

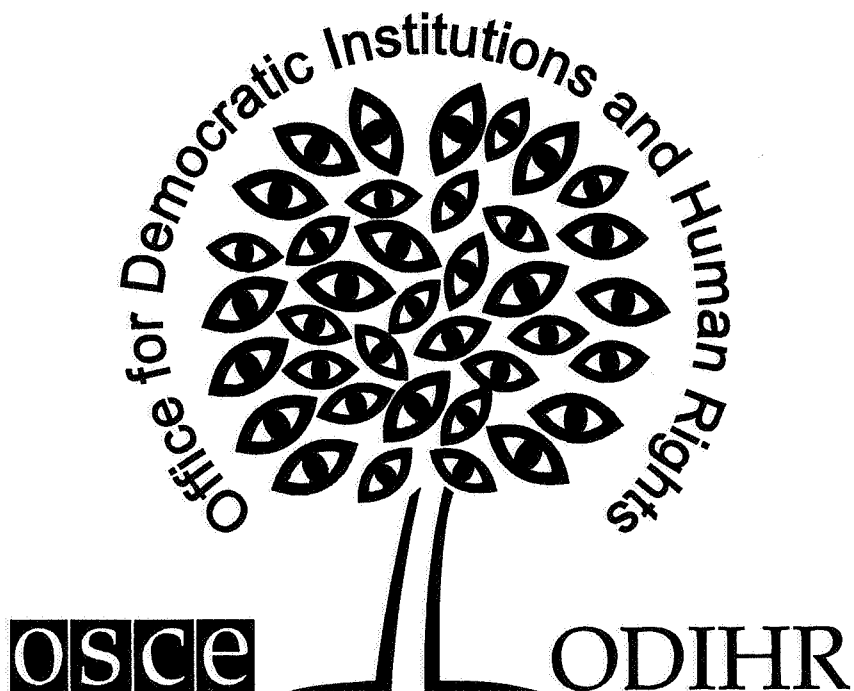
Albanian (63)

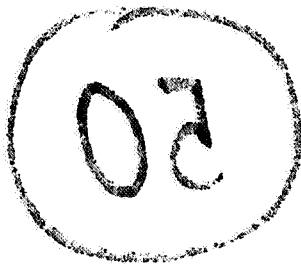
50

**ODIHR CPRSI Assessment Trip to Albania on Trafficking in Children
from Roma and Egyptian Communities**

REPORT

16 - 21 June 2003





The assessment was carried out and the present report written by Rut Feuk, Assistant to the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues (CPRSI) of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

This report was supported through the ODIHR Anti-Trafficking Project Fund.
The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the OSCE and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE ODIHR).

SOME ABBREVIATIONS

BKTF	Bashku Kunder Trafikimit te Femijeve (All Together Against Child Trafficking)
CESS	Center for Economic and Social Studies
CPRSI	Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues
ICMC	International Catholic Migration Commission
NPF	Ndihme per Femjet (Help the Children)
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
TdH	Terre des Hommes

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	2
II. BACKGROUND TO THE ASSESMENT	3
1. CPRSI AND THE ISSUE OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS.....	3
2. SENSITIVE ISSUES INVOLVED.....	4
A. Unawareness regarding the definition of trafficking.....	4
B. Racist stereotyping of Roma in connection to trafficking.....	4
C. Data collection and identification.....	5
3. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSESSMENT	5
4. METHODOLOGY	6
5. THE SITUATION OF ROMA AND EGYPTIAN CHILDREN IN ALBANIA	7
6. PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON TRAFFICKING IN CHILDREN FROM ROMA AND EGYPTIAN COMMUNITIES	9
III. ROMA AND EGYPTIAN CHILDREN AND TRAFFICKING IN ALBANIA	10
1. TRAFFICKING IN ROMA AND EGYPTIAN CHILDREN.....	10
1) Trafficking for begging and similar purposes	11
A. Ways of trafficking for begging including some contributing factors	12
2) Trafficking for prostitution.....	13
A. Ways of trafficking for prostitution including some contributing factors.....	13
3) Trafficking in organs	14
4) Possibilities for reintegration of the child victims of trafficking.....	14
2. PERCEPTIONS OF THE SITUATION OF TRAFFICKING IN CHILDREN AS IT AFFECTS ROMA AND EGYPTIANS.....	15
3. CO-OPERATION BETWEEN NON-ROMA NGOS AND ROMA/EGYPTIAN NGOS	16
A. Mutual distrust.....	17
B. Attitudes to Roma and Egyptian NGOs	17

