

INTRODUCTION

On the initiative of the Human Rights Centre (KEPAD) the *ARIADNE Network against Trafficking in Human Beings in Southeast and Eastern Europe* was established in June 2005, with its seat in Athens, Greece. The founding members of the Network are 17 NGOs from 12 countries of the region of SE and E. Europe (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹, Greece, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia (and Kosovo), Turkey and the Ukraine). KEPAD was designated as the Coordinator of the Network.

The primary objective of the Network is to combat the bane of human trafficking by developing close and coordinated cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination of the trafficking victims, for the promotion of joint action to provide support to the victims and to prevent the phenomenon.

The present publication is the product of the first joint project of the Network, which is the *Registration of the Actual Situation of Human Trafficking* in the 12 countries represented in the Network. The national reports contained in this volume were drafted following a thorough research, which was conducted by the NGO/partners in cooperation with state agents, international organizations and other local NGOs dealing with this issue in their respective countries.

The objective of this joint project is to define the deficiencies, gaps or neglected areas in human trafficking, in each one of the participating countries, and to make recommendations for the improvement of the situation.

On the basis of the evaluation of the situation and the needs assessment, the members of the Network will proceed with the adoption of a *plan of action* for further joint projects to address the priorities defined by the NGO/partners for their respective country in the field of human trafficking.

The English publication is translated into each one of the local languages of the countries engaged in the project. The publications will be distributed to state agents, international organi-

¹ The authors of the report for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (p.81) use the constitutional name of their country, which is not the one used officially by the United Nations, the Council of Europe, and the European Union.

zations and other interested parties dealing with human trafficking.

The *target groups* of this project are:

- The victims and potential victims of human trafficking (direct beneficiaries), women, children and men, who are usually victims of social phenomena, such as poverty, unemployment, lack of education, training, etc.
- The state agents and institutions active in the prevention of human trafficking, as they will be aware of the actual situation in this field in their own country, as well as in the neighbouring countries.
- The general public, which will gain a greater awareness of the problems encountered in human trafficking, and thus will be able to contribute to the collective effort for the improvement of the situation.
- The NGOs (indirect beneficiaries) which will enrich their knowledge and ability in counter-trafficking activities.

The national reports are to be updated annually so as to include possible changes in the human trafficking law and its implementation, as well as in practices aiming at improving the situation in this field.

The joint project is co-sponsored by the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs (HELLENIC AID), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway and the Canadian Embassy in Greece.

KEPAD has cooperated with the International Organization of Migration (IOM), Mission in Greece, and with the Thessaloniki Office of the Stability Pact for SE Europe.

The Human Rights Defence Centre, on behalf of all the partners of the Network, wishes to express its appreciation and thanks to all the state agents, international organizations and other NGOs, for their valuable contribution in the research and the overall implementation of this project.

Finally, we wish to emphasise that the views expressed in each one of the national reports are strictly those of the individual NGOs, that are the authors, and not necessarily those of the editors, or those who have contributed to make this publication possible.

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