



PREVENTION PROSECUTION PROTECTION

GUIDELINES ON THE EU STRATEGY AGAINST TRAFFICKING

To Maria Paola Colombo Svevo
Former Member of the European Parliament and President of Aretusa

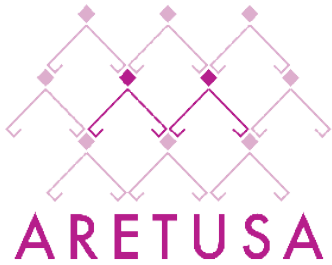
«Between 2007 and 2010, Aretusa was led, by Maria Paola Colombo Svevo, a former member of the European Parliament. On December 15th 1995, the European Parliament adopted the **Colombo Svevo Report on trafficking in human beings**, the first Report of the European Parliament in this field, which was followed by a Resolution in January 1996. The Resolution called for “*protection of human beings against any exploitation of their precarious social and economic circumstances or their inexperience*”, asserting that “*it is the duty of every society to ensure that all human beings are allowed to fulfil their potential and that their interests are respected by all*”.

The Colombo Svevo Report and the Resolution drew attention toward the social dimension of trafficking and the role of promotion and protection of gender equality to combat this severe violation of human rights. For the first time, the main focus was directed toward the need to “take direct measures to ensure the safety and dignity of the victims” and Member states were called to take social, legal and administrative assistance measures.

With the aim of ensuring the respect for human dignity, the Colombo Svevo Report called for the three P approach – Prevention, Prosecution and Protection. It can be considered the basis for subsequent legal and financial measures adopted by the EU to fight and prevent trafficking and to assist victims. I am honoured and grateful to recall today Maria Paola - as an active European citizen, as a member of the national and European Parliament, as a professor of European social policies and as a friend. I will never forget her unyielding commitment towards the promotion and protection of women’s rights and the creation of a more inclusive European Union».

Marcello D’Amico, Aretusa President
European Parliament, Brussels 25 April 2013





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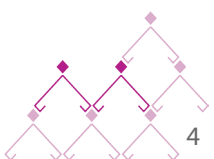
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INTRODUCTION

Aim and basis of the handbook

With this handbook Aretusa intends to contribute to improve the knowledge and understanding of the legal and policy framework of the European Union, to support responsible authorities in programming and implementing policies aimed at preventing and combating trafficking in human beings.

The handbook seeks to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and information among policymakers, law enforcers, judiciaries, civil society organisations who are committed in the fight against trafficking in human beings, and more generally in the fight against violence on women and children. By focusing on the European framework and the most recent actions, the overarching goal of this handbook is to promote integration of policies and principles created at European level in national and local strategies and measures to combat trafficking and protect women's rights.

The information compiled and analysed provide a compendium of the following legal and policy documents:

- **Legal standards:** **UN Protocol** to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nation Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime (2000); **Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking** in Human Beings (2005); **Directive 2011/36/EU** on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims (2011); **Council Directive 2004/81/CE** on the residence permit issued to third-country nationals who are victims of trafficking in human beings (2004);
- Political documents: Communication COM(2012)286 the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in human Beings 2012-2016; Report of the Experts' Groups on Trafficking in Human Beings (2004); Brussels Declaration on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings (2002).

Where possible, online resources are indicated where users can either consult the complete text of a document referred to, or find further information on a given topic.

The Aretusa website www.aretusa.net offers a resource centre where the relevant documents can be downloaded.

The handbook was drafted under the coordination of Roselyn Borg and Marcello D'Amico

Trafficking in human beings: a challenge and a commitment for the European Union and its citizens

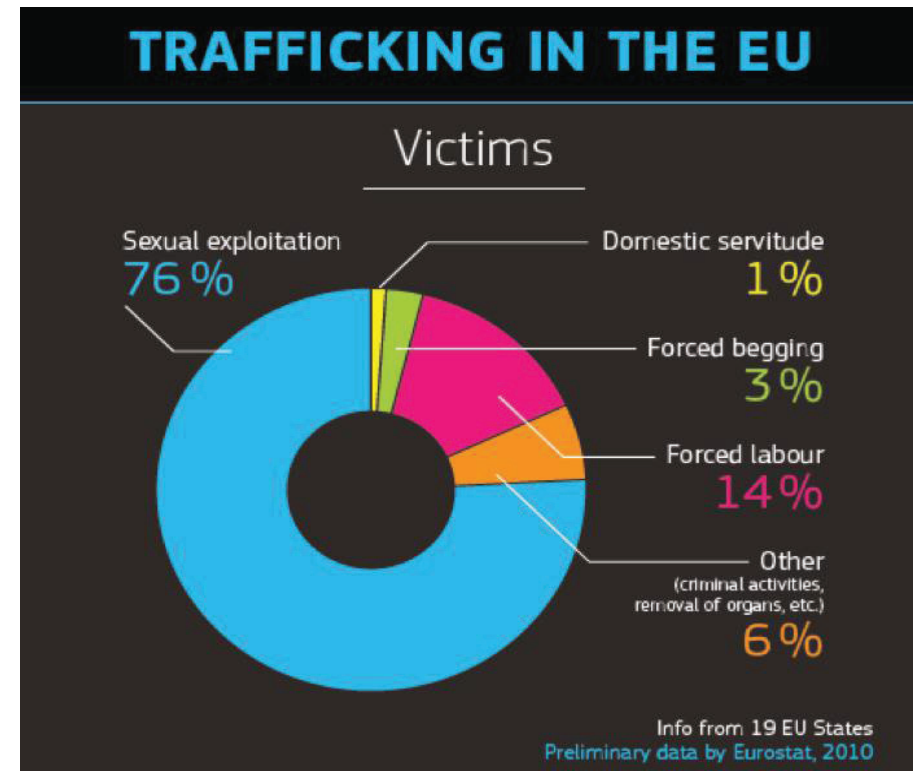
Trafficking in human beings remains a serious issue in the European Union. According to the estimations of the International Labour Organisation, 20.9 million people at a global level are victims of forced labour and sexual exploitation.

Statistics collected via Eurostat show that within the European Union **three quarters of the victims are trafficked for sexual exploitation** and the rest for labour exploitation (2010).

Women and girls are the main victims of trafficking. Romania, Bulgaria, Poland and Hungary are the main origin countries of victims within the EU and Nigeria within non-EU countries.

Evidences from data and researches available point out that the sex industry as well as the demand for commercial sex, the situations of social exclusion and poverty, the lack of equal opportunities suffered by women and girls are the main factors that still fuel trafficking within the EU.

Taking into account its root causes and the situation of its victims, the commitment to eradicate trafficking is about defending human rights and fundamental freedoms of people who have experienced abuse, violence, discrimination and marginalisation in origin and destination countries.



