulos, *ibid*, 17-19 and 70-71; *Trafficking in Migrants*, 1995-2002; Migration News Sheet, Monthly Bulletin, different issues, 2001-2002) have shown the various facets of the problem. Among the EU countries the Netherlands, Germany, France and Italy are the major receiving countries. The country of origin of trafficked women and children differs from country to country and according to the period examined. Greece is both a transit and a destination country. However, in some EU countries like the Netherlands there is an impression that Greece is a country of origin as well, because many Albanians speaking rudimentary Greek have been «trained» in Greece and supplied with false passports by Albanian pimps. The EU countries have imposed strict national rules concerning regular immigration. With high unemployment rates across Europe, EU governments have enacted legislative restrictions on immigration.

### **C. The role of the traffickers**

The traffickers are not only men. Among them, women may represent a high percentage: in Bosnia-Herzegovina, about 40% of previously trafficked women have become recruiters themselves.<sup>3</sup>

a) *The causes of traffickers' involvement* (Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001, 28: 74; *Trafficking in Migrants*, Quarterly Bulletin, 1995-2002, different issues) are the vast socio-economic inequities encouraging the involuntary supply of the prostitution market which greatly benefits the agents, middlemen and organized rings who derive most of the profits from this business. Trafficking in women and children is not the sole criminal activity of the offenders. Most of them are also involved in smuggling arms, drugs, money laundering, stolen cars, false documents, begging and theft.

b) *Mode of operation of the traffickers* (Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001: 28-29 and 74; *Trafficking in Migrants*, Quarterly Bulletin, 1995-2002, different issues): In the countries of origin, some women and children are abducted in discos, in the streets, out of schools, etc.. A few are sold by relatives, even by their own parents. The majority of the traffickers operate as «recruitment agents» in towns and villages offering job opportunities abroad, but usually the contacts that push women to emigration are friends and acquaintances, or amorous relationships. Occasionally women in bars and discos are approached by friends/acquaintances, with false promise of work: they are recruited as dancers, artists, language students, or tourists paying for travel costs in advance and delivering fraudulent documents, if necessary. Sometimes traffickers present themselves as producers, film directors and managers. Some traffickers own brothels, discotheques and bars. Advertisements in the newspapers, on the internet and even with legal agencies are also involved: the traffickers often carry out their work behind a legal facade and the women are persuaded to sign contracts that stipulate each party's obligations and financial returns. Through these usually innocuous-looking documents, the women become ensnared in a financial arrangement that leaves them in debt bondage and obligated indefinitely to their employers. This is the norm in the world of traffickers and their victims. The brains of the rings persuade their prospective victims to work in bars and clubs where they end up in prostitution. In Asia, the methods of trafficking include the normal lure of false opportunities: village girls are

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3. «Focus on the Balkans», *Trafficking in Migrants*, 2000, 22: 1.

abducted and smuggled across the border to work as prostitutes. In order to obtain a legal residence permit for the women, mainly for those from the former USSR, the procurers resort to unimaginable wrangling and scheming. Two examples are relevant: a) in a few cases, a phony marriage is arranged between a Greek man of an advanced age, or invalid, and of low social status and the procurer's victim so that the woman may acquire a residence permit in Greece; b) a network of procurers undertakes the task of securing legal residence permits for women who have been brought into the country on tourist visas and with forged documents. They present these women as mothers of minors, and undertake to find Greek volunteers to acknowledge children as their own. The role of the father is paid in exchange for 350,000 drachmas (€1,000). The immigrant women are provided with board and lodging with the aim of sending them to work in brothels as soon as their legal residence permits are issued. Modeling agencies offering training to become a model, a hostess or a dancer, and marriage agencies selling «mail-order-brides» are the ideal recruiting places and cover-up for trafficking in women. Travel agencies, sometimes controlled by traffickers, are used for recruiting, making themselves known to the public by advertising in newspapers, magazines and television.

*c) Why the traffickers prefer women from Central and Eastern European Countries?* In all the EU countries, the illegal migrants are cheaper for the clients and it is easier for the traffickers to oppress and blackmail them. The situation in the Central and Eastern European countries during the 1990s – that is, the lack of controls, the inability of adequate response to crime and the high corruptibility of officers- make them cross-roads to gain access to richer European countries. It is easier and cheaper for traffickers to bring women from the Central and Eastern European countries to Western and Southern Europe than from the developing countries. Their transport fees are minimal and the visa for many of their citizens has been abolished in EU countries. Traffickers, brothel and bars owners prefer foreign women precisely because they are easier to manipulate/exploit and control, because usually they do not speak the language, are unfamiliar with customs and laws, cannot fall back on friends or acquaintances and are often mistrustful of the police. The criminal role of the traffickers will be analyzed below.



## II. TRAFFICKING AS A VIOLATION OF FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE VICTIMS AND AS A LUCRATIVE BUSINESS FOR THE CRIMINAL TRAFFICKERS

Trafficking in women and children for sexual exploitation affects a growing number of countries. The life and working conditions of the victims are incompatible with international instruments on fundamental human rights:<sup>4</sup> the conventions, declarations and norms in place at the international level are not vigorously implemented because they do not always constitute legal text binding the member states. The implementation of international instruments depends on the awareness of the problem at the national level. However, countries «exporting» and «importing» victims are not conscious of the problem or do not want to refer to it.

