



RENA TE: Visit to Norway and Denmark: May 3rd - May 8th, 2016.

Members: Adina Balan CJ and Imelda Poole IBVM

Norway – Oslo: May 3rd - May 5th.

Meetings with:

- Dominican Sisters: Sr Anna
- Kirkens Bymisjon , Anna
- Pro Sentret: Bjorg Hammergren
- Rosa Foundation: Mildred Mikkelson
- Caritas Norway: Head of Domestic Affairs (Migration and Refugees.): Alexander Golding.
- Round table of Catholic Organisations in Oslo organised by Mette Bruusgaarde. (Andante connection)

Population of Norway: 6 million living mainly around the coastal regions. Large influx of immigrants.

Sr Anna OP, the Prioress of the community where we stayed in Oslo, was extremely helpful in opening more doors for us to meet relevant groups in Oslo and to have contact with other religious congregations. There are not many active religious in Norway but we were introduced to Christian led NGOs. All our contacts were very interested in the work of RENATE and all welcomed the information sharing but were hesitant in committing without more time to reflect. We left the RENATE membership application form with each group we visited and wait to see if there will be an opening for new members from Norway. We are hopeful.

A meeting was held at a Christian centre dedicated to work with trafficked and vulnerable people. Kirkens Bymisjon is an evangelical Christian-led mission with many centres across Oslo dedicated to different aspects of pastoral care. We visited the central offices and spent the major time with Anna who was the director of the centre for trafficked and vulnerable people. It is also a drop-in centre. We witnessed the people coming and going from different rooms, in groups and individuals. All needs were being



catered for in terms of health, counselling, vocational training and food. Anna had been on maternity until that day, for one year, but she was able to give us an excellent over view of their work.

We then crossed town in time for our appointment with Bjorg Norli, the director of Pro Sentret, a project founded by the local municipality and now also funded by the Norwegian government for women working in Prostitution. They also work with trafficked women but this is not their focus. Pro Sentret works in partnership with many organisations such as Rosa Project, Salvation Army and Kidken Bymisjon, to ensure the best care for all. Here we discussed the often repeated term, ' The Nordic Model. They gave us the history of the change of law in Norway regarding the criminalisation of the user. This was for very different reasons in Sweden and the law was enacted very fast in Norway, to deal with a sudden crisis in Oslo of hundreds of Nigerian women working as Prostitutes on the streets of Norway. The law led to zero tolerance on the streets but not the abolition of prostitution or trafficking into prostitution. We learnt at Pro Sentret of the many ways in which they care for and support the women and especially to help those who wish to leave this work on the streets. The issues were related to the law in Norway which made such a fine line between sexual exploitation and trafficking into prostitution. The former meant that in most cases the girls would not be given asylum. It was stated that nearly all women working in prostitution were migrants. 10 % are Norwegian. Some prostitutes work in a systemised way to serve the men in the mountains who stay there to look after the land whilst the women and children live in the city for work and education. This centre also cares for men and boys working in prostitution.

A meeting at the Rosa Centre with Mildred Mikkelsen was focused solely on their work with trafficked women and girls. They were founded in 2005 and since this time they have cared for



trafficked people through a rehabilitation process. They have housed about 500 trafficked victims and have had contact with over 1000. In Norway there is a 6 months reflection period for trafficked victims and support and care is funded by the municipality/government who ask NGO's to do this work. Every year the Rosa centre is asked to organise two awareness raising conferences which are funded by

the government. There are shelters for trafficked victims in every town in Norway from the far north to the south. Victims also receive social funding throughout their process of rehabilitation. Once again there was an emphasis on working in partnership with other organisations and all the work was funded by the government.

Later, we had a meeting at Caritas Norway, with the head of the domestic department. The focus for all of their work at home has been government led refugee work who asked Caritas to help them in the crisis. Early on in the response led by Caritas, churches were used to house some of the refugees.

Now the work continues in many ways and especially through the integration programme for refugees finding their status in Norway. The immigrant population is huge in Norway and although the Catholic population is very small, it is now doubled in numbers by these immigrant Catholics. Alexander Golding, the key worker at Caritas



covered many issues relating to trafficking and the link with refugee work and labour trafficking in particular. The immigrant population who had been trafficked were discovered in the car wash industry, cleaning companies, as domestic workers and in the construction industry. A court case pending at present, is related to trafficking in labour whereby the owner of a chain of stores, run by asian owners also led organised crime with trafficked victims brought over from their own country and forced into servitude working in the stores.

One of the evenings in Norway, Mette Bruusgaarde, a prior member of the ANDANTE Board, gathered Catholic workers from different commissions in the church, to share their stories and to hear about the work of RENATE. The evening covered many topics including radicalisation, the role of youth in prevention work and the systems used by the church in Norway to develop pastoral work. The main topic referred back to the situation of immigrants and the role of the church in this pastoral care. Priests from the immigrant countries were employed by the church to work with their people in Norway in pastoral and spiritual support.



parish context and ANDANTE.

The organisations represented at this round table had not been involved with any trafficked people but asked many questions as to how they could work together to combat the crime. Some were interested in working together with this aim. The organisations present represented Caritas, Marriage care, the Bishop's office, the former Catholic Women's League, Education of Immigrants in Norwegian language and culture within the

We shared RENATE leaflets and the mapping exercise in all of these places in Norway. It was a very fruitful time there and we hope that many of these relationships will be sustained.

Denmark, Copenhagen – May 5th – 6th

Population of Denmark: 6 million
Many immigrants mainly from East Europe and Nigeria.

