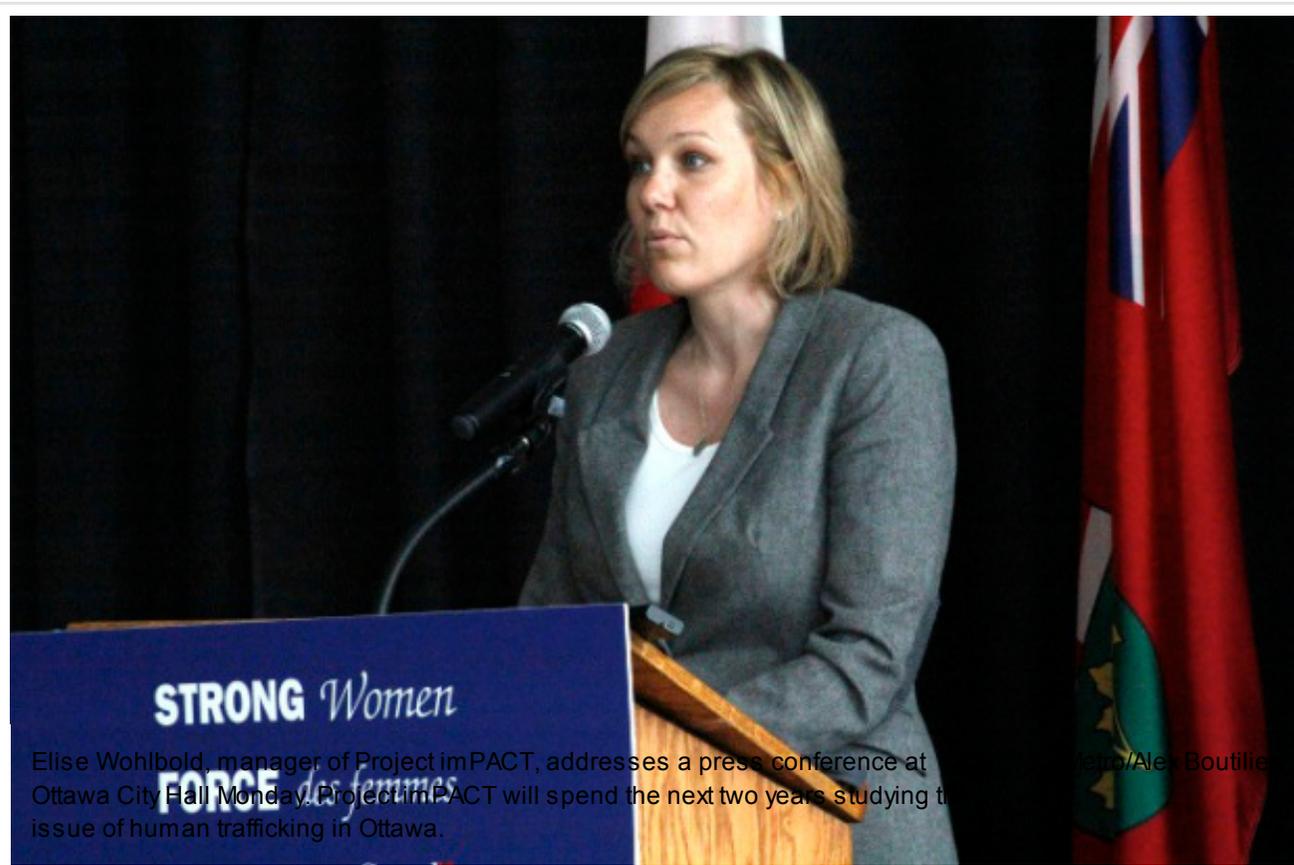


Ottawa human trafficking study gets \$200k from feds



(<http://metronews.ca/author/alexboutilier/>)By Alex Boutilier (<http://metronews.ca/author/alexboutilier/>)

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Elise Wohlbold, manager of Project imPACT, addresses a press conference at Ottawa City Hall Monday. Project imPACT will spend the next two years studying the issue of human trafficking in Ottawa.

A new initiative will try to determine the scope of human trafficking in Ottawa, and make recommendations on how to combat it.

Project imPACT (PACT — Persons Against the Crime of Trafficking in Humans) will spend the next two years studying the issue of human trafficking in Ottawa, and more specifically, the trafficking of young women for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

“Ottawa does not, as of yet, have anything like that,” said Elise Wohlbold, Project imPACT’s manager.

“I think there’s definitely a lack of awareness within the city that human trafficking is occurring.”

At Ottawa City Hall Monday, Status of Women Minister Rona Ambrose announced \$200,000 in funding for the project. That funding will extend over a period of two years, during which imPACT plans to release a community safety audit.

The audit will attempt to paint a more complete picture of human trafficking issues in Ottawa, as well as reviewing what literature currently exists on the issue. It will also make recommendations about how best to combat the crime.

Insp. Uday Jaswall of the Ottawa Police Service that audit could help direct OPS's enforcement strategies

"What we don't have ... is the scope and the magnitude of the issue, and where we might want to look at investing some prevention and education initiatives," Jaswall said Monday.

"Human trafficking is a complex issue that is both international and domestic, (but) the cases again that we've dealt with in Ottawa are primarily domestic cases."



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