

RROMA WOMEN AND TERROR IN THE BALKAN

Rroma Foundation, October 2001

The current situation of Rroma women and girls, especially in countries bordering Kosovo, such as Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria, Macedonia is showing a worrisome trend. More and more Rromnja (Rroma woman) are reported abducted, raped, for example in recent times in Macedonia, Kosovo, but also in other places and in several cases, are then sold into slavery and land in brothels in Western Europe, in the best of the cases.

Such attacks, as far as our information is concerned, happen on young girls and women, even more so if they have no family and thus little protection and this, in full impunity.

In one case that we closely followed, the young Rromni, ca. 16 years old was abducted in full day and subsequent enquiries showed she was sold into slavery, first to Albanians in Albania proper, then in a brothel in Belgium. She managed to call her family and tell of her ordeal but was apparently caught by her tormentors and has never been heard from again.

This weapon of rape and abduction is not new in the Balkan, as it started in the Bosnian Wars but is now showing a new face in its connection with organised crime. In addition, for example in the case described above, authorities must have been bribed as, although they knew who had abducted her, they never undertook any action.