

# NEWSLETTER

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## 1.INTRODUCTION: WHERE ARE WE IN THE PROJECT?

by project coordinator Maria Carla Midena and Federica Irene Molinaro, Veneto Region Social Services .

After one year from the beginning of the Next to You project, all planned activities are in progress.

The work done under **WP 2 (capacity building on the early identification and support to the victims)** has been most successful, providing an added value to the project tasks. Trainings have been carried out in Spring 2021 in Italy and Spain, guided by the Equality social cooperative, the University of Padua, and Cruz Blanca. The topic addressed was the early identification of trafficked minors and young adults, aimed at capacity building among professionals, with a specific focus on forced criminality and marriage.

Following these trainings, Equality and Cruz Blanca organized on 27th October 2021 a meeting for the consortium partners and other stakeholders involved in antitrafficking systems, in order to exchange good practices between Spain and Italy on exploitation, forced marriages, and criminality.



Co-funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) of the European Union

The meeting has been organized in 2 panels: one on forced marriages led by Fundacion Cruz Blanca and one on forced criminality led by Equality. It focused on how to detect the two phenomena, the multi-agency cooperation, and the practices to share, starting from a case study.

With reference to **WP 3 (intensive labor market inclusion programs)**, the actions aimed at promoting better integration into the labor market for 60 trafficked minors and young adults in Italy, France, and Spain are currently in the implementation phase. The first cycle of assessment interviews has been carried out for beneficiaries in Italy (Comunità dei Giovani), France (France Terre d'Asile), and Spain (Fundacion Cruz Blanca), involving social workers and cultural mediators. Furthermore, several workshops have been held on key aspects to promote good employability. For instance, tools to set up good job profiles, instruments for active job search and use of social networks, awareness of rights and duties at work, and income support tools have been presented.

Regarding **WP 4 (psychological workshops and psychological support for TPs)** the psychosocial workshops for the beneficiaries are still in progress in Belgium, Italy, Spain, and France, thanks to the contributions of Payoke, Equality, Fundacion Cruz Blanca, and France Terre d'Asile.

Groups are aimed at self-knowledge and prevention of at-risk situations and/or re-victimization. They also activate resilience and those protective factors that can be useful to build a durable project of life autonomy and, therefore, increase the integration process. In the last months, some individual counseling activities for providing psychological support have been carried out. Counseling is thought to be an emotional support to elaborate trauma by changing the narrative of life stories. It represents also a useful instrument to assist the trafficked persons in the process of changing their self-perception, helping them to overcome trauma.

Concerning **WP 5 (sharing of learning and best practices)**, on 11th May 2021, Payoke organized an online Consortium meeting to share good practices on early identification. This meeting was supposed to be held physically, but due to Covid-19 restrictions, it was not possible. In addition, the event held on 27 October 2021 on forced marriages and criminality gave the opportunity to enhance professionals' skills, learning from case studies and real-life experiences. The next consortium meeting will take place in Sevilla on the 5th and the 6th of April 2022. On that occasion exchange, visits on socioeconomic inclusion of VoT (Victims of Trafficking) will be organized by Fundacion Cruz Blanca.



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## 2.EDITORIAL: 18TH OCTOBER, EU ANTI-TRAFFICKING DAY. DON'T TURN A BLIND EYE TO THE SERIOUS EXPLOITATION!

by Prof. Degani, University of Padua

**Between 2017 and 2018 the victims officially registered in the European Union were more than 14,000. Almost one in four victims is a minor.**

October 18th is the EU **Anti-Trafficking Day**, established by the European Commission in 2007 to make European countries aware of the phenomenon of serious exploitation, which affects hundreds of thousands of adults and minors, who every year are involved in situations of heavy slavery in EU countries.

In Europe, human trafficking has a turnover second only to arms and drugs trafficking. According to the data proposed by the European Commission in the EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2025) in April 2021, **between 2017 and 2018 the victims officially registered in the European Union were more than 14,000**, a number that is far from the real data. Nearly half of the territory of the European Union is made of EU citizens, and a significant number are trafficked within their own Member States. The majority of the victims in the EU are women and girls involved in sexual exploitation.

