



Sixth EU Anti-Trafficking Day, 18 October 2012

Report on activities following the Joint Statement of the Heads of the EU Justice and Home Affairs Agencies

On the occasion of the Fifth EU Anti-Trafficking Day in 2011 organised by the Commission under the Polish Presidency, the Heads of seven Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Agencies signed a Joint Statement in which the EU Agencies committed themselves to addressing trafficking in human beings in a coordinated, coherent, and comprehensive manner.

A year later, and to mark the occasion of the Sixth EU Anti-Trafficking Day, the achievements of the EU JHA Agencies are presented in this document.

Setting the Scene

On 19 June 2012 the Commission adopted an EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016. A key message in the strategy is the need to address trafficking in human beings in a multi-disciplinary, coordinated and coherent manner and to include all relevant actors working in the different fields of trafficking in human beings. This is in line with the mandate of the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator who is overseeing the implementation of the Strategy with a view to improving coordination and coherence between all actors involved in addressing trafficking in human beings.

The Strategy refers to the Joint Statement and stipulates that the Commission will coordinate and monitor its implementation. The Strategy also includes specific future actions to be taken by the JHA Agencies such as increased cross-border cooperation in addressing trafficking in human beings involving Europol and Eurojust, the development of an action plan on trafficking in human beings by Eurojust, work on financial investigations by Europol, specific training for law enforcement and border guards (European Police College and Frontex), asylum officers (European Asylum Support Office), the development of a best practice model on the role of guardians and/or representatives of child victims of trafficking and the development of a tool to assist Member States in addressing fundamental rights by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights.

In order to ensure better results in working towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings and to ensure close cooperation amongst and across JHA Agencies, each Agency has





nominated a contact point responsible for ensuring an overview of the Agency's efforts in the field of anti-trafficking and representing the Agency in the EU and in their cooperation with third countries and regions. In the past year, these contact points have held two joint meetings, organised by the European Commission, to discuss progress made and further coordinate activities.

Aiming at more cooperation and coherence between the EU Agencies and in order to provide for synergies and to avoid duplication, the actions listed below are addressed and informed by the multi-disciplinary and coordinated perspective.

CEPOL (European Police College)

CEPOL has developed a wide spectrum of specifically targeted training activities addressing trafficking in human beings: courses, online seminars, Common Curricula and E-learning tools. The European Institute for Gender Equality, Europol, Eurojust, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights as well as Frontex have provided support for the establishment of these activities and contributed to them by means of lecturers and expertise. The European Institute for Gender Equality has contributed by providing input, particularly in terms of integrating a gender perspective and ensuring a strong victim protection element to the training materials. The most important training activities to be mentioned are the THB Online Learning Module and a Webinar organised with input from the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, Europol, Eurojust and Frontex, which was open to the public with very successful results. CEPOL also contributed to a THB Training Manual, including a Toolkit, developed by FRONTEX. The Training Tool focuses on combating Trafficking in Human Beings and was developed in cooperation with experts from Member States and Schengen Associated Countries, as well as other EU agencies and international organisations.

European Asylum Support Office (EASO)

The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) contributes to addressing trafficking in human beings through general asylum support actions, including the exchange of information amongst Member States, the training of asylum officials, support to Member States under particular pressure and contributing in various forms to the implementation of the Common European Asylum System by collecting and exchanging information on best practices, drawing up an annual report on the asylum situation in the EU and adopting technical documents, such as guidelines and operating manuals, on the implementation of the Union's asylum instruments.

More specifically, as a part of the EASO activities to support the development of the Common European Asylum System, EASO focuses on vulnerable groups within mixed migration flows.





Potential victims of trafficking in human beings are a special group within vulnerable groups in the asylum process. To ensure, that asylum officials will have a raised awareness on detecting and referring THB victims, tools and information will be part of capacity building in the EASO tool box, e.g. in training modules and manuals.

EASO will look into the possibility of using its Early Warning and Preparedness System to analyse trends in the trafficking in human beings flows in the EU. Early warning provides regional outlook, analysis of trends and push-pull factors, as well as risk scenarios. Preparedness could serve as a tool to detect inefficiencies in the protection systems and eventually point at need for training and capacity building support in Member States.

