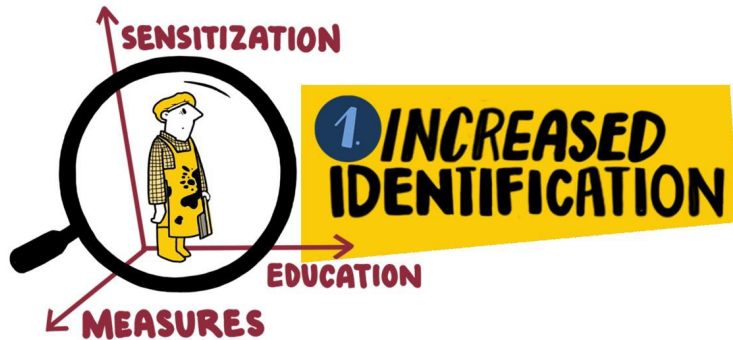


# Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings

1<sup>st</sup> European Santa Marta Conference, 08 - 09 February 2022





## 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 show ways on 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.

We will also engage in increasing the knowledge about human trafficking and exploitation in society at large and cooperate with the media for serious and fact-based reporting.



## 2) Specialised institutions in law enforcement and the judiciary

- Recommendation

Establish specialised departments for human trafficking cases in the police, the public prosecutor's office, and specialised 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 specialised 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 all forms 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 with possibility to be discriminated against back home and possibly deportation.

- Action

We will advocate for governments to develop and invest in exit and rehabilitation programmes for all forms of human trafficking, 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. For that purpose, specialized counselling centers with professional personnel, including lawyers are needed.



## 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 among other things) for all victims independently of their legal status.

- Rationale

Survivors of human trafficking have suffered (physically and psychologically) and are often deprived of promised salaries; hence compensation is imperative. Too often, compensation procedures are either unknown, cumbersome, insufficient, or not existing.

- 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 considering the Council of Europe’s and European Parliament’s guidelines.





## 6) Sufficient resources to fight the crime

- Recommendation

Provide a sustainable financing from the institutional budget for 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 institutional 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 raise awareness on the responsibility of Church institutions for their supply chains and encourage screening the procurement of our institutions and organisations for exploitation and human trafficking and promote responsible consumption.





#### 8) Engage in multistakeholder and multiagency cooperation

- Recommendation

Seek multistakeholder and multiagency cooperation across geographical, conceptual, religious boundaries

- Rationale

Human Trafficking is a complex crime and cannot be fought alone.

- Action

We will engage in and encourage multistakeholder and multiagency cooperation, in all areas relevant to combatting human trafficking: prevention, protection and prosecution.



## 9) 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. We will explore the cooperation with the financial sector.

## The Background

The Action Plan is fruit of a reflection process which took place under the auspices of the German Bishops' Conference and the Santa Marta Group. This process involved experts from different countries who met in thematic seminars. The recommendations were chosen after a thorough discernment about relevance and feasibility. Based on these reflections the Action Plan offers 9 key recommendations of what the authors think are the most urgent to eradicate human trafficking and to be followed up by action. The Action Plan was enriched during the 1st European Santa Marta Conference, which took place from 08 – 09 February 2022.

First and foremost, it is imperative that states fulfil their obligations with regard to ratifying and/or implementing relevant international and regional instruments developed for the fight against human trafficking. Moreover, it goes without saying that of course any preventative measures which can be taken, are better than any action to protect victims and pursue the criminals.

Following a “whole-of society approach”, this Action Plan is a collective product and an offer, to those who want to work together to achieve systemic change with regard to combating human trafficking with specific action. The organisers of the 1st European Santa Marta Conference commit themselves as operational and strategic “owners” to drive and support the plan. The common responsibility lies with those who have contributed and want to engage. It ties us all together on an important cause: Eradicating Human Trafficking.

The steps to be taken may differ from country to country and from region to region according to the political and societal environment and the spheres of influence of the persons engaged. **We invite all who want to engage with this Action Plan to identify more actions and work for their implementation in Church organisations, law enforcement agencies and other decision-making bodies!**

Berlin / Bonn / London,

the Feast of St Josephine Bakhita, 8 February 2022



