



**TOLERANT**  
Support Victims of Human Trafficking

## TOLERANT: Transnational network for Employment integration of women victims of trafficking

**Newsletter No3**  
October 2020

**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

Covid-19 pandemic continued to represent a major issue in recent months. Although facing several difficulties, support services for victims of trafficking were implemented under safe conditions in all partner countries, both online and, wherever possible, in person. Following the economic downturn caused by the pandemic, the lack of job opportunities for low-skilled workers affected the most vulnerable groups all over Europe, including migrants and victims of trafficking.

Supported by project partners, KMOP organised the second exchange workshop (online) on the 25th and 26th of June 2020. Experts and practitioners were invited in order to discuss and exchange good practices and strategies to tackle human trafficking for sexual exploitation. Special attention was given to three topics mainly related to service provision under the Covid-19 pandemic, prevention and awareness-raising campaign against trafficking for sexual exploitation, employability and reintegration of victims of human trafficking.

The next meeting of the partners will be on the 9th and 10th of December during the final conference of the project (online).



#### PROJECT PARTNERS



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

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## ► In Greece:

### More specifically for Greece:

In Greece, KMOP – Social Action and Innovation Center has continued providing 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 are offered in Northern Greece in the area of Thessaloniki. Until now, we had the chance to effectively address the needs of 12 women at risk of becoming Victims of Trafficking, offering them customised support to enhance their employability skills. Their countries of origin were Syria, Kuwait, Morocco, Afghanistan, Iraq, Cameroon, DRC and Georgia. COVID-19 continues to challenge our effective service provision, since a second lockdown is discussed as a possibility for the upcoming months.



Some news from the Greek context:

**1)** Stakeholders in the field of Trafficking continue to collaborate and build networks of cooperation, strengthening the protection system to address the challenges brought by COVID-19. In a recent interview, Mr Moskof further highlighted the effects of the pandemic to the identification, prevention and protection systems related to trafficking.

**Read the interview [here](#).**

**2)** During the World Day Against Trafficking, a parliamentary discussion took place with the participation of the President of the Hellenic Republic Ms Sakellaropoulou. All actors highlighted the need for more effective coordination to eliminate trafficking and ensure that victims' rights are protected.

**Watch the session [here](#).**

**3)** A21 with the collaboration with the Department of Fighting Organised Crime of the Hellenic Police have renovated the room where the interviews of potential Victims of Trafficking take place.

**Check the room [here](#).**



**4)** A new AMIF-funded project will start during October 2020, led by KMOP. The overall objective of “enhAnCing the anti-Trafficking Identification, preVention And support mEchanisms” (ACTIVATE) is to enhance the prevention, identification and support mechanisms against trafficking in human beings (THB) with a special focus on Victims of Trafficking (VoT) for sexual exploitation. Capacity building to lawyers and to professionals in the reception and identification centres are among the core activities of the project. Stay tuned for more updates.

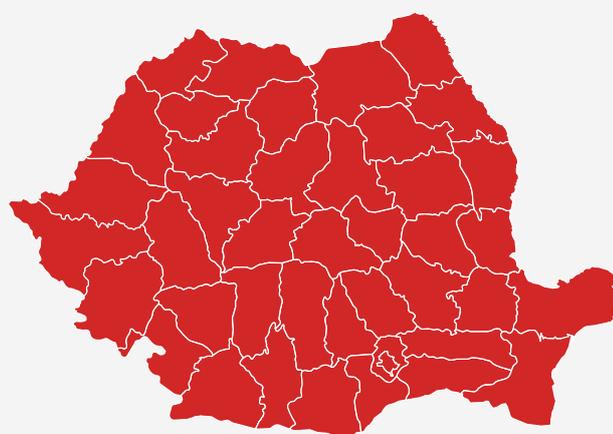
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### READ ABOUT:

## ► In Romania:

During June- August, the main activity developed by AIDRom was the training sessions for the Integration service provision for access to employment of the beneficiaries.

The trainings sessions focused on the actual needs of the beneficiaries in time of pandemic with COVID 19, especially on the orientation to the private and public structures, access to education, access to health care, access to social benefits, the residence permit in Romania, job placement services and skills building, career advice services.



In the first half of 2020, National rapporteur has implemented 6 national prevention campaigns, 7 local / regional campaigns and 14 educational projects. During these prevention initiatives, ANITP carried out 1.500 information activities with 152.000 beneficiaries.

