



TOLERANT

Support Victims of Human Trafficking

TOLERANT: TransnatiOnaL network for Employment integRAtion of womeN vicTims of trafficking

Newsletter No1

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TOLERANT is a transnational network aiming to support the regular exchange of good practices, experiences and information related to ground work for integrating women victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation (VoT) in employment and for promoting their economic empowerment.

LEARN ALL THE **LATEST NEWS** ABOUT **TOLERANT PROJECT**

All relevant governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in **Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Austria and Romania** are informed about the project. TOLERANT's aim and activities were widely communicated through press releases and events that took place with the participation of project's representatives. **The Guide for Integrated Services** was also announced and practitioners are expecting its publication.

PROJECT PARTNERS



Funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) of the European Union

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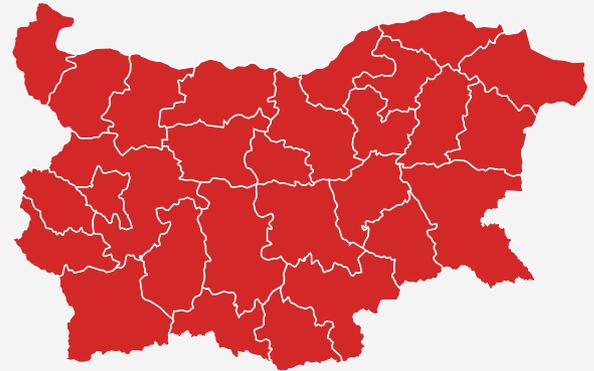
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► In Bulgaria:

In 2019, **Animus (supported by UNICEF)** provided training on GBV to all actors working with migrants and refugees – State agency for refugees, Police Directorate “Migration”, Social Support Directorates, health inspectors, service providers, reception centers’ staff. Special sessions during the seminar were devoted to TOLERANT.



There are several difficulties related to the access to potential beneficiaries of the project that the team works hardly to overcome:

- **The situation with migrants and refugees has significantly changed during the last years.** After the extreme migration flows a few years ago, the number of asylum seekers in Bulgaria has dropped significantly. In 2019, they were 2,152 (according to the State Agency for Refugees official data), compared to more than 20,000 in 2015. A total of 1,842 are men, while women are 6 times less (310).
- **The majority of women originate from Iraq (93) and Syria (154).** They travel with their families and are highly dependent on them.
- **Currently, most migrants are accommodated at external address and women who live with their families are very isolated.** Their role is seen as housekeepers and mothers and autonomy is not welcomed by husbands and fathers.
- **There are no formally or informally identified victims of trafficking among TCN.**

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► In Greece:

In Greece, **KMOP – Social Action and Innovation Center** has already started building its capacity to offer an individual and gender-sensitive service support for the labour market integration of women identified as victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation and migrant women, who are at risk or are potential victims. The services will be offered in Northern Greece in the area of Thessaloniki.



Some news from the Greek context:

- **Hellenic Police and its Anti-Trafficking Units continue investigating cases of trafficking leading women victims of trafficking to safety.** [Read this article](#) to find out more about a recent success.
- **Stakeholders in the field of Trafficking continue to collaborate and build networks of cooperation.** Recently, actors in the airport community have participated in an informative talk in the Parliament and they have also organized an informative event on trafficking. For more information check [Hellenic Parliament photo archive](#) and [AIA's Press Release](#).
- **The National Center for Social Solidarity continues to provide specialized training to various professionals** (e.g. professionals in the Reception and Identification Service, lawyers), thus building the protection system's capacity. The National Referral Mechanism continues its operation with members-actors referring victims to each other for tailored assistance.
- **In Greece, sexual exploitation is the main form of trafficking. Greece is both a transit and destination country for victims of THB.** Overall, the number of officially recognised and registered victims is small. This fact significantly underestimates the actual magnitude of the problem and reflects the major deficiencies in proactive victim detection and identification. According to the Hellenic Police, the number of identified VoT was 38 in 2017 and 27 in 2018, with sexual exploitation accounting to 92% and 96% respectively. The vast majority of the identified VoTs are females. For more statistics by Hellenic Police, [check here](#).
- **Greece has been convicted by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) for an inadequate framework regarding the protection of women - victims of trafficking since** significant deficiencies in proceedings by police and judicial authorities have been observed. [Find more here](#).

