

# TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN

## *The misery behind the fantasy: from poverty to sex slavery*

### *A COMPREHENSIVE EUROPEAN STRATEGY*

In marking International Women's Day, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2001, the spotlight turns to the growing problem of trafficking in women.

This compilation of '*information sheets*' and '*funding sheets*' has been prepared to raise awareness and gives an overview of European strategies and actions. It covers elements common to various types of trafficking in human beings and concentrates on the issue of trafficking in women.

#### **Information sheets<sup>1</sup>**

1. Trafficking in human beings – a growing concern
2. EU-strategy in the field of prevention and fight against trafficking in human beings
3. Prevention of trafficking in women
4. Criminalising trafficking
5. Support for and protection of victims
6. Co-operation with third countries, in particular the candidate countries

#### **Funding Sheets**

1. The STOP Programme
2. The DAPHNE Programme
3. Programmes and initiatives in the field of employment and social affairs
4. Social support for victims of trafficking under the European Social Fund
5. The PHARE Programme, the main source of financial support for enlargement

---

1

This information pack is available at the following address:  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/equ\\_opp/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equ_opp/index_en.htm)

## **INFORMATION SHEET I**

### **TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS – A GROWING CONCERN**

Trafficking in human beings is an abhorrent and increasingly worrying phenomenon. It is of a structural, rather than of an episodic nature affecting a few individuals, in that it has extensive implications on the social, economic and organisational fabric of our societies. The phenomenon is facilitated by globalisation and by modern technologies. Trafficking in human beings not only involves sexual exploitation, but also labour exploitation in conditions akin to slavery. The victims are subjected to violence, rape, battery and extreme cruelty as well as other types of pressure and coercion. The Member States of the European Union and the candidate countries are much affected by these scourges to society.

### **THE REASONS WHY TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IS DEVELOPING**

The underlying root causes of trafficking in human beings include poverty, unemployment and lack of education and access to resources. Clearly, if on the one side, people are ready to take the risk of falling into the hands of traffickers in order to improve their living opportunities, on the other side, there is a worrying trend in industrial countries to use cheap and undeclared labour forces as well as exploiting women and children in prostitution and pornography. In particular women are in a position of vulnerability to become victims of trafficking due to the feminisation of poverty, gender discrimination, lack of educational and professional opportunities in their countries of origin.

### **RECENT TRENDS IN TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**

Despite the continuing difficulties in collecting statistical data in this area, most actors involved in combating trafficking in human beings agree that it is a growing phenomenon. At world level, estimates reach as high as 700 000 women and children being moved across international borders by trafficking rings each year. Some non-governmental organisations estimate the number to be significantly higher, especially if trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation is included.

The traditional flow between certain developing countries (Northern and Central Africa, Latin America, Asia) and Western destination countries continues. However, the most striking factor, which gives rise to great concern, is the increase in the numbers of women and children trafficked into the EU from Central and Eastern European countries. The worsening of the economic situation in these countries has had a direct effect on the flow of trafficking in women. Estimates of up to 120 000 women and children being trafficked into western Europe each year have been made. The majority of these countries have according to their own law enforcement officials become, to various degrees, both countries of origin, transit as well as countries of destination. Many women originating from the Newly Independent States are being trafficked via the candidate countries before ending up in EU Member States. The phenomenon of re-trafficking within the EU has also been noted as one new and developing factor.

All Member States are, to a greater or lesser extent, affected by trafficking in women. More specifically, trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation has

increased in recent years in parallel to the development of the sex industry. Although certain figures have been collected by police and NGOs as well as international organisations, it is here again difficult to gather reliable overall figures.

### **TRAFFICKING NETWORKS AND ORGANISED CRIME**

Law enforcement experience shows that, although there is small scale traffic involving few individuals, there are, more importantly, large enterprises and international networks creating a sophisticated and well organised “industry” with political support and economic resources in countries of origin, transit and destination. Cases of corruption of officials have also been reported. There seems also to be links with other forms of criminality. Trafficking in women is becoming a major source of income for some organised crime groups. High profits gained by these criminal organisations often imply the creation of front companies involved in legitimate activities. Profits are also laundered and fed into other illicit activities, including narcotics and arms trafficking.