The most important campaign to prevent human trafficking for the purpose of exploitation through begging was “Set them free! Don’t pay for exploitation!” „Dă-i libertate! Nu-i plăti exploatarea!” implemented within the project Reducing the amplitude of human trafficking through better information for citizens financed by the European Commission through the ISF Police component of the Internal Security Fund. The campaign was implemented in partnership with AIDRom - Association of Ecumenical Churches in Romania, eLiberare Association and World Vision Foundation in Romania, INCA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of National Education.

The campaign aims to ensure strong anti-trafficking messages, oriented and adapted to the specifics of the target groups. Children are particularly vulnerable. However, their vulnerabilities do not in lead to trafficking. Trafficking in human beings is fuelled by the high profits they generate and the demand for services for which victims are forced.

The most recent prevention initiative with great impact was the broadcasting of several informative-preventive spots within the international film festival TIFF 2020 (Transylvania International Film Festival).

The prevention actions carried out in the first half of 2020 were supplemented by an intense information activity carried out in the online, meaning that, for example, on the Facebook page of ANITP were made over 900 posts, which had total impact of about 1,650,000 unique users. At the same time, the dissemination of ANITP’s anti-traffic messages was carried out with the support of two well-known vloggers (Atenție Cad Mere și Doza de Cultură Generală), who had 940,000 and 350,000 subscribers on their own YouTube channels, which are educational channels.

In September 2020, AIDRom participated in the public debate organized by the Ministry of Internal Affairs on the draft GD for the approval of the National Strategy on Immigration for 2020-2023, the Action Plan for 2020-2021 for the implementation of the National Strategy on Immigration for the period 2020-2023, as well as for the amendment and completion of GD no. 572/2008 on the establishment of the Coordination Group for the implementation of the National Strategy on Immigration.

The European Commission launched a public consultation at EU level on 22 July to gather views on new actions that could be taken at Union level to promote the integration and social inclusion of migrants and people from migrant backgrounds. The results of the consultation will contribute to the development and renewal of the Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion.

More information is available [here](#).

The public consultation will be available in all official EU languages until 21 October 2020.

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### READ ABOUT:

## ► In Italy:

**1)** Save the Children Italy expressed its concern about the social consequences and devastating impact of COVID-19 on women and girl victims of trafficking. According to the X edition of the report “Little invisible slaves 2020”, published ahead of the World Day against trafficking, “the lockdown has forced institutions and non-governmental organisations to deal with greater difficulties in prevention and support activities for victims”. It is worth to be mentioned that the pandemic has also affected the usual models of trafficking and exploitation, pushing victims off the streets and intensifying indoor prostitution.

[Find out more.](#)



**2)** Although the difficulty of bringing traffickers to justice, Ottavia Spaggiari narrates the story of a young victim of trafficking who managed to gather solid proofs and convict her perpetrators. [Read here.](#)

**3)** On the 25th September, 2020, twenty members of the Nigerian organisation or “cult” known as Maphite were found guilty of a series of crimes related to human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, drug trade, smuggling of migrants and forced begging. It is worth to be mentioned that the Court of Turin has recognised the Maphite as a mafia-type association characterised by brutal initiation ceremonies, strong subjugation (even psychological) of victims and the systematic use of violence and intimidation to achieve its goals. [Find out more](#) (*This content is available only in Italian*).

**4)** On the 25th of June, U.S. Embassy in Italy republished a report on THB in Italy. According to the study, “The Government of Italy does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so”.

[Read more here](#) (p. 276).

**5)** On the 25th of August, Save The Children, within the European project Pathways, developed and published two operational documents which constitute a useful orientation tool within the first identification and proper care of underage victims or potential victims of trafficking and/or exploitation. [Read here.](#)

