Nowadays, more than ever, the fight against human trafficking is an essential issue in Europe and worldwide.
In the Caritas international network, we have noticed that the Euro-Mediterranean countries share same issues about human trafficking.
As a response to this reality, Caritas partners from Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Lebanon, Morocco, Romania, Turkey, Ukraine, and France committed together in an ambitious Euro-Mediterranean anti-trafficking project.
This project aims to promote and strengthen the cooperation between European and Mediterranean countries so that to streamline and accelerate existing efforts to combat human trafficking. Various activities have been planned to attain this goal: prevention with young communities; exchanges focused on:
• the new forms and dimension of trafficking;
• good practices in victim of trafficking assistance and
• cooperation between origin, transit and destination countries.
In simple words: Let’s join our skills to be more effective!
This newsletter will help all of us to share our practises and ideas through joint efforts and we invite all Caritas partners who share the same commitment to work together at international level for combating human trafficking!

Geneviève COLAS
Caritas France

“Let’s join our skills to be more effective!”

PROJECT PRESENTATION

The “Human trafficking - a common challenge for the new century” project will be implemented by Caritas organizations experienced in human trafficking issues covering the South-East European region.
This 2-year project aims to strengthen the network of Caritas in Eastern European region so that to significantly contribute in human trafficking reduction and elimination.
By increasing and valuing the capacity of Caritas and Caritas staff through study visits, trainings, common activities and exchanges of best practices, concrete plans for combating human trafficking in the region are to be designed.
In addition, the planned activities aim to promote development of services for trafficking victims and approaches to empowerment of trafficking survivors.
It is within the aim of this transnational endeavor to facilitate and capacitate national and international actors engaged in the fight against trafficking by initiating an active dialogue with decision makers and strongly advocating for policy initiatives likely to better support and encourage consistent public education, awareness raising and grass-root level actions, in both origin and destination countries.
In particular, the project targets to improve coordination and information sharing and dissemination among national and international stakeholders and actors, using the channels and resources of Caritas organizations active in this field, through the COATNET platform, through the national existing networks, through the international partnerships with various entities at European level,
Built on the experience of 10 Caritas organizations, the project will consolidate the efforts of fighting against trafficking in human beings by renewing the working methods, increasing the efficiency of practices and providing a clearer understanding and a better response to the complex dynamics of human trafficking. It is a logical continuation of the achievements of different previous projects financed by Caritas France from 2005 till now.
Within the framework of the implementation of the first activity of Regional Project, during the European Week against Human Trafficking, Caritas Albania, in cooperation with the permanent representative office of France with the United Nations and International Organizations in Vienna, and the Embassy of France in Tirana organized the training “The Identification and Reintegration of the Victims”, on October 12 and 13, 2011.

The training hosted representatives from Caritas France, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, representatives of shelters and other NGOs from Tirana which have direct contact with the victims.

The main topics of the seminar included:
- The cases of family involvement in trafficking;
- The policy against trafficking in France;
- Identifying the problem and understanding and evaluating the issues of victims.

During the first day, the training was conducted by Vanessa Simoni, the leader of the French organization “Les Amis du bus des femmes” - whose main mission is to provide health, social and administrative assistance for victims.

An important moment of this training was the presentation of the concrete cases that the French organization encountered during its work in the streets of Paris.

The second part of the training was conducted by Mr. Eric Panloup, the Regional Technical Representative of Southeast Europe and the permanent representative of France with the United Nations and International Organizations in Vienna. Mr. Panloup, in his capacity of an adviser for the issues of human trafficking referred to:
- Collaboration of Police Department with the NGOs;
- Protecting the rights of the victims of trafficking;
- Compensation of the victims and children protection.

The participants found the topics highly interesting since they could link it directly with their everyday job and strongly impacted on:
- Mutual information sharing among participants;
- Knowing and comparing different realities;
- Applying different approaches and the best practices.

This experience will serve to the training participants to adopt new approaches for victim of trafficking identification and assessment.