Traffickers of women and children use a variety of methods to move their victims. They sometimes operate through nominally reputable employment agencies, travel agencies, entertainment companies or marriage agencies. In the cases of children the use of adoption procedures have also been noted. Legitimate travel documents are often obtained and used to cross international borders, after which the trafficking victims disappear or overstay their visas. Traffickers, however, also use fraudulent documents to obtain genuine travel documents or use altered or counterfeit papers.

Looking more specifically at trafficking in women, the recruitment of the victims takes various forms. Traffickers profit from the fragile social and economic situation of women and lure their victims by promising them large earnings in the West. Accepting such offers could support not only the victims themselves, but also their families. Traffickers approach women by advertising in newspapers for dancers, waitresses, club hostesses etc. or by direct recruitment in discotheques and bars. They also lure women through the use of marriage bureaus. Even if a certain number of the trafficked women know they will work as prostitutes, they do not know that they will often be kept in slavery like conditions being unable to escape from their exploiters. After the women are transported to the country of destination, there are several ways in which they are forced to enter and/or to continue with prostitution. Often they are obliged to repay heavy debts consisting of the costs of the documentation and transport, or their passports and money are taken away, or they are led into drug addiction by their exploiters.

Frequently the trafficked women are threatened with violence, beaten up and raped. In some cases women are physically restrained to prevent them from leaving. Traffickers also threaten to inform the family of the women that they are working abroad as prostitutes. These women also feel trapped because of their situation as illegal immigrants. Finally, the influence over the victims is even stronger when the criminal organisations control the whole chain from recruitment, through transportation to the concrete sexual exploitation.

## INFORMATION SHEET II

### **EU-STRATEGY IN THE FIELD OF PREVENTION AND FIGHT AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**

The fight against trafficking in human beings has become increasingly a political priority at the level of the European Union. Initially most attention was drawn to the fight against trafficking in women and children for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Recent developments have, however, highlighted the need also to address the issue of trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation.

The European Union has been actively engaged since 1996 in developing a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach towards the prevention of and fight against trafficking in human beings involving all relevant actors – NGOs and social authorities, judicial, law enforcement and migration authorities. Such an approach involves national and international co-operation. It is necessary to address the phenomenon throughout the trafficking chain (recruiters, transporters, exploiters, other intermediaries and clients). A variety of measures, including explicit legal protection to all individuals, and preventive measures, as well as measures to ensure adequate protection of, support for, and assistance to the victims, are required. Since women are in a position of vulnerability to become victims, there is also a clear need to tackle this problem from the angle of promoting gender equality.

The European Parliament has always been very active in requiring further actions at EU-level, both in the field of prevention and in the field of fighting against trafficking in human beings. This is for instance illustrated by several resolutions, including specific resolutions on trafficking in women.

There is a general consensus, in particular as regards the need to develop:

- Preventive measures
- Penal legislation as well as co-operation involving police and judicial authorities
- Protection, assistance and support for victims
- Appropriate co-operation policies

All these elements require various initiatives depending on the type of trafficking (for labour exploitation or for sexual exploitation) and on the victims. So far the European Union has been more active in taking initiatives on the development of penal legislation and law enforcement and judicial co-operation than on the prevention of trafficking and the protection of victims. In a first Communication on trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation in 1996, the European Commission developed a European strategy to prevent and fight against this phenomenon. Also in 1996, the mandate for Europol was extended in order to enable the organisation to combat trafficking in human beings. Furthermore, in November 1996, the incentive and exchange programme STOP was launched to support actions by the persons responsible (public officials and NGOs) for the fight against and prevention of trafficking in human beings and the sexual exploitation of children (see annex 1).

In February 1997, the Council adopted a Joint Action calling on Member States of the European Union to review their national criminal legislation as regards trafficking in human beings and judicial co-operation as well as to encourage protection of victims

in judicial proceedings. Also in 1997, the DAPHNE Initiative to combat violence against children, young people and women was launched. The Initiative was followed by the DAPHNE Programme in December 2000 (see annex 2). This programme has a wider scope than the STOP Programme in that it covers the general issue of violence against women and children in which trafficking is included. Although the DAPHNE Programme is open for public entities, it is focusing on the important role of NGOs.

