

NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 4

NOVEMBER 2022



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AT STAKE:

Developing socio economic empowerment and psychological support pathways for victims of human trafficking



1.EDITORIAL: NExT TO YOU FINAL CONFERENCE

The N.E.x.T. TO YOU project is rapidly approaching its conclusion, scheduled for November 30, 2022. In recent months, important results have been achieved in all the countries of the consortium in relation to the project actions concerning WP3 - Socio-working Empowerment and WP4 - Paths of socio-psychological support. In addition, the project coordinator participated in the networking event promoted by DG Home on 26 September 2022 in Brussels. This was the occasion to learn about other important projects addressing the fight against human trafficking and serious exploitation, to share good practices and to strengthen the network.

During the month of November, the onsite meeting with the participation of the whole consortium will be held in Padua. Indeed, on November 14 a partners' meeting is scheduled for further exchanges of good practises and will include the study visits with the National Anti-trafficking Help Line which is the Italian Observatory on Trafficking in Human Beings managed by the Veneto Region. In addition, some of the professionals from the N.A.V.I.G.A.Re project will describe the latest implementations adopted.



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

On November 15, on the other hand, the final conference of the project will be held in Venice at Palazzo Grandi Stazioni, Fondamenta Santa Lucia, Cannaregio 23. The event, which can also be followed online, will aim at sharing and disseminating the main results achieved by the project, as well as reflecting on the phenomenon of human trafficking and serious exploitation of minors and young adults. Inputs will come from the European Commission, the Council of Europe (Conference of INGOs, Committee on Environment and Health Crisis) and the Center for Human Rights of the University of Padua.

Time will also be provided to reflect on the impact of the project, thanks to the dialogue with European and international networks, and on synergies with complementary projects.

To download the programme and the registration form go to **<https://nexttoyou.ensa-network.eu/>**.



Maria Carla Midena, Veneto Region Social Services
Director: Unit addictions, third sector, new
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Federica Irene Molinaro, Veneto Region Social
Services: Unit addictions, third sector, new
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2. FOCUS ON: INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM MEETING, SEVILLA APRIL 5-6 2022

by Carmen Martínez-Raposo Soria, Referent for Trafficking and Humanitarian Aid Programmes, Fundaciòn Cruz Blanca

For nearly a year and a half, the covid-19 pandemic has prevented the consortium from holding the international exchange meetings that were planned. Thus, while the kick-off meetings and the first scheduled visit to Belgium had to take place online, it was finally time to be in the field... On this occasion, the consortium met in the Spanish city of Seville, where Fundación Cruz Blanca works.

There is no doubt about the importance of human relations in our society. This was evident in the two intense days of sharing and learning that we experienced. Suddenly, those faces we saw at Zoom meetings became people in flesh and blood. And not only did we have the opportunity to share these spaces with each other, but also to meet the clients of the Fundación's in the shelter for male victims of trafficking; the only shelter of its kind available in Spain.

This exchange meeting focused on job counselling and employment training with victims of human trafficking. In this regard, we were able to visit the Alalba-Oblatas project. A social entrepreneurship project to promote the autonomy and employment of women in situations of social inequality, mainly women victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. The project seeks to ensure the improvement of the quality of life of those who participate in it, and to achieve a more humane and collaborative social economy.

I believe that meeting in person as well as the sense of community and belonging that we have achieved after these two days, will have a positive impact on the development of the final phase of the project.

Carmen Martinez-Raposo, Fundaciòn Cruz Blanca



3. EXCHANGE OF GOOD PRACTICES ON SOCIAL ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT

Views from Italy, France, Spain and Belgium

What methodological approach are you following to support trafficked minors and young adults?

Italy, Comunità dei Giovani (CdG) by Francesca Albertoni

The team foresees a division between the tools needed for the job search activities together with the clients and the tools used by the operator. Indeed, they strongly believe in activating brief and targeted training, including short internships due to the client's interests and the present request of the job market.

If possible, several intensive pathways for the same person should be activated. It is very important to extend the territorial network by involving companies, training organizations, sectorial categories, and exchanging good practices with other private social organizations.

Finally, given the frequent lack of recognized qualifications and the needs of our clients, we believe it is more effective to address them to low-skill work experience, while encouraging them to participate in medium/long-term training. These could be carried out together with work.

France: France Terre d'asile (FTDA) by Radek Ficek

The approach, within this project, is to adapt the existing tools as well as creating new ones so they can match the needs of both asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection. For instance, we created a visual summary of the skill evaluations and, for those without the status; we decided to focus on the possibility of voluntary work and hobbies, as well as referral for French classes.