European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

The European Institute for Gender Equality contributes to addressing Trafficking in Human Beings through offering expert advice on gender related aspects of this phenomenon. This year, the Institute provided input to the European Police College project on THB Training ensuring the integration of gender and victim support perspectives.

The European Institute for Gender Equality also undertakes activities indirectly linked to prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings which include support to EU institutions and Member States in the integration of gender concerns into all policies as well as the collection, processing and dissemination of data, methods, tools and good practices through the Resource and Documentation Centre (RDC) and sharing knowledge and information on gender equality issues, including on gender-based violence, available amongst various stakeholders.

EUROJUST

Eurojust's strategic activity addressing trafficking in human beings is its "*Strategic Project on Eurojust Action against Trafficking in Human Beings*", which aims at strengthening and improving cooperation between national judicial authorities in the fight against trafficking in human beings; improving the efficient use of existing legal instruments; intensifying efforts in prosecuting these crimes at national level; and enhancing the involvement of Eurojust in cases of trafficking in human beings. The final report of the project and Eurojust's action plan against trafficking in human beings were approved by the College of Eurojust on 2 October 2012.

The most important and effective tool from which Eurojust benefits in its operational activities, is the coordination meeting, during which practitioners meet in person, discussing challenges and exploring solutions related to investigation and prosecution. Coordination meetings have almost doubled in number in the past year and are often attended by Europol officials. In



addition, coordination centres, providing increased operational support for judicial authorities during days of action in different Member States, have proven to be an efficient tool for combating trafficking in human beings. For example, in June 2012, judicial and law enforcement authorities in four countries (France, Bulgaria, Poland and Belgium) successfully conducted a joint operation - supported and coordinated by Eurojust and Europol - against a trafficking in human beings (THB) criminal network operating in several Member States. A coordination centre was set up at Eurojust on 12 June 2012, run by the Eurojust French Desk with the assistance of the Case Analysis Unit, which provided significant support in the execution of the European Arrest Warrants. The operation was supported on the day by Europol's trafficking in human beings team and the deployment of its mobile office. The intelligence gathered during the operation was analysed and exchanged in real time, the collected data was immediately cross-matched, and previously unknown links to other investigations were identified. This coordinated multi-agency approach brought added value to the operation.

Finally, the added value of Eurojust in joint investigation teams is noteworthy. Eurojust continued its JIT Funding Project, entitled "*Supporting the Greater Usage of JITs*", based on the grant received from the European Commission under the Prevention of and Fight against Crime 2007-2013 programme. The project has become a valuable element in helping ensure financial constraints do not discourage the use of JITs in fighting organised crime groups.

EUROPOL

Europol continues to support its operational partners in all 27 MS in the fight against trafficking human beings. The number of cross-border investigations referred to Europol this year has increased by 100% when compared to figures for the same period last year (Jan – Aug 1549 v. 749 data contributions). In 2012 Europol's dedicated THB Project, Focal Point Phoenix, received 257 new THB cases and has supported 16 high-profile operations. In the framework of these on-going high-profile operations, 54 suspects have been arrested and 154 victims have been identified. Operational support has also been extended to Member States with the deployment of the Europol mobile office on four occasions, allowing investigators access to Europol's databases and analytical tools directly from the field. This year FP Phoenix supports one JIT and will join two other JITs in the coming months. As an insight into the level of THB information provided to Europol by the MS, 23% of the data entities stored in Europol's centralised database, the Europol Information System (EIS), is THB related.

Europol has been actively supporting the EMPACT Operational Action Plan (OAP) Project on THB developed under the overall responsibility of the UK as the driver for this OAP and agreed by COSI on 8 December 2011. This programme aims to combat all forms of trafficking in human





beings and human smuggling by targeting the organised crime groups conducting such criminal activities, particularly focusing on the southern, south-western and south-eastern criminal hubs in the EU. 18 MS, CEPOL, European Commission, Eurojust and Frontex take part in the project.