Source: European Commission

"Trafficking in human beings is a serious crime, often committed within the framework of organised crime, a gross violation of fundamental rights and explicitly prohibited by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Preventing and combating trafficking in human beings is a priority for the Union and the Member States"

Directive 2011/36/EU

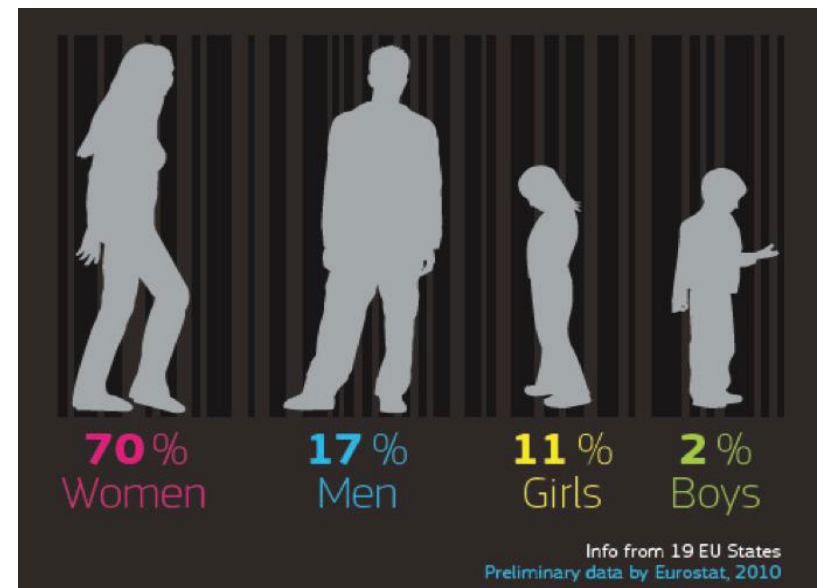
To support European citizens to exercise and enjoy their rights and to ensure respect of fundamental human rights is part of the integration process and condition for sustainable economic growth and social cohesion within the European Union.

“The Union shall offer its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice without internal frontiers, in which the free movement of persons is ensured in conjunction with appropriate measures with respect to external border controls, asylum, immigration and the prevention and combating of crime

It shall combat social exclusion and discrimination, and shall promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations and protection of the rights of the child”.

Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union

The EU strategy for preventing and combating trafficking in women responds to one of the basic principles of the European legislation: **the promotion of equality of treatment between women and men and the fight against gender discrimination**. Inequality between men and women is at the root of the problem of trafficking. Women are victims of trafficking as the position of women in the economic and social context is one which makes them vulnerable and until their standing is that which is equal to men, they will continue to be victims. Therefore the fight for equality between men and women continues and even though it has improved over the years, the current situation is still not giving women an equal footing to men.



Protection of human dignity and promotion of women’s rights are also enshrined in the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union**, proclaimed in Nice on 7 December 2000, particularly articles 20, 21 and 23 that decree the commitment of the Union in promoting the principle of equality and the prohibition of discrimination. Article 5 of the Charter contains also the prohibition of any forms of slavery and considers trafficking in human beings its modern expression.

The purpose of the Charter is set out in its introduction: *“it is necessary to strengthen the protection of fundamental rights in the light of changes in society, social progress and scientific and technological developments by making those rights more visible in a Charter”*. The Charter is divided into six sections: Dignity, Freedoms, Equality, Solidarity, Citizens’ Rights and Justice.



Chapter I: Dignity

Art.5 Prohibition of slavery and forced labour

1. *No one shall be held in slavery or servitude.*
2. *No one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour.*
3. *Trafficking in human beings is prohibited.*

Chapter III – equality

Art. 20 Equality before the law

Everyone is equal before the law

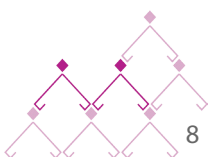
Art. 21 Non discrimination

Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited.

Within the scope of application of the Treaty establishing the European Community and the Treaty on European Union and without prejudice to the special provisions of those Treaties, any discrimination on grounds of nationality shall be prohibited.

In 2007, the EU established the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights with the specific task of providing advices on fundamental rights.

To find our more about the Agency visit the website: <http://fra.europa.eu>



Overview of the key elements of the EU strategy

Area	Field of intervention	Goal
Prosecution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Common definition of trafficking ▷ Investigation and prosecution ▷ Non prosecution of the victim ▷ Access to schemes of compensation to victims of trafficking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Adopt a human rights-based legislative response to the crime of trafficking ▷ Establish effective investigative tools and national multidisciplinary law-enforcement units on human trafficking ▷ Ensure that victims of trafficking are not detained, imprisoned or held liable for criminal prosecution or administrative sanctions for offences committed as a direct consequence of trafficking ▷ Ensure that trafficked persons have access to existing schemes of compensation to victims of violent crimes
Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ National and Transnational Referral Mechanisms for early identification of, assistance to and support for victims ▷ Reflection and recovery period ▷ Unconditional access to assistance and support measures ▷ Protection of child victims of trafficking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Support rapid and accurate identification of trafficked persons through cooperation between relevant authorities, officials and NGOs ▷ Enable the victim to recover and escape from their traffickers, taking into account the different needs of male and female victims ▷ Ensure victims effective exercise of their human rights regardless of whether the perpetrator is identified, prosecuted or convicted ▷ Ensure specific measures to assist and support child victims taking into account the child's needs and concerns
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Discouraging and reducing the demand ▷ Information, raising awareness, research, education ▷ Training for those who work in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Adoption of legislative, educational, social and cultural measures addressing the demand side in order to prevent and combat trafficking itself ▷ Ensure understanding of the factors that drive the supply and demand side of trafficking, taking into account the gender dimension ▷ Address the effective and correct application of EU and international rules and guidelines on prosecution and victims protection
Coordination and cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ National Rapporteurs and of the EU network of NR ▷ EU platform of civil society organisations and service providers working on victim protection and assistance ▷ EU wide System for Data Collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Assess trends in human trafficking and progress in the implementation of national policies, strategies and programmes ▷ Promote networking, exchange of information and best practices on THB ▷ Collect reliable, comparable data for evidence-based policy on THB

PART I | EU ANTI-TRAFFICKING LEGISLATIVE STANDARDS

1.1. Definition of trafficking in human beings

One of the first objectives set by the European Union in implementing its strategy against trafficking in human beings has been the adoption in the Member States of a **common definition of the crime of trafficking in human beings** and of proportionate criminal penalties, as an essential requirement for implementing a common action in criminal matters and for a more effective cooperation in the judicial field.