Due to geographical distribution of housing centres in France Terre d'asile, we chose to facilitate the workshops both face-to-face and online. To guarantee the security of the clients, they have to connect only from their housing centres and could choose a nickname. We observed a good percentage of attendance, even for the online cycle.

To promote participation, France Terre d'asile created new tools, mixing supports and adapting them to online activities.



Spain: Fundacion Cruz Blanca (FCB), Carmen Martinez-Raposo

In the daily activities, Cruz Blanca professionals include some general good practices, such as:

- Reinforcement of confidence and creation of a climate of security to carry out an adequate intervention;
- Training in the trafficking of human beings to all members of the organization;
- Close coordination in the work team;
- Adaptation of the training plan to the profiles that are attended each year;
- Open interventions;
- Methodology focused on a warm and horizontal intervention;
- Use of material and support activities;
- Accompaniment throughout the participatory process.

What best practices would you like to share to improve psychological support for Victims of Human Trafficking?

Italy: Social Cooperative Equality, Francesca Sguotti psychologist and psychotherapist, and Comunità dei Giovani (CdG), Giorgia Bordin psychologist

Within the Navigare project, a project against human trafficking in the Veneto Region, we would like to speak about the activity “Psicologhe a Bordo”. It includes different disciplines of psychology: ethno-psychology, psychotherapy, sexology, neuropsychology, legal and forensic psychology, community and health psychology, emergency psychology, intercultural education, psychology from body point of view, and group paths oriented towards self-awareness, and philosophy for children.

The psycho-social intervention takes into account two assumptions:

- the fragility of migrant people to whom the actions are intended;
- the complexity of the obstacles that this type of migrants have to face from the moment of their first entry.

France: France Terre d’asile (FTDA) by Radek Ficek

In FTDA we promote the implementation of psychological care projects. Partner associations can also offer this type of social care but these types of offers are unevenly available throughout the country. For instance, in Paris there are more initiatives and programs dedicated to victims of human trafficking than other cities. Due to geographical distribution of housing centres of France Terre d’asile, we facilitated the possibility to have both a psychologist and a cultural mediator either face-to-face or online. Besides, we involved social workers in the creation of contents and tools as they have a strong knowledge of their clients, and adapted these tools to our different cycles layout.



Spain: Fundacion Cruz Blanca (FCB) by Carmen Martinez-Raposo

Our psychological support team highlights the importance of the therapeutic skills such as empathy, warmth, professional skills, flexibility and tolerance, active listening and professional ethics. It is also important to conduct a continuous evaluation of the situation of the clients. The evaluation tools applied are the psychosocial assessment interview and some self-report techniques such as “Refugee Health Screener 15 (RHS 15)”, “Beck Depression Inventory (BDI)”, “State Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI)”, “Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale” or “International Post Traumatic Stress Questionnaire (ITQ)”.

Belgium: Payoke by Robert Leysen

Many Payoke clients are not proficient in Dutch or English, and an interpreter is often needed during individual psychological counseling. However, some believe that a third party inhibits building a trusting counselor-patient relationship. Therefore, we always strive to find psychologists who speak the patient’s language. Moreover, through Next to You and other EU-funded projects like Amelie, we started exploring body-based interventions to foster recovery and healing. Because most survivors of trafficking have developed some form of mental or emotional condition, including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, or feelings of severe guilt or shame, we provide our clients with opportunities to practice dance, yoga, exercise, and sports in a trauma-sensitive environment as a complement to traditional psychotherapy.



4. VISITING SHELTERS FOR MALES VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND CENTRE FOR WOMEN INTEGRATION

Testimonies from Fundacion Cruz Blanca Spain

Shelter for male victims of trafficking run by Cruz Blanca in the city of Arahal

For years, we have been committed to understanding the phenomenon of trafficking in its broadest sense, and Fundacion Cruz Blanca is the only organization in Spain that assists male victims of this crime. In the N.E.x.T. TO YOU project, we propose the transformation of the social and structural conditions that promote the existence of trafficking.

During the Consortium Meeting, we had the opportunity to visit a shelter for male VoT in the city of Arahal. It counts on an interdisciplinary team, including a social worker, a social educator, a psychologist, a lawyer, and social integrators. The difficulties faced in working with this specific profile, often conditioned by the obstacles of the system itself, were highlighted.

“We face a lack of resources, because until recently, there was hardly any institutional support for such programs. For example, we cannot guarantee to have interpreters to support the first interviews that take place in the shelter, even though it is a right that every victim should have access to” – Ángeles Pérez

“And it is also important to point out the difficulties of integration into society, when there are no real options for access to the labour market. Especially when the identification and documentation processes take a long time”- Marta Corzo



- **Alalba centre Oblatas (organisation that works in employment and reintegration programmes with women victims of human trafficking)**

The Fundación team arranged a visit to another of the specialised entities working in Seville. We visited the Alalba Centre, one of the 14 projects run by the Oblate congregation.

