

ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT PRO REFUGIU ASSOCIATION

JUSTICE

LAW

HUMAN RIGHTS

VICTIMS OF CRIME

MIGRATION

TOLERANCE

DIVERSITY

SOCIETY

2019

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FOREWORD

The report provides an overview of the activities and achievements of Pro Refugiu Association in 2019. In line with its mission and objectives, the organisation provided assistance to victims of crime, asylum seekers and refugees, continued to strive in ensuring a better protection of the human rights.

Pro Refugiu Association continued throughout 2019 to organise multiple national and international events, bringing together key partners and stakeholders to discuss fundamental rights issues in several major areas. The organisation operated within the following thematic work areas: access to justice for victims of crimes, immigration and integration of migrants.

Pro Refugiu Association presented findings on human trafficking and on migration incorporated into accessible and user-friendly studies, reports, handbooks, research papers. It consistently provided information on fundamental rights challenges and promoted fundamental rights safeguards and recommendations throughout the year.

Pro Refugiu Association would like to thank the partners, the collaborators, the private and public donors, the grants providers who have supported in 2019 our efforts to successfully implement all the actions and projects

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Pro Refugiu Association is a non-governmental organisation based in Bucharest, Romania, set up in early 2011 from the initiative of a group of specialists in assisting victims of human trafficking, asylum seekers, and refugees.

Since its beginning, the organisation followed a work philosophy based on protection and promotion of the rights for victims of human trafficking, asylum seekers, refugees, migrants according to the national and international standards, and also, to manage the problems that these persons face.

Fundamental Values	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect for human rights. • Holistic approach (bottom up) of the human trafficking, migration phenomenon and co-operation at national and international level. • Tolerance. • Equality. • Trust. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help to combat the human trafficking phenomenon, illegal migration. • Identify the needs, problems of the victims of human trafficking, asylum seekers, refugees. • Development of special programmes of legal, psychological, social assistance at the highest professional standards for the benefit of the target groups. • Advocacy and lobby meant to improve the legislation and practice in the field of protection for the victims of human trafficking, migration, and asylum procedure.

STEERING COMMITTEE

President
Vice-President
Secretary

Assistance Department for victims of human trafficking	Assistance Department for asylum seekers and refugees	Training Department	Research Department	Financial Department
Legal counselling and assistance: Social counselling and assistance Psychological counselling	Legal counselling and assistance: Social counselling and assistance Psychological counselling	Organize trainings for legal/social/health professionals (lawyers, prosecutors, judges, police officers, social workers, psychologists) on topic related to victims' rights protection, refugees' rights according with national and international standards.	Develop studies and research on topics related to victims' rights protection, the human trafficking and migration phenomenon.	Ensure the financial management of the organisation
Staff/Collaborators: 12 lawyers 3 psychologists 2 social workers 1 medical mediator	Staff/Collaborators: 12 lawyers 3 psychologists 2 social workers 2 cultural mediators	Staff/Collaborators: 5 trainers	Staff/Collaborators: 3 researchers	Staff/Collaborators: 2 financial managers

PROJECTS

The organisation implemented in 2019 multiple projects for the benefit of the target groups, continued to collaborate with national and foreign stakeholders in areas related to the rights of victims of crime, asylum and refugees, organised trainings for specialists from legal, social and health areas, developed studies and research.

PRO VICTIMS JUSTICE THROUGH AN ENHANCED RIGHTS PROTECTION AND STAKEHOLDERS COOPERATION

The project was coordinated by the Pro Refugiu Association in partnership with the Crime Prevention Council of Lower Saxony Germany, Center for the Study of Democracy Bulgaria, Scandinavian Human Rights Lawyers Sweden, the National Union of Romanian Bars. The implementation of the project started in September 2017 and ended in August 2019. It was implemented with the financial support of the Justice Programme of the European Union.