In addition to the regular operational cooperation with Eurojust, which became a member of FP Phoenix in January 2012, the project has actively contributed to Eurojust's Strategic Project on THB and their Expert Meeting held on 26-27 April 2012. To ensure better collection and access and sharing of information, a new secure connection between Europol and Eurojust became operational in mid-2012. This connection allows for a secure exchange of e-mails between the two institutions and allows a secure exchange of operational information via SIENA. Frontex is also at the final stage of gaining access to SIENA. On a more strategic level, Europol has started an exchange program with the Fundamental Rights Agency in order to discuss possible areas of cooperation. Regarding the external dimension of the fight against THB, Europol continues to cooperate with Third countries in the framework of already established Cooperation Agreements and this year the Agency also met with a Brazilian and a Chinese delegation in order to initiate strategic cooperation in the field of THB.

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

With respect to the FRA's programme of research, the Agency is in the second phase of a project on treatment of third country nationals at the EU's external borders, which was also carried out with the support of Frontex. The first phase of the project focused on migrants crossing the Mediterranean by sea in an irregular manner, whereas the second phase looks at selected airports and land border crossing points. The research results, which will be published in 2013, also review whether mechanisms are in place to identify groups in need of protection, including suspected victims of human trafficking. In this context, the individual interviews undertaken by the Spanish Red Cross with each woman immediately upon disembarkation emerged as a promising practice to identify women at risk. Further, the FRA has undertaken a large survey of the Roma population. Although it was not specifically on THB, the results could be useful in understanding the pull-push factors related to trafficked Roma. The intention is to have a second round of the survey that will allow for the elaboration of specific issues.

The FRA is also currently working on a comprehensive study on severe forms of labour exploitation, which links to the issue of THB for labour exploitation. The research looks at areas other than sexual exploitation and the results of this study will be launched in 2013.

The FRA complements the work of the JHA agencies, approaching their work from a fundamental rights perspective. The data that the FRA collects and analyses provide evidence





that can aid in formulating the operational response of these agencies by, for example, highlighting the perspective of victims. In its cooperation with Frontex for example, the FRA provides fundamental rights analysis and proposes the integration or mainstreaming of a fundamental-rights dimension into selected activities. The FRA could assist the other JHA agencies likewise.

In order to strengthen existing instruments, and building upon its past and on-going work on trafficking - in the coming years the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights could start to work with others on developing a tool to assist the EU Member States in addressing fundamental rights issues specifically related to anti-trafficking policy and related actions. This action is listed in the deliverables for the EU Strategy on THB.

FRONTEX

Frontex, the agency initiating last year's initiative that led to the Joint Statement, developed a THB Training Manual, including a Toolkit. The Training Tool focuses on combatting Trafficking in Human Beings by first and second line officers and was developed in close cooperation with experts from Member States and Schengen Associated Countries, as well as EU Agencies and international organisations. The Training Manual is based on the new EU Directive and will be translated into all EU languages. This Manual is also the basis for training to third country border guards. Frontex also developed the second edition of the Handbook on Risk Profiles on Trafficking in Human Beings 2012. This Handbook is to be used by Border Control Authorities and during Frontex Joint Operations, but can also be used by other Law Enforcement Authorities. It aims to increase the efficiency of detection and the dismantling of criminal groups in cooperation, among others, with Europol and Eurojust. And finally Frontex developed the Vega Handbook, which is a practical handbook on the detection and disruption of criminal organisations involved in the trafficking of human beings and people smuggling at air borders. First line officers, like border guards, play an important role at the start of the identification phase, in this regard Frontex is supporting the Commission drafting the guidelines for consular services and border guards on the identification of victims of trafficking in human beings.

Looking to the future

The JHA Agencies will continue working closely together in supporting the Member States to prevent and address trafficking in human beings and ensure the implementation of the Joint Statement. The Commission and the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator more specifically will monitor the progress achieved in this field, as envisaged in the EU Strategy. The Operational Programme of Europol, EMPACT THB, and the Strategic Programme of Eurojust combined with





the capacity building products of European Police College, Eurojust and Frontex, and supported by Intelligence and Research products of all JHA Agencies, particularly Europol, the FRA and Frontex, will ensure that the common goal of working against trafficking in human beings will place the victims at the centre. This is in line with the EU Directive that will be enforced in the upcoming year (April 6, 2013) as well as in accordance with the new EU Strategy. These actions will reinforce cooperation and will contribute to the JHA Agencies' efforts to support the Commission and the EU Member States to more effectively address trafficking in human beings.