In a second Communication on further actions in the fight against trafficking in women in December 1998, the Commission assessed progress made and recommended a number of new targeted initiatives as well as the deepening of certain existing actions. In particular the objectives are to:

- to ensure that the question of trafficking remains high on the political agenda;
- to reinforce international and European co-operation, including both governments and NGOs in the countries of origin, transit and destination;
- to strengthen a multidisciplinary approach focusing on both prevention, research, law-enforcement and effective sentencing of traffickers, as well as on support for victims;
- to make clear to the candidate countries, through the accession process, that they have a responsibility to control trafficking by national measures and co-operation with the EU.

Since May 1999, the European Union's actions to combat trafficking in human beings are explicitly mentioned under the Title VI in the Amsterdam Treaty. The articles of Title VI cover police and judicial co-operation. The conclusions from the European Council in Tampere of October 1999 also give clear priority to the fight against trafficking in human beings.

The Amsterdam Treaty also introduced under its social provisions the fight against exclusion. Positive synergies can be developed between actions fighting trafficking and actions promoting social inclusion. Subsequently, the Lisbon European Council in March 2000 called for setting common objectives to fight poverty and social exclusion as well as developing priority actions for groups in a vulnerable position according to the situation in each Member State. These common objectives were endorsed by the Nice European Council in December 2000 and the Member States committed themselves to mainstream the promotion of inclusion in their relevant policies (employment, education and training, health and housing). National financial means necessary to implement these commitments shall be complemented, at Community level, by action under the Structural Funds, in particular the European Social Fund.

Combating and preventing trafficking are also taken into account in various ways in the enlargement process. The EU is actively involved in helping the candidate countries to improve their labour markets and their living standards, in particular by seeking to increase women's participation. Candidate countries can also participate in specific Community programmes in partnership with Member States, for example STOP, DAPHNE, EQUAL and the Gender Equality Programme (see annex 1, 2, 3).

## **INFORMATION SHEET III**

### **PREVENTION OF TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN**

Crime prevention includes all activities which contribute to halting or reducing crime as a social phenomenon, both quantitatively and qualitatively, either through permanent and structured co-operation measures or through ad hoc initiatives. Although there are still developments to come, the EU has already taken actions to prevent trafficking in women. There are, on the one hand, measures more specifically targeted at preventing trafficking in women such as the European Forum on Prevention of Organised Crime and information campaigns, and, on the other hand, actions of a more general scope, such as promotion of gender equality and fight against poverty, that can contribute to the reduction of the number of women being trafficked for exploitative purposes.

#### **THE EUROPEAN FORUM ON PREVENTION OF ORGANISED CRIME**

The 1997 Hague Ministerial Declaration on European Guidelines for effective measures to combat trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation devotes a specific chapter to prevention. Unfortunately, no coherent follow-up has been initiated on the basis of the different elements that were identified by the ministers. The Commission has, however, launched, in November 2000, a Communication on crime prevention in general where it develops an overall strategy against various forms of crime, including trafficking in women. One of the key elements of the strategy is the launching this year of a European Forum on the Prevention of Organised Crime. Attention will be given to more specifically the prevention of trafficking in women, both for the purpose of labour exploitation and for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

The overall intention behind the Forum is to promote partnerships between and among all the different actors (such as law enforcement, social authorities, judicial and migration authorities, NGOs, international organisations). A number of projects under the STOP Programme seeking to build partnerships and European Network have also been supported and they have demonstrated their usefulness, in particular in the field of prevention. Obviously, a number of prevention measures can be considered, ranging from studies looking at a better understanding of the causes of the phenomenon, the detection of trends and the development of research, training, exchange of best practices to the launching of information campaigns.

#### **PREVENTION CAMPAIGNS AND SUPPORT TO NGOS**

Financial support for the creation and development of NGOs active in the fight against trafficking in human beings complements efficiently the role of public authorities. For example, in 1996, the EU funded the NGO "La Strada" to encourage the prevention of trafficking of women in Central and Eastern Europe, concentrating on the Czech Republic, Poland and Ukraine.

Within the framework of the New Transatlantic Agenda, the EU and the US have joined forces in the fight against trafficking in women, and information campaigns were funded for 1999/2000 in Hungary and Bulgaria, implemented by the

International Organisation for Migration. These initiatives aimed at bringing the problem of trafficking to the attention of the public and the authorities, to provide legal and medical support to the victims and warn women of the dangers of this phenomenon. In 1999, a project with the NGO 'Anti-Slavery International' was funded aimed at identifying ways of making prosecutions of traffickers more effective, focussing on witness protection schemes in ten selected countries. The PHARE and TACIS Democracy Programmes have had a major role in the financing of these activities (see annex 5). New information campaigns are being considered in candidate countries as well as other eastern European countries such as neighbouring countries of Russia. In Russia, plans for a campaign are presently being prepared.

