

PRESS RELEASE EU ANTI-TRAFFICKING DAY 18 of October 2023

The *EU Anti-Trafficking Day* was established by the European Commission in 2007 to raise awareness of this extremely serious crime and is celebrated on the **18 of October** each year.

RoTIP ([Network of NGOs against Trafficking in Human Beings](#)) and the consortium of NGOs implementing the [STOP-AT](#) project, highlights the following to the attention of the general public:

1. for more than 20 years¹, the Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP Report), published by the US Department of State, has annually highlighted that:

*"The Government of Romania is not meeting... the minimum standards to eliminate trafficking in human beings"*²;

2. in the Treaty of Accession to the EU, signed in 2005, Romania committed itself:

"to develop and implement a coherent multi-annual anti-crime strategy, including concrete actions to reduce Romania's status as a country of origin, transit and destination for victims of trafficking in human beings, and to present annually credible statistics on how this criminal phenomenon is controlled";

3. Romania has been and remains the main "problem country" for trafficking in human beings in Europe. Across the 27 EU Member States, the citizens of a single country - Romania - account for between 30%³ and 50%⁴ of the total number of victims identified and between 40%⁵ and 60%⁶ of EU traffickers;

4. The latest report published by the European Commission in December 2022, highlights the very high number of victims of human trafficking, Romanian citizens. They represent 2,315 trafficked persons in the EU

¹TIP Report, U.S. Department of State, pg.125, 2003, available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/21555.pdf>; 2001, available at <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/usdocs/traffickingreport-2001.html>

²TIP Report, US Department of State, 2022, material available at <https://ro.usembassy.gov/ro/raportul-privind-traficul-de-persoane-2022>

³Data collection on trafficking in human beings in the EU, pg.25, 2020, available at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/5b93c49f-12a0-11eb-9a54-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

⁴Trafficking in human beings, EUROSTAT, pg. 35, 2015, available at <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-statistical-working-papers/-/ks-tc-14-008-1>

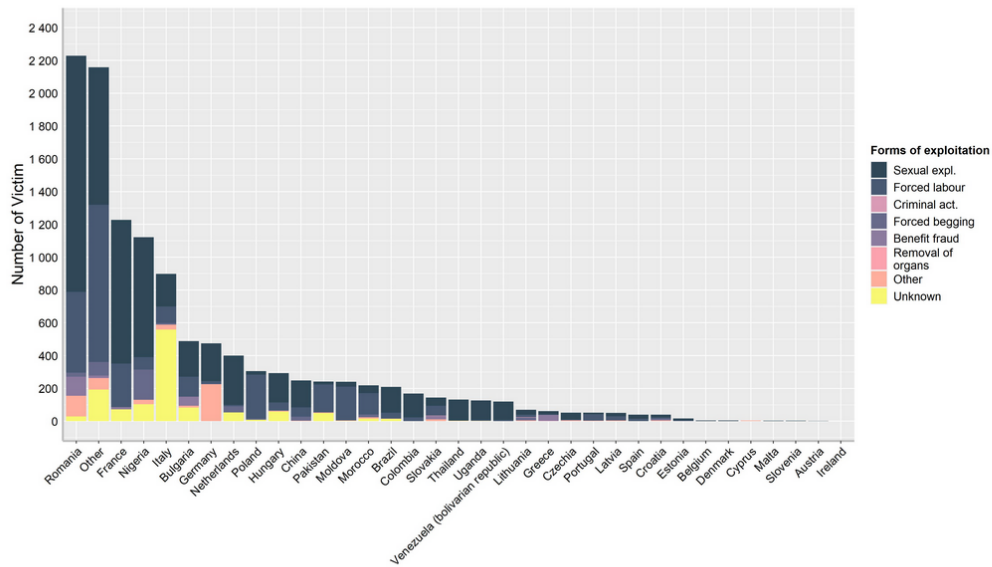
⁵Data collection on trafficking in human beings in the EU, pg.123-127, 2018, available at https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2020-09/20181204_data-collection-study.pdf