### 1. Living and Working Conditions of the Trafficked Women

Surveys and studies in many developed countries, especially in the EU, point out the dramatic and inhumane living and working conditions of the migrant trafficked women (e.g., IOM 1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1998, 1999; United Nations, 1995: 625; Beare, 1997: 28-30; Caldwell et al., 1997: 61-67; Phongpaichit, 1997: 83-88; Bruisma, Meershoek, 1997: 112-114; Shannon, 1997: 137-138; Williams, 1997b: 145-170; Savona, 1998; Gery, 1999; Budapest Group, 1999; Esdas 2000; European Commission, 2000b; Council of Europe, 2001; Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001). The costs of the services facilitating migration have to be repaid, often under long-term arrangements. The fees together with high interest rates lead to a debt bondage, creating more dependencies between the traffickers and the trafficked persons. Some women are trafficked as regular migrants with work permits e.g. as dancers in the entertainment business. More vulnerable to exploitation are women in an irregular situation: they are forced to work in slave-like conditions. This means 12 hours a day, non stop; they receive very little from the brothel owner or procurer, since 70% or more of their earnings go to the traffickers, while they pay for their food and lodging, and are often robbed of their income. Sometimes they are not allowed to keep any of their earnings in exchange for their transport and living costs: the pimps just give them food and the minimum for personal hygiene. The

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4. For the international instruments and national legislation on trafficking in women and children, see Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001, Appendices B and C.

traffickers control women by emotional and physical manipulation, alcohol and drug dependency, by isolating them from the local society, compelling them to work and live in the same place. This is easily achieved due to their poor grasp of the local language and their illegal status in the host country. A typical isolation strategy is to trick or coerce a woman into surrendering her passport making her in effect a «non-person». They are deprived of their human rights and freedoms, are forbidden to leave the places without permission, threatened by deportation, violence and humiliation if they ask the authorities for help. They may be locked into apartments or secret rooms in bars. The newcomers are under surveillance of a bodyguard and are obliged to give all their earnings to their pimps. Sometimes the methods used to constrain women into prostitution are reminiscent of the concentration camps of the nazi regime: there is a preparatory period of three months during which they are raped, beaten, and without adequate food and water. A great number of the women bear the marks of severe beatings. Since 1999, defenseless women from Kosovo have been forced into prostitution by unscrupulous criminals with extensive experience in the trafficking of women and children. The criminals stop at nothing, systematically intimidating social workers to deter them from helping their victims.

Once in the country of transit or destination, the traffickers, using physical and psychological violence, force their victims into prostitution in order to pay for what their torturers have paid for their entry and stay in the place where they are exploited. In Greece the traffickers sell their victims to owners/managers of private bars who re-sell, incite, and force even underage girls into prostitution and to brothel owners or managers. In order to minimize the possibility of arrest and to increase their profits, they move them about from place to place, either within the same town or to other parts of Greece, usually where the pimps have connections with corrupt members of the police so that they are not easily tracked down. Another reason for moving the women from town to town or even from country to country is to make it appear to the patrons of clubs, cafe-bars etc. and the clients that «fresh merchandise» is being offered. The women are often sold several times from one bar owner to another. Greeks and foreigners, individual pimps and prostitution rings, buy, exploit, and sell women. In the organized ring, some accompany and take care of the victims, and others are the collectors of the money, who give them to the «entrepreneur». As in other receiving countries, they keep the women imprisoned, do not pay them at all and mistreat them. The traffickers who advertise in the newspapers or on the TV during the night programs offer continuously «new

commodities». Traffickers and other intermediaries rape and force into prostitution women with dozens of clients per day, obliging them to have sex without condoms and forcing them into abortion.

The above mentioned conditions are also true for Greece, where living and working conditions vary according to the experience or not of prostitution before arrival, the different types of consent, the extent of any deceit, coercion or violence, the amount of contracted debt and the mode of repayment. A survey (Lazos, 1998: 19-22) has described the life of trafficked women as follows: humiliation by the pimps and the clients; blackmail (e.g., the threat of handing them over to the police); non-satisfaction of vital needs (hunger, thirst); destruction of personal belongings (photos, etc.); retention of their earnings, threats, intimidation, beatings, and even murders. Their opinion about the social environment through pimps, clients and policemen was hostile. Prostitution in Greece «entails new heights of violence as well as degradation and exploitation of the prostitute». 26-28% of the foreign prostitutes entered into prostitution through direct and prolonged use of physical or psychological violence. No one among them has the possibility of refusing. Only 20-23% knew the purpose for which they came in Greece. This survey ended with the striking result that 36% of the foreign prostitutes suffer from a clear loss of the sense of space – only 27% knew in which neighbourhood of Athens they were, and 32% did not know where Athens is! With regard to sense of time, 33% did not know what day of the week it was, 56% did not know the date (up to 8 days out) and 10% did not know the month. Some of them did not know the year: When questioned in 1996, 4% answered, «1995, 1996, 1994, something like that». The study by the Non Aligned Women's Movement (1995, 1999a, 1999b) points out that trafficked women are forced to work as prostitutes without the possibility of leaving or changing their working conditions. They are denied their freedom and are economically and sexually exploited.