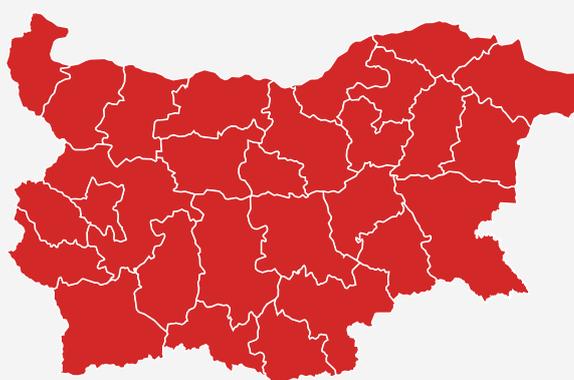
**6)** On World Day Against Trafficking in Persons (30 July 2020), UN Special Rapporteur of trafficking in persons Maria Grazia Giammarinaro called on the International Community to strengthen its efforts in preventing and countering human trafficking all around the world by guaranteeing people’s fundamental rights, with particular attention to migrants and refugees. [Read more here.](#)

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## READ ABOUT:

## ► In Bulgaria:

**1)** In July, the Animus Association Foundation's team finally received official approval by the State Agency on Refugees to access Reception Centers for migrants and refugees where due to the COVID-19 pandemic no outside persons were allowed. Due to the security measures, the team will meet women accommodated there on Animus territory. We work in close cooperation with the social workers from the Centers in order to synchronize our efforts to integrate the accommodated women.



**2)** We organized a meeting with the Arab Committee on Integration in Bulgaria. The organization develops different activities in support of migrants and refugees from Iran, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Morocco, Libya, Tunisia, Pakistan, Egypt and other countries in Bulgaria. The team working on the TOLERANT project will organize a presentation for women's clubs from these countries to inform them about the support provided by the TOLERANT project.

**3)** TOLERANT project was presented at meeting of the **Integration Task Force** organized by UNHCR. All national stakeholders are involved in it. Animus was invited to join the group and will take part in its future meetings.

**4)** AAF representatives took part in different online forum and events related to trafficking in human beings and migration:

- ▶ *20th Alliance against Trafficking in Persons* conference entitled **“Ending Impunity: delivering justice through prosecuting trafficking in human beings” - 20-22 July**
- ▶ **Coronavirus Response Investment Initiatives** (CRII and CRII Plus) - a webinar hosted by the European Commission, seeking to re-direct unspent EU Structural Funds to national, regional & local communities fighting COVID-19, on **Wednesday 3 June, 10:00 CEST**, aims at bringing together all relevant actors at national and European levels to engage in a constructive dialogue and exchange of innovative ideas on how to use the CRII to ensure the continuity and quality of care and support services
- ▶ Council of Europe **HELP** courses:
  - Introduction to the ECHR and the ECtHR
  - Access to Justice for Women
  - Child-friendly Justice
  - Reasoning of Criminal Judgments
  - Child Friendly Justice and Children's Rights
  - Family Law and Human Rights
  - International Cooperation in Criminal Matters
  - Right to Respect for the Private and Family Life
  - Transitional Justice and Human Rights
  - Violence Against Women

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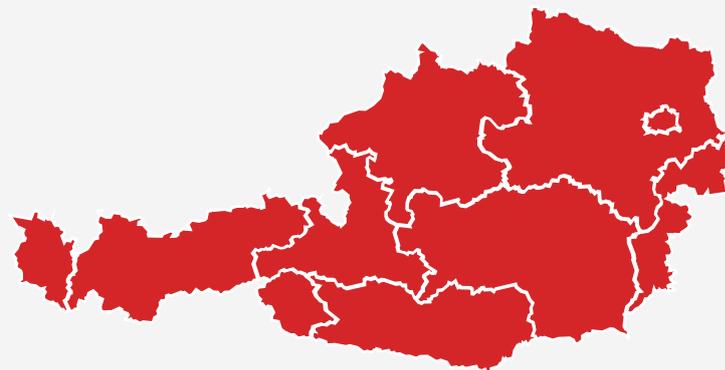
### READ ABOUT:

## ► In Austria:

LEFÖ-IBF is contributing with a workshop to the Virtual Conference on the occasion of the EU Anti-Trafficking Day. The workshop will be held on October 15, in cooperation with two partner organisations.

10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

“Corona Crisis and Victim Support: The Impact on Trafficked Persons and Heightened Risks of Exploitation” (ENGLISH)



*Manfred Buchner, Director of MEN VIA – Support for Men as Victims of Human Trafficking; Jasmina Kronic, Head of Policy and Learning ASTRA Anti-Trafficking Action Serbia; Evelyn Probst, Director of LEFÖ – Intervention Center for Trafficked Women (IBF)*

The Corona crisis made risks of exploitation and human trafficking more visible and aggravated the situation for trafficked persons. In this workshop, the victim protection organisations LEFÖ-IBF and MEN VIA together with the NGO Astra (Serbia) will share insights from their work. On the basis of case studies, we will discuss the impact on trafficked persons, heightened risks of abuse and severe exploitation for vulnerable groups, and link the current situation to the concept of vulnerability and access to rights. For participation please register [here](#).