⁶Data collection on trafficking in human beings in the EU, pg.123, 2020, available at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/5b93c49f-12a0-11eb-9a54-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

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(some victims with French, Italian, British etc. citizenship are also of Romanian origin), followed in second place by France with 1,202 victims⁷ as shown in the graph below:

Figure 6: Number of victims per citizenship and form of exploitation in EU and the main non-EU countries in 2019-2020



Source: Eurostat

5. the share of Romanian sexually exploited children among all trafficked minors (between 75 and 80%)⁸ is well above the global share in this area (51%)⁹;

6. The ECHR noted that Article 4 of the Convention refers to the need for a comprehensive approach to the elimination of trafficking in persons that includes measures to prevent and protect victims, in addition to measures to punish traffickers. Article 4 necessarily provides that States have positive obligations to

⁷Statistics and trends in trafficking in human being in the European Union in 2019-2020, available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52022SC0429&fbclid=IwAR004ExvdaHCmFB-VOeQyEY3mwePkYRD6h2m6-net7GDBVtRYArTVkyCAKQ>

⁸Annual Report on Trafficking in Human Beings in 2021, pg. 13, available at <https://anitp.mai.gov.ro/ro/docs/studii/Raport%20anual%202021.pdf>

⁹Global estimate of forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking, Geneva, Switzerland, pg. 46, 2022, available at https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---ipecc/documents/publication/wcms_854733.pdf

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adopt [measures that effectively sanction](#) trafficking in persons and to implement these measures effectively¹⁰.

Through the international legal instruments of the UN, the Council of Europe, the OSCE or the EU, Romania has undertaken obligations to reduce the number of victims and traffickers of Romanian citizens. However, we observe a constant passivity of the Romanian state in fulfilling its duties in the fight against human trafficking.

In this context, [we reiterate our previous requests to the Romanian Government](#) concerning:

1. increasing the capacity of law enforcement authorities to effectively and efficiently carry out their legal duties to combat and monitor the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings;
2. the operationalisation of the 9 shelters for victims of trafficking in human beings and the adequate funding of their assistance and protection needs, both in the public and private sectors;
3. organise massive public information and awareness-raising campaigns on human trafficking, supported by public and private media institutions. The STOP-AT consortium has developed information materials (teaching projects for middle and high schools) which can be accessed through the [#ECLERhubs](#) programme on the website www.ecler.org.

In particular, we hope that the current Minister of the Interior, Mr. Cătălin Predoiu, who is well aware of the need to implement the provisions for the effective empowerment of the DIICOT, mentioned in GEO 76/2016, will quickly issue the necessary ministerial orders for its implementation, so that prosecutor-police cooperation can be made more efficient.

We mention that the need to increase the capacity of the DIICOT in the context of Romania's acceptance into the Schengen Area is an absolute necessity because Romania's border would become the easiest external border for cross-border organised crime, representing the second largest land border after that of Finland, but much easier to access. In order to guarantee the security of the Schengen area, Romania must be able to respond promptly and effectively to regional challenges in the fight against cross-border organised crime.

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For more information about the project "Report Traffic, Stop the Danger - AntiTrafficking", visit stopat.ecler.org

About the Active Citizens Fund Romania Program

The Active Citizens Fund Romania programme is funded by EEA Grants 2014-2021. The overall objective of the Grants is to reduce economic and social disparities and strengthen bilateral relations between the 15 beneficiary countries and the donor countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway). The Programme is administered by the consortium composed of the Civil Society Development Foundation, the Partnership Foundation, the Resource Centre for Roma Communities, the PACT Foundation and Frivillighet Norge, acting as Fund Operator designated by the FMO - Office of the EEA and Norwegian Grants Financial Mechanism.

Active Citizens Fund Romania aims to strengthen civil society and active citizenship and increase the capacity of vulnerable groups.

¹⁰*Siliadin v. Franța*, § 89, 2005, available at <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22itemid%22%3A%5B%22001-69891%22%5D%7D>

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With a total allocation of €46,000,000, the programme 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 the donor countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

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

For more information on EEA and Norwegian grants, please visit www.eegrants.ro.

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