### **ADDRESSING DISCRIMINATION AND GENDER EQUALITY IN THE EU AND IN THE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN**

In order to change social attitudes towards sexual exploitation of women, long term preventive measures are crucial. In its framework strategy on gender equality for the period 2001-2005, the Commission has included the promotion of gender equality in civil life. It relates to the question of the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms regardless of race, ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Particular attention needs to be paid to women who are subject to multiple discrimination or who face violence and/or sexual exploitation. In addition to projects funded by the STOP and DAPHNE programmes, actions in this field shall include:

- training on equality legislation for the legal professions, labour inspectorates, social partners and NGOs in the EU and in the candidate countries;
- research and data collection on the gender dimension of health and safety at the work place
- development of structures in support of the implementation of the gender equality matters in the candidate countries

### **ADDRESSING UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY AT THE ROOTS OF TRAFFICKING IN THE CANDIDATE COUNTRIES**

To prevent trafficking, it also is essential to address the social and economic differences which push people to accept the first job proposed in the West in the false hope of a brighter future. Since 1999, provisions have been made to prepare candidate countries for a progressive implementation of the European Employment Strategy and the various provisions existing in the social field at EU level.

Candidate countries are currently finalising the first stage with the help of the Commission. It covers a review of their employment policies and of the characteristics of their labour market. The candidate countries identify a number of measures whereby their employment policies can be reinforced to address structural problems in their labour markets. This leads each candidate country to establish with the Commission a Joint Assessment of national employment priorities.

Particular attention is given to women's participation to the labour market in view of the future requirement of the European Employment Strategy on gender equality. The Joint Assessments therefore propose measures to narrow the identified gender gaps, promote family-friendly working arrangements and improve the overall situation of

women in the labour markets.

In a second stage, candidate countries, in co-operation with the Commission, will draw up National Strategies for Employment and Human Resources Development including policy responses to many of the challenges identified in the Joint Assessments. The priorities identified in the Joint Assessments are used to select projects to be financed under the PHARE programme.

Similarly, the very recent European Strategy to fight Poverty and Social Exclusion and promote social inclusion should be discussed with the candidate countries in a near future to prepare them to gradually implement it.

The main financial tool in support of the European Employment and the Social Inclusion Strategies is the European Social Fund. It will be available to the candidate countries on the day of their accession, but in the meantime a Special Preparatory Programme for the European Social Fund is being managed through the European Training Foundation (ETF) to prepare the candidate countries to use it.



<b>INFORMATION SHEET IV</b>
-----------------------------

### **CRIMINALISING TRAFFICKING**

Since the issue of trafficking in human beings has been high on the political agenda of the European Union, progress has been noted in Member States' policies and legislation. In particular, the Council has adopted on February 1997 a Joint Action focusing on penal provisions and judicial co-operation. Despite this Joint Action, continuing discrepancies and divergences in penal legislation have been identified among the Member States. Furthermore, the European Council of Tampere requested further legislative initiatives, in particular in the area of fighting against trafficking in human beings.

Following the mandate of the European Council the Commission presented on 21 December 2000 a proposal for a Council Framework decision on combating trafficking in human beings. The aim of the Commission's proposal is to set up commonly adopted definitions and penalties in the Member States' legislation. Its objective is to cover not only offences concerning trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation, but also offences concerning trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation. The proposal seeks to provide a common approach to criminal law and to further develop law enforcement and judicial co-operation. Since it is crucial to address different forms of criminal movements of people that are operated by international criminal organisations, it should also be underlined that the Commission's proposal on trafficking in human beings for exploitative purposes is to be seen as to complement the initiatives presented by the French Presidency on facilitation of illegal entry, stay and residence. The Commission has also taken onboard, where appropriate, the work reflected at international level by the UN-protocol on trafficking in human beings supplementing the UN Convention on Transnational Organised Crime.