Some authors refer to Albanian victims and procurers. It is worth mentioning two studies of the trafficking of women from Albania to Greece for sexual exploitation (Roumeliotou, Kornarou, 2001; Council of Europe, 2001). a) The first study involving prostitution of underage Albanian girls, some as young as 12 years old, which is facilitated by the development of agencies and networks linking origin and destination and responsible for recruitment and transportation. While some (mainly adult) women migrate specifically to work in the sex industry, others are recruited as «entertainers» or «models» and then forced into prostitution by unscrupulous agents and friends. The working conditions in the sex industry are worse

than in any other branch of migrant activity, frequently involving violence and subjugation to male dominance. Albanian women in Greece are at the bottom of the sex industry ladder – often stereotyped as dirty, uneducated and cheap. Prostitution is regarded in Albania as a criminal act, a terrible loss of honour and a source of shame for the family. Albanian prostitutes in Greece are forced to live between two worlds, neither of which is prepared to accept them; b) the second study underlines that Albanian women are usually involved in «protection» networks, whereby some man takes all the woman's money.

In Greece, managers of nightclubs urge the waitresses, especially those who are living without documents in the country, to offer sex to various clients. The pimps make all arrangements by means of mobile phones, and the «deals» are closed and appointments are fixed through advertisements in newspapers under the title «Massage» and «Personals». As happens all around Europe, victims of the Albanian mafia are ill-treated, not paid and forced to «work» from the morning until 2 am, while cases of servicing as many as fifty clients a day have been mentioned. The secret brothels have been turned into minor concentration camps, where young immigrants are imprisoned and become martyrs in the hands of ruthless procurers. Rooms in cheap hotels and in the basements of buildings have been turned into «camps» where the pimps, both Greek and foreign, «train» the young women by means of gang rape, beatings, humiliation in order to force them to become prostitutes. Cases are not rare of procurers prostituting their own wives.

Why do the victims not react? The aim of the traffickers and pimps is to transform their victims into perfectly obedient beings. If a girl tries to escape, she is threatened and beaten. Sometimes they are denounced to the police and expelled/deported: in this case, the police unwillingly assist the traffickers in their program of torture and discipline. Accounts from newspapers of women who have escaped from their torturers are shocking: women who had the courage to denounce their exploiters have spoken about mutilations and tortures which they themselves or others have endured.

A survey (Lazos, 1998: 19-22) explains the reasons why trafficked women accept the violence of the pimps and stay with them: a) one out of five believes that this is the best alternative solution, because she earns money for the satisfaction of consumption needs, for the needs of her family or for buying drugs; b) the great majority are characterized by inertia, because of fear, routine, physical and psychological exhaustion, the feeling of futility and the belief that everywhere exists the same hostile environment.

The parents of trafficked women and children often believe that their daughters are married or/and work in homes taking care of children and the elderly. Sometimes they know the truth but they do not speak because they are afraid for their other children.

Even when there are efforts to combat trafficking and traffickers, the women are often afraid to testify against those who have been exploiting and abusing them – a reluctance that is even greater in those societies where the women are treated as the perpetrators rather than as victims of crime (Williams, 1997b: 156).

Expulsion-deportation punishes the victims and mainly eliminates the possibility of exposure of their exploiters, since there are no witnesses for the prosecution of the procurers when the trial takes place (Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001: 21). States arrest the women and/or deport them with little concern for what happens to them upon their return. Most of the receiving countries enforce only their immigration laws to punish and deport women, rather than considering them as victims of trafficking. In Greece, police authorities have arrested many young women from Bulgaria, who have been brought illegally into the country by prostitution rings. As the Greek state does not make available money for deportation by airplane, the women are sent back to their country by rail: Greek police officers, in collaboration with Bulgarian police, send the young women by train directed to Sofia so that in Bulgarian territory the Bulgarian police will receive them. However, armed mafia enter the train before the Bulgarian police and disembark the girls violently in order to send them back (80% of women deported by rail come back within 48 hours) or send them to another country to continue working as prostitutes. The traffickers work in collaboration with «Greek centres» in which policemen are sometimes involved. The above-mentioned situation shows that deportation increases the profits of prostitution rings because they re-sell the victims to another «boss», as the traffickers force their victims to call them.

A study (Non Aligned Women's Movement, 1999: 6-7) distinguishes between prostitution exercised: a) in the bars, existing even in small villages, and hotels: these are well-known by the police; b) in the «massage parlors»; and c) in the brothels. However, in Greece there are some very peculiar forms of prostitution: women brought by bus to provincial cities and villages, «ordering» of women having special characteristics, or for the weekend, prostitution of Albanian women at very low prices where sometimes the pimp is their own husband. There are also special agencies importing women as dancers or entertainers, with legal documents for 6

months or less. Trafficked women without residence permits cannot work in the streets because there is a risk of being arrested. The Police Report (Greek Police, 2000a) distinguishes between: a) foreign women already living in Greece who, with false promises of economic and social ascension, were persuaded to work in bars, cafeterias, clubs, dance clubs etc. and b) women recruited from abroad, as noted above.