The objectives of the project were to promote methods and tools to ensure victims of crime receive proper assistance, to strengthen victims' role in the justice framework through exchange of best practices, transfer of expertise and networking among legal professionals from several EU Member States.

Within the project was developed a comprehensive study on institutions and organizations that have competencies in the protection of victims in Romania, Bulgaria, Germany and Sweden; it was created an online platform as a public database with contact data of judicial institutions and organizations; it was elaborated a guide on the identification, referral and assistance of victims in domestic and cross-border cases; national and transnational events were implemented in the project countries.

Website <https://provictimsjustice.prorefugiu.org/>

Seminar in Romania

The seminar was organized by the Pro Refugiu Association, in Bucharest, 5-6 April 2019, and was attended by 54 participants – lawyers, prosecutors, judges, police officers, social workers and psychologists from Romanian institutions and organizations. The event had a multi-disciplinary approach focusing on topics of current interest both for law practitioners and for other professional categories that come into contact with victims of crime. The event thematic was focused on deontological and ethical principles when coming into contact with victims, communication in an empathic manner, psychological trauma and how to avoid re-victimization in the criminal trial.



Final Conference in Romania

The conference was organized in Bucharest, 7 June 2019, bringing together 51 participants from Romania, Bulgaria, Germany and Sweden. The event was a good opportunity for representatives of institutions and organizations to discuss in an interactive manner about the results that were obtained in the project and how they can continue to be used in order to enhance the protection of the rights of victims of crime.



RACCOMBAT

PREVENTING AND COMBATTING RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA THROUGH SOCIAL ORIENTATION OF NON-NATIONALS

Pro Refugiu Association was partner in the transnational project that started in 2017 and ended in June 2019. The project was implemented with the financial support of the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union, in partnership with organizations from Bulgaria, Belgium, Greece, Latvia and Austria.

Project Website <http://raccombat-project.eu/>

In 2019 Pro Refugiu Association contributed at the mapping and analysis of social orientation programmes concerning the integration of third-country nationals in Europe, the implementation of national and transnational events.

Seminar in Romania

Pro Refugiu Association organized a seminar in Bucharest 4 April 2019, the event being one of the multiple activities implemented in the project. The event gathered 24 participants from immigration authority, social services of municipalities and non-governmental organizations with competencies in the integration of refugees and other third-country nationals. The discussions were focused on topics such as individual and collective causes that are at the basis of intolerance and discrimination; social orientation and language classes used as strategies to combat racism and xenophobia regarding migrants; the presentation of guidelines on incorporating tolerance and mutual respect in language tuition and social orientation programmes.



TOWARDS A MORE EFFECTIVE RIGHTS PROTECTION AND ACCESS TO JUDICIAL PROCEDURES FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME



The transnational project started its implementation in September 2018 and will continue until April 2020. It is coordinated by Pro Refugiu Association in partnership with Center for the Study of Democracy Bulgaria, Demetra Association Bulgaria, Center for European Constitutional Law Greece, Italian Coalition for Civil Liberties and Rights, Association Trabe Iniciativas para la Economia Social y Solidaria Spain. The project benefits from the financial support of the Justice Programme of the European Union.

The project aims to improve access to justice for women victims of violence, to increase the reporting of cases towards judicial stakeholders, to ensure financial compensation through an appropriate assessment of the damaged suffered by victims.

Project Website
<http://justiceforwomen.prorefugiu.eu/>

Violence against women. Key findings and strategies to tackle unreported cases and to enforce the protection order

The purpose of the publication was to highlight the situation of violence against women in Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Spain and to emphasize common difficulties in ensuring better rights protection. Also, through this publication, a series of recommendations and strategies were presented on how to improve the legislative framework, as well as social and educational issues that play an important role in the fight against violence.

Cases concerning women victims of crime

The publication addresses judges and prosecutors involved in cases that have as legal object to grant financial compensation to women victims of crime. It is also targeting lawyers that provide legal assistance. The publication addresses topics such as European and national legal framework concerning financial compensation, the relevance of psychological and psychiatric reports and of other evidences to assess the pecuniary and non-pecuniary damages suffered by women victims of crime.