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► In Italy:

- **Italian Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family, Elena Bonetti**, has convened a meeting with the intergovernmental national body against human trafficking (Cabina di regia per la prevenzione e il contrasto della tratta di esseri umani) in order to define the actions and the next steps to be taken. In line with GRETA's recommendation, all the participants agreed on the creation of a new national strategic plan to combat human trafficking by 2020. Additionally, the Minister expressed her willingness to re-establish an expert committee (Technical Committee). [Find more information.](#)



- **On January, 2020, Differenza Donna NGO launched an innovative project called “Differenza Donna in rete”.** In fact, the Court of Rome has entrusted to the organization 5 properties confiscated to organized crime in Rome. One of these properties will be entirely dedicated to the hospitality of women victims of trafficking. [Find more here.](#) A crowdfunding campaign has also been launched. [See more information.](#)
- **According to the report published by IOM within the ADITUS project framework, an increase in the number of Ivorian women trafficked through the central Mediterranean route has been registered.** After experiencing a traumatic experience in Tunisia, women from Côte d'Ivoire run the risk of re-trafficking in Italy. [Find more here](#)

A new report released by Save the Children has confirmed the upward trend in the number of trafficked victims in Italy. According to the Italian branch of the international NGO, 1,660 victims have been identified in 2018 during the implementation of the Vie d'Uscita/ Exit routes project. It is worth mentioning that the number of minor victims of trafficking rose from 9% to 13% within a single year. Find more statistics and information [here](#). [Read more.](#)

On November 24th, 2019, the Sicilian NGO “Donne di Benin City” has inaugurated its first shelter/safe house for victims of trafficking. The house is run by a group of Nigerian women wishing to support their “sisters” and combat sexual exploitation. [Find more.](#)

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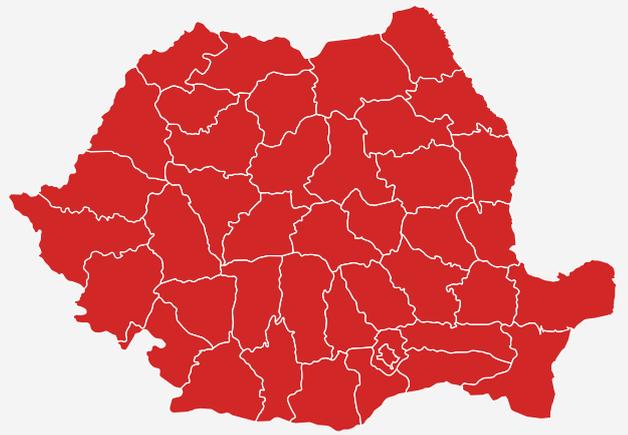
► In Romania:

NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS – THE MOST IMPORTANT TOOLS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

During the last three years, Romania has turned from a country of origin into a country of transit and destination. Internal trafficking increased suddenly and many women, especially third country nationals, were trapped by the traffickers' network.

This is the reason why AIDRom has focused in 2019 in the development of the national campaigns organized in cooperation with the National Agency against Trafficking in Persons. The campaigns provided a lot of information for migrant women, potential victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. They also provided information about the four AMIF projects that AIDRom is developing in the field of assistance of the refugees and beneficiaries of a form of protection. The participation in the development of the campaign had the aim to come as an added value to the TOLERANT project.

The first campaign was implemented in the period February - December 2019 under the logo: "Destroy the wall of the indifference! Trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation can be avoided." A.N.T.I.P. Partners within the project were: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (M.A.E.), Ministry of National Education (M.E.N.), Ministry for Romanians Everywhere (M.p.R.P.), Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania - AIDRom, Association ELiberare and World Vision Romania Foundation. The involvement of the press and other opinion multipliers in disseminating the message of the campaign has ensured an increase in the degree of information and awareness regarding the problem of human trafficking.