How can this torture of victims be brought to an end? A woman or child who has been the object of trafficking may later on voluntarily prostitute herself / himself, since this is the only work this person knows and is unable to find any other means of livelihood. In some cases, they have saved money and can return home. According to UNICEF (1999), in most cases trafficked children, even when their exploitation has ended, have very few alternatives and return to prostitution.

The problem is, how they will be free from the traffickers and in what physical and health condition? Usually, by the age of 35 they are old women. There are only four ways to get out of the rings: to go mad, to be in a state of advanced pregnancy and therefore useless for their pimps, to be helped by a client, and, finally, death.

## **2. Trafficking as a Lucrative Low-Risk Business**

Trafficking in women and children is a lucrative business as international criminal networks and pimps have very important profits with very low risk for the traffickers from these activities compared with other forms of trafficking, in particular compared with trafficking in drugs (Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001: 25, 72-73). The traffickers profit, in addition to prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation, by exploiting the trafficked person and introducing her or him into criminal circuits, which may include organized begging, pick- pocketing, trade in children, illicit labour or drug trafficking.

Trafficking does not require a large capital investment and it frequently involves little risk of discovery by law enforcement. In addition, trafficking victims, unlike drugs, can be re-sold and used repeatedly by traffickers (US Department of State, 2002).

The profit from female sexual exploitation associated with the child sex business has been estimated as higher than \$5 billion (Shannon, 1997: 121). The IOM and the United Nations estimated the income from trafficking in women as amounting to \$8 billion per year (United Nations General Assembly, 2000).

Although the contemporary trade in child pornography is driven largely by personal rather than profit motives, the development of electronic payments systems via the Internet will increase the proportion of these exchanges in the future.

In Greece, in 1996, the income of pimps was estimated at 70 billion drachmas. For 1 million drachmas invested in the entrance and exploitation of one foreign woman, the trafficker earns 27 million drachmas (Lazos, 1998). According to UNICEF (2000c), for the year 2000, children working as beggars or in the sex industry bring to their exploiters about a billion drachmas per month. The yearly profits were estimated in 169 million euros for the year 1990, 1,170 for the peak year 1999 and 1,130 for the year 2000 (Lazos, 2002b: 97). The amount paid per act to the woman has more than doubled in the period 1990-2000: from 22 euros to 46. The escort agencies address higher incomes, as a girl costs about €300 for 24 hours. (Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001: 31).

### **3. Trafficking as a Crime**

Many traffickers who are part of criminal networks involved in other transnational crimes have recognized that they can profit greatly by supplying people to fill the demand for sexual exploitation (US Department of State, 2002).

Trafficking in women and children is a crime that is increasing in scope and complexity. Globalization has significantly influenced the development of organized crime. Technological advances in communications, travel and infrastructure increase the opportunities for criminal activities of organized groups. Alongside the trade in illegal drugs, global markets for other illicit products, trafficking in women and children has been developed. Criminals specialize in moving persons from one country to another provide an alternative to legal immigration.

For criminal organizations, individual pimps and various intermediaries involved in the market, this is not only a very high profit, but a generally low - risk activity. The role of trafficker-pimps is similar all over the world. Traffickers profit from lax or non-existent sanctions in many parts of the world and insufficient counter-measures. Penalties for participation in the trafficking of women are often minimal and sometimes non-existent. Convictions are few because the victims are expelled and there are no witnesses during the trials. Since the 1990s, trafficking has been growing and becoming more organized.

In the courts, all the witnesses are dubious. The client is unseen, the woman forced into prostitution is the martyr: she is frightened, subject to pressure, she never seeks the protection of the law because, and in many cases, she does not speak the language of the country. As she is residing in the country illegally, she becomes the victim of blackmail and violence, under the control of mafia or individual pimps. Convictions of procurers are few and the penalties imposed are light, because several countries expel/deport the women thus depriving the prosecution of valuable witnesses (Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001: 26-30, 73-74; *Trafficking in Migrants*, Quarterly Bulletin, IOM, different issues, 1995-2002; *Migration News Sheet*, Monthly Bulletin, different issues, 2001-2002).

#### **A. Organized crime and individual traffickers**

Traffickers in the EU countries consist of: a) small and occasional traffickers who recruit only a few women at a time, as and when the owner of a brothel or sex-club places an order. The local contact recruits the women, accompanies them to the destination country or arranges for their transport and delivery; b) large-scale traffickers with extensive networks, using a variety of legal and illegal ways to recruit women from different countries; c) medium size traffickers who tend to specialize in one or two countries, and are likely to use the women for their own clubs and brothels instead of selling them to a third party.