**Almost one in four victims is a minor.** Therefore, we are speaking about people, mainly women and young people, who are forced into prostitution suffering extreme hardship conditions. Furthermore, minors are forced into criminal activities, mainly drug dealing and theft, exploited in the work, forced to beg, often victims of violence, even sexual violence.

**Criminal networks have replaced States in helping people in vulnerable employment situations creating a criminal parallel welfare that strengthen the power of the exploiters.**

We are talking about **men** and/or **young adults** employed in occupations such as agriculture, pastoral or intensive livestock breeding mostly of cattle, pigs, and poultry, logistics, manufacturing, construction, and also food delivery and leafleting activities. There are as well **women**, invisible women, who work as carers or in domestic services every day. These activities contribute daily to feed the market of serious exploitation, full by an ever-widening pool of people in vulnerable conditions, that the pandemic has further increased. **Criminal networks have replaced States in helping people to overcome these difficult moments, creating criminal parallel welfare that strengthens the power of the exploiters.**

Today, even more, the **identification** of victims as well as the **support** provided in tailored pathways, assistance, and **social re-integration are the cornerstones of the human rights paradigm** for the phenomenon of human trafficking. The main point is working to enhance the **social capital** of these persons, aiming to help them regain their dignity and self-esteem that is only possible when what is envisaged is achieved.

The project “N.E.x.T. TO YOU” is part of a consolidated path, that anti-trafficking projects in EU countries have carried out thanks to the opportunities offered by the European Commission's programs.

Thanks to the work of the private sector, in collaboration with national and local authorities, these initiatives were able to give back a dignified life and an authentic migration project to thousands of migrants.

**The EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings** presented by the Commission on 14th April 2021, defines actions aimed at detecting and combating trafficking, as well as protecting victims by supporting them in redefining their lives. Presently, the phenomenon of trafficking is related to the mixed migration flows as well as to humanitarian crises that for political, climatic or economic reasons, determine the need for millions of people to leave their countries of origin seeking better conditions in other countries.

Migrations have always contributed to shaping the history of humanity. The wars of recent years, the complex emergency crises, the recurrence of political regimes characterized by extensive and serious violations of human rights, underlined the necessity for the International Community and EU institutions to work in the direction of fighting against violence and serious exploitation.

**The project “N.E.x.T. TO YOU” is part of a consolidated path, that anti-trafficking projects in EU countries have carried out thanks to the opportunities offered by the European Commission's programs.**

The specific issues of the rights of minors and non-accompanied minors, victims of human trafficking, and their empowerment through accompanying paths, have been at the core of the work of the anti-trafficking networks since their establishment.

N.E.x.T. TO YOU allows important synergies between the specificities of the partners, the operational work, and the development of the actions, coordinated by the Veneto Region, the project's coordinator. It is coherently placed in the framework of the interventions designed by European policymakers for fighting serious exploitation and protecting the victims.

**In these recent years, thanks to the work of the private sector, in collaboration with national and local authorities, these initiatives were able to give back a dignified life and an authentic migration project to thousands of migrants.**



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### 3. THE ETHNO PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT WORKSHOPS: LET'S START!

*Interview with Francesca Sguotti, Equality social cooperative, on behalf of the consortium*

Within the month of October 2021, the **psychosocial workshops** in all partner countries finally started.

#### *What are they about?*

The fourth work package of the N.E.x.T. TO YOU project is called "**Psychosocial workshops and ethno-psychological support for Trafficked Persons**", to be implemented between summer 2021 and spring 2022. They aim at supporting healing pathways to prevent re-trafficking, improving the trafficked persons' recognition of their own delicate situation, as well as their resilience. The objective of the workshops is meant to change the self-perception from victims to agents of change. The co-applicants involved in these actions are Equality (Italy), France Terre D'Asile (France), Fundacion Cruz Blanca (Spain), and Payoke (Belgium).

The psychological support addresses a specific group of 80 vulnerable trafficked persons previously indicated by the social workers. They are accompanied by a small support group that focuses on their individual needs. This first action is entitled "**Psychosocial workshops**".

#### *The approach*

These workshops are carried out through the approach of **ethnopsychology**, taking specific attention to the culture and the country of origin. The presence of cultural mediators acts as a support to the professionals. This second action is called "**Individual ethno-psychological support for trafficked young adults**".

#### *What about the psychosocial workshops?*

20 TPs have been involved and divided into 3 small groups according to gender, age, specific needs, and type of exploitation.