Aurora Koqeku
Caritas Albania
COUNTRY PRESENTATION: UKRAINE

Preamble – Ukraine (Europe)
Capital: Kyiv
Population (2010): 45.4 million
Area: 603,700 sq km
Spoken Languages: Ukrainian (official), Russian
Currency: Hryvnya (UAH)
GDP per Capita PPP (2007): USD 6,914
HDI Rank (2007): 85 of 182
Remittances (2008): USD 5,769 million
Net Migration Rate (2005-2010): -0.3 migrants /1,000 inhabitants
Immigrants (2010): 11.6%
Women as a Percentage of Immigrants (2010): 57.2%
Population under 15 (2010): 13.9%
Adult HIV Prevalence (2007): 1.6%

HUMAN TRAFFICKING STATISTICS
The International Organization for migration (IOM) estimated that:
• 100 000 Ukrainians had been trafficked since 1991-out of which 85% victims of labor exploitation;
• every 10th citizen of Ukraine met with cases of human trafficking in his nearest surrounding;
• for the last 5 years our compatriots were trafficked to 52 different countries of the world –Turkey, Russia and Poland being the leaders;
• Between 2 to 3.5 mil Ukrainians work abroad, a lot of citizens work in other countries with no adequate legal documents or official permits, only 2% of labor migrants (i.e. 60 000 people a year) work legally.

The lack of information leads to the growing number of people who have suffered from human trafficking and illegal transportation. Wrongly informed people often fall victims of traffickers and smugglers.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
In every sphere of its activity, Caritas Ukraine continuously strives to develop productive partnerships with other organizations and governmental agencies aiming to reach a common goal – to help the needy, regardless of their religion, nationality or social status.
Since 2004, Caritas Ukraine has been working in the direction of human trafficking prevention and reintegration for victims of trafficking with the support of Caritas France, EU Commission, SRTV, Renovabis Foundation, AMA / Communicantes, Caritas Spain, IOM, OSCE, Caritas Switzerland and others.

The main result of our activity is the assistance provided to more than 800 victims of trafficking who applied to Caritas centers. They are men, women and teenagers.
• All of them received qualified complex assistance for reintegration, including social, psychological support, medical, judicial assistance, professional courses, support for employment & starting their own business.
• An important achievement is the development and strengthening of the network of Caritas counseling centers that work in strong coalition with the Ukrainian anti-trafficking platform. Currently we have 5 Centers for providing counseling to victims of trafficking and information to those going abroad.
• The statistics of the help line calls in the previous projects shows that 70 % of all the calls are connected with going abroad, half of them for employment (how to get visa, how to check up the intermediate agency, how to sign the contract, etc.)
• The result of common advocacy Ukrainian anti trafficking network during previous Projects is creation of the network of NGOs and some governmental institutions for combating of human trafficking and introduce the lessons on the issue of prevention of human trafficking in the state school curriculum by the Order of Ukrainian Ministry of Education beginning from school year 2010/2011.

Caritas helps the Ukrainians to understand the possibilities of work here in Ukraine, but also to prevent young people from becoming victims. The lack of information and social-economic crisis in Ukraine lead to the increasing number of people who suffering from human trafficking and illegal migration. More than 6000 people were questioned by Caritas on the issue of going abroad. 75% of respondents answered that they would like to go abroad for work. Only 18.7% of respondents have enough information about the rights of Ukrainian citizens abroad, while 67.4% know practically nothing about their rights.
That’s why, we consider that there is a big need to raise awareness about human trafficking, illegal labor migration, forced labor, exploitation, violence and human rights violation.

ACTIVITIES:
All the activities of our Centers may be divided into several types:
• Informational campaign
• Advocacy
• Prevention - educational campaign
• Social assistance campaign
• Telephone information line

CONCLUSION
What are our achievements? What are our pluses? First of all this is the work in Caritas network and in close coalition with the other Ukrainian NGO’s. Among our strong sides are: qualified staff, psychologists, project managers, social workers; close cooperation with governmental structures (social centers, police departments, unemployment centers, departments of education etc.) as well as with the religious structures (Commissions, Dioceses, parishes) and assistance of young Caritas volunteers in preventative activities.

Natalia Holynska
CaritasUkraine
Workshops with youth (71 participants)
The young people carefully listened a lecture on human trafficking and actively participated in discussions. Also, there was a meeting of volunteers.

Economic empowerment (2 families)
Users of small grants who started an independent business.

Campaigning
The media campaign that began in 2011 will last until the end of the same year. The name of the campaign is Janisam rob (a) = I’m not a commodity. Since the last campaign lasted till today, Caritas Bosnia & Herzegovina sent a message about the dangers of trafficking and ways to protect through 122 different media channels (newspapers, TV stations, internet portals).

By the end of the current phase of the project, posters made by Caritas Bosnia & Herzegovina will be placed at all border crossing points of Bosnia and Herzegovina (it has been agreed with the Ministry of Security). Bosnia-Herzegovina has 89 border crossing points.

