

**INTERVIEW WITH MANUEL ALBANO,  
RAPPORTEUR FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN PORTUGAL**



Dr. Manuel Albano,  
Portuguese Rapporteur for Human Trafficking,  
Delegate of Portuguese Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality,  
In North of Portugal, Porto.  
Consultant of Project CEINAV, Portugal, for human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

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**CEINAV — Dr. Manuel Albano, as the Rapporteur for Human Trafficking in Portugal, can you tell us how and when the concerns with Human Trafficking emerged? And how recent historical, cultural and political pathways in Portugal have configured this social problem?**

**MA —** Well, in national terms and in the last ten years, the evolution, either in policy or in practice, in terms of Human Trafficking, were originated from several projects, coordinated here by the Delegation of

Porto of the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality - CIG<sup>1</sup>. Even the Commission for Female Condition - CCF<sup>2</sup> already had these concerns through Dr. Ana Maria Braga da Cruz<sup>3</sup>, who worked a lot in those areas, with an emphasis, at first, on the issues of prostitution.

This led to a first project in Porto, in 1998, funded by the old Program STOP of the European Commission, called *De Rua em Rua (From Street to Street)*. It was precisely a project that aimed to identify the flows of prostitution and street prostitution in Porto and Matosinhos. In addition, this project contemplated a set of technical training modules in the social area that could promote intervention of diverse professionals in these issues. 150 hours of training were completed, with exchanging experiences between Portugal, Spain and Italy.

With this project, the study coordinated by Celina Manita<sup>4</sup> identified some situations that could be classified as trafficking and the interviewing of women at the time, identified people that had been trafficked.

This led to an informal group, in Porto, that included: us, from CIG; the Project *Inovar (To Innovate)*, coordinated by Teresa Rosmaninho; the Northern Health Administration (ARS) through Dr. Olímpia Aleixo, with the Project *Auto-Estima (Self-Esteem)* in Matosinhos<sup>5</sup>, for reducing risk in sexual and reproductive health; the Portuguese Association for Family Planning - APF, through the Project *Espaço Pessoa (Person Space)*, in Porto; and the *International Organization for Migrations – OIM*, with a vast experience not only with migrations but also in human trafficking, mainly in the European context.

This work originated a Seminar in 1999 the 1<sup>st</sup> International Seminar on Human Trafficking held in Porto, Portugal. Politically, at the time, Maria de Belém Roseira, was working the area of equality as Ministry of Equality, and Ana Maria as the President of CIDM. These projects have gone through several Presidents of the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality, starting with Dr. Ana Maria Braga da Cruz (1998-2002), followed by Dr. Amélia Paiva (2002-2005), and, in the final phase, by Dr. Elza Pais (2005-2011).

This informal group met periodically to reflect upon the necessary interventions, being very devoted to the prostitution issues, but soon they started to identify some strange phenomena. Likewise, internationally, it was the time that the Palermo Protocol<sup>6</sup> was adopted and, therefore, all this led to the realization that the social reality of prostitution could include a set of other social phenomena that would shape a situation of trafficking. And, to us, on a legislative level, at the time, trafficking was just for sexual exploitation and not for other purposes. In legislative terms, the typification of trafficking was reduced for sexual exploitation purposes.

Only after 2007 did the legislation on trafficking stopped demanding transnationality: after the Convention of the Council of Europe, Portugal signed in 2005 and then rectified in 2008. Only with the Palermo Protocol are human trafficking issues faced by the United Nations as a problem that demands a differentiated treatment and that needs to distance itself from the migrations problematic. This means that we need to understand that one thing is illegal immigration and what it substantiates – migration policies, international migrations – and another thing are situations that configure Human Trafficking. The Palermo Protocol qualifies it, even by its own definition of the Human Trafficking issue. With the Convention of the Council of Europe there's a qualitative movement forward in this theme. In other words, in a structural point of view, what is placed in the centre of the whole approach is the victim, the person that is being trafficked. And this, in some way, revolutionized the whole vision.

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<sup>1</sup> The actual Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality - CIG was formerly named Commission for Equality and the Rights of Women - CIDM (1991-2007) and previously Commission for Feminine Condition – CCF (1977-1991).

<sup>2</sup> The already mentioned Commission for Feminine Condition – CCF.

<sup>3</sup> President of the former Commission for Equality and the Rights of Women – CIDM (from 1998 to 2002), previously the Delegate of CIDM – North, in Porto, until 1998.

<sup>4</sup> Professor in Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of the University of Porto.

