

Nicosia, 7 November 2017

Panel on EU Anti – Trafficking Day

Forced Labour and Sex Slavery are Crimes: Stop the Crime.

The European Commission on the occasion of the EU Anti trafficking Day will hold a panel on Wednesday, 8 November 2017 from 14:30 – 16:30 at EU Programme Support Office, Nicosia. The opening speeches at the event will be made by Mr. George Markopoulitis, the Head of the European Commission Representation in Cyprus, and H.E. Mrs. Kathleen Doherty, the Ambassador of the United States of America in Cyprus.

EU Anti trafficking Day serves as an occasion to bolster Europe-wide commitment for ending trafficking in human beings, to raise awareness, exchange know-how and best practices, and take stock of what has been achieved. Trafficking in human beings is a grave human rights violation and it is prohibited by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Sweden's National Rapporteur Ms. Kajsa Wahlberg will talk about the Swedish model which criminalises the buying of sex. In addition to this, Özge Uğraşın, a human rights lawyer, will present the local situation and provide recommendations, and a speaker from the US Embassy in Cyprus will present the US Department of State's 2017 Trafficking in Persons report findings. The presentations will be followed by a question and answer session.

Trafficking is very often linked with organised crime and is considered as one of the most profitable criminal activities worldwide. Women and girls represent 56 % of victims of forced economic exploitation and 98 % of victims of forced commercial sexual exploitation. "There is no human trafficking if there is no money involved and no demand" reminds the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator.

The European Union's policy for addressing trafficking in human beings is comprehensive focusing on prevention, protection of victims, prosecution of criminals, and the developing partnerships with the various actors involved. This approach is human rights based, victims centred, gender specific and child sensitive.

As a follow up to the event, the European Commission will announce a radio spot that aims to further contribute to awareness raising on this topic.

Background:

The annual EU Anti-Trafficking Day on 18 October makes both policymakers and the general public reflect upon the response to trafficking in human beings in Europe. Countries still face challenges in properly identifying trafficked persons, providing them with adequate assistance, prosecuting perpetrators and measuring the overall impact of such actions. Observations show that this is particularly difficult in cases of trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation.

Participation in the event is free. Interested participants are kindly invited to register.

Interested individuals can get more information on these events on the EU Infopoint Facebook page [f/abbilgi](https://www.facebook.com/abbilgi) or by contacting the EU Infopoint: info@abbilgi.eu, 228 2577 and 11A Hasene Ilgaz Sokak, Köşklüçiftlik Nicosia.

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