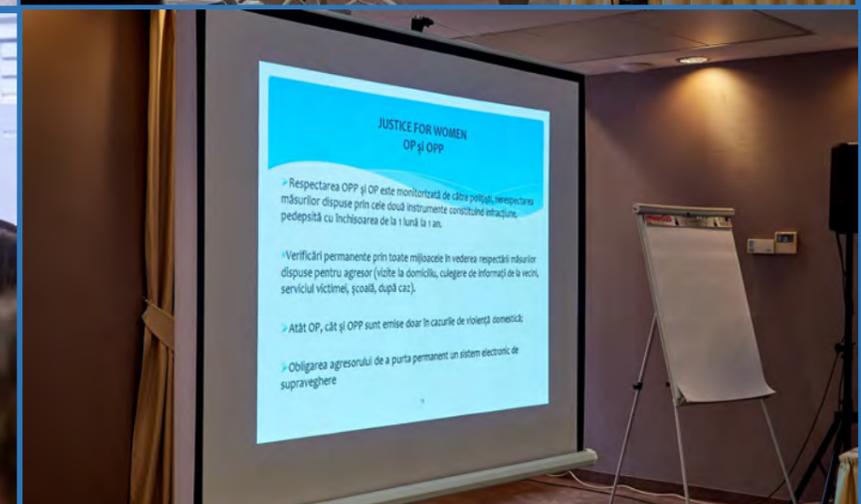


FINANCIAL COMPENSATION GUIDE
CASES CONCERNING WOMEN VICTIMS OF CRIME



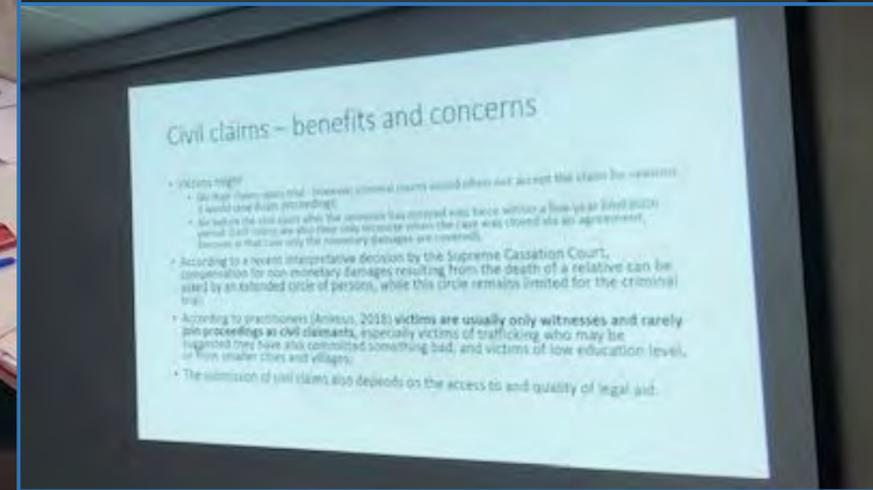
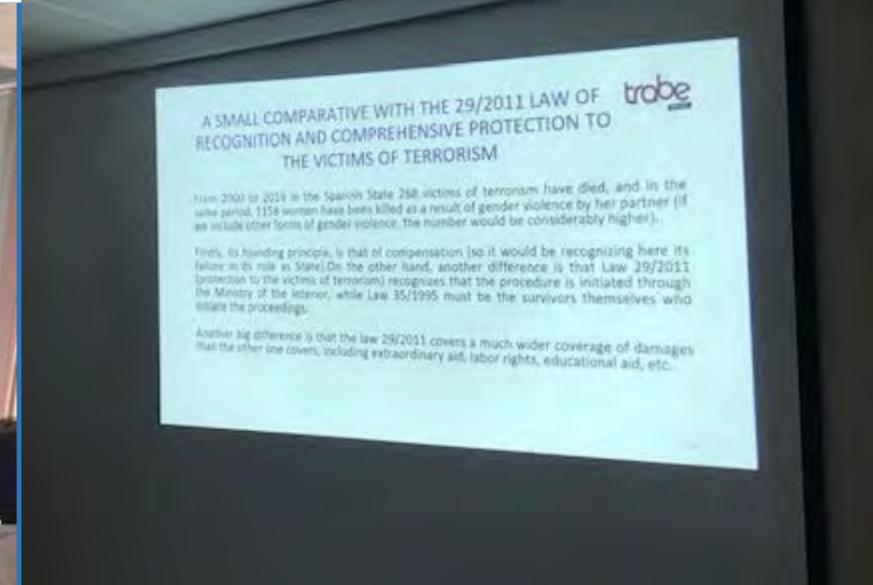
National experts working group in Romania