<sup>5</sup> Matosinhos is a city near Porto, in the north of Portugal.

<sup>6</sup> General Assembly resolution 55/25 of 15 November 2000.

**CEINAV – In your point of view, does the fact that the victim is the centre of the approach constitute a qualitative movement in Europe and Portugal?**

**MA** – Yes. In other words, the victim's protection is where all the intervention is clearly based. The Convention of the Council of Europe states that the victim is the centre of the approach. And this had a bit of influence in Portugal as well. It is worth to notice that we signed the Convention in 2005 and it only was included in the Portuguese law in 2008. We were the 14<sup>th</sup> country to rectify the Convention.

**CEINAV — When trafficking is mentioned, the experience of the Project *CAIM* is always remembered as a benchmark in the problem in Portugal. Can you tell us about the experience of this Project?**

**MA** — *CAIM* was a transnational Project with Spain, our partners in Galiza, with the participation of the *Adoradoras Sisters*<sup>7</sup> — with a fantastic work in Galiza — and funded by the Initiative Equal of the European Commission.

With that project, it was noticed that, after all, trafficking also affected Portugal. The famous *CAIM* was a pilot project clearly about prostitution. Note that prostitution always gravitates around this, the prostitution issues are always present here, but the Project *CAIM* subtitle was “the Pilot Project for Prostitution and Women Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation purposes”. We were in 2004. This project was important, crucial, in the whole construction of the structure for intervention that we now have in Portugal. I'm proud of this, because we managed to sit at the same table institutions that were unthinkable to seat together besides the CIG, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Social Security, the Ministry of Justice. From a point of view of a more real work for this problem, we managed to gather the main stakeholders (that we thought at the time).

**CEINAV — Dr. Manuel Albano, can you identify the diverse tendencies that concern Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation?**

**MA** — There are tendencies — note that these are not European tendencies, but mostly national tendencies — that try to push this issue away from the area of equality, because they consider that this is a criminal problematic, not a gender equality issue. This is against the Palermo Protocol, which clearly states that the focus must be given to equality issues, to gender issues. That means that trafficking must be viewed and worked on from a gender perspective.

Therefore, it's important to realize that the problematic and the gender view for this doesn't have anything to do with any theorization. It has to do, objectively, with the main target affected, which are still women. The number of men and children trafficked has also increased, due to trafficking for labour exploitation purposes, such as mendacity. When we work with victims, female and male, we understand that the dynamics are completely different. In other words, a man, when he's found in this situation, mostly wants to quickly return to his home place. He's not very concerned with the support that may exist here, what he wants is to go out, to be free, to return back home. A woman has completely different characteristics: she appeals for a more specific support, a more continuous and differentiated help on this level.

The 1<sup>st</sup> National Plan against Human Trafficking came out from the experience of the Project *CAIM*. We presented the first draft. We also managed to have the discernment to call someone from the outside, Dr. Fernanda Rodrigues, the project consultant. There were hours and hours, days and days of discussion, in order to achieve something, so we could have the guideline we now have, to establish all those dynamics. This was a process down to top. That's why people, a lot of them, identified themselves with all the created instruments, because they built them. It wasn't a process that someone imposed, no,

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<sup>7</sup> Sisters Adoradoras are a religious congregation of women, located in Galiza, Spain.

people identified with it. I'd say that, in Portugal, this project is striking and makes a difference in this area, fully; I have no doubt about it.

An example of that was the documentary sponsored by CIG, at the end of last year: it was something that made people think and reflect about this. People talked about these issues in day-by-day situations.

**CEINAV — How do you characterize the issue of human trafficking in Portugal, in this moment?**

**MA —** I think that, at this point, concerning trafficking policies in Portugal, we are at the phase of searching for knowledge, with specific interventions, from the point of view of the empowerment of the main stakeholders, policemen, judges, everyone... And this is crucial to pursue a policy for human rights.

**CEINAV — Thank you for your time and your experience and knowledge. I hope we will meet often times, in a near future, to debate all these issues together.**

**MA —** It was a pleasure. We will meet again, surely!

**Biographical Note:**

Manuel Joaquim Pereira Albano is working in the area of gender equality and women's human rights and gender based violence since 1994. Nowadays he is the director of the regional north delegation of the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality governmental machinery for gender equality and he is also the **national rapporteur** for trafficking of human beings. Coordinated and participated in several national and community projects in the area of citizenship and gender equality and gender violence, including domestic violence and trafficking of human beings, both at National and International Level.