The European Day against Trafficking – 18th of October
Caritas Bosnia & Herzegovina, in cooperation with the Ministry of Security, organized street actions to inform and raise awareness on this issue. To strongly mark the European Day against Human Trafficking, volunteers - dressed in sackcloth - distributed leaflets and brochures in Sarajevo, Mostar, Banja Luka and Tuzla to attract people to come and take informational materials.

At the same time, in Sarajevo, Mostar, Banja Luka and Tuzla actors performed short dramas on the topic of trafficking in the same time.

Networking
Project Coordinator, Ivana Kozina, attended the regional training program on "Identification and Reintegration of Victims" in Tirana, Albania. Also, she attended the COATNET meeting in Brussels on 21st - 23rd of November.

There was a meeting of the coordinator of the project with representatives of the U.S. Embassy in Bosnia & Herzegovina, who shown interest in funding some of the activities of Caritas Bosnia & Herzegovina in stopping human trafficking.

Participation in a meeting and training on the topic of "Trafficking for labor exploitation."

Ivana Kozina
Caritas Bosnia and Herzegovina
The 5th European Day against Human Trafficking was marked by a number of activities at national and local level. Thus, in Bucharest, the Regional Center of the National Agency of Trafficking in Persons, in cooperation with CARITAS BUCHAREST and AIDROM, organized a meeting with over 800 students from schools in Bucharest and Ilfov County where the young audience (16 – 18 years old) was presented a number of video clips and short movies, illustrating the current trends of the phenomenon.

Also, they were distributed all sort of materials, produced under various prevention actions by the three partners and a interactive debate was conducted on this issue, underlying the risks and consequences of trafficking. Youngsters showed a high level of interest, many schools requesting the representatives of the three organizations to visit their schools and plan together meetings to inform school communities on various HT issues. Thus, as a follow up, Caritas Bucharest invited the interested schools to sign up in a new European project, i.e. FIGHT AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SEXUAL TOURISM, a transcontinental project implemented in 5 countries (Italy, Spain, Brasil, Argentina and Romania) by 17 partners.

In addition, 55 students and teachers of the ‘St.Joseph’ High school in Bucharest organized and activity underlining the significance of the day and focusing on how trafficking is a serious violation of human rights.

Another significant event – CHILD RIGHTS REWARD - was organized – for the first time in Romania - by the Federation of Non-governmental Organizations for Child (FONPC), in partnership with UNICEF mission in Romania, French Embassy, Wallonie Delegation – Brussels, Spanish Embassy, Parada Foundation and the International Organization of Francophonie meant to raise awareness of wider public on the responsibility of the entire society to respect, promote and defense of the rights of the children. The reward ceremony on the 9th of December in Bucharest, was part of a larger FESTIVAL OF CHILD RIGHTS – an action meant to encourage the activities supporting children rights.

Based on the activities developed and implemented in schools on anti-trafficking issues at national, regional and international level, Caritas Bucharest, i.e. Gabriela Chiroiu, was nominated by the French Embassy In Romania.

Gabriela Chiroiu
Caritas Romania
For the 18th of October 2011, Caritas Ruse realized a city campaign, in partnership with the Local Commission for Combating Human trafficking under the municipally of Ruse. This year campaign aimed to stress on the issue of labor exploitation. Official opening was made with a round table dedicated to the need of strengthening the cooperation between government and non-governmental actors on local level in the fight against labor exploitation.

Caritas Ruse, in a partnership with the National Anti-trafficking Commission started the campaign named “A loyal employer”. This campaign aims to honor employers who respect their employees by awarding them with the “loyal employer” order. A code of ethics was created, which will be sign by employers who agree to respect the human rights for their employees.

An exhibition of posters, informational materials and pictures was placed in the Grand Hall of Ruse Municipality.

On the 18th of October, 6 teams of volunteers distributed informational materials in the town. The teams jointed the United Nation campaign “Blue hearts” and gave blue ribbons to the citizens.

A small questionnaire for assessing the level of knowledge concerning labor exploitation was applied to the citizens also. 317 people took part in this small research.

On October 29, the documentary movie “The price of Sex” was shown in Bulgaria for the first time. The Price of Sex is a feature-length documentary about young Eastern European women who’ve been drawn into a netherworld of sex trafficking and abuse. It shows in a very comprehensive way the situation in Eastern Europe after the collapse of Communism and the story follows in depth the cause of never-ending circle of this crime, related very much with the corruption, hypocrisy of rich countries and poverty.

After the premiere there were discussions with the public.