### **DEVELOPING JUDICIAL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT CO-OPERATION TO FIGHT TRAFFICKING**

In the field of law enforcement co-operation, the mandate of the Europol Drug Unit (EDU) was extended in September 1996 to include trafficking in human beings and it was asked also to establish a directory of specialised competence (a list of contact points for law enforcement purposes). Since the establishment of Europol in October 1998, ongoing exchange of information between liaison officers based in the Hague as well as the analysis of trends and methods has taken place. In addition, Europol is hosting expert meetings and is providing training for law enforcement officers. Also the STOP Programme has co-financed a number of law enforcement training events and a subsequent increase in the involvement of Europol in actions under the programme has been noted.

Apart from the work of Europol in this area, it is clear that direct co-operation must be encouraged by national police forces and that internal organisation could be improved, for instance by the setting up of specialised units dealing with trafficking. It should be noted that the Task Force of EU Police Chiefs already has begun to examine operational co-operation to fight trafficking in human beings.

Furthermore, a unit (EUROJUST), composed of national prosecutors, magistrates or police officers with equivalent competence detached from each Member State, will be set up, initially as a provisional unit. Its task will be to facilitate the proper co-ordination of national prosecuting authorities and of supporting criminal investigations in organised crime cases. Combating trafficking in human beings will be one of its targets.

## INFORMATION SHEET V

### SUPPORT FOR AND PROTECTION OF VICTIMS

Women victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation are in general being recruited in social circles in which they are in a position of vulnerability both from material and psychological viewpoints. They have, in all cases, suffered deep physical and/or psychological trauma during the time of their exploitation and some suffer health problems long after the exploitation has ended. NGOs and health and social services play an important role in assisting these victims to gradually resume a normal life.

Efficient support for, assistance to, and protection of victims requires a multidisciplinary approach with all relevant actors. Although most of the actions should be developed at national and local level, the EU and the countries of origin and transit can provide added value. Different initiatives can be developed depending on the type of trafficking (for labour exploitation or for sexual exploitation) and the victims themselves. Such initiatives are emphasised by The Hague Ministerial Declaration. They must not only consist in providing safe reception and rehabilitation centres to protect the victims against their exploiters, but also confidential medical, social and psychological care and legal assistance. Further support is also needed in terms of education, job training and repatriation to the home countries of the victims.

It is crucial to address the terms of residence in the countries of destination for the development of actions to support the victims. EU legislative action must be undertaken on the specific issue of temporary permits of stay for victims of trafficking willing to co-operate with the judicial system. The Commission has already indicated its intention to make a proposal. It will now present a broader approach for all victims of trafficking prepared to co-operate in the fight against traffickers.

Several programmes at EU level can contribute to actions aimed at supporting, assisting and protecting the victims. In particular there is a strong need for assistance to be provided to the victims through NGOs. These organisations have demonstrated their ability to devise innovative ways of reaching and supporting victims of sexual exploitation. They have also started to organise themselves and to co-operate at European level, including also the candidate countries and other Eastern European countries in their networks. Although the main focus of the STOP Programme is to support co-operation projects among public authorities, it has also supported actions involving NGOs seeking to develop their networks and their co-operation with public authorities. The STOP Programme has and will continue to support such actions, not least against the background of the successful actions already carried out. The work of international organisations such as the International Organisation for Migration is also important to note in this context.

The Commission under the DAPHNE Initiative (launched in May 1997) and the now running DAPHNE Programme has supported a number of innovative transnational projects in the field of rehabilitation and reinsertion of victims. For instance, it has encouraged the development of WAVE 1998 (Women Against Violence in Europe) and in particular the elaboration of a data bank available on CD-ROM and on Internet. This database provides information on rehabilitation centres for victims of violence

including trafficking in the European Union and in a number of candidate countries (see annex 2).

Alongside specific programmes such as DAPHNE and STOP, some programmes running in the field of employment and social affairs can also support transnational projects and contribute to a better understanding and to exchanges of best practices, for instance:

- The EU Gender Equality Programme for the period 2001-2005 which has been designed to provide financial support to implement the framework strategy on gender equality encompassing all EU policies (see annex 3)
- the EQUAL initiative which supports transnational partnerships to develop and disseminate new ways of tackling discrimination and inequality in the field of employment (see annex 3)

New perspectives have been opened when the Lisbon European Council in March 2000 invited the Member States to use the Structural Funds to fight poverty and social exclusion and to develop priority actions for specific target groups. Italy is for instance using the European Social Fund to combat trafficking and provide support for its victims.(see annex 4).