The event took place in Bucharest, 21 March 2019, and brought together 33 participants (representatives of courts, prosecutor office, social assistance authorities, lawyers, psychologists, non-governmental organizations). The multi-disciplinary event allowed participants to discuss about the difficulties encountered by women when accessing the justice system and what can be done in order to simplify the procedures, the efficiency of the protection order that can be issued by court and by police, the need for better referral procedures for victims to receive assistance.



Experts meeting in Spain

The event was organized in Madrid, 10 May 2019. At the meeting attended 18 lawyers, legal and policy officers, social workers, psychologists, migration and human rights consultants from Spain, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece and Italy. The aim of the event was to exchange information on the legal framework and practices concerning financial compensation for victims, difficulties encountered in the judicial procedures, the need to use in practice better indicators for assessing the damages suffered as a result of the acts of violence against women. Information on existing practices were used in drafting the guide on financial compensation for women victims of crime. Another topic addressed was related to the difficulties encountered so far in approaching the business/economic sectors in order to involve them in actions to prevent and combat human trafficking.





Workshop in Romania

On the 10th of October 2019, there was held a workshop in Bucharest, intended for Romanian specialists working with women - victims of crime. The one-day multidisciplinary event brought together professionals from different fields of activity and from different regions of the country. Therefore, along with the trainers, 41 participants were present: judges, prosecutors, lawyers, social workers and psychologists within the General Directorates for Social Assistance and Child Protection, as well as representatives of the Romanian Police. This event aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the entire judicial process through which a woman - victim of crime can go through and how proper functioning of the network of legal services, assistance, and procedures can positively influence the results of the entire process. The theoretical notions were exemplified through case studies and the practical applications were used to actively involve the participants in the learning process. The attending specialists had been actively involved in the learning process, providing knowledge from their personal practice that completed the information structured by the trainers. The discussions started from the premise that in the act of justice, especially in cases where the crime captures the victim's vulnerability, it is important to understand not only the direct impact of the crime, but also its consequences, beyond the physical injury. Therefore, the comprehensive psychiatric and psychological assessment of the victim should become a routine practice in all cases, particularly those that involve vulnerability.



Case conference in Romania

The event was implemented on the 11th of October 2019, in Bucharest. 24 participants attended the conference, activating in professions in which they interact directly with women - victims of the crime, respectively: judges, prosecutors, lawyers, social workers, psychologists, and police officers. The need to organise this case conference was based on the (scientifically proven) theory that specialists working with people who had experienced traumatic situations may be affected in turn, and may develop a number of psychological difficulties, namely the burnout syndrome and vicarious traumatisation. Therefore, this event aimed to bring together professionals from different fields of activity and to encourage them to discuss the impact that interaction with victims has on them, to share experiences, to reflect on the work they perform, to learn and implement protective and stress management strategies.



