



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

MEMO

Brussels, 17 October 2013

Statement by Commissioner Malmström on EU Anti-Trafficking Day

On the eve of the 7th EU Anti-Trafficking Day, Commissioner for Home Affairs Cecilia Malmström made the following statement:

"At a time when growing numbers of victims are being identified in the EU ([IP/13/322](#) and [MEMO/13/331](#)), we must send a loud and clear signal that we will not let their suffering continue; a signal that Europe is working closer together to address human trafficking

Europe has developed ambitious policies and measures to help the victims of today's slavery and put an end to this hideous crime. Unfortunately we are not there yet.

New EU legislation on human trafficking was adopted in record time, but some Member States are still lagging behind with its implementation. More than 6 months after the deadline for transposing has expired, 18 countries have notified a full transposition of our Directive into their national laws (Czech Republic, Sweden, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Finland, Bulgaria, Croatia, Ireland, Greece, France, Austria, Portugal, Slovakia and UK) and 2 countries have only notified partial transposition (Belgium, Slovenia).

If properly implemented, our legislation will make a real difference, both for prosecuting traffickers and for supporting victims, but also for preventing trafficking in human beings. It is high time for all Member States to honour their commitment and deliver.

A huge amount of work is being done at EU level to get to the root of the problem. The Commission has put in place concrete actions that were identified under the 2012-2016 EU Strategy ([IP/12/619](#) and [MEMO/12/455](#)). To name a few, the EU Platform of civil society organisations was launched and an overview of the [rights of the victims](#) has been developed.

Early identification of victims remains crucial to promptly assist, support and protect them. We are now issuing concise [guidelines](#) for professionals like border guards and consular staff who are likely to come across potential victims in the course of their day to day activities. While around 9.500 victims were identified in the EU Member States in 2010, this is considered to be just the tip of the iceberg. The concise guidelines will provide front-line officers with basic tools to identify situations of trafficking and adequately deal with victims or potential victims.

There is a lot more to do. And there is a lot more that we need to know. Certain trends deserve more analysis and attention. The links between the Internet and trafficking in human beings, for instance, both as a means to recruit victims of trafficking and as a tool to help prosecution and raise awareness. This will be the theme for discussion tomorrow at a conference in Vilnius.

Over the past few years we have seen stronger commitments across the EU to work against trafficking in human beings. While human lives are at stake, this must remain a political priority - in Europe and beyond our borders. We cannot afford to stay silent. And we cannot afford to fail".

EU Anti-Trafficking Day

The EU Anti-Trafficking Day is observed on 18 October of every year. The first Anti-Trafficking Day took place in 2007.

Many events are organised across the EU tomorrow, for instance:

- Commissioner Malmström will attend the screening, in Brussels, of the film **'Not my life'** - by Robert Bilheimer.
- The EU Anti Trafficking Coordinator, Myria Vassiliadou, will participate in a **conference** organised by the Lithuanian Presidency and European Commission in Vilnius: "*Exploring the Links between the Internet and Trafficking in Human Beings: Cyberspace for Prevention, not Recruitment*".
- Experts from different governments, law enforcement, national rapporteurs or equivalent mechanisms, civil society organisations and academics, as well as the private sector and the media will meet in order to discuss the role of the Internet in the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings.

Useful Links

Cecilia Malmström's [website](#)

Follow Commissioner Malmström on [Twitter](#)

DG Home Affairs [website](#)

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European Commission Anti-trafficking [website](#)

Questions & Answers on trafficking in human beings and the EU: [MEMO/13/331](#)

EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016 [website](#)

Infographics: [Trafficking in human beings in the EU](#)

Data on trafficking in human beings (covering 2008-2010): [2013 statistical report](#)

Overview of rights based on EU legislation: [The victim's rights](#)

[Guidelines](#) on identification of victims