Finally, stricter administrative controls of working conditions in certain activities are also important elements in the fight against trafficking. The Commission identified in its Communications on trafficking in women the need for Member States to pay attention to the working conditions of au-pair girls, employees of bar and dancing establishments as well as employees in sex shows and massage parlours. It also recommended Member States to ensure proper co-ordination between social and health inspectorates and law enforcement services with the aim of identifying and helping victims. As far as the Commission is aware, no follow-up has been made by the Member States of these recommendations although they have certain means to exert control over employers. It would be useful for Member States to review their existing legal provisions and administrative controls as well as conditions attached to the functioning of marriage bureaus and escort activities as such services are used in certain cases to cover the activities of traffickers.

## **INFORMATION SHEET VI**

### **CO-OPERATION WITH THIRD COUNTRIES, IN PARTICULAR THE CANDIDATE COUNTRIES**

Combating and preventing trafficking is a shared responsibility between the countries of origin, transit and destination. The real, long-term impact of the various initiatives already undertaken at EU level as well as at regional and at the level of the Member States, although indispensable, will be greatly reduced if they are not matched by actions in the countries of origin and of transit. This requires the public authorities of these countries to give a higher priority to this issue and to intervene at various levels to combat traffickers, warn potential victims and re-integrate victims who return.

The main factors driving women to listen to false promises by recruiters and to take the risk of being trafficked, are linked to poverty, unemployment and the lack of opportunity within their country of origin. The aggravation of the economic situation in these countries has had a direct effect on the flow of trafficking in women. The key objectives for the Community's development co-operation include the fight against poverty, the promotion of human rights, gender mainstreaming and democracy, and sustainable development. Furthermore, it is essential to ensure that countries of origin are prepared to re-integrate the victims who return. It is still too often the case that victims fall in the hands of traffickers a second time or face difficulties re-establishing themselves after their very often traumatic experiences. As regards the candidate countries, the accession process provides a strong tool to respond to the root causes of trafficking.

Such a comprehensive approach must also be complemented by promoting certain pilot-projects in the field of trafficking, in particular information campaigns targeting not only potential victims and the general public, but also the public administration.

### **MOBILISING EU-INSTRUMENTS**

Instruments already used in co-operation programmes with government authorities or in supporting local NGOs and civil society (particularly those relating to human rights, gender policies and access to justice) should be further developed with all important countries of origin and transit.

Support is provided to improve administrative structures in key sectors (e.g. law enforcement agencies and judicial bodies). Without such structures, it is difficult to investigate and prosecute criminal organisations involved in organised crime including trafficking in women. The new Tacis Regulation 2000 – 2006 which provides grant-financed technical assistance to 13 countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, sets out new priorities, including co-operation in the field of justice and home affairs. More emphasis is placed on actions of common interest of the EU and the partner states, as well as on results, effectiveness and efficiency. The Partnership and Co-operation Agreements with CIS-countries also cover specific aspects of justice and home affairs. In this context, the Tacis-funds will finance projects to combat trafficking in women and children.

Specific funds are made available to support co-operation with the candidate countries as part of the accession process to the European Union (see annex 5). Much has been done in the pre-accession strategy in this field. In particular, the Accession Partnerships attach great importance to the development of administrative and judicial capacities of the candidate countries and the identification of priorities each country need to address, including the fight against organised crime. Justice and Home Affairs is a priority area for all candidate countries in the framework of the reinforcement of administrative and judicial capacities. Twinning projects between Member States and their administrations have been carried out since 1999. A large number of projects selected in this field have contributed to the efficiency of the fight against organised crime and trafficking in women.

#### **OTHER FORMS AND FORA FOR INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN**

As regards international co-operation, the Member States of the European Union and the Commission are actively engaged in the work of multilateral fora such as the UN, OSCE/ODIHR, Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the G8, ASEM and the Council of Europe to co-ordinate efforts against trafficking in human beings. In particular, the Member States and the Commission have signed and have been actively involved in the successfully concluded Convention on Transnational Organised Crime and its additional protocols, one of which concerns human trafficking.

### The STOP Programme

The objectives of the STOP Programme are to encourage, support and reinforce networks and practical co-operation between the various persons responsible for action against trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation of children in the Member States, and to improve and adapt their training and skills. The programme is aimed at judges, public prosecutors, police departments, civil servants, and public services concerned with immigration and border controls, social and tax legislation, trafficking and sexual exploitation, victim-support and treatment for perpetrators. The programme is also open for NGOs which have been involved in around 25 % of the projects since 1996.