Existing «cross-national networks» facilitate the growth of criminally assisted illegal migration. One of the most important actors in the world of illicit sex is organized crime. Mafia groups are an essential part of the structure that controls the market and their involvement takes many forms: They might act independently or in co-operation with other individuals, such as authorities, pimps and other mafia groups. They make use of travel agencies or modeling and other agencies (sometimes in their hands) to traffic the women and take care of the false passports, visas, or other necessary documents. They also corrupt civil servants in order to obtain such documents. Europol (Salt, 2000: 44) points out that members of the criminal organizations engaged in sexual exploitation are often of the same nationality as the women they control. The organized crime groups (mafia) in the EU countries are characterized by the presence of networks, operating in all countries, the development of «domestic bilateral organizations» operating from country to country and of domestic organized groups (gangs). The mafia have a high degree of specialization, extreme violence and are increasingly decentralized and flexible in their organization.



Criminal organizations either engage in the trafficking directly or facilitate the trafficking for agencies and entrepreneurs involved. Brothel and club/bar owners or managers and criminal groups pay the suppliers and initially put the women to work. Guards help to ensure that women do not escape and inflict punishment in the event that they try. The business would not run efficiently without the involvement of numerous intermediaries and aides such as escorts, owners of publicity and travel agencies, even taxi drivers. Among the mafia groups, the Russian (Caldwell, 1997: 42-73) is the best organized, using violence or threat of violence, expending resources to discourage co-operation of its members with the police and corrupting legitimate government authority. Many mafia members are former employees of the military and the National Security Agency KGB. The Albanian mafia (di Nicola, 1999; Emke-Pouloupoulos, 2001: 27; *Trafficking in Migrants*, 1995-2002; *Migration News Sheet*, 2001-2002) is considered to be the most cruel and violent for its ability to keep immigrant women in severe conditions. In Albania, there are concentration camps where women are raped, tortured, and their families threatened in order to obtain the victim's obedience, raise no objection to forced prostitution and blindly obey their tormentors. According to the IOM (1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1998, 1999; *Trafficking in migrants*, 1995-2002; *Migration News Sheet*, 2001-2002), young refugee women are abducted from the refugee camps by armed scafisti, members of Albanian organized crime, forcing these women into prostitution in Italy and elsewhere in Western Europe. Although there are pimps who exploit a few women, most belong to large trafficking rings which encourage demand in the receiving countries. Traffickers easily find women in the poor and war-devastated former Yugoslavia, especially in Bosnia, FYROM, Kosovo, where the political situation is chaotic, the laws are not respected and trafficking in women flourishes under the protection of corrupted officials. They enter Western Europe through Italy and Greece (Emke-Pouloupoulos, 2001: 27). Apart from the above-mentioned Russian, Ukrainian, Albanian and Balkan mafia, specialized Greek traffickers, assisted by other nationalities, are involved in trafficking in women and children for the sex trade, Turkish and Pakistani criminal groups operate in the field of human smuggling (di Nicola, 1999). The Police Report (Greek Police, 2000a) has shown that in 1999 most of the apprehended pimps are Greeks, followed by Albanians, Romanians, Russians, Bulgarians, Ukrainians, Africans and others. A Police paper (Greek Police, 2002) has added Moldavians.

Prostitution rings in Greece (IOM, 1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1998, 1999; *Trafficking in Migrants*, 1995-2002; *Migration News Sheet*, 2001-2002) are organized according to the norms of gangs, sometimes with eminent leaders who are rich members of the local communities. An unknown percentage of Greek society lives and enriches itself by forcing into prostitution foreign women and children. Some own brothels and clubs in different cities. Natives organize trafficking activities in collaboration with pimps from Eastern and Central Europe, Turkey, Russia, Albania and other countries. The pimps belong to a ring including many kinds of impostors and criminals. Mafiosi, dealers, «escorts», blackmailers, swindlers, cheats, and even murderers. Some undertake to keep guard over the girls, others collect the money the women get and hand it over to the «procurer-businessman». Some Greek «businessmen» from Northern Greece wanting to invest in Bulgaria have chosen the gainful sector of trafficking in women! Greco-Bulgarian «illegal businesses» or «organized gangs», estimated by the Bulgarian police to number 300, include three owned by Greeks for which women and girls are recruited and sent to Greece. However, in Greece, as in other EU countries, Albanian rings and pimps have the worst reputation for being cruel and merciless. A survey carried out in Athens has shown that during the period 1991-1995, there were 490 illegal brothels functioning in Athens. Procurers and victims were usually lovers or married couples; in a few cases, they were unknown or just acquaintances. It is a form of criminality with close personal or kin relationship, with a great number of «dark cases». Rarely do these crimes reach the police or get to court.

In the receiving and transit countries, the prostitution market is demand-driven. The demand comes from owners of brothels, clubs or bars who pay the suppliers and put women to work. Procurers and other intermediaries enhance the demand in the receiving and transit countries by advertisement in the mass media (daily papers, magazines, on TV during the late night showings) and by use of mobile telephones. Corruption and the attitude of state and society also play an important role.

