

THE ROMANIAN SENATE MAY PUT CHILDREN IN DANGER

Today, November 2, the STOP-AT project consortium members were informed that 88 members of the Romanian Senate are promoting a bill that endangers minors and those with rights assimilated to them.

The Draft Law "[B658/2022 Legislative proposal to amend and supplement Law no. 248/2005 on the regime of free movement of Romanian citizens abroad, as well as to amend article 23 of Law no. 272/2004 on the protection and promotion of children's rights](#)" aims changing the legal regime of circulation abroad for minors, reducing the age from 18 to 16. This legislation was introduced in the Senate on October 24th and appears to be moving quickly through the legislative process.

The change comes in the context where Ukrainian children have the right to travel unaccompanied from the age of 16. The reduction of the age of movement abroad for minors, from 18 to 16, makes Romanian and Ukrainian children even more vulnerable to organized crime networks that are very active in both countries. In practice, the removal from Romania of children, potential victims of trafficking in minors or other forms of crime, will be facilitated by this legislative amendment.

We underline that **Romania has the largest number of trafficked minors in Europe** and that **their number has increased 10 times in 2 years**, according to the European Commission's Report "[Data collection on trafficking in human beings in the EU](#)", page 33, published in October 2020.

Statistical data for 2020, published by the [Government of Romania](#) and processed by [ECLER](#), shows that the number of exploited children is constantly increasing, covering all ages - from 1 year to 18 years, with a very high percentage of children between the ages of 16 and 18 who are especially [sexually exploited](#).

The STOP-AT project consortium members ask the Romanian Senate to urgently withdraw Bill B658/2022, which, which, in the specific context of our country and related to the data

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presented above, cannot be an effective legislative amendment and in favour of the Romanian children or of those located on the territory of Romania.

Material created with the financial support of Active Citizens Fund Romania, a program financed by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA Grants 2014-2021. The content of this material does not necessarily represent the official position of the EEA and Norwegian Grants 2014-2021.

Project carried out by the Valore Plus Association in partnership with the European Center for Legal Education and Research, G4Media, the Christiana Cultural Social Economic Association, Freedom House Romania and the Jesuit Service for Refugees from Romania, with the financial support of Active Citizens Fund Romania, a program financed by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through EEA Grants 2014-2021.

The aim of the project is to increase the level of efficiency in the implementation of anti-trafficking policies through education, monitoring, advocacy and watchdog activities.

For more information about the project "Signal the Traffic, Stop the Danger - AntiTraffic", go to stopat.ecler.org.

About the Active Citizens Fund Romania Program

The Active Citizens Fund Romania program is financed by the EEA Grants 2014-2021. The general objective of the Grants is to reduce economic and social disparities and strengthen bilateral relations between the 15 beneficiary states and the donor states (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway). The program is administered by the consortium composed of the Foundation for the Development of Civil Society, the Foundation for Partnership, the Resource Center for Roma Communities, the PACT Foundation and Frivillighet Norge, which acts as the Fund Operator appointed by the FMO - the Office of the Financial Mechanism for Grants EEA and Norwegian. Active Citizens Fund Romania aims to strengthen civil society and active citizenship and increase the capacity of vulnerable groups.

With a total allocation of €46,000,000, the program aims to develop the long-term sustainability and capacity of the civil society sector, enhancing its role in promoting democratic participation, active citizenship and human rights, while strengthening bilateral relations with donor states Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

For more information about the Active Citizens Fund in Romania, please go to www.activecitizensfund.ro.

For more information on EEA and Norwegian Grants, visit: www.eeagrants.ro.

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