

Petition

to ratify The Council of Europe
Convention on Action Against the
Trafficking in Human Beings.

If the slave trade was abolished in the UK over 200 years ago, why are more than 80 women trafficked here every week and sold for sexual exploitation?

These women are fleeing from conflict, poverty and family abuse and are often lured by false promises of education and employment abroad. On arrival they are beaten or raped into submission, then forcibly and repeatedly sold for sex. They have had to endure unimaginable acts of cruelty. They are psychologically and physically damaged but too frightened and ashamed to ask for help.

If they try to escape, traffickers threaten to attack their families. If they do escape, the UK authorities provide no immediate protection, often threatening to return them home where the traffickers are waiting for them.

The Council of Europe Convention on Action Against the Trafficking in Human Beings establishes legal rights for victims of trafficking. Countries that ratify the Convention must:

- Identify victims and provide assistance for their safety and physical and psychological recovery.
- Protect the victims when they take part in criminal proceedings.
- Punish traffickers.
- Actively prevent trafficking.

9 countries have ratified the convention so far. If one more country ratifies it the convention will enter into force.

As matter of priority we the undersigned appeal to the UK Government to:

- Set a deadline for ratification of the Council of Europe Convention Against Trafficking.
- Implement the Convention to the highest standards.
- Ensure the Convention leads to the full and effective protection of all victims of trafficking in the UK.