The consortium was particularly interested to learn about the two-pronged social entrepreneurship project:

-miTEA genius minds: designs and produces free and sensorial didactic material adapted for children with and without functional diversity.

-Sumak Kausay: offers handmade products, combining the skills of working women with the most advanced techniques of sublimation, embroidery and plating.

“The only way for women to get out of the trafficking circle is to guarantee real socio-labour alternatives. Through our programmes, we try to do just that. An insertion in the labour market that guarantees them security and stability” – Sister Marisa.



5.OVERLOOKED AND UNDER-SERVED: THE MALE VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

by Silvia Lamonaca, Head of Programmes NGO Payoke, Belgium

As part of the Next to You consortium meeting in Seville on 5-6 April, the project partners visited a shelter for trafficked men managed by Fundacion Cruz Blanca (FCB). Like FCB, Payoke is one of the few NGOs in Europe offering accommodation and support to adult male victims of human trafficking. The visit offered an opportunity to reflect on the fact that men and boys make up a significant proportion of trafficked persons, yet they go unreported.

There are systemic barriers to assisting potential male survivors:

- In many countries, programs established to assist trafficking victims only cater to women;
- Many male victims are unwilling to speak out, silenced by fear and gender stereotypes such as “tough men can’t be victims”;
- The lack of discussion and research on male victims of trafficking seems to convey the notion that the phenomenon does not affect men or that it is not as dire of a situation as it is for women;
- Evidence shows that trafficked men face the same trauma and exploitation as females but are frequently overlooked. Trafficked boys and men experience the same vulnerabilities as girls and women, such as income, discrimination, housing and job insecurities, abuse, and domestic violence;
- The notion that trafficked men are all labour trafficking victims is a myth. Men are often associated with trafficking for labour exploitation, whereas sex trafficking is seen as a crime affecting women and girls exclusively. While that is often the case, evidence shows that the number of men and boys falling victims to sex trafficking is on the increase;
- Few support programs provide specialized assistance to men, especially safe housing and gender-sensitive psycho-social counselling. In the absence of specialized reception centres, male survivors are often accommodated in homeless shelters, which are inadequate for traumatized people;
- Common assumptions about gender and migration contributed to the view that female migrants who are exploited are easily considered trafficked. In contrast, male migrants who faced the same violations and abuse are seen more commonly as irregular migrants whose migration plan failed. As a consequence, authorities and service providers often fail to recognize male victims due to bias or the tendency to perceive men as less vulnerable to trafficking;
- In public opinion, when it comes to illegal work, men are viewed more as accomplices than victims. The survivors themselves often believe that their agreement to go abroad makes them complicit with their trafficker;
- The intersection between labor violations, labor exploitation, and human trafficking can be blurred, and exploitation can be addressed differently from country to country. In certain legal contexts, trafficking for economic exploitation can easily fall under the radar.

Too often, men and boys suffer in silence. We believe we can empower survivors to find their voices by offering tailored support, pushing out the stigma surrounding male trafficking, and lobbying for more resources and safe spaces devoted to them.

As victim support organizations and advocates, we can:

- **Lobby for funding** to provide comprehensive and culturally appropriate assistance to meet men and boys' needs without detracting from, or minimizing the need for services for women and girls.
- **Expand and challenge the narrative** of human trafficking, in language and portrayal, to include men and boys.
- Offer a **safe place** where males can share their stories of violence or abuse, without being exposed to the traditional perceptions of masculinity.
- Advocate for **safe housing**.



6. TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS PREVENTION IN THE PRESENT UKRAINIAN CONTEXT

by Radek Ficek, Director of France Terre d'Asile

The massive arrival of Ukrainian refugees, mostly women with children, illustrates how vulnerable can be such migrants population to the practice of human trafficking. In France, for instance, the first day after opening Paris reception and registration centre for Ukrainians, we noticed presence of the traffickers trying to capture the young women. The civil society, governmental agencies and UNHCR were at once mobilised to prevent this phenomenon. The UNHCR, since the beginning of the war, organises once a week coordination meetings with different actors of civil society. Together they are trying to update their knowledge, to prevent the risks of trafficking in human beings and to address the needs of potential victims. In this context, some basic information was spread through flyers, translated to Russian and Ukrainian languages. They were distributed via all web sites dedicated to Ukrainian refugees. The paper version was distributed in the reception and registration centres. The information was also disseminated in the hostels and centres providing accommodation for the Ukrainians refugees.

