

Action Plan

1st European Santa Marta Conference

08th and 09th February 2021

Working Document

1) Increased identification

- Recommendation

Cooperate with national and local authorities to establish networks for the better identification of trafficked persons and to provide training for relevant personnel.

- Rationale

Human Trafficking happens under our eyes, but people do not “see” it, as they lack the knowledge and the skills to identify it, as well as a network to whom to report it.

- Action

We will call on Church institutions (schools, hospitals, parishes, counselling centers) in our area of responsibility to include education and sensitization measures on human trafficking and how to identify it in their formation curricula to fight the culture of indifference.

We call on state authorities to use the expertise of faith based and civil society organisations.

2) Specialised institutions in law enforcement and the judiciary

- Recommendation

Establish specialized departments for human trafficking cases in the police, the public prosecutor’s office, and specialized chambers in courts.

- Rationale

Cases of human trafficking are very complex – sometimes beyond imagination - and difficult to prosecute and require specialist skills to be developed.

- Action

We will advocate for the specialized training and resourcing of staff; we will offer our experience and knowledge to contribute to this objective as partners.

3) Effective rehabilitation for victims

- Recommendation

Establish exit and rehabilitation programmes for victims of human trafficking, including reintegration support until they can live independently.

- Rationale

Survivors of human trafficking are under a high social and moral pressure to leave the “criminal circle”. However, very often the only perspective they have is uncertainty, precariousness, a failed migration journey and possibly deportation.

- Action

We will advocate for governments to develop and invest in exit and rehabilitation programmes, including applying the reflection period and to grant a residence permit independently of willingness to cooperate with the police.

4) Strengthen the access to justice

- Recommendation

Ensure that victims of labour exploitation have safe access to justice.

- Rationale

Many barriers limit the access to justice for victims of labour exploitation, as they may have to declare their irregular work or residence status and thus be subject to criminalisation and/or deportation and asked to make their claim from abroad.

- Action

We will demand the protection of victims while they file complaints or claim back-wages because their access to justice should take precedence over criminal, residence, or migration policy considerations.

5) Facilitate compensation

- Recommendation

Develop (where appropriate) and implement a system for compensation of victims, including a “guarantee” fund for immediate remedy (from confiscated assets amongst other).

- Rationale

Survivors of human trafficking have suffered and are often deprived of promised salaries; hence compensation is imperative. Too often, compensation procedures are either unknown, cumbersome, or insufficient.

- Action

We will work together with professionals to make legal rights for compensations known to counsellors and victims; where no compensation schemes are available, we will advocate for a compensation regulation.

6) Sufficient resources to fight the crime

- Recommendation

Provide a sustainable financing from the institutional budget for fighting anti-trafficking initiatives; consult NGOs and survivor groups on needs for professional services.

- Rationale

Anti-trafficking projects or measures are often poorly funded or only funded as projects limited in time. This makes a continuous work difficult. It supports the public perception that human trafficking is a marginal problem.

- Action

We will hold governments accountable, review draft budgets and request reporting on the resources made available to combat trafficking.

7) Slavery free supply chains in Church institutions

- Recommendation
Free the supply chains of Church institutions from human trafficking and exploitation.
- Rationale
Church institutions and organisations are often large buyers and consumers of goods and services. They have been vocal advocates for slavery free supply chains but have rarely checked their own supply chains.
- Actions
We will screen the procurement of our institutions and organisations for exploitation and human trafficking and promote responsible consumption.

8) Human trafficking must not pay off

- Recommendation
Ensure that human trafficking does not generate profits.
- Rationale
Human trafficking exists because there is demand for cheap services, labour and goods, because the “commodity” is “reusable” many times and it generates huge profits.
- Action
We will engage in multistakeholder approaches looking at all dimensions of human trafficking and how to stop demand.