The Council of the European Union adopted in 2002 a Framework Decision¹ including in its scope of application not only crimes related to trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation but also crimes connected to labour exploitation and it was aimed at establishing “*common definitions, incriminations and sanctions*”. The Framework Decision is now replaced by the new Directive 2011/36/EU.

What is trafficking?

The decision was drafted taking into consideration one of the most important results achieved at international level in order to develop an agreed definition of trafficking: the **United Nation Convention against Transnational Organised Crime** whose Supplementing Protocol addresses the issue of trafficking in human beings². The definition proposed at EU level aligns with the fundamental elements of the definition of the UN Protocol, including the fact that considers trafficking as a **crime against the person** for the purpose of the exploitation of that person.

Human trafficking has been defined in the art. 3 of the “Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children” (known as the “Palermo Protocol”) to the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) as follows:

- a) “Trafficking in persons” shall mean:
 - **the act** of recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons,
 - **by means** of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person,
 - **for the purpose** of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;
- b) The **consent of a victim** of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used.
- c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a **child** for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;
- d) “Child” shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

¹ Council Framework Decision of 19 July 2002 on combating trafficking in human beings.

² The UN Protocol on trafficking in human beings, open to subscription from 12 December 2000 in Palermo, came into force on 25 December 2003 following the 40th ratification. The Protocol contains the first common definition, at international level, of trafficking in human beings. Information on protocol and on the activities of UNODC (United Nation Office for Drugs and Crime) can be found on http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crime_prevention.html

Human trafficking is also defined in the **Council of Europe Convention on “Action against Trafficking in Human Beings”**, known as the Warsaw Convention adopted in 2005.

Article 4 of the council of Europe Convention defines “trafficking in human beings” as follows:

- a) *“Trafficking in human beings” shall mean:*
 - *the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons,*
 - *means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person,*
 - *for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;*
- b) *The consent of a victim of “trafficking in human beings” to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used;*
- c) *The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in human beings” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;*
- d) *“Child” shall mean any person under eighteen years of age;*
- e) *“Victim” shall mean any natural person who is subject to trafficking in human beings as defined in this article.*

Trafficking and smuggling of migrants

The UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and its two supplementing Protocols make a clear distinction between **trafficking in human beings** and **smuggling of migrants**.

According to the definition of the UN Protocol smuggling of migrants means the procurement, in order to obtain a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State breaching the norms of that State concerning migration. The offence of aiding illegal migration is therefore considered an **offence against the State**.

Trafficking in human beings is different from smuggling as:

- It does not necessary entail the violation of national laws concerning entry or residence of foreign citizen;
- In the phase of recruitment, transport or residence in the country of destination, forms of coercion are used in order to put or maintain a person in conditions of exploitation;
- It is one of the most demeaning forms of slavery entailing a breach of the fundamental rights of the person, such as the right to life, dignity, safety, health and equality.

Trafficking in human beings is therefore a **crime against the person** and the condition of abuse inflicted to the trafficked person gives him/her the **status of victim**. The consequences of mistakenly treating a trafficking victim as a smuggled migrant can be very severe for the victim. Furthermore the human rights approach promoted by the Council of Europe Convention is one which needs to be emphasised and referred to when dealing with trafficking in human beings. In fact the definition of crime in the Convention includes more specific standards on the protection of the victim.

Since the late 1980s, the Council of Europe has invested considerable efforts in the fight against trafficking in human beings. These efforts culminated in the adoption, in May 2005, of the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and the setting up of a mechanism to monitor compliance with the obligations contained in it. This monitoring mechanism is composed of the **Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings** (GRETA), a multidisciplinary panel of 15 independent experts. GRETA draws up country evaluation reports containing an analysis of the implementation of the Convention by each Party and proposals for further action. On the basis of GRETA's reports, the political pillar of the monitoring mechanism, the Committee of the Parties, may adopt recommendations concerning the measures to be taken to implement GRETA's conclusions.

1.2. EU common standards under the Directive 2011/36/EU and the Directive 2004/81/EU

Why a new legal instrument?

The first legal instrument adopted by the EU was the **Joint Action 97/154/JHA** on 24 February 1997 concerning action to combat trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation of children. The Joint Action was superseded by the Council Framework Decision on combating trafficking in human beings on 19 July 2002.

In 2011 the **Directive 2011/36/EU** entered into force with the aim of setting common legal standards, which are binding as to the results to be achieved by Member States, which prohibits and criminalises trafficking. **The aim of this Directive is also to better create a legal framework whereby victims are protected.**

This Directive establishes minimum rules concerning the definition of criminal offences and sanctions in the area of trafficking in human beings. It also introduces common provisions, taking into account the gender perspective, to strengthen the prevention of this crime and the protection of the victims

Art.1 of the Directive 2011/36/EU

The new Directive recognises the **gender dimension of trafficking** and acknowledges that men and women are trafficked for different purposes, thus any assistance and support measures should be gender specific. It recognises that the 'push' and 'pull' factors may be different according to the purposes for which people are trafficked, for example, there are different factors in trafficking for the sex industry and for the different categories of labour exploitation. Thanks to the new approach promoted by the Directive in addressing trafficking, the **protection of human rights is placed at the centre of the actions to prevent and combat trafficking.**

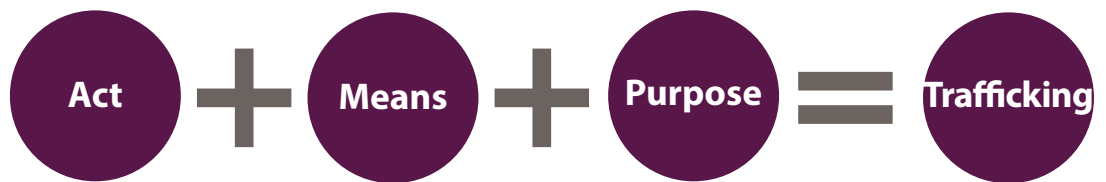
Prosecution: the offences of trafficking...

The Directive adopted a broader concept of what should be considered as trafficking than the definition under the previous legal instrument (the Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA). Additional forms of exploitation are considered, including the definition of forced begging under the 1930 ILO Convention No. 29 concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour.

Article 2 of the Directive reproduces the definition of trafficking set out in the UN Protocol and states that the following **acts** are punishable:

- The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or reception of persons, including the exchange or transfer of control over those persons,
- by **means** of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person,
- for the **purpose** of exploitation.





Article 2 also gives a definition of a **position of vulnerability**, clarifies the concept of **exploitation** and the issue of the **consent of the victim** and provides the definition of the offence when children, defined as any person below 18 years of age, is involved.

The consent of a victim of trafficking in human beings to the exploitation, whether intended or actual, is irrelevant where threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability has been used.

A position of vulnerability means a situation in which the person concerned has no real or acceptable alternative but to submit to the abuse involved.