The level of organization and structure of trafficking businesses vary widely – including informal networks of migrants' relatives and friends in the sending, receiving and transit countries, owners of trucks or boats, to large trafficking rings and mafia with contacts all over the world. The organizational model produced by Salt and Stein (1997) divided the trafficking process into three stages. i) *Recruitment* (see I, 2, C). ii) *Transportation*. Modes of transport include car, train, even aero planes. Different people in the network take care of transportation in the sending,

in the transit and in destination countries. Local agents are often used as guides. Traffickers provide the necessary services facilitating migration: provision of information, stolen or counterfeit documents, official and unofficial transport, accommodation during the journey, border crossing services and introduction into criminal circuits. In this procedure, trafficked women do not have contacts with society and remain at the mercy of their traffickers. The routes of trafficking change according to the distance between countries of departure and destination, political situation, law enforcement effort and corruption. Organized crime groups are flexible and always prepared to adapt to changing circumstances. iii) *Management*. The business is big with high turnover. Trafficking has complex structures of organization, is carefully planned and supervised. The highest level is rarely known by lower elements involved in the trafficking business, making fighting against organized crime more difficult.

***B. Are the clients criminals?***

The number of clients has increased by 128% during the period 1990-2000 (from 540,000 to 1,230,000 persons). The peak year was 1997 with 1,290,000 clients. After 1996, the percentage of the foreign clients is 11% (Lazos, 2002b: 201-202). The most widespread way to find clients in Greece is through the media: daily newspapers, journals, even television during the night. The pimps and their (usually female) collaborators make all arrangements by means of mobile telephones, the «deals» are closed and appointments are fixed. The clients «discreetly» call foreign prostitutes 093 and 094 according to the initial numbers of the procurer's mobile telephones. «Civilized» clients of brothels buy children's flesh pretending that they believe the prostitute woman is adult. The clients, knowing the inhumane conditions under which trafficked women are living, perpetuate this situation, being accomplices to the violence exerted on the victims and the crime of trafficking in women and children. Seeking more and more enjoyment and satisfaction of their perversions, they increase the demand and this situation pushes the prostitution rings and the pimps to meet the offer by finding and recruiting a greater number of new victims. Medium income clients find women through classified advertisements in the newspapers. The press provides us with information regarding the clients, who vary from procurers, marginal men of the night, to new rich, youth or more commonly respectable citizens, married or not, or businessmen who want to offer a «surprise» to their employers or business partners for the summer vacations, a gift of a few days' sensual pleasure to celebrate the «clinching of a deal».

The survey of the Non Aligned Women's Movement (1999b) asked the question 'why are foreigners preferred to Greek prostitutes?' The answers were: because they are cheaper (38%), because they are more available and more liberated (38%) and that they are more beautiful and exotic.

### ***C. Corruption***

(Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001:30-31 and 75): In some countries corruption contributes to the problem of trafficking, where local officials are complicit in trafficking or turn a blind eye (US Department of State, 2002). In many instances, corruption of public officials helps the traffickers and renders anti-trafficking legislation virtually ineffectual. Corrupt officials assist in provision of passports, visas etc; civil servants are bribed by the procurers to issue residence permits. Corruption abroad is another important factor: although Greece has signed police collaboration agreements with FYROM and Bulgaria, the results are minimal because the police officers of those two countries with average monthly salary of 70 dollars are greatly affected by corruption. In Greece, although few persons are corrupted, corruption of the administration abroad (Greek consulates etc.) and in the Country (Police, Public Officials etc.) is an important factor rendering the legislation against trafficking ineffectual (Emke-Poulopoulos: 32, 78).

### ***D. The role of the Mass Media***

(Emke-Poulopoulos: 21-22 and 72): The contribution of the mass media is important in order to inform society about the extent of the problem, giving information on the procurers' racket. A survey on the compulsory prostitution of foreign women showed that 80% of male and female Greeks stated that their source of information regarding the prostitution network was the media; one out of five said that it was from their personal experience, a fact that shows how widespread the phenomenon is in Greece. The mass media refer to trafficking and white slavery only in cases of: i) trafficking in children. ii) trafficking in women and procurement when there is a tragic end, e.g. when the tragedy of the victims ends by suicide, accident, or even murder. Suicides of unfortunate girls are not a rare phenomenon. In order to escape from their torturers they jump off the top floor of a building and are either killed or crippled for life. In one case, a young woman hanged herself using her tights tied to the cistern of the toilet.

However, the mass media play a negative role in the countries of transit and destination - the demand is enhanced by advertisements in the daily newspapers; there are even running ticker-tape type adverts on late-night

television, in all EU countries. Particularly in Greece, the television, presents a kind of «peeping Tom» image. The role of the daily newspapers is determinant, as they advertise in the most degrading manner the product to be «consumed» under the headings of «Personals», «Telephone Acquaintances» or «Massage». There is a mass incitement to prostitution under the pretext of offering «massage» services to the clients. These advertisements, the so-called «pink advertisements», placed by prostitution rings and individual pimps, contribute to the daily nightmare of the women whom the procurers force into prostitution.

A survey (Manganas, 1998: 35-39) on how third party debauchery is made easy via the press (porno-ads or the so called «pink advertisements») showed that in 1995 there were two guilty verdicts issued regarding newspaper owners, but in the case of 15 other verdicts the accused were acquitted, and in two cases the court was pronounced «non-competent». According to a survey on illegal migration and crime in 1996, the sentences passed on the defendants charged with procuring ranged from 1 to 4 years (Papantoniou, 1998: 72-73).

