

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Round Table on Danube Cities against Human Trafficking (D-CAHT)

### STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF MUNICIPALITIES AND CITIES IN PREVENTING & COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING & EXPLOITATION: *The Importance of a Coordinated and Integrated Approach*

18 April 2018

Jable Castle, Ljubljana, Slovenia

## SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Trafficking in human beings (THB) is a complex phenomenon that requires specific capacities and resources for detection, combatting and preventing. Local actors – be it public authorities, non-governmental organisations or citizens – have a crucial role in this issue, as they are often closest to both victims and traffickers. Although cities and municipalities offer a variety of possibilities for effectively counteracting human trafficking, local actors tend to lack capacities, resources or know-how in order to initiate activities. Additionally, stakeholders need a transnational approach in order to effectively tackle the international dynamics of trafficking in human beings. In particular, the Danube Region encompasses regions that face both the recruitment – with a high share of victims recruited from Romania and Bulgaria – and exploitation of victims of human trafficking. Against this background, Priority Area 10 “Institutional Capacity and Cooperation” of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region is working towards a thematic networking initiative – the Danube Cities Against Human Trafficking (D-CAHT) initiative – which shall address in particular cities, towns, relevant NGOs, experts and local institutions in order to enhance capacity-building and know-how transfer on this genuinely transnational and transversal issue.



Priority Area 10 “Institutional Capacity and Cooperation”/Centre for European Perspective organised in cooperation with the Regional Implementation Initiative the Round Table on “Preventing & Combating Human Trafficking and Exploitation at Local Level” in Mengeš, Jable Castle on the 18th April 2018. The seminar gathered over thirty representatives from cities, civil society, international organisations and research to discuss needs and opportunities for local cooperation.



In her opening remarks, Nina ČEPON (EUSDR Priority Area 10 “Institutional Capacity and Cooperation”) introduced the issue of preventing and combating human trafficking and exploitation at local level and shortly presented activities of EUSDR Priority Area 10 “Institutional Capacity and Cooperation.”



Helga KONRAD (Regional Implementation Initiative, RII) continued with the issue of preventing & combating human trafficking and exploitation at local level. She underlined the importance and difficulty of working together.

Sandi ČURIN (National Coordinator on Anti-Human Trafficking in Slovenia) initially presented the most typical forms of modern slavery, as is most commonly referred to as trafficking in human beings. It is a violation of fundamental human rights and a serious form of crime, which the state's detection and prosecution structures often cannot successfully tackle alone. According to him, Slovenia has a solid system for combating human trafficking. We should, however strive towards prevention and awareness raising.

Polona KOVAČ (Association Ključ) presented activities of Association Ključ. Association Ključ carries out preventive activities in schools. Scholars as a vulnerable group need awareness raising about the set-ups of traffickers. In addition to that they also provide shelter and crisis accommodation for victims of human trafficking. She stressed that human trafficking in Slovenia is not organised on a local level. Only the City Municipality of Ljubljana funds shelter and other activities.



Helga KONRAD stressed that cooperation on the regional level is important because human trafficking is a complex issue. Whereas it is the local level where human trafficking takes place. Institutions alone will not solve this issue.

Mike DOTTRIDGE (Independent Anti-Trafficking Expert and Consultant, UK) presented what municipalities and local services can do to identify human trafficking situations promptly and to prevent exploitation, with a special focus on children. He stressed that there is an incorrect assumption that trafficking is just about sexual exploitation. Although the legal definitions of human trafficking refer to the same forms of exploitation whether children or adults are victims, the main forms of exploitation experienced by children in Europe seem quite clear. Occupations where trafficked children have been found in Europe are mainly commercial sexual exploitation, forced begging, illicit criminal



activities (e.g. growing cannabis in Britain, picking pockets, dealing in contraband, acting as ‘drug runner’), live-in domestic servants in servitude in a private household. His presentation gave special emphasis to the special responsibilities of child protection services (for migrant as well as local children), on legal and (wider) moral responsibilities to identify and protect trafficked children who have been trafficked or exploited, how can we prevent such cases from occurring and how some other local services need to be involved in identifying exploited children.