Art.2 of the Directive 2011/36/EU

In the context of trafficking vulnerability is typically used to refer to those inherent, environmental or contextual factors that increase the susceptibility of an individual or group to being trafficked. These factors are generally agreed to include human rights violations such as poverty, inequality, discrimination and gender based violence – all of which contribute to creating economic deprivation and social conditions that limit individual choice and make it easier for traffickers and exploiters to operate.

The abuse of a position of vulnerability is also identified as an additional means through which individual can be recruited, transported, and maintained into situations of exploitation (UNODC, Abuse of position of vulnerability and other means within the definition of trafficking in persons, Issue Paper 2012)

Article 3 deals with instigation, aiding, abetting and attempt and states that each Member State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that the instigation of, aiding, abetting or attempt to commit an offence under Article 2 is punishable.

...and penalties

Article 4 stipulates that each Member State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that an **offence is punishable by a maximum penalty of at least five years of imprisonment**. This Article further states that where the offence was committed against a victim who was particularly vulnerable, which in the context of the Directive shall include at least child victims; was committed within the framework of a criminal organisation as defined in Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA; deliberately or by gross negligence endangered the life of the victim or was committed by use of serious violence or has caused serious harm to the victim shall be punishable by a maximum penalty of at least ten years imprisonment.

This Directive also provides for **liability for and puts sanctions on legal persons**, which sanctions shall include criminal and non-criminal fines and may also include other sanctions.

Member States should also take the necessary measures to ensure that competent authorities are entitled to seize and confiscate instrumentalities and proceeds from offences under Articles 2 and 3.

Protection: Non-prosecution or non-application of penalties to the victim...

Victims are protected from criminal prosecutions by virtue of Article 8, which states that **victims shall not be prosecuted and penalties shall not be applied to them for their involvement in criminal activities** which they have been compelled to commit as a direct consequence of trafficking.

Victims are further protected by means of Article 12 which envisages provisions of assistance and support in the framework of criminal investigations and proceedings. Member States are to ensure that **victims shall have access without delay to legal counselling and to legal representation, including for the purpose of claiming compensation**. Where the victim does not have sufficient financial resources, legal counselling and legal representation shall be free of charge. An **individual risk assessment shall be carried out to determine the level of protection to be offered to the victim**. Such protection measures are to include inter alia, witness protection programmes and secondary victimisation by unnecessary repetition of interviews during investigation, prosecution or trial; visual contact between victims and defendants; the giving of evidence in open court and unnecessary questioning concerning the victim's private life.

...and unconditional assistance and support measures

Art. 11 provides that Member States shall take necessary measures to ensure that a person is provided with assistance and support without delay as soon as the competent authorities have a reasonable grounds indication for believing that the person might have been victims of trafficking.

Member States shall take the necessary measures to ensure that assistance and support for a victim are not made conditional on the victim's willingness to cooperate in the criminal investigation, prosecution or trial
Art.11 of the Directive 2011/36/EU

Article 17 provides that victims of trafficking should have access to existing schemes of compensation to victims of violent crimes of intent.

Child victims of trafficking

The Directive also makes provision for **special circumstances where the victim is a child**. Article 13 states that the child's best interests are to be a primary consideration. In the case where the age of the victim is uncertain and there is reason to believe that the victim is a child, there shall be a presumption that the person is a child in order to receive immediate access to assistance, support and protection in accordance with Articles 14 and 15 which provide for assistance and support and protection during criminal investigations and proceedings. Article 16 makes provision for unaccompanied child victims of trafficking.

Prevention: addressing factors that fuel trafficking

Member States are obliged to take appropriate measures to **discourage and reduce the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation related to trafficking**, to **raise awareness** and reduce risk of people, especially children on becoming victims of trafficking, to promote regular **training** for officials likely to come into contact with victims of trafficking and to consider criminalising the use of services which are the objects of exploitation.

1.3. Directive 2004/81/CE of 29 April 2004

In line with the creation of a common definition at EU level of trafficking in human beings, the EU adopted a directive³ aimed at defining the **conditions for the issue of a temporary residence permit depending on the length of investigations and judicial proceedings against traffickers in favour of third-country nationals who are victims of trafficking who cooperate with the competent authorities.**

The purpose of the directive is allowing police and judicial authorities a more effective means of combating traffickers by favouring cooperation with the victims in the investigations during the proceedings against the offenders through the issue of residence permit (art.1).

According to article 6 of the directive, the victims of trafficking, third-country nationals, are granted a **reflection period** “allowing them to recover and escape the influence of the perpetrators of the offences so they can take an informed decision as to whether to cooperate with competent authorities”. During the reflection period it is not possible to enforce any expulsion order against them. Member States should also ensure that the third-country nationals concerned who do not have sufficient resources are granted standards of living capable of ensuring their subsistence and access to emergency medical treatment in order to help them to regain their material and psychological independence (article 7).

According to article 8 of the directive, conditions for the issue of the **residence permit** are:

- The opportunity presented by prolonging his/her stay on its territory for the investigations or the judicial proceedings;
- He/she has shown a clear intention to cooperate
- He/she has severed all relations with traffickers.

In the presence of these conditions a residence of permit of six months can be issued.

Holders of the residence permit are granted access to programmes aimed at “*the recovery of a normal social life, including courses designed to improve their professional skills, or preparation of their assisted return to their country of origin*” (art.12). Member States define the rules under which holders of the residence permit are authorised to have access to labour market, to vocational training and education (art.11). Once the residence permit is expired the victim could be granted to remain in the State territory according to the national laws on migration.

3 Council Directive 2004/81/EC of 29 April 2002 on the residence permit issued to third-country nationals who are victims of trafficking in human beings or who have been the subject of an action to facilitate illegal immigration, who cooperate with the competent authorities.

PART II THE EU POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR PREVENTING AND COMBATING TRAFFICKING AND PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS OF VICTIMS

2.1 The European Union action towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings

The commitment of the European Union to address trafficking in human beings is reflected in several political and legal initiatives implemented since the establishment, with the Maastricht Treaty (1992), of the so called “*third pillar*” dedicated to “Justice and Home Affairs” (JHA) in order to advance **cooperation between Member States in criminal and justice fields**.

Furthermore, the EU counter trafficking policy has become a relevant issue not only in the area of Freedom, Security and Justice but also in the fields of **gender quality, employment and social affairs**. One of the five priorities of the Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015 includes “*dignity, integrity and end to gender based violence*”⁴.

Since 1996 funding has been allocated for the implementation of transnational projects promoting prevention and fight against trafficking in human beings in EU member States.