The programme started in 1996 for a four-year period with a budget of €6.5 million. In the five-year period of implementation, the programme has co-financed 85 projects. Besides support to actions enhancing law enforcement and judicial co-operation in the areas, special importance has been attached to developing co-operation and methods to assist the victims and to prevent trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children. Research has also formed an important part of the activities under the STOP Programme. Projects which also involve those responsible for preventing and combating trafficking in candidate countries with a view to helping them prepare for accession to the European Union have received special attention (44% of projects in 1999 and 45% in 2000).

Since the STOP Programme came to an end on 31 December 2000, the Commission has proposed an extension for a period of two years, the STOP II Programme, to ensure continued support. The programme will provide funds amounting at € 4 million for the two-year period. The proposal puts the candidate countries in special focus. It also underlines the importance of co-operation with third countries and international organisations. STOP II should be adopted by the Council during the first half of 2001.

<b>The DAPHNE Programme</b>
-----------------------------

The Daphne Programme (2000-2003), a four-year multiannual programme of community action on preventive measures to fight violence against children, young people and women, grew out of the Daphne Initiative, which ran from 1997 to 1999 on an annual basis. The Initiative arose as part of the European Commission's response to growing concern about violence aimed against children, young people and women in Europe. Its remit was wide: to facilitate, through a funding line of 11.8 million ECU over the course of the Initiative, NGO and multisectoral action. Violence was understood in the widest possible sense, from sexual abuse to domestic violence, from commercial exploitation to bullying in schools, from trafficking in women to discrimination-based violence against disabled, minority, migrant or other vulnerable people. In 1997, the Daphne Initiative funded 46 projects, in 1998 49, and in 1999 54 projects were approved for funding.

With the introduction of the Daphne Programme (2000-2003), the remit of possible activity has widened in three principle areas: a wider group of organisations is eligible to submit applications for funding; the geographical coverage is extended; projects may now run for more than one year. The programme provides funds amounting to € 5 million per year (€20 million in total). For the year 2000, 47 projects have been funded. Among them were projects dealing specifically with trafficking in women.

A call for proposals is published each year, usually in March, in the EC Official Journal. Successful projects are normally announced in September or October each year. Final reports are submitted within three months of the end of the project. Copies of these reports are included in the Daphne project database. This is a useful resource to all those working in the fight against violence against children, young people and women, and is an essential reference for organisations preparing projects for funding.



## ANNEX 3

### **Programmes and initiatives in the field of employment and social affairs**

In addition to direct support given to victims of trafficking, there is a need to improve exchange of information and best practice between Member States and candidate countries on the various means to prevent and combat trafficking.

Alongside the STOP and DAPHNE specific programmes, other Community programmes and initiatives in the field of employment, social affairs and gender equality can contribute to combating and preventing trafficking. For instance:

- the EQUAL Initiative supports transnational partnerships to develop and disseminate new ways of tackling discrimination and inequality in the field of employment. EQUAL encourages partnerships to help the integration of asylum-seekers in its priorities. Depending on the official status of the asylum seekers, assistance may be provided for new ways of helping them enter the labour market or for training for unsuccessful asylum-seekers prior to their leaving the EU. The total of the European Union's contribution to EQUAL, provided through the European Social Fund, is € 2,847 million over the period 2000-2006.
- the new EU Gender Equality Programme, 2001-2005 has been designed to provide financial support to the implementation of the Community framework strategy on gender equality. This strategy embraces all Community policies and actions aimed at achieving gender equality. In conjunction with other Community programmes, the Gender Equality Programme will support and finance general activities in the fields of economic life, equal participation and representation, social rights, civil life, gender roles and stereotypes.

Trafficking is taken into account in the field of civil life and projects developed in this programme should complement those carried out under DAPHNE and STOP. Eligible projects must be transnational and contribute to promoting and disseminating the values and practices underlying gender equality, improving the understanding of issues related to gender equality and developing the capacity of players to promote gender equality effectively.

All relevant actors, in particular non-governmental organisations, have access to the programme. Access has also been opened up to the candidate countries. It is up to them to choose which programmes they wish to participate in and PHARE provides for the matching co-financing. For the period 1998-2000, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovenia, Romania and the Czech Republic have participated in the equal opportunity programme. Projects covered for instance promoting equal pay and equal opportunities in the labour market, in local partnerships, combating discrimination against women in national laws and positive actions and networking in sex equality.