Meetings with:

Reten International: Anca and Kiera
The Little Sisters of Jesus: Sr Joanna Marie
KIT: Karin
Swedish Baptist Church Pastor: Gutter

Following this very fruitful time in Norway we spent two days in Denmark. As we walked to our first meeting in Copenhagen we became aware that the country was very different in relationship to work of Prostitutes and the law. All the meetings on the first day were held around a square of the city which is known as the red light district. The posters on all the club doors were very explicit and there were also posters on lamp posts along the road standing up for the dignity of women. The picture below explain a little of this.



We spent time with two workers at the Reden International founded in 2002. Reden is a word meaning 'Nest' in Danish. There are 5 Nests in different cities in Denmark. The organisation is caring for foreign women working in prostitution. They have a drop in centre, offering courses, advice and health care. They also have a Night cafe three times a week and they work on the streets with the women. They work slowly with the methodology of befriending in the hope that eventually they can help them off the street and into rehab programmes, or shelters if they find they are being trafficked. There was mention of the fact that the law in Sweden led to their problems being moved to another place such as Denmark which is only 30 minutes from the border of Sweden. One of the social workers was Romanian, the other, the manager of the NGO, was Danish. Reden works with many other partners and is funded by the local municipality. Nigerian, Romanian and Bulgarian are the main immigrant communities whom they work with on a daily basis, on the streets and in the drop in centre. The manager is working in the field of lobbying to gain better conditions and human rights for the women and especially for asylum for the many working illegally, with no human rights and who are threatened back in their own countries. They work closely with the police and always when they are going through the assessment process for suspected victims of trafficking, before they are admitted to the shelter.

At this point the women in the shelter automatically can access all state benefits even without denunciation. We wondered why there was such a waiting period between discovering a trafficked victim and the rescue of these victims. The workers were wholly dedicated and once again we offered them all of the RENATE materials such as leaflet and Mapping Exercise and also an application for membership.



The rest of the day was spent with Sr Joanna Marie, a Little Sister of Jesus. We spent time with their community and heard especially about the work of Joanna Marie in a clinic for street people some of whom are drug addicts. She is a podiatrist and finds working on the feet of the men gives an opportunity for healing and conversation. The men are offered clean needles and support when they ask to be helped off the drugs. The clinic where she works offers all kinds of health care including distribution of needles and blood tests for STDs.

On Saturday, May 7th, before returning to Oslo and then Albania and Romania, we met Karin Kjaergaard, the project leader for KIT, Kirkens Integrations Tjeneste. This is a Lutheran Foundation, dedicated to Nigerian women who work in the sex industry who need more than health care but also spiritual nourishment. A night cafe is opened three nights a week in the basement of the Lutheran church, Elias Kirchens Krypt. Karin has already visited Nigeria and has dreams of developing preventative work

in the States from where the women have come. She is however aware that the women have no desire to return to Nigeria. A film has been made to raise awareness in Nigeria, of the conditions for the Nigerian women in Denmark. Karin has made a three year plan with five distinctive developments:

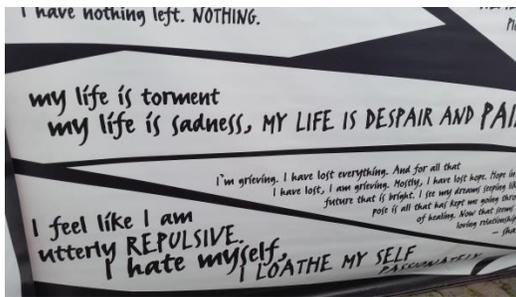
- to continue to develop the cafe service,
- develop micro business workshops and other forms of training requested by the women,
- health care workshops,
- developing the kind of cafe run by KIT in Copenhagen, in other cities in Denmark,
- extending the service to East European women and move into the work of advocacy.

KIT is working in Nigeria in collaboration with the church and raises awareness, using the film, in 30 villages and many schools. She collaborates with NATIP which has 9 shelters in Nigeria. NATIP is run by the Nigerian government. Karin hopes to also make contact with Patricia Egbulem and Monica Chikwe .



Contact made with Sweden.

This week was 'Church Week' in Copenhagen. After finishing our time with Karin we went to see the work of this project in the context of Church week and in raising awareness against trafficking. This Church week takes place every 3 years and is totally ecumenical. To our great delight we met a wonderful Baptist minister, Sven-Gunnar Liden, who was Swedish and had travelled from Sweden for this event with a project to highlight the issues of trafficking in human persons. Sven-Gunnar Lidén is the coordinator of the EBF **Anti-Trafficking** Network in Sweden. He has a project which consists of walk in tents, all connected, which exposes the life of a woman from the origin country. It illustrates her dreams, the reality in the destination country, the experience of the escape, the healing process and the beginning of new life. There were also adverts for how to get help and 12 bullet points giving ideas of how anyone can get involved in this work. These connecting tents were colour filled from white through to red and blue. It was such a powerful exposition. The pictures below say it all. We exchanged contacts and information about RENATE membership. Gunter would be a great advocate for the work being done in Sweden against trafficking. In Sweden there is a strong network against trafficking. We will keep in contact.



Pictures Taken from the Tents

These days in Scandinavia have given hope into the future as a result of our connections and continued dialogue with people from this part of Europe. At the same time it was a good opportunity for us to understand the Nordic model and the way the different Scandinavian countries understand and apply it in the specific context. It is very useful for us to have members from these countries and especially for the members of RENATE whose countries are deliberating on this model. Overall this visit gave us, as members of RENATE, more than we could have hoped for at this time in our history.

Adina Balan CJ and Imelda Poole IBVM