### ***E. The consequences of trafficking***

Trafficking in women and children has a substantial human cost (IOM, 1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1998, 1999; Beare, 1997: 34; Caldwell et al., 1997: 42-73; Kornarou, Roumeliotou, 1997: 380-385; European Commission, 2000b; Non Aligned Women's Movement, 1995, 1999a, 1999b;. Greek Police, 2000a, 2000b; Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001: 26, 73; US Department of State, 2002; *Trafficking in Migrants*, 1995-2002; *Migration News Sheet*, 2001-2002). From the perspective of those who control and benefit from the trade, these costs are irrelevant, especially when compared to the profits that can be made. From the point of view of the victims, the cost is enormous: their physical and mental health are in danger, they are, in reality, imprisoned slaves. In Greece the vast increase in the number of women imported from East European countries who prostitute themselves and who work under conditions of violence and exploitation, conceals great danger both for the health of these women and for the public health as well. The human cost is also important for the sending and receiving societies. Trafficking for sexual exploitation causes problems in physical and/or mental health for the majority of women and children. Minors are particularly vulnerable. They endure long-term life threatening consequences, including psychological trauma, the risk of early pregnancy and its attendant dangers, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases such as chlamydia, gonorrhoea and

syphilis. Many trafficked women and children with health certificates proving that they have tested negative on HIV tests, in reality are virus carriers or are suffering from AIDS. Some women and children are suffering from hepatitis B and tuberculosis. Trafficking is a real danger for public health in both the sending and the receiving society (Kornarou, Roumeliotou, 1997: 380-385; Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001).

Three among many dangers confronting «children on the streets» are sexual exploitation, mistreatment and AIDS. The abuse which trafficked children endure has long-term life-threatening consequences including psychological trauma, the risk of early pregnancy and its attendant dangers, and HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections is contributing to the demand for ever younger child prostitutes (UNICEF, 2000a, b, c).

#### ***F. How responsible are society and the state?***

(Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001: 33 and 75): In all the EU countries, it is common knowledge that trafficking in women and children exists and the role of the state is important. Indifferent Governments are responsible for the proliferation of the sex business. In Greece, the role of the state is «regulating». Prostitution is accepted as a social relationship. The prostitute is «declared» and subject to controls, and the client is «invisible». However, non-declared prostitution is the main type. It is well known by the police, the lawyers, the judges, even those judges who acquit the procurers-criminals-pimps for reasons of insufficient evidence, as well as by almost all the ordinary citizens. Social indifference is startling and consequently this indifference makes people responsible to the degree that everyone keeps silent although they are aware of what is happening and they tolerate the situation without showing anger. No one denounces what he knows, nor does anyone react to the trafficking of foreign women. Doctors perform abortions, citizens let their flats for «massage parlours» knowing that they are transformed into informal brothels, tenants/owners of other flats in the same building either know or suspect what is going on, or are even perfectly sure that in their very building alien minors are often prostituted against their will. The tolerance shown by local societies is a considerable and ever widening characteristic of European societies in general. A characteristic example in Athens is the case of a 13 year old Albanian girl tortured by her compatriot pimp in a residential flat: the neighbours had suspicions because they heard noises, voices and screams during the night and they found used condoms in the entrance of the building: however, for several months they did not report the matter. Why do people not report these things to the

police? Responsible individuals who addressed the police received threatening phone calls or were victims of various violent assaults from procurers and, frightened, did not proceed with further activities.

Rarely have inspections been carried out in the «businesses» (e.g. bars) nor are complaints lodged by regional authorities, local authorities or any other state authority that by law have the right and the obligation to act. The state may benefit from a woman's testimony as witness in a trial because it can lead to a crackdown on organized crime. However, as in other EU countries, witness protection and relocation programs are rarely offered for cases involving trafficking.

### ***G. Policy on trafficking and forced prostitution in Greece***

(Emke-Poulopoulos, 2001: 35-40, 59-62, 75-76): The prerequisite is that trafficking in women and children should be examined from a scientific point of view, and the results of investigations should be made public via the mass media. More intensive international collaboration is required to combat illegal immigration and organized crime in order to reduce the illegal trafficking in women and children.

Different measures must be applied in order to prevent trafficking and protect the victims of this modern slave trade. It is necessary to harmonize criminal legislation and law enforcement strategies among EU states. We can distinguish a) repressive measures for the offenders such as measures for administrative control; repression of corruption, measures to curb the activities of the traffickers and their strict punishment, changes at the legislative level and measures to confront clients as accessories and jointly responsible in cases of prostitution of minors, b) measures for preventing trafficking, such as measures for informing and protecting the victims and for the rehabilitation of the victims.

In the USA, the *Trafficking Victims Protection Act* (Division A of Public Law 106-386/2000) was enacted to combat trafficking, to ensure the just and effective punishment of the traffickers and to protect victims. The Act added new crimes, strengthened pre-existing criminal penalties, afforded new protections to trafficking victims and made available certain benefits and services to victims of severe forms of trafficking (US Department of State, 2002).