Tetiana RUDENKO (Senior Co-ordination Adviser, OSR/CTHB, OSCE) emphasized the importance of multi-stakeholder cooperation in combating trafficking in human beings. OSCE according to its Action Plan (2003, 2005 and 2013) works on prevention, prosecution, protection and as a coordinating body for protection in ATHB Task Forces and National Coordinators, National Rapporteurs or other monitoring mechanisms and cooperates with NGOs, international organizations and partners. She introduced Alliance against Trafficking in Persons conference that aims to promote inclusive partnerships to enhance the coherence of anti-trafficking efforts and strengthen co-operation at the local, national, regional and international level, examines existing, more traditional anti-trafficking partnerships, along with the benefits of innovative co-operation modalities, and highlights new actors whose engagement would bring added value to anti-trafficking responses.



Alexandra MALANGONE (Expert and Consultant, Italy) presented a project in combating human trafficking along migration routes, which was based on four live reality-based simulation exercises. OSCE Simulation Based Training on Human Trafficking in Mixed Migration Flows was held in Vicenza, Italy. Project experts developed three scenarios of human trafficking based on real cases. These scenarios took place in the fictitious destination Dreamland, surrounded by other fictitious states (countries of origin, transit and others). Project involved several groups of trainees, including financial investigators, labour inspectors, prosecutors, criminal investigators, journalists, shelter staff, NGO staff, lawyers, public services and cultural mediators.

Philipp SCHWERTMANN (Head of the 'Migration and Decent Work' Section at Arbeit und Leben DGB – German



Trade Union, Berlin) talked about whether decent work for migrant workers could be a strategy to prevent labour trafficking. Migrant workers have a right to claim their rights even if they don't speak the local language, don't have money or don't have work permits. He presented three main activities they developed. The Work Time Calendar is developed jointly with practitioners. It informs about labour rights and is available in 13 languages. Besides that, they are issuing 6 Information Leaflets on Labour Rights. They developed a course module „Labour Exploitation – Be aware

and react!“ that is designed for German language and integration courses. It includes a short silent movie and allows participants to learn about labour law and rights, to reflect on working conditions and to learn about signs of exploitative/trafficking situations. In collaboration with local counselling centres for mobile workers they carry out Joint Counselling against Exploitation and Labour Trafficking. Lessons learnt are that we should strive towards taking an activating approach – what are the options for instance, instead of what should I not do. Talking about trafficking in human beings rather deters people at risk (message is understood, but there is no impact on decisions).

Stefano VOLPICELLI (Trainer and Researcher on Migration and Trafficking in Human Beings) argues that there is no consensus on the definition of human trafficking. He understands it as strictly linked to exploitation. In fact, there would be no reason for human trafficking to exist if not for exploiting purposes. He emphasises the role of local actors for the detection of victims as they are closest to them. Civil servants in cities and



municipalities are well trained to identify victims but still it is difficult because victims often do not perceive themselves as victims with respective rights or they fear severe consequences from the traffickers. But the most important reason is that they don't see any benefits in reporting as in most of the cases they will end up in detention and probably repatriated. He highlighted that it is important that assistance and protection is provided regardless the collaboration of victims with the authorities and that they should be given the opportunity to access justice and compensation for their losses. He stressed that need values, principles and involvement of all community.

Veronica ASENSIO and Lucia CELLERINO (Unity against Trafficking in Human Beings, City Council of Barcelona) emphasised the importance of comprehensive and constant assistance to victims at all levels, which requires close cooperation between public authorities and further service providers and training for civil service. In Spain, cities have to deal with different police bodies and cooperation between cities often is challenging as they have different approaches in managing trafficking in human beings. They shortly presented activities of the Unity against Trafficking in Human Beings.





*In cooperation with*

Regional Implementation Initiative  
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