<b>Social support for victims of trafficking under the European Social Fund</b>
---

The European Social Fund is the main source of European funding for local, regional and national measures linked to the European employment strategy. Over the next six years (2000-2006), the ESF will support Member States' investment in modernising and expanding their labour markets, and developing their human resources.

As part of the Employment Strategy, Member States produce national action plans each year to implement the commonly agreed employment policy guidelines. In the guidelines, special attention is given to promoting equal access to the labour market for all. Guideline 7 urges the Member States to identify and combat all forms of discrimination that restrict access to the labour market, education and training for groups such as ethnic minorities and migrant workers. Guideline 9 calls on Member States to combat undeclared work and to encourage the transformation of such work into regular employment.

The role of the European Social Fund in fighting poverty and social exclusion will be further developed in the coming years with the implementation of the new European strategy to promote social inclusion. The following common objectives were set at the Nice European Council in December 2000:

- to promote participation in employment and access for all to resources, rights, goods and services and prevent exclusion;
- to help the most vulnerable and those experiencing particular integration problems
- to mobilise all organisations, authorities and other bodies involved in implementing the new strategy

The Member States undertook to promote social inclusion in all relevant policies, using, where appropriate, funding from the Structural Funds, in particular the European Social Fund. Member States are now drawing up national action plans based on these objectives, for the period 2001-03. The strategy will enable Member States to exchange best practice, to learn from each other, to refine their policies and achieve their joint objectives.

Victims of trafficking are in a particularly vulnerable position for discrimination and social exclusion, which the social inclusion and employment strategies are designed to combat with support from the ESF and other Community programmes. Accordingly, Community assistance including ESF may be available for rehabilitation measures and other forms of support for victims of trafficking who reside in Member States after escaping.

In Italy, victims of trafficking are given temporary residence permits for at least six months. During that time, they can take part in one of the 49 integration programmes run by NGOs and local authorities. In the Mezzogiorno region, the European Social Fund supports a measure aimed at raising local awareness of trafficking in women and children, creating a database, and building a network that links together the various organisations concerned, particularly local authorities and NGOs. In central Italy, refuges are to be set up with funding from the Structural Funds. Social support and training will also be made available.

### **The PHARE Programme, the main source of financial support for enlargement**

The PHARE Programme is the European Union's main financial instrument to help candidate countries of central and Eastern Europe<sup>2</sup> prepare for EU membership. In ten candidate countries (a separate financial regulation exists for Cyprus and Malta) PHARE funding concentrates on the priority areas identified in the Accession Partnerships.

PHARE assistance takes the form of grants, and provides support for institution building measures, as well as investment projects in regulatory infrastructure, and economic and social cohesion. PHARE supports national and regional governments, and local authorities, as well as regulatory and supervisory bodies, to implement the whole Community "acquis", including in the fields of justice and home affairs, employment, social affairs, and equal opportunities.

In the context of economic and social cohesion, support is available to help the candidate countries prepare for the Structural funds, including the European Social Fund, which is the main source of EU funding for grass roots projects to combat unemployment and promote equal opportunities. Assistance to customs and immigration authorities is given through Integrated Border Management Strategies. PHARE also finances Cross-Border Co-operation programmes which promote co-operation between border regions in candidate countries of Central Europe and EU Member States (in conjunction with Interreg), as well as between candidate countries themselves.

In the context of reinforcement of civil society, the PHARE Access programme provides funding for NGOs projects aiming at the inclusion and participation of individuals and groups at risk of being economically, socially or politically marginalised.

In addition, PHARE gives financial support to enable the candidate countries to participate in various Community programmes with current EU Member States and third countries. It is up to the candidate countries to decide, in association with the European Union, which programme they wish to participate in (providing funding of their own) and whether PHARE co-funding is required. Several candidate countries have used this possibility for co-funding their participation in the Equal Opportunities Programme. PHARE funding could also be used to help candidate countries participate in the DAPHNE programme.

---

<sup>2</sup> The annual budget for PHARE is 1610 MEUR (2001 budget). Since 2000, two other pre-accession financial instruments (SAPARD and ISPA) also provide financial support for candidate countries (respectively 540 and 1080 MEUR).