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## READ ABOUT:

► **In the European/International context:**



**1)** On the 30th of July, the International community celebrated the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol). In this occasion, two webinars titled “20 Years After: Implementing and Going Beyond the Palermo Protocol” were held on 29-30 June and 13-14 July. [Read here.](#)

**2)** At the end of her 6 years mandate as UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, Maria Grazia Giammarinaro presented her concluding remarks. [Read the article in Italian.](#) [Video message in English.](#)

**3)** In the aftermath of the 7th Summit of the Southern EU countries (10/09/2020), participants reaffirmed their commitment “to fight against terrorism and human trafficking and smuggling that contribute to irregular migration”. [Find out more.](#)

**4)** In order to provide adequate support and guarantee their right to protection, the EU Commission adopted the “EU Strategy on victim’s rights” (2020-2025) aimed at tackling victims’ obstacles in accessing justice. As highlighted by the Commission, vulnerable victims, including victims of trafficking in human beings, are often exposed to insufficient support and protection as well as to “secondary victimisation during criminal proceedings”. [Find out more.](#)

**5)** During the Coronavirus pandemic, the role of people working on the front lines to fight human trafficking has become even more important. This year, on World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, the UN and in particular UNODC celebrated this event by honouring the first responders helping to tackle the crime of human trafficking. [Read more.](#)

**6)** On World Day Against Trafficking in Persons (30 July 2020), IOM Director General invited the anti-trafficking community to “evolve and adapt to this new crisis, finding innovative ways to identify trends, to screen for vulnerabilities, to support States while advocating for human rights and the prevention of abuse, and to seek safe and viable options for those who will remain on the move”. [Find out more.](#)

**7)** In occasion of the World Day against trafficking in Persons, GRETA called for additional support to victims of trafficking and persons at risk of being trafficked, exhorting State Parties to take urgent action in order to allocate adequate resources and strengthen their efforts in assisting and protecting vulnerable people, including victims of trafficking. [Find out more.](#)

**8)** GRETA held its 37th plenary meeting from the 29th of June to the 3rd of July 2020. In that occasion, the group of experts has approved several draft reports to be transmitted to the corresponding national bodies for their review. [Find out more.](#)

**9)** Over 30 academics from different University in Bangladesh participated in a 2-day workshop on crimes related to human trafficking and migrant smuggling organised by UNODC within the framework of the [Education for Justice initiative](#). Trafficking for sexual exploitation represents a serious problem in Bangladesh, since the country has become a source, transit and destination point for illegal activities related to THB. The workshop was meant to provide participants with a better understanding of these issues by sharing best practice, international standards and real case studies. [Find out more.](#)

**10)** In June, the OSCE - Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe held an online event with the aim of presenting an [innovative research](#) on how national authorities, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders can use technology in order to fight human trafficking. [Read more about the initiative here.](#)

**11)** Fleeing a collapsed country, migrant and refugee women from Venezuela have been facing unbearable challenges during the pandemic. Young women and girls have been trafficked and forced into sex work in Colombia and Ecuador, while little has been done to find durable solution to the exodus of millions of vulnerable people. [Read more here.](#)

**12)** In June, U.S. Department of State – Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons released the 20th edition of the “Trafficking in Person Report”. [Read more here.](#)

**13)** The European Commission released the [Migration & Asylum Pact](#). On human trafficking it states: “The risks of trafficking along migration routes are high, notably the risk for women and girls of becoming victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation or other forms of gender-based violence. Trafficking networks abuse asylum procedures, and use reception centres to identify potential victims. The early identification of potential non-EU victims will be a specific theme of the Commission’s forthcoming approach towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings, as set out in the recent Security Union Strategy”(point 2.4).

**14)** Civil society organizations working against trafficking in human beings, members of La Strada International - European Platform Against Trafficking in Human Beings, gave their [input](#) to the new EU strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings. [Find out more.](#)

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