Key policy documents of the EU strategy against Trafficking in human beings:

- *Colombo Svevo Report “On trafficking in human beings”; European Parliament, Committee on Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs. A4-1326/95 (14 December 1995)*
- *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament “On trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation”; COM (1996) 567*
- *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament “For further actions in the fight against trafficking in women”; COM (1998) 726*
- *COM (2000)85*
- *“Brussels declaration on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings” – European Conference on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human beings- Global Challenge for the 21 Century, Brussels 18-20 September 2000.*
- *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament “On Fighting trafficking in human beings: an integrated approach and proposals for an action plan” (COM(2005) 514 final*
- *“The EU Plan on best practices, standards and procedures for combating and preventing trafficking in human beings” (2005/C 311/01)*

On the 19 June 2012 the European Commission adopted with the **Communication COM(2012)286 a new Strategy for the period 2012- 2016 towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings**. The main goal of this new policy instrument is to support and complement the transposition and implementation of the Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protect its victims. In accordance with the approach of the new directive 2011/36/EU and of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against trafficking in human beings, the strategy identifies **five priorities of the multi-disciplinary policy of the European Union** and ensures an human right and gender oriented perspective. The five priorities are as follows:

- A. Identifying, protecting and assisting victims of trafficking**
- B. Stepping up the prevention of trafficking in human beings**
- C. Increased prosecution of traffickers**

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D. Enhanced coordination and cooperation among key actors and policy coherence
E. Increased knowledge of and effective response to emerging concerns related to all forms of trafficking in human beings

The first three priorities are coherent with to the so called “*three Ps*” approach and address measures in relation to **victim Protection, Prevention and Prosecution of traffickers**. The last two deal with horizontal issues such as **enhancement of coordination and cooperation** among public and private entities working to prevent, combat and protect victims and **increasing the knowledge** of the changing patterns of demand and supply of all forms of exploitation linked to trafficking.

The main responsibility for addressing trafficking in human beings lies with the national Governments while the EU intends to complement and support the action of Member States and civil society organisation. For each priority the European Commission plans a **set of actions** to be carried out over the period 2012-2016 in cooperation with Member States, EU agencies, International organisations and NGOs.

The framework of the existing EU policy measures against trafficking is complemented by other key instruments:

- The **EU anti-trafficking day** on 18th October every year;
- The **EU Anti-trafficking Coordinator** who is expected to improve coordination and coherence between different actors involved in anti-trafficking policies (EU institutions, EU agencies, Member States and NGOs);
- The **Experts’ Group on trafficking in Human Beings** with the function of providing expertise and advice on specific issues
- a **thematic website**⁵.

The European Commission launched in 2010 a website devoted to combatig trafficking in human beings:
<http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking>

5 <http://www.ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking>

2.2 Priority A. Identifying, protecting and assisting victims of trafficking

According to international Conventions and to the Charter of the fundamental rights of the European Union, practices connected to trafficking in human beings represent a serious violation of individual freedom and dignity of the victims of such crime. As a consequence, **respect for fundamental rights** of trafficked persons should be the core approach of all efforts to prevent and combat trafficking.

Trafficking for sexual exploitation, including prostitution, is also a form of gender based discrimination and violence against women and girls. Anti-trafficking strategy and measures therefore should **address gender-based discrimination and violence** and promote gender equality and respect for the dignity of all human beings regardless of their gender, race, religion, sexual orientation.

*As the **EU Experts' Group report** outlines, so far States have concentrated predominantly on measures in the area of crime control and migration policies, rather than on victim's assistance and protection. The neglect of the area of assistance and protection to trafficked persons forms both an obstacle to effectively address trafficking and falls short of the obligations that States have under international human rights law according to which trafficked persons should have access to protection, assistance and adequate compensation for their violated rights.*

According to the Experts' Group a counter-trafficking strategy that takes due account of the human rights of the trafficked person should:

- consider trafficked person as a holder of rights. This includes minimum standards of treatment that all trafficked persons are entitled to as well as responsibilities of the institutional organisations;*
- consider trafficked persons as active subjects seeking for a change in their situation as well as victims of a crime and of a serious breach of human rights for which they are entitled to receive adequate compensation;*
- guarantee assistance and support together with strategies aimed at empowering victims and favouring their social inclusion, development, participation;*
- be aimed at providing remedies to the violations of the human rights creating conditions in which trafficking can occur.*

The first priority of the EU strategy 2012-2016 focuses on two main concerns regarding victim protection: improve **mechanisms of identification** of potential victims and ensure the enforcement of **measures to assist and socially include** victims of trafficking.

The EU strategy identifies **"five broad needs of victims"** that law enforcement authorities should attend: respect and recognition, assistance, protection, access to justice and compensation. The five broad needs are consistent with the legal requirements for victims of trafficking in human beings regulated in the directive 2011/36/EU which is currently in the process of transposition in all Member States.

The identification of victims is still difficult in all Member States. Trafficked persons may be identified either by government actors and law enforcement or by NGOs, local social-welfare organisations, labour unions, labour inspections and other labour-related agencies. However in the majority of the EU countries specific means for identifying the victims are insufficient and suitable training and information should be provided to all actors who can be in contact with the victims. Particular attention should be ensured to the identification and assistance of trafficked children especially because of the difficulty in establishing the relationship with the adult accompanying them and their age and personal information. As soon as the competent authorities have a reasonable-grounds indication for believing that a person might be a victim of trafficking, he/she will receive information on his/her rights to assistance and protection, including the right to obtain a reflection period and a temporary or permanent residence permit.

In order to establish contacts with presumed trafficked persons and to build the necessary confidence and trust, outreach work, drop-in centres and hotlines should be developed. This is particularly important since research indicates that only a limited number of trafficked persons are identified by law enforcement agencies. The majority of trafficked persons seem to be identified through outreach work of NGOs, local authorities, hotlines, clients, colleagues and other citizens.

Recommendation number 91 of the EU Experts Group

The aim of mechanisms of protection and assistance is to safeguard the human rights of victims **by enabling the victims to recover and escape from their traffickers**, to avoid further victimisation and to encourage them to act as witnesses in criminal proceedings against the perpetrators. **As part of protection measures victims of trafficking should be protected from prosecution or punishment** for criminal activities such as the use of false documents, or offences under legislation on prostitution or immigration, that they have been compelled to commit as a direct consequence of being subject to trafficking (art.8, Directive 2011/36/EU). In order to support the re-integration and reduce the risk of re-trafficking, re-integration programmes should be aimed at empowering the victims by developing their capacity to attain economic independence through the provision of vocational training and job opportunities. Access to and provision of shelter protection and assistance to victims require that NGOs and services providers are timely and adequately funded by Member States.

Member States should establish appropriate structures for providing assistance and protection to trafficked persons. This should include at the minimum safe and appropriate accommodation, counselling, health care, free legal assistance, education, vocational and employment opportunities. All services must be provided on a voluntary and confidential basis, in a non-discriminatory and non-judgmental manner and in compliance with a number of basic principles derived from international human rights norms, in particular the respect for privacy, confidentiality, self-determination and freedom of movement.