ANTI-TRAFFICKING STAKEHOLDERS AND ECONOMIC SECTORS NETWORKING, COOPERATION TO COMBAT THE BUSINESS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING CHAIN

The project started in 2018 and will end in April 2020. It is implemented with the financial support of the Internal Security Fund Police of the European Union, coordinated by Pro Refugiu Association in partnership with Verein für Internationale Jugendarbeit e.V. Landesverein Württemberg Germany, the Center for the Study of Democracy Bulgaria, the Center for European Constitutional Law Greece, the Italian Coalition for Civil Liberties and Rights.

The project objectives are to analyse the link between human trafficking and the economic sectors that might be involved in the demand and supply chain for services and products obtained as result of victims' exploitation; to engage the economic sectors in sustainable cooperation with anti-trafficking stakeholders; to increase the awareness of public through social media campaign.

Project website

<http://net-combat-thb-chain.prorefugiu.eu>

Transnational Experts Meeting in Germany

On the 12th of April 2019 a transnational experts meeting was held in Stuttgart Germany. The event was attended by experts and representatives of anti-trafficking institutions and organizations from Germany, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece and Italy. A total of 14 participants who addressed in an interactive manner subjects related to human trafficking. Participants debated about the criminal and civil liability of legal entities that are involved in the demand and supply chain of goods and services resulting from the exploitation of victims of human trafficking. The experts made presentations according with each country particularities. Another topic addressed was related to the difficulties encountered so far in approaching the business/economic sectors in order to involve them in actions to prevent and combat human trafficking.



Financed by the Internal Security Fund Police of the European Union

Asociația PRO REFUGIU.ro
CSD CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF DEMOCRACY
CENTER FOR EUROPEAN CONSTITUTIONAL LAW
CILD Italian Coalition for Civil Liberties and Rights
vije



Human trafficking and the economic/business sectors susceptible to be involved in the demand and supply chain of products and services resulting from victims' exploitation

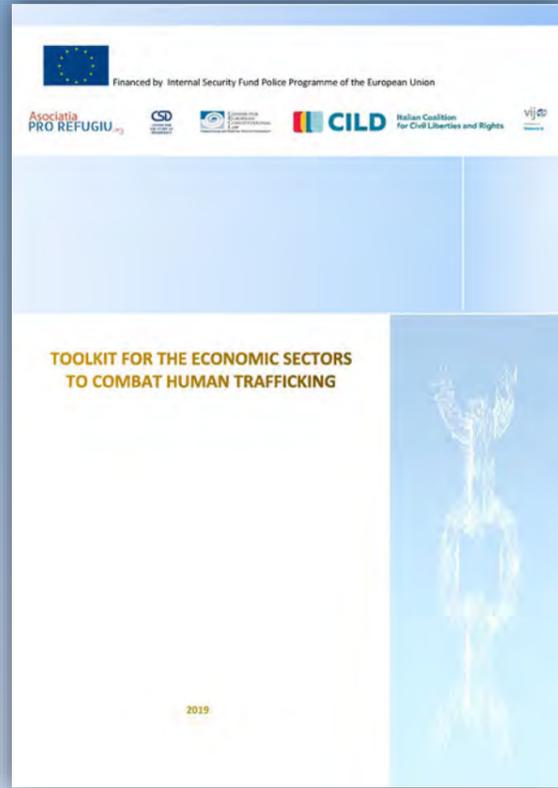
March 2019

Human trafficking and the economic/business sectors susceptible to be involved in the demand and supply chain of products and services resulting from victims' exploitation

The study, just like the entire project, is based on the current European and international context: the increasing demand for sexual services, the demand for cheap labour, the desire to make a profit with minimal investment are factors that intensify the activity of the networks of human trafficking.

The economic and social situation in many countries has increased the vulnerability to trafficking of certain social groups. Human trafficking is a highly profitable business and the products of this criminal activity are largely reintroduced into the world economy and financial system.

The toolkit provides information to support the economic sectors to combat human trafficking in partnership with other stakeholders. The publication contains references to the consequences that human trafficking can have on the economic sectors, how the employees can be trained to report cases towards judicial and law enforcement authorities, the code of conduct for companies and their personnel, the due diligence procedures that companies should implement to prevent being involved in the demand-supply chain of services and products that are the result of victims' exploitation.