4. FUNDING FOR ANTI-TRAFFICKING PROJECTS.....	18
5. POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION/FOLLOW-UP AS RECOMMENDED BY ACTORS IN ALBANIA.....	18
A. Awareness raising	18
B. Repatriation actions and reintegration.....	19
C. Facilitating increased co-operation between Roma and non-Roma NGOs.....	20
D. NGO and leadership capacity raising.....	20
E. Addressing root causes.....	21
F. Other issues to be addressed.....	21
IV. REFERENCES.....	23
NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR COMBATING CHILD TRAFFICKING.....	23
MEETINGS BETWEEN 16 - 21 JUNE 2003	23
ANNEX I. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH.....	25
ANNEX II. ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS	27

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ODIHR CPRSI assessment on trafficking in children from Roma and Egyptian communities in Albania, which took place between the 16 – 21 June 2003, was prepared and carried out in close co-operation with the ODIHR Anti-Trafficking Unit.

The assessment is based on recommendations directed to the CPRSI to address the issue and to collect data on trafficking, with a focus on children, as it affects Roma and related groups. Some Roma representatives are reluctant to address the issue as it has many times been labeled a “gypsy problem” and dealt with in a way that generates racist stereotypes. However, the issue is increasingly raised at several official meetings.

Albania was chosen because several recent reports highlight the vulnerability of the Roma and Egyptian communities to trafficking in children in Albania. Also, the need of addressing the issue has been pointed out by some Roma representatives in Albania.

During the assessment, meetings were held with representatives of Roma/Egyptian NGOs, non-Roma NGOs and IGOs working on anti-trafficking issues as well as with relevant representatives from the Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Clearly, there exists an overwhelming consensus among both Roma and non-Roma actors that trafficking in children constitutes a great problem within the Roma and Egyptian communities, taking the form of two main categories of trafficking. Trafficking for begging mainly affects children between 6-10 years old whereas trafficking for the purpose of prostitution primarily affects girl children between 15-17 years old. Rumors circulate of some more anecdotal forms of trafficking including trafficking in children for the removal of organs.

The main factors contributing to trafficking are the great poverty of Roma and Egyptian families and their marginalization in society. Many parents are deceived believing that their children, apart from doing some work, will get education and a better living situation and thus agree for the child to go abroad. Regarding trafficking for prostitution, in many cases, girls who have separated from abusive and/or forced marriages see prostitution as their last option to sustain themselves and their children and these girls are vulnerable to fall prey to traffickers.

So far there has been no serious co-operation between Roma and non-Roma NGOs to combat trafficking. Non-Roma NGOs that specifically engage in anti-trafficking efforts are very experienced on the issue, having worked on it for many years. The Roma community though appears to have started addressing the issue only recently and mostly through individual initiatives. This, as well as the existence of widespread mutual distrust, may contribute to the difficulty in co-operation. Roma representatives appear to be either unaware of the existing anti-trafficking mechanisms or to distrust the work of

the anti-trafficking NGOs. On the other hand, the non-Roma NGOs seem to be reluctant to seriously co-operate with Roma and Egyptian NGOs because of previous negative experiences and lack of trust. A further obstacle to co-operation may be the lack of understanding among non-Roma NGOs of the specificity of the Roma and Egyptian culture and living situation.

Due to the extent in which trafficking affects the Roma and Egyptian community, it seems vital to enhance the possibility and capacity of Roma/Egyptian NGOs to address trafficking in children in co-operation with non-Roma NGOs currently working on anti-trafficking issues.

II. BACKGROUND TO THE ASSESMENT

1. CPRSI AND THE ISSUE OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

The issue of trafficking in human beings is new for the CPRSI and no activities have been carried out up to now regarding trafficking. Also, the issue is very sensitive for several reasons, which will be further explored below, and this has resulted in reluctance from some Roma representatives to address it. However, the issue has been touched upon in different ways during several recent conferences. For example, during the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in 2002, there were several Roma NGOs present, taking part in discussions about trafficking and submitting statements on the issue. Also, during a meeting in Albania (Elbasan) organized in January 2003 by the CPRSI under the project "Roma and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe", the urgency of addressing the issue of trafficking in children was raised. Furthermore, some recommendations exist directed to