Raccomendation number 99 of the Experts' Group

Member States should recognise the importance of a variety of service providers working with trafficked persons, including the NGO sector, and should adequately support, co-operate with and timely and transparently fund them. Memoranda of understanding and/or contracts between governmental and non governmental agencies should clarify the roles of the different actors.

Recommendation number 100 of the Experts' Group

Service providers for trafficked persons should develop standards, based on clear and measurable indicators, to regularly monitor and assess the quality and the suitability of their services and their performance. The EU should support the development of such standards as well as transnational co-operation between service providers.

Recommendation number 102 of the Experts' Group

Assistance and protection measures to victims must be provided by Member States whether or not the perpetrator is identified, prosecuted or convicted and not made conditional on the victim's willingness to cooperate in the criminal investigation/prosecution against traffickers (art.11, directive 2011/36/EU). The practical implementation of such measures should, on the basis of an individual assessment, take into account the circumstances, cultural context and needs of the person concerned. According with the new EU Directive "Assistance and support measures should also be gender-specific where appropriate".

Return and social assistance programmes should aim at the empowerment and social inclusion of the trafficked person, whereby empowerment is defined as the process through which an individual can develop her/his ability to stand independently, make her/his own decisions and show control over her/his life.

Recommendation number 112 of the EU Experts' Group

Return and social assistance programs should rest on the following principles: voluntariness; protection of privacy and safety;¹⁶⁷ strict protection of the confidentiality of the relation between the service provider and the trafficked person; non-stigmatisation; freedom of movement of the trafficked person;¹⁶⁸ the treatment of trafficked persons in a respectful, non judgmental and non moralizing or patronizing way; the needs, views and concerns of the trafficked person should be at the centre. Elements of such programmes should be an individual needs assessment; regularization of the documentation status of the person concerned; appropriate housing; health care; psychological assistance; legal aid; assistance in finding viable means of existence; and support of self-organisation.

Recommendation number 113 of the EU Experts' Group

Testifying victims are an essential resource in the judiciary action against traffickers, but in the light of the risks and threats, witness protection measures should include the provision of shelter or "safe house" accommodation, change of identity, re-location, special measures of safety and funding. If necessary, these measures should be extended to the victim's family. After having testified in the criminal proceedings, return of the victim to her/his country of origin should be carried out only after having considered risks deriving from the victims' cooperation in testifying against traffickers.

An approach based on protection of human rights of the victims must take into consideration the need of creating effective mechanisms for compensation for the suffered abuse.

According to the Experts' Group, compensation is one of the essential phase for social –re-integration of victims. However, the possibilities of obtaining adequate compensation are not well developed at European level. A joint effort of the EU could show trafficked persons a special sign of support. Provisions to enable trafficked persons to get compensation, in both civil and criminal proceedings, as well as through State compensation schemes, should include the right to free legal advice and assistance and a stay of deportation while such proceedings are in progress.

Recommendation number 128 of the Experts' Group

Within the priority "identifying, protecting and assisting victims of trafficking", the EU strategy 2012-2016 against trafficking is focused on four actions as follows:

Action 1: Establishment of National and Transnational Referral Mechanisms

The mechanism is intended to establish procedures to better identify, refer, protect and assist victims and include all relevant public authorities and civil society. Member States have already committed to establishing this mechanism by the end of 2012. The Commission intends to develop guidelines on how to further develop such national mechanisms and a model for an EU transnational referral mechanism.

Action 2: Identification of victims

The identification process and criteria used generally differ between the Member States. Few Member States have regulated by law the identification process. Some of them use guidelines and indicators developed by international organisation (e.g. ILO, IOM), others refer to memoranda of understanding with non governmental organisations involved in the procedure. The Commission intends to support the development of guidelines to better identify victims of trafficking in human beings

Action 3: Protection of Child Victims of trafficking

Children are particularly vulnerable to victimisation and revictimisation. To better protect children general provisions on assistance, support and protection measures for child victims of trafficking in human beings should be defined and enforced. The Commission intends to develop guidelines on child protection systems.

Action 4: Provision of Information on the Rights of Victims

Many victims face problems in contacting the appropriate authorities and organisations in order to receive clear information on their rights to assistance and protection under the EU law. The Commission intends to provide clear, user-friendly information and help Member State to disseminate at national level.

2.3 Priority B. Stepping up the prevention of trafficking in human beings

According to article 18 of the EU directive prevention of trafficking includes three areas of intervention:

- prevention through **public awareness and education**
- prevention through **training** of key actors
- prevention through **reduction of demand**

Prevention policies generates proactive and positive obligation on the relevant actors with respect to the need to address vulnerability of trafficking by ensuring alternatives for those potentially at risk of being trafficked.

The gender approach

The new Directive adopts a broader perspective on the issue of human trafficking and requires member Countries to take another step towards this gross violation of fundamental rights, explicitly linking it to the comprehensive commitment for equality between women and men. Gender inequalities, social exclusion and poverty make women and children more vulnerable to sexual and economic exploitation and to trafficking. Women are often marginalised before becoming victim of trafficking and find themselves in situation of poverty, unemployment and abuse. The new EU strategy includes the fight of gender-based violence and patriarchal structures through the adoption of legislative and political measures for the promotion of equal opportunities and the eradication of all forms of gender-based discrimination. In this framework a key aspect in addressing the root causes of trafficking is the effort to guarantee empowerment of women in their societies, in particular, by adopting measures promoting social, economic and educational development in order to tackle poverty and marginalisation that put women at greater risk of falling victims of traffickers.

This aspect of the EU strategy is particularly important for Aretusa as it recognises the need and the opportunity to link anti-trafficking policies with the fight against discrimination which makes women particularly vulnerable to such a violation of the fundamental rights of the person. Organisations belonging to Aretusa have embraced this approach and included it in their Charter of Principles. To this end Aretusa is committed to promoting the involvement of women associations and equal opportunities agencies of public institutions for drafting and implementing strategies of prevention aimed at tackling and eradicating discrimination, marginalisation and social exclusion.

Member States should reduce vulnerability for trafficking by adopting measures to:

- *ensure that appropriate legal documentation for birth, citizenship and marriage is provided and made available to all persons;*
- *combat violence and discrimination against women, e.g. by encouraging gender sensitisation and equal respectful relationships between the sexes;*
- *ensure women equal access to and control over economic and financial resources, including the promotion of flexible financing and access to credit, including micro-credit with low interest for socially vulnerable women;*
- *combat all forms of discrimination against minorities, including the development of programmes that offer livelihood options, basic education, literacy, and reduce barriers to entrepreneurship*

Recommendation number 50 of the Experts' Group

The demand

Trafficking is a criminal industry based on the market principles of supply and demand. As stated in the UN Protocol (art.9), in the Council of Europe convention (art.6) and the new directive (art.18), prevention measure should address not only the supply side (inequality, poverty, violence) but also the **demand of**

sexual and economic exploitation (cheap, low-skilled and easily disposable labour), targeting consumers and users of services.