[Watch the spot of the campaign](#)

[Watch also](#)

The second important campaign: **"ARE YOU A VICTIM OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSON? YOU HAVE RIGHTS!"** was launched on the European Day for Combating Trafficking in Persons - 18 October, by simultaneously sending press releases by the states involved, including through social media. Romanian NGOs and the National Agency against Trafficking in Persons were part of this campaign alongside Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Holland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia.

[More info](#)

During the campaigns, AIDRom experts presented the services that are provided within the project TOLERANT and invited the State institutions as well as the relevant NGOs to join us on the Platform.

In December, AIDRom had already started building its capacity to offer gender-sensitive services and support for the labour market integration of women identified as victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation and migrant women, who are at risk or are potential victims.

AIDRom trainers have already provided 10 training sessions for 20 women from: Ethiopia (17); Eritrea (2), Philippine (1). The trainings were provided according to the actual needs of the women: Access to education; information about labour legislation and orientation to private and public structures; Skills building, career advice services, etc.

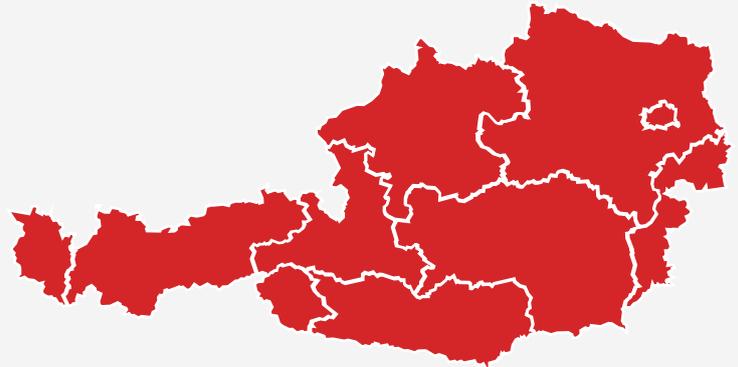
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► In Austria:

In Austria **LEFÖ-Intervention Centre for Trafficked Women and Girls (LEFÖ-IBF)** has managed to further formalize its offer of labor market integration support services and to inform relevant stakeholders about the special needs of VoT in this regard. In the frame of Tolerant, the organization developed, in cooperation with its partner, a course tailored to the needs of VoT.

The aim of the course is to strengthen the digital

abilities of women victims of trafficking in order to facilitate their entry into the highly formalized labor market in Austria.



In June 2019, the third evaluation of Austria by CoE GRETA (Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings) including a country visit took place. Prior to the country visit, LEFÖ-IBF submitted its answers to GRETA's questionnaire and GRETA also paid a visit to the IBF. The third round of GRETA focusses on "access to justice and effective remedies" (GRETA, 2018) which includes also the question on the right of victims of trafficking to compensation. The Austrian Government's reply to GRETA's questionnaire can be found [online](#) and we are awaiting the recommendations.

GRETA, 2018. Questionnaire for the evaluation of the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by the Parties. Third evaluation round. Available [here](#).

READ ABOUT:

► International News



- **The second mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children Maria Grazia Giammarinaro is ending in June 2020.** A new UN Rapporteur will be elected at the 44th session of the Human Rights Council. The call for a new UN Rapporteur on Trafficking is published [here](#).
- **The mandate of EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator Ms. Myria Vassiliadu has finished on 29 February 2020.**
- **216 organizations (among them Animus and Lefoe) working to support refugees and migrants** providing services and defending their rights in Europe and worldwide sent a letter to Commissioner Johansson requesting formal consultation as part of the development of the Migration and Asylum Pact.

► For more news and updates on trafficking, please visit the latest newsletter of *La Strada International!*
Available [here!](#) ◀

“The Migration and Asylum Pact, and its forthcoming legislative proposals, should aim at building a consensus between EU, national and local decision-makers, civil society working on the ground and the migrants and refugees that are directly affected. Engaging in this dialogue will enable the EU to build an asylum and migration policy that is effective and in line with European values. In a world that is increasingly trying to suppress or criminalise the voices of civil society, the EU should set a positive example and make them part of the conversation through a transparent process that generates accountability.”

The Commission respected the request and a consultation was scheduled in February.

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