The official GRETA report about Bulgaria was announced. Caritas Ruse was one of the 5 NGOs, invited by the secretariat of GRETA, which provide official report about how Bulgaria is fulfilling its obligation under the EU Convention for combating Human Trafficking.

One woman, victim of human trafficking for sexual exploitation in Poland, is applying for financial help from Caritas Ruse Fund for juridical support of victims of HT.

We are continuing the trainings of young students for peer to peer education on how to make an awareness rising campaign in their own school. In December, a new group of 5 young ladies started the training, which lasts for 3 months and trains them on 3 important topics related to Human Trafficking: human rights; people’s differences and equality; human relations and exploitations.

Joana Terzieva
Caritas Bulgaria
INTERACTIONS BETWEEN THE SECOURS CATHOLIQUE AND THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE’S GROUP OF EXPERTS ON ACTION AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS (GRETA)

Secours Catholique – Caritas France coordinates the network of 25 French organizations Collectif «Ensemble contre la traite des êtres humains» (Together against human trafficking) which share a joint commitment to work together at national level for combating human trafficking. Within this network, advocacy activities have been carried out throughout 2011.

In December 2011, the Council of Europe’s Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) has sent to the French government and Non-Governmental organizations the questionnaire for the evaluation of the implementation of the Council of Europe’s Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by the parties.

The Collectif “Ensemble contre la traite des êtres humains” has drawn up a reply and concluded it with 4 assessment points:

- French law lacks coherence and clarity for justice agents, and must be reformed to improve the consideration and management of the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings.
- The effective fight against human trafficking requires more financial means. Institutional stakeholders lack trained personnel.
- The protection of victims of human trafficking knows significant deficiencies in France, especially for minors and foreigners.
- Some policies in France, particularly concerning the Roma, strengthen an unstable and precarious situation which increases the risk of human trafficking for these marginalized groups.

At the national level, representatives from the Home office and the Ministry of Justice have also participated.

At the end of this conference, 3 main recommendations were highlighted:

- It is necessary to establish a clear definition of what human trafficking and exploitation are. A subjective understanding of these extremely complex phenomena is observed, and a precise definition is required to enable a common understanding of various disciplines.
- Migration policies have an impact on human trafficking and exploitation in particular in the context of increased difficulties for regular migration.
- It is necessary to balance safety practices and measures to protect children, women and men who have undergone situations of extreme violence.

PROJECTS OF SECOURS CATHOLIQUE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS DURING THIS YEAR 2012

With the French presidential election, an advocacy action is launched to the candidates, in order to make the fight against human trafficking, a matter of concern. This advocacy relies on the conclusions of the conference on “The impact of migration policies in the fight against trafficking in human beings.

In cooperation with the Collectif, Secours Catholique – Caritas France plans to organize on the 18th of October 2012, a conference on the new ways human trafficking affect children.

Additionally, Secours Catholique – Caritas France will participate to a project coordinated by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, co-funded by the European Commission and in partnership with experts from Bulgaria, Spain, Greece, the Netherlands, and Romania. The overall objective of this project is to strengthen and harmonize the methods and procedures for identifying trafficking victims among the participating countries, through the development of guidelines for the identification of victims of trafficking.

Geneviève COLAS
Caritas France
Since combating trafficking of human beings is one of our major fields of interest, Caritas Kosova is currently implementing an anti-trafficking project on (2011 – 2012), having as its main objective the “psycho-social reintegration of victims of human trafficking into the Kosovar society.” This project is mainly focused on working closely with shelters of the Kosovo Shelters Coalition (KSC).

In the frame of this project, there have been implemented plenty of activities. During October-December 2011, the activities developed were mainly dedicated to the International Month of Anti-trafficking with human beings. In October, a campaign has been realized in cooperation with the Coalition of Shelters, including activities, such as: printing of posters with messages on combating trafficking, which were disseminated in the entire territory of Kosovo.

In addition, a conference on the “KOSOVAR SOCIETY FIGHTING AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS;” where representatives of different Kosovar government institutions, various organisations working on human rights and anti-trafficking issues participated. Five experts from different institutions have been invited as panelists; they spoke about various aspects, such as:

- religious approach towards humans rights and the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings;
- the law perspective, including approval and implementation;
- the action of the Ministry of Justice and the decisions in the cases of trafficking.
- the work and difficulties shelters are facing regarding the victims’ rehabilitation and
- the victims’ psycho-social-economic reintegration;
- a social aspects that have affected or are impacted by trafficking with human beings, etc.

Jakup Sabedini
Caritas Kosovo