#### *The methodology*

#### *How many sessions have been held for each group?*

8 sessions of 2 hours each were held led by a professional with specific experience of psychological support or migration processes.

An essential factor was the sharing of a **working methodology** towards the project's beneficiaries; all the psychologists were invited to co-create a common working model adapted to the specificities of each country.



A **participatory methodology** was adopted: the beneficiaries were able to intervene in the co-construction of the path, according to their needs. The professionals suggested topics and discussed them through analogic tools such as art, photography, storytelling, mind-body techniques.

### Where

At end of the summer, **Fundacion Cruz Blanca**, in the Spanish location of Cordoba and Ceuta, and **Equality** for Veneto Region (Italy) started the first cycle of workshops. Equality began with the first group in Padova (Italy) and the second one will be held in November 2021 in Verona (Italy) and will be entitled “**Ways to be**”.

Fundacion Cruz Blanca involved a group of young women with children from third countries such as Nigeria, Morocco, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Ghana, Venezuela, in Cordoba. In Ceuta, the group was composed of girls between 11-17 from Morocco.

### Mind-body integration for psychosocial workshops

In Belgium, in September 2021 **Payoke** launched the first cycle of workshops with a group of Nigerian women clients. To complement the workshops, Payoke created a “**Mind-body toolkit**” offering guidance to put in place trauma-sensitive yoga mini sessions to open or close the Next to You workshops. The toolkit is based on David Emerson’s Trauma Center Trauma Sensitive Yoga model, an empirically validated clinical intervention for complex trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder. To date, Payoke delivered 3 training of trainers with the project partners to encourage the piloting of trauma-sensitive yoga across the consortium.

**France Terre D’Asile** started its first cycle on November 19th, 2021 and the second one will begin in January 2022. The previous experiences of other partners will be most helpful. Clients living in remote areas with no access to associations specialized in supporting victims of human trafficking will be benefiting from online sessions.

*Our approach remains to stand by the people, not to replace them.  
They can make it!*

The experience of talking about prevention with young women who have had a history of trafficking becomes a challenge that can lead to both obstacles and great satisfaction. **Our approach remains to stand by the people, empowering them.**





## 4. FLASH FROM FRANCE TERRE D'ASILE ON INTENSIVE LABOR MARKET INCLUSION PROGRAMS AND PSYCHOSOCIAL WORKSHOPS

### *What are your key challenges?*

**The key challenge is to adapt each workshops cycle to the local specificities of the area where they are implemented.**

"According to us, the main issue is **to adapt each workshops cycle to the local specificities completing the support already existing in the area.**

To this end, we can rely on a strong network of partners that we keep developing, together with N.E.x.T TO YOU.

In addition, we are most grateful to our social workers who show a strong commitment and are meaningful actors to keep the project alive in the whole area.

With regard to WP4, our psychologist, Juliette Flora Denicola, has developed a program of 8 workshops called **"A cycle to empower yourself"** in which body and mind are at the heart of the experience. She facilitates them together with a cultural mediator from Nigeria. Participants work on self-esteem and self-awareness by using various means of expression (art-therapy tools, body expression, relaxation, board game, talk groups) while bonding together.

Here are Juliette's words on this adventure:

"As a clinical psychologist, I have been working for several years with adolescents in exile. My clinic is guided by the psychoanalytical approach, with particular attention given to cultural coding and the environment in which the subject is integrated. The use of therapeutic workshops through art is a precious tool that I use. They allow creating a meeting space different from the classic framework of clinical interviews, where art and the material used become the support of the relationship. The cycle of activities suggested has been thought in this sense, with the use of different media such as plastic arts, modeling, mimes, body movements. The aim is developing self-expression and creative abilities, as factors of success for personal development."

### *What came out of the skills assessments?*

- Our clients, mostly women from Nigeria, do not want to work in the same field of their previous work experiences.
- These women are willing and motivated to follow vocational training.

They are in need of a better understanding of the French job market and its specificities. They are unaware that employees do not only have obligations but also rights. An informative and interactive workshop is essential so that they can become informed workers."





REGIONE DEL VENETO

Only by guaranteeing all sections of the population the same access to rights in the workplace and elsewhere will we be able to ensure the well-being of the entire community.