On the 27th of September 2019, the Pro Refugiu Association organised a local conference, in Bucharest, with the purpose of promoting, among the representatives of the economic sectors and other actors in the anti-trafficking field, the guide made within the project comprising information meant to help the economic sectors become actively involved in the reducing of the phenomenon of human trafficking. This meeting also aimed to establish the collaboration between the governmental and non-governmental stakeholders and the relevant economic sectors, bringing their contribution towards the awareness of the phenomenon, the identification of the cases of trafficking and the cooperation with the law enforcement bodies, in order to stop the phenomenon. The event brought together 24 specialists from relevant fields in the fight against human trafficking: National Agency against Trafficking in Persons, Hotel Industry Federation of Romania, Directorate for Investigating Organised Crime and Terrorism, Ministry for Romanians Abroad, lawyers from Bucharest Bar, Ministry of Justice, Agency for Employment and non-governmental organisations.





Human trafficking is also happening online.

Protect your kids from online predators.
<http://net-combat-thb-chain.prorefugiu.eu/>

Social media campaign to raise awareness on human trafficking and its consequences

The campaign is run by the coordinator in partnership with the organizations involved in the project and targets social media users in Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Germany and Italy. The campaign started in 2019 and will continue until the end of the project. Facebook is used to promote this campaign.



Do you pay a fair price for the products and services you use?

Support fair pay and treatment for workers to reduce labor trafficking.
<http://net-combat-thb-chain.prorefugiu.eu/>

Financed by Internal Security Fund Police Programme of the European Union.

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Accept friend request. A horror story started online.

Traffickers use social networks to connect with teens, gain their trust and start an online relation with the aim of exploit them for criminal purposes.

Beware of online predators!
<http://net-combat-thb-chain.prorefugiu.eu/>



Human trafficking happens right next to you.

If you spot signs that a person is being exploited, report it to the local law enforcement.

Your small action can save a person's life
<http://net-combat-thb-chain.prorefugiu.eu/>

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TRAINING LAWYERS, PROSECUTORS, JUDGES TO ENSURE BETTER RIGHTS PROTECTION FOR MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Pro Refugiu Association is coordinating the project in partnership with Center for the Study of Democracy Bulgaria, Center for European Constitutional Law Greece, Italian Coalition for Civil Liberties and Rights, Association Trabe Iniciativas para la Economia Social y Solidaria Spain. The project started in June 2019 and will continue its implementation until February 2021 with the financial support of the Justice Programme of the European Union.

Project Website

<http://train-pro-rights.prorefugiu.eu/>



The main objectives of the project are to increase lawyers, prosecutors and judges knowledge on EU legislation and jurisprudence concerning rights' protection for victims of human trafficking that have migrant & refugee background; to contribute to an effective and uniform application of EU law in cases concerning victims of human trafficking; to implement practice oriented cross-border judicial trainings and to create tailor-made training materials.

Transnational experts meeting in Romania

On the 19th September 2019 the event was organized in Bucharest with the participation of legal experts from Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Spain. The discussions were focused on the legal thematic that should be utilised in the judicial trainings for lawyers, prosecutors and judges.

The representatives of the Pro Refugiu Association participated during 2019 in a series of transnational events organized by other key-stakeholders in Brussels Belgium

Meeting of the EU Civil Society Platform against Trafficking in Human Beings, 13-14 June 2019, Brussels Belgium



INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

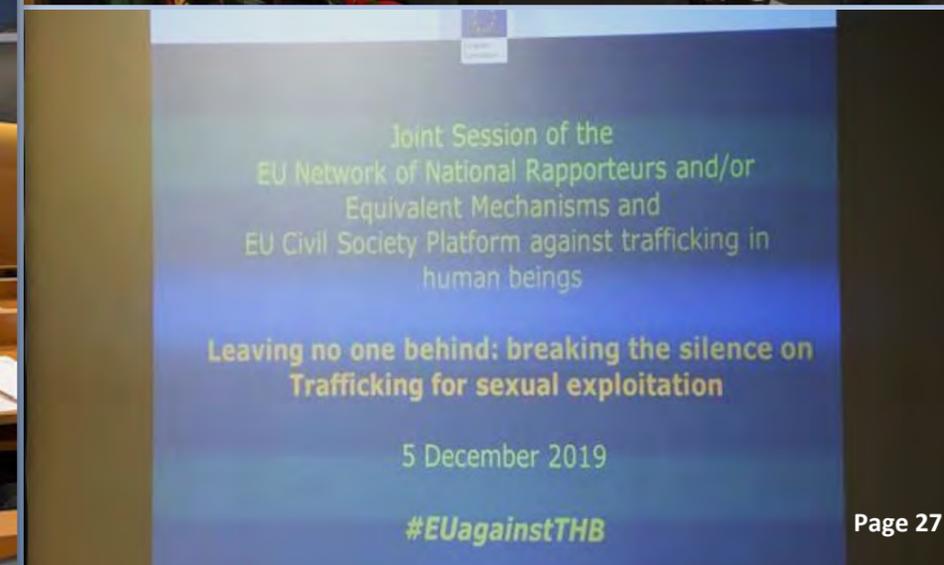
Exchange Seminar 27-28 May 2019, Brussels Belgium

The event was organized within the project JUSTICE AT LAST - European Action for Compensation for Victims of Crime International that is coordinated by La Strada International and implemented in cooperation with NGO partners in 10 European countries. Association Pro Refugiu representatives were invited as speakers to share their expertise on the procedures regarding financial compensation that should be granted to victims of crime in domestic and cross-border cases.



Meeting of the EU Civil Society Platform against Trafficking in Human Beings,

5-6 December 2019, Brussels Belgium



PARTNERS

Being aware of the fact that international, regional cooperation is essential for exchange of information, good practices, Pro Refugiu Association continued also in 2019 to maintain a sustainable partnership with various organisations, institutions at national and international level. Some of the organisations, authorities are partners in the projects implemented by Pro Refugiu Association and with others the NGO had concluded several collaboration protocols having as main objective the exchange of information, best practices related to the assistance of asylum seekers, refugees and victims of crime.

<p>International partners</p> <p>KOK - German NGO network against trafficking in human beings</p> <p>ECPAT Germany</p> <p>Crime Prevention Council of Lower Saxony, Germany</p> <p>Verein für Internationale Jugendarbeit e.V. Germany</p> <p>Caritas International, Belgium</p> <p>Center for the Study of Democracy, Bulgaria</p> <p>Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation</p> <p>Demetra Association, Bulgaria</p> <p>Centre for European Constitutional Law, Greece</p> <p>Italian Coalition for Civil Liberties and Rights</p> <p>Association TRABE- Iniciativas para la Economia Social y Solidaria, Spain</p> <p>Scandinavian Human Rights Lawyers, Sweden</p> <p>The European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, affiliated with the United Nations (HEUNI), Finland</p> <p>Networks (membership)</p> <p>EU Civil Society Platform against Trafficking in Human Beings</p> <p>The Fundamental Rights Platform of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights</p>	<p>National partners</p> <p>National Agency against Trafficking in Persons</p> <p>Romanian General Inspectorate for Immigration</p> <p>National Institute for Magistracy</p> <p>Bucharest Bar</p> <p>National Union of Romanian Bars</p> <p>National Agency for Community Programmes for Education and Professional Development</p> <p>Bucharest University, Faculty of Sociology and Social Assistance</p> <p>Betania Association</p> <p>People to People Foundation</p> <p>East European Institute for Reproductive Health</p> <p>General Directorates for Social Assistance and Child Protection</p>
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