The Government of Greece is taking steps since 2001 toward combating trafficking and the Minister of Public Order described it as a first priority for the Greek police. While there is no trafficking law, slavery, pandering and pimping laws can be used to prosecute the traffickers. The Ministry of Public Order instructed all police stations to enforce existing legislation. The lack

of a specific law, however, has made prosecuting traffickers difficult. A June 2001 law on organized crime includes a section on trafficking that allows for limited undercover investigations, however, there have been few arrests and prosecutions. Fines and sentences are minimal. The Government has prepared a draft legislation on sexual crimes and trafficking in human beings. Regional cooperation in investigating and prosecuting is limited but improving. Greek border guards participated, with other countries in the region, in anti-trafficking training seminars offered by the US Government. Border control is weak. However, the Government has increased staffing of the border police. Regarding protection, traditionally victims have been deported along with foreign prostitutes working in the country illegally. The 2910/2001 immigration law sets aside judgments against women who press charges against their traffickers, and allows these victims to remain in the country. The law also temporarily suspends deportation of victims if deportation raises humanitarian concerns. The Government does not provide shelters or services for trafficking victims, and an NGO that wanted to provide medical and psychological help to possible trafficking victims at Government detention centers has been given only limited access. The NGO is working to establish shelters for victims in Athens and Thessaloniki with the cooperation of local Governments. With respect to prevention, the Inter Ministerial Committee for Trafficking launched a national anti-trafficking campaign in the Spring 2002 with posters and pamphlets. Police academies began to include training on how to identify trafficked women in September 2001 (US Department of State, 2002).

## CONCLUSION

The situation described in this paper shows that trafficking is a violation of fundamental human rights. Women and children trafficked are not only economically exploited, but are also subjected to sexual abuse, violence, mistreatment, suffer mental anguish and are even led to suicide. Hundreds of thousands victims have lived and are living under conditions of degradation and brutality. The women are prey in the hands of the traffickers who force them into prostitution, into pornography and into sexual tourism. The human rights of women include the right to have control over, and decide freely on, matters relating to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health – free of coercion, discrimination and violence. Trafficking in women for sexual purposes and in children for the commercial sex industry or for forced labour as beggars (and often both) is a serious abuse of their human rights.



The number of women and children being forcibly led to prostitution is ever on the increase, as for the profits of the traffickers – slavers, they too are on the rise. The ever-increasing collapse of values, with the sole pseudo-value being money, contributes to the continuing and increasing participation of degraded procurers, the depraved employees and the corrupted officials. The turnover from trafficking for prostitution tends to be equivalent to the drug trade. In many cases, the corruption of police and administration officials is an important factor rendering ineffective the legislation against trafficking in women and children.

Authorities are generally hostile to victims of forced prostitution, seeing them as somewhat criminal rather than innocent. Increased prosecution of illegal immigrants by the countries of destination make women hesitant to report abuse to authorities; they know they will be treated as illegal immigrants and arrested, detained and deported. This is particularly true for women working in the sex industry. In cases where women are formally processed and sanctioned for working illegally as prostitutes, this punishment affects the victims and not the real criminals. The survey undertaken by the Non Aligned Women's Movement asked the question «who has to be prosecuted?» 89% answered «the pimps» – the traffickers, the «protectors».

A trafficked person must be treated not as a criminal but as a fully empowered human being. *Greater priority must be placed on weakening the scope of organized crime, rather than on punishing the actions of victimized women.*

The costs for victims, their families, the support systems and societies in the country of origin, transit and destination is enormous. This cost is not only high, but it cannot be assessed in money: e.g., the families of the victims are under threat, their siblings may have the same fate. The repercussions on the physical and mental health of the victims of trafficking are serious. The victims of trafficking may have contracted AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, abortion complications and other health problems such as hepatitis, tuberculosis, etc.

Important also is the role of the clients, whose number has greatly increased in recent years, because without the latter there would be no trafficking in women and children. The clients who receive these services bear a great responsibility: while they are aware of the infringement of human rights and the ill-treatment of these women by procurers, with their participation they are partners in the crime of violence. The clients using the «services» of foreign women, although they know under what conditions they live, and that they have been forced into prostitution, are accomplices

to the violence exerted and in the crime of trafficking in women, not only in the cases concerning minors. If there were no clients there would be no «business». They are the indispensable partners in the crime.

This complex and multifaceted problem requires urgent measures in the countries of origin, transit and destination. If this situation does not change, organized crime will further develop and the victims will remain silent and miserable.

The societies of the countries of origin, transit and destination tolerate the existence of the modern slave trade with the help of corrupt policemen, administrators and even politicians. Agreements condemning trafficking and the new forms of slavery signed by Governments are considered «wishful thinking». How much longer will the civilized world tolerate modern slavery which enriches the mafia? The economic and social situation and the position of women in their home country must be improved.

A struggle is needed in order to deal with the miserable reality, to abolish the factors creating trafficking in women and children in all the receiving EU countries. The measures taken to combat trafficking and corruption are ineffective. Urgent steps must be taken, not only for reasons of public order and security but also for humanitarian reasons.

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