European Union Agency for Asylum participated in the work on the prevention of different forms of exploitation of Ukrainians refugee population, considered as particularly vulnerable. On 31st May 2022, a VEN-EUAA network meeting took place on trafficking in human beings and Gender-Based Violence in the Ukrainian context. On this occasion, possible solutions to assist Ukrainian women in Poland, Sweden, Moldavia and Ukraine were presented. From this perspective, two main objectives are foreseen: the assistance of victims and the prevention of possible enrolment (raising awareness about the risk of human trafficking in the war context).

In Spain, the Ministry of Migration activated a protocol for the detection and care of victims of trafficking in the four centres set up for the registration and first reception of Ukrainian people. Likewise, in the first weeks of the conflict, there was already evidence of the disappearance of groups of people and minors who had been picked up in Poland and disappeared once they arrived in Spain. The most notorious case is the disappearance of a group of 30 minors who were to be transferred to the Canary Islands. The case of these children is an example of the lack of control that is increasingly worrying the Spanish and Ukrainian authorities. Warnings about the transfer and reception without official supervision of minors, the most vulnerable in the war, have been growing since the Russian invasion began on 24 February. Initiatives to transfer children out of Ukraine are numerous, but they have to be carried out in accordance with the legislation of the two States and with the corresponding authorisations.



7. THE EU ANTI-TRAFFICKING DAY



Source: European Commission, Migration and Home Affairs

The main purpose of the EU Anti-Trafficking Day is to raise awareness on trafficking in human beings and to increase the exchange of information, knowledge and best practices amongst the different actors working in this field. The NExT TO YOU Consortium highlights, encourages and organizes awareness raising actions.

A flash on the Veneto Region

The NAVIGARe project (Network Anti-tratta Veneto Intersezioni Governance Regionali)

The NAVIGARe project intends to implement and consolidate a unique and integrated assistance of victims of trafficking and/or severe exploitations, active 24 hours per day during the whole year in order to guarantee them the access to rights. It is a project responding to a call from the Italian Council of Minister, Department for Equal Opportunities, where the Veneto Region is leading a partnership with local stakeholders, local social and health units, universities, judiciary authorities, the police, labor supervisory bodies and the Third sector.

Follow the journey of the NAVIGARe events on the EU anti-trafficking days in Treviso, Verona, Venezia, Padova, Vicenza and Rovigo.

TREVISO

October 21st

Presentation of the photographic exhibition "The invisibles", curated by Comunità di Sant'Egidio, followed by a presentation of anti-trafficking projects and severe forms of exploitation

October 22nd

"Il monzone – una storia di caporalato", a play about illegal hiring, by Beppe Casales;

VERONA

October 19th

Testimonies of liberation, courage and beauty, dialogue between exceptional speakers and Quid (social enterprise);
October 19th, presentation of the NAVIGARe project followed by the play "Disegni dalla frontiera", about a journey and experience, a monologue and a collective story, a manifesto for humanity and suffering;

October 17th-23rd

Communication and awareness raising actions about anti-trafficking and severe labor exploitation;

VENICE

October 18th

"Disegni dalla frontiera. A written tale with drawings" with the author Francesco Piobbichi;

October 17th-18th

The Town Hall of Mestre and palace Ca' Farsetti in Venice colored with orange lights;

PADUA

September 30th

support for vulnerable and marginalized persons, dialogue and stories;

October 14th

presentation of the book "Le cattive" (The bad ones) by Camila Sosa Vilada, with Marcia Leite, transfeminist activist, founder of Libellula di Roma association;

VICENZA

October 15th

inauguration of the exhibition "Dream but don't sleep";

ROVIGO

October 18th

workshop about labor exploitation and illegal hiringout labor exploitation and illegal hiring

ONLINE

(on Twitch and Youtube),

October 18th

"Un diavolo per capello" talks about trafficking and severe exploitation.

October 18th, Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe, Migration Committee on the rights of migrants "Human trafficking in flight from conflict, Impact of the war in Ukraine"

The NExT TO YOU Consortium developed exchanges with the above Committee.

The aim of the event has been to learn about the work being done to protect those vulnerable to trafficking, exploitation and abuse in the current situation, and to hear the steps being taken to identify and prosecute perpetrators, and potential abusers.

To highlight:

The Council of Europe **Action Plan** on Protecting Vulnerable persons in the Context of Migration and Asylum in Europe (2021-2025), which recognises that refugees are at particular risk of insecurity, trafficking and violence especially at border crossing points; transit hubs; reception centres and shelters. It recommends the early identifications and protection of victims and persons vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation.

The Council of Europe **Group of Experts** on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, that produced a Guidance Note (GRETA (2022) 09) addressing the risks of trafficking in human beings related to the war in Ukraine and the ensuing humanitarian crisis.



Greetings from the N.E.x.T. To You Consortium!

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



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

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