## 5. FOCUS ON THE EUROPEAN ANTI-TRAFFICKING DAY

### Precariousness or slavery is not a job!" Conference of the INGOs of the Council of Europe

*Interview with Francesca Albertoni, Comunità dei Giovani, and Federica Irene Molinaro, Veneto Region.*

To mark the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17 October) and the European Anti-Trafficking Day (18 October), the **Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe** organized two events, on the 18th of October.

A ceremony with leading personalities of the Council of Europe and testimonies of persons who have been victims of trafficking or whose rights to decent work have been denied were presented.

A **webinar was held to explore the issue of decent work** (with reference to the **revised European Social Charter**), entitled "Precariousness of slavery is not a job!".

The webinar was opened by Gerhard Ermischer, President of the Conference of INGOs, and Karin Lukas, President of the European Committee of Social Rights – Council of Europe. The panelists addressed the topic of **decent work** and the measures to allow access to the labor market.

**Francesca Albertoni**, coordinator of Comunità dei Giovani (Padova) underlined how the phenomenon of labor exploitation of the most vulnerable groups has become increasingly widespread and involves all territorial areas.

*Francesca, in your experience, what are the conditions for decent work that are not respected, and that should be guaranteed at all costs?*

"The sectors most affected by severe exploitation, which mainly involve the migrant population, remain agriculture and textile, where situations of semi-slavery still emerge. I think that **increasing the awareness of fundamental rights and guaranteeing their equal access** is the only way to ensure the well-being of the entire community. In fact, work favors the building of identity and inclusion in the social network. It does not only provide income but is a place of fulfillment, exchange and relationships, personal and professional growth, and acquisition of independence. On the contrary, the absence of concrete employment opportunities with a regular contract increases the vulnerability of the person and the consequent risk of marginalization or re-victimization with a return to the network of exploitation."

**Federica Irene Molinaro** intervened on behalf of the Department of Addiction, Third Sector, New Marginalities, and Social Inclusion of the Veneto Region, directed by Maria Carla Midena.



*Federica, what is already being done, or what needs to be done, to allow everyone to access decent work?*

"Two main initiatives are in place in Veneto. They aim to promote the eradication of all forms of poverty, with a specific focus on vulnerable people, such as victims of human trafficking and exploitation.

The first initiative is the regional scheme called "**Reddito Di Inclusione Attiva - Active Inclusion Income**" (R.I.A.), whose main objective is promoting recovery paths related to job placement, targeting disadvantaged categories and/or promoting socializing paths.

The second initiative is "**N.A.V.I.G.A.Re - Veneto Anti-trafficking Network Governance and Regional Actions**", which aims to consolidate an integrated system for the protection and assistance of victims of trafficking and/or serious exploitation, active 24 hours a day for 365 days a year. **The objective is guaranteeing access to social rights, regardless of legal status, age, nationality, gender, and type of exploitation** (sexual, labor, forced begging, forced criminal activities, forced marriages).

The main objective was to share regional experiences promoting the social inclusion of vulnerable people and victims of trafficking. They are characterized by a high degree of multi-agency integration and public-private partnership, as well as by a multidimensional personal care approach.

"N.A.V.I.G.A.Re - Veneto Anti-trafficking Network Governance and Regional Actions", aims at guaranteeing access to social rights, regardless of legal status, age, nationality, gender and type of exploitation



Still on the topic of decent work, during the same conference, Payoke's Director Klaus Vanhoutte, representing the three Belgian reception centers for trafficking victims, Payoke, PAG-ASA, and ASBL SŪRYA, participated in the panel addressing the issue of decent work.

"Social equity, **#economicgrowth**, and environmental **#sustainability** are part of the same equation. We need to rethink **#affluence** and transform our **#consumption** patterns if we want to curb the demand for **#cheaplabor**" said Mr. Vanhoutte.



## OTHER INITIATIVES FROM THE PARTNERS TO MARK OCTOBER 18TH



### Elevating the voice of trafficked persons

by Silvia Lamonaca, Payoke

To mark EU anti-trafficking day 2021, Payoke launched the online campaign “Elevating the voice of trafficked persons”. The need to include the voices of trafficked persons in anti-trafficking initiatives has been increasingly championed by victim-support and anti-trafficking organizations in recent years.