One of the main causes of the sex exploitation, which is often the final aim of trafficking, is that the demand for prostitution is still tolerated and considered as inevitable. Prostitution is seen as a cultural institution in our societies – exactly the same way slavery and serfdom have been conceived in former times. Men assuming the right to purchase another human being fuel the market of prostitution and of trafficking. There is a clear link between prostitution and human trafficking: the market – sex buyers - constantly demand new women and young girls and boys.

As stated by the EU directive (art.18,4) to effectively discourage the demand Member States can consider to take measures to establish as a criminal offence the use of service which are objective of the exploitation in the framework of trafficking.

In the Charter of Principle of Aretusa network all member organisations state that prevention actions must not be mere information and awareness raising campaigns but they must also entail interventions aimed at discouraging the demand, in particular with educational programmes on equality between men and women and on the dignity of the individual.

Research

Effective prevention measures require research and analysis on qualitative and quantitative features of trafficking in human beings, on the structure of criminal organisations and on the methods of exploitation. A crucial component in the counter-trafficking response is a further research and analysis of the demand and an examination of methods by which the demand of clients can be effectively reduced. Research should also focus specifically on the needs and vulnerability of children

Awareness raising activities

Awareness raising campaigns should be aimed at relevant target groups, including potential victims, policy makers, law enforcement officers, diplomatic and consular personnel and other relevant public officials. The campaigns must be realistic and factual concerning the possibilities of legal migration and foreign employment opportunities and of the potential risks posed by the use of irregular migration methods. Information material should be displayed in the consular and visa sections of the State diplomatic missions and copies should also be enclosed in any postal visa applications.

On raising awareness campaigns, the Experts' Groups says *"Awareness raising campaigns should be embedded in a comprehensive strategy, complementary to advocacy for human rights, gender equality, self-empowerment and human dignity. They should be educative, convey empowering and gender-sensitive messages, with aspects of interactivity, and be based on an assessment of the interests of the respective target groups."*

Training

Specialised training should be set up which targets police investigators, prosecutors and personnel of governmental and non governmental organisations in order to improve skills on identification of the

victims, especially by use of pro-active intelligence led investigative tactics, and their treatment. Training of the law enforcement and judicial personnel should have a multi-disciplinary and human rights approach and should focus, in particular on the immediate needs and treatment of victims.

Specific training programmes aimed at front-line personnel should be developed that are designed to enable them to recognise indicators of trafficking and related crimes and to fully realise their potential to identify and rescue victims.

Teaching modules in schools should be developed that are aimed at informing pupils and students of human rights and gender issues and at teaching specifically the modus operandi and dangers presented by trafficking crime.

A training component should be included in all counter-trafficking national action plans. Moreover, regional anti-trafficking and European modules should be developed and mainstreamed into the regular curricula of all relevant actors.

Recommendation number 65 of the Experts' Group

Training should target a wide scope of actors and be delivered by a variety of agencies. All training should contain a general as well as a specific part tailor made for the targeted actors. Multi-actor training is indispensable to ensure a coordinated and multi-disciplinary approach. All training should be delivered by multi-disciplinary teams, especially with the participation of NGOs.

Recommendation number 66 of the Experts' Group

Within the priority “stepping up the prevention on trafficking human beings”, the EU strategy 2012-2016 against trafficking is focused on three actions as follows:

Action 1: Understanding and reducing the demand

A common objective of the counter trafficking action should be the reduction of the demand of services and sexual services and performances and of underpaid labour through information and awareness raising campaigns. In this framework the Commission intends to fund research on reducing the demand for and supply of services and goods by victims of trafficking and on the legal measures that some Member States have taken to criminalise the use of services of trafficking in human beings.

Action 2: Promote the establishment of a Private Sector Platform

Cooperation with the private sector is also essential in order to reduce the demand for trafficking in human beings and to develop supply chains that do not involve trafficking in human beings. The Commission intends to establish an European Business coalition against trafficking in human beings.

Action 3: EU-wide Awareness Raising Activities and Prevention Programmes

The Commission intends analyse prevention initiatives already in place to target trafficking carried out in different Member States by various actors.

2.4 Priority C. Increased prosecution of traffickers

The first step towards a greater and more effective commitment of police and judicial authorities is the **harmonisation of national law in criminalizing trafficking** in human beings according to the minimum standards of the Directive 2011/36/EU. The new strategy highlights that despite the progress made in terms of criminalisation of the offence of trafficking the total number of cases prosecuted in the EU remains low.

The reduction of the invisibility of exploitation

Special investigation techniques, also administrative, should be deployed specifically to combat criminal organisations connected to trafficking that are hidden behind non criminal activities. Within the countries of destination, it is essential to implement measures to reduce the “*invisibility of exploitation*” such as a multi-agency programme of monitoring, administrative controls and intelligence gathering within the sex and labour markets. Police, health, employment, other concerned public officials and international, governmental and non governmental organisations should work together to impose high visibility of exploitation.

Cyber crime

An integrant part of the reduction of the invisibility of exploitation should be the monitoring of illegal use of the Internet, especially in the commercial sex industry.

Within the priority “increased prosecution of traffickers”, the EU strategy 2012-2016 against trafficking is focused on four actions as follows:

Action 1: Establishment of National Multidisciplinary Law Enforcement Units

The Commission calls Member States to establish national multidisciplinary law-enforcement units on human trafficking.

Action 2: Ensuring Proactive Financial Investigation

The Commission calls Member States to proactively conduct financial investigations on trafficking cases.

Action 3: Increasing cross-border police and judicial Cooperation

The Commission calls Member States to create where relevant joint investigation teams and involve Europol and Eurojust in all cross-border trafficking cases and to make use of EU agencies such as Europol and Eurojust.

Action 4: Increasing Cooperation beyond borders

The Commission intends to foster regional cooperation on trafficking in human beings along routes from East to the EU.

2.5 Priority D. Enhanced coordination and cooperation among key actors and policy coherence

All actors committed to combating and preventing trafficking in human beings should adopt suitable measures in order to intensify their cooperation and exchange of information with a view to achieving a better coordinated response.

To effectively address trafficking in human beings a holistic and integrated approach is needed based on respect for and promotion of human rights. In order to realize such an approach multidisciplinary co-operation and co-ordination between all involved actors and stakeholders, including civil society and labour organisations, are crucial. The aim should be to develop an integrated policy covering the different fields and levels on which action is required. To this end governments should establish efficient co-ordination and co-operation structures at the political and operational level.

Recommendation number 15 of the EU Experts' Group

Mechanisms of cooperation and coordination should operate on two levels – a European level and a national level. Member States are called to establish the National Rapporteur aiming at carrying out assessment of trends and measuring the impact of anti-trafficking measures. In 2009 the informal EU network of National Rapporteurs was established by the Commission.

The Experts' Group report outlines that ineffectiveness of the anti-trafficking policies are due to the lack of a formalised coordination structure at national level. The report, defines the National Referral Mechanism as "cooperative framework through which state actors fulfil their obligations to protect and promote human rights of trafficked persons and co-ordinate their efforts in a strategic partnership with civil society." This cooperative framework can work to help improve national policies and procedures on a broad range of victim related issues such as residence and repatriation regulations, victim compensation and witness protection. The National Referral Mechanism can establish national plans of action and can set benchmarks to assess whether goals are being met.

Coupled with a National Referral Mechanism Member States should establish a governmental co-ordination structure consisting of a National Governmental Coordinator and a cross-sector and multidisciplinary Round Table to develop, coordinate, monitor and evaluate national action plans and policies. One of the tasks of the Round Table should be to develop a quick and "light weight" mechanism to address individual complaints with regard to the proper identification and assistance of trafficked persons.

Recommendation number 31 of the Experts Group

Within the priority "Enhanced coordination and cooperation among key actors and policy coherence", the EU strategy 2012-2016 against trafficking is focused on four actions as follows:

Action 1: Strengthening the EU network of National Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanisms

In order to support the work of national rapporteurs the Commission is working to strengthen the coordination at EU level by establishing an informal network.

Action 2: Coordinating EU external Policy Activities

The EU's external policy is part of the strategy against trafficking, especially in order to foster mechanisms to prevent trafficking and ensure respect of human rights in origin countries.

Action 3: Promoting the establishment of a Civil Society Platform

The Commission is working to enhance cooperation among service providers working on victim protection by establishing a platform on civil society organisations.

Action 4: Reviewing projects funded by the EU

To improve effectiveness and coherence of the EU strategy the Commission intends to review the projects carried out with the financial support of the EU.

Action 5: Strengthen the fundamental rights in anti-trafficking policy and related actions

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights will play a key role in strengthening existing instruments to mainstreaming fundamental rights in anti-trafficking policy. A handbook to assist Member States in addressing fundamental rights will be drafted and disseminated.

Action 6: Coordination training needs in a Multidisciplinary context

The Commission intends to focus its effort to reinforce training mechanisms on judiciary and cross-border law enforcement.

2.6 Priority E. Increased knowledge of and effective response to emerging concerns related to all forms of trafficking in human beings

The new strategy highlights the need to ensure better understanding of trafficking in order to ensure effective responses and improve identification of victims.

Within the priority “Increased knowledge of and effective response to emerging concerns related to all forms of trafficking in human beings”, the EU strategy 2012-2016 against trafficking is focused on four actions as follows:

Action 1: Developing an EU – wide system for Data Collection

The Commission intends to develop an EU-wide system for the collection and publication of data broken down to age and gender in order to ensure knowledge and understanding the lows and trends of trafficking. National Rapporteurs will support gathering of data.

Action 2: Developing knowledge relating to the gender dimension of trafficking and vulnerable groups

The Commission intends to develop knowledge on the gender dimensions of human trafficking, including the gender specificities of the way men and women are recruited and exploited.

Action 3: Understanding Online recruitment

Taking into account that the internet offers numerous possibilities to recruit victims, the Commission intends to increase knowledge of recruitment over the internet and via social networks.

Action 4: Targeting Trafficking for labour exploration

The Commission works to increase the number of cases of trafficking for labour exploitation that are investigated and prosecuted. To this aim a study of case law in all Member States will be promoted and cooperation with labour, social and safety inspectors will be strengthened.

PART III IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING BODIES

3.1 European Commission

Within the European Commission Trafficking in human being is addressed by:

- **Directorate General Home Affairs** supporting Member States in the fight against transnational crime;
- **Directorate Justice** supporting Member States in promoting equality between women and men;
- **Directorate Employment and Social Affairs** supporting Member States in combating poverty and social exclusion.

In order to improve coordination and coherence between EU institutions, EU agencies, Member States and international actors and to contribute to a coordinated and consolidated Union strategy against trafficking in human beings, the European Commission appointed an **anti-trafficking coordinator**.

Visit the website: <http://ec.europa.eu>

3.2 European Union Agency for fundamental rights

The European Union Agency for fundamental rights has the specific task of providing the EU institutions and Member States with independent, evidence-based advice on fundamental rights. The Agency aims at ensuring full respect for fundamental rights across the EU. To do this, it performs the following main tasks:

- collecting and analysing information and data;
- providing assistance and expertise;
- communicating and raising rights awareness.

Visit the website: <http://fra.europa.eu>

European Institute on Gender Equality

The European Institute for Gender Equality is a European agency which supports the EU and its Member States in their efforts to promote gender equality, to fight discrimination based on sex and to raise awareness about gender equality issues. Its tasks are to collect and analyse comparable data on gender issues, to develop methodological tools, in particular for the integration of the gender dimension in all policy areas, to facilitate the exchange of best practices and dialogue among stakeholders, and to raise awareness among EU citizens.

Visit the website: <http://www.eige.europa.eu>

Europol

Europol is the European Law Enforcement Organisation which aims at improving the effectiveness and co-operation of the competent authorities in the Member States in combating criminal organisations operating in two or more Member States. It has been active as anti-drugs unit since 1994 and it has progressively broadened its competences to other criminal activities such as trafficking in human beings. Europol facilitates the exchange of information, provides support to investigation activities and carries out analysis on the main criminal phenomena.

Visit the website: <http://www.europol.europa.eu>

Eurojust

Eurojust is a European Union body created in 2002 to enhance the effectiveness of the competent authorities within Member States in dealing with the investigation and prosecution of serious cross-border and organised crime.

Eurojust is a permanent network of judiciary authorities aimed at an effective cooperation in the field of justice and in particular at preventing and combating organised crime.

Visit the website: <http://www.eurojust.europa.eu>

For further information on Aretusa
www.aretusa.net

CONTACTS:

ARETUSA AISBL, Register Number N.F.I. 1742

Boulevard Brand Whitlock 66
Woluwe Saint Lambert
1200 Brussels, Belgium
info.aretusa@gmail.com
www.aretusa.net

Presidency:
IRENE Association
irene@irene.mi.it

Secretariat:
AFP Patronato San Vincenzo
progettazione@afppatronatosv.org

