

HUMAN RIGHTS PLATFORM HOTLINE

Human Rights Platform Hotline provides service on weekdays between 10.00 - 18.00. The hotline is controlled by legal experts of the Human Rights Platform Association. You can call, send an SMS message or text via WhatsApp to our hotline to receive legal counselling (free of charge) regarding the five thematic areas (Anti-trafficking, LGBTI+ rights, democratic participation in decision making, refugee rights, detention conditions and freedom from torture) covered by the Human Rights Platform Project.

HOTLINE NUMBER

+90 542 862 00 60

Please scan here for detailed information about the hotline and its service areas



ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS PLATFORM

The Human Rights Platform struggles for an egalitarian, just, democratic and inclusive world where universal human rights and freedoms are accessible and secure for everyone, protected, and constantly improved through effective mechanisms.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS PLATFORM PROJECT

The Human Rights Platform Project aims for developing a more just, equitable, democratic and inclusive society where human rights are not only respected but cherished.

Follow us to get further information about the Human Rights Platform and the Human Rights Platform Project.

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**İnsan
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Human Rights Platform

INFORMATIVE BROCHURE ON COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE NORTHERN PART OF CYPRUS



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WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking, also known as modern-day slavery, is a crime that involves compelling or coercing a person into any type of work or service or engaging in commercial sex acts. The coercion does not have to be related to physical violence, it can also be done through psychological or economical violence. Indeed, human traffickers increasingly use psychological manipulation tactics day by day.

Every year, thousands of people are trafficked by traffickers worldwide, either in their own countries or abroad. It is estimated that human trafficking generates around \$150 Billion worldwide annually.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HUMAN SMUGGLING AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human smuggling and human trafficking are two different terms that people most often confuse. Human smuggling involves assisting people to irregularly enter another country in exchange for money or any other interest. The crime of human smuggling is completed once the person arrives in the other country. Human trafficking, however, is forcing someone into work, services or commercial sex without their consent. Human trafficking does not have to involve transportation since people can be trafficked in their hometowns as well.

IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING A CRIME IN THE NORTHERN PART OF CYPRUS?

Human trafficking is defined as a crime under "article 254B of the Criminal Code". This "regulation" was made in compliance with the definition within the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol), supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime adopted by "the parliament" in 2018.

Human trafficking is a serious crime and in case of conviction, a person may receive up to 10 years of imprisonment. If the victim is a child, then the imprisonment sentence is up to 14 years and if the trafficker is a "civil servant", then the sentence is up to 16 years of imprisonment.

CAN VICTIMS BE DEPORTED BY THE POLICE DUE TO THE ABSENCE OF A VALID RESIDENCY?

Human trafficking victims cannot be deported by the police for not having a valid residency in the northern part of Cyprus. "Article 254B of the Criminal Code" states that when the victim complains and the investigation and prosecution process is ongoing, they cannot be penalized by the local bodies for irregular residency.

For example, in the case of the victim's employer not issuing a work permit and therefore the victim not obtaining a valid residency, and if the employer is being investigated in regards to the crime of human trafficking, a legal process is not initiated against the victim for their lack of a valid residency permit. Similarly, if legal proceedings have been initiated against the victim for their invalid residency, these proceedings are terminated upon the suspicion of being a human trafficking victim.

WHAT ARE THE TRENDS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING CASES IN THE NORTHERN PART OF CYPRUS?

Two types of human trafficking are identified in the northern part of Cyprus; labour trafficking and sex trafficking. People are forced into labour or commercial sex, for labour and/or sexual exploitation, especially in the sectors of construction, service, agriculture, domestic work, retail and entertainment. Sex trafficking is especially happening in nightclubs or private apartments and foreign women are vulnerable to it.

WHAT IS THE PROFILE OF THE VICTIMS?

There is no single profile of a trafficking victim. Victims of human trafficking can be anyone regardless of race, colour, national origin, disability, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, education level, or citizenship status.

Although there is no single profile, trafficking cases in the northern part of Cyprus show that traffickers most often target foreigners who are poor, vulnerable, living in an unsafe or unstable situation, have language barriers and have limited or false knowledge of our the northern part of Cyprus. These individuals are most often in search of a better life. Trafficking victims are deceived by false promises of job, education or a stable life and forced into situations where they are made to work under deplorable conditions with little or no pay. It has been seen that especially many young foreigners are deceived through promises of higher education and work. Student visa "regulations" are being abused by the traffickers to allow their access to the northern part of Cyprus.

HOW CAN YOU IDENTIFY HUMAN TRAFFICKING CASES?

Today, human trafficking takes place overtly in front of our eyes. In our daily lives, it might not be possible to see exploitation at all times. However, victims of human trafficking are among us and we are, directly or indirectly, in constant interaction with them. We can notice them by asking a few questions to ourselves. If you are in doubt about whether someone is a victim of human trafficking, you may determine the indicators by asking yourself the questions below.

- Are there any observable signs of fear, worry, depression or anxiety?
- Can you see any symptoms of physical, psychological or sexual abuse?
- Can you see any symptoms of physical restraint, imprisonment and/or torture?
- Can they communicate with their family or friends freely?
- Do they have the opportunities to socialize freely?
- Can they move freely?
- Has the victim or a family member of the victim been threatened with violence?
- Are their working hours extremely long and/or unusual?
- Have they been threatened with being deported and/or being subjected to any "law enforcement"?
- Do they own an identity card, passport or travel documents?
- Do they live in a place with humane conditions?
- Are they forced to pay an impossible and/or repetitive debt to their employer?

WHAT DO WE DO?

Human Rights Platform conducts advocacy, capacity building, lobbying and monitoring activities for combating human trafficking in the northern part of Cyprus. It also provides legal aid and counselling to the victims free of charge.

Call, send an SMS message or text via WhatsApp to our hotline (+90542 862 00 60) to receive support or report a person you suspect is a human trafficking victim. You can report anonymously if you do not wish to share your personal information with us.