However, trafficked persons’ contributions are not always integrated in a meaningful and non-stigmatizing manner, and instead, often fall short of promoting their rights. Reflecting on the enduring and vital need for victim-centered and human rights-centered approaches, in this campaign Payoke presented La Strada International’s 7 actionable recommendations.

More info [here](#).



### France Terre d'Asile and its engagement on social media

On the 18th of October, France Terre d'Asile published an information video on social networks to raise public awareness on the European Anti-Trafficking Day. On Instagram, internet users could answer a quiz to test their knowledge on this issue.

Youtube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOcde4hMWL0&t=5s>



France terre d'asile

★ Favoris · 18 octobre · 🌐

A l'occasion de la journée européenne de lutte contre la #traite des êtres humains, découvrez notre vidéo explicative sur ce crime complexe, souvent méconnu, mais dont au moins 50 000 personnes sont victimes dans le monde.

#endhumantrafficking #EUAntiTraffickingDay





## 6. SYNERGY WITH LIBES, LIFE BEYOND THE SHELTER, BY PAYOKE

Silvia Lamonaca, Payoke



*Life Beyond the Shelter (Libes) aims to enhance support for trafficked persons in the long-term, as they move from shelter to independent living.*

### **New synergies and cross-fertilization with AMIF-funded Libes project**

New social work tools to support the socio-economic integration of third-country national victims of trafficking were released in September, as the AMIF-funded project Life Beyond the Shelter (Libes) came to a close. The 24-month project, implemented in Belgium, Germany, Italy, and Spain **aimed to enhance support for trafficked persons in the long-term**, as they move from shelter to independent living.

Although virtually in every Member State, there is a support system in place to provide for victims' immediate and short-term needs, longer-term assistance can be a challenge. Once victims leave the shelter, they are on their own, coping with multiple tasks and trying to move on with their lives, often in a country foreign to them and with modest language skills. In this phase, shelters and social services strive to continue to provide help, but they hardly have the resources needed for a close and comprehensive follow-up.

**The project results offer opportunities for cross-fertilization with N.E.x.T. TO YOU on different levels, primarily towards the reinforcement of clients' psycho-social, social, and labor integration pathways, for instance:**

- The **Libes independent living skills curriculum**, available in 6 languages, pilot-tested through more than 120 workshops in 4 countries. It is made of 8 training modules addressing areas such as handling personal finance, navigating the public administration, finding an apartment, managing a household, finding a job, communicating across cultures, and practicing self-care;
- The needs assessment report A **"World I can trust"**, available in 6 languages, is the result of 54 semi-structured interviews with clients and highlights the main cluster of needs they identified in their transition from residential care to independence;
- The **mentoring program for trafficked persons** in which about 45 clients were matched with a buddy, either a local volunteer or a former client of the victim support organizations, provides a successful trauma-informed practice towards empowerment. An ebook, available in Italian, German and English, documents the experience and describes the main features of mentoring for such a highly vulnerable population.

All the Libes results are available on the project website at <https://libes.org/results/>

After several intense months of remote work, we have finally been able to set a date for the first face-to-face exchange meeting. It will be organized by Fundación Cruz Blanca in Seville (Spain) on **5 and 6 April 2022**.



This exchange session will focus on job counseling and employment training with victims of human trafficking. We will also have the opportunity to visit the Fundación Cruz Blanca shelter for male victims of trafficking; the only shelter of its kind available in Spain. There will be the chance to visit other programmes for victims of trafficking in Seville.







## 8.EU NEWS

**EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2025)**, European Commission

**"Fighting Trafficking in Human Beings - Factsheet"**, European Commission

**"Trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation: new HELP online training module"**, Council of Europe.

**"EU Anti-Trafficking Day"**, IOM - UN Migration



*"Trafficking in human beings is a crime that destroys people's lives. It denies victims their most basic of fundamental rights and undermines their dignity, especially women and children who are trafficked for sexual exploitation. We must all join forces to end this crime. Today's Strategy focuses on prevention, awareness raising, prosecution of criminals and protection of victims. "*

*- Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission*

**Greetings from the N.E.x.T. TO YOU partnership!**

**For further information:**  
**[www.ensa-network.eu/nexttoyou](http://www.ensa-network.eu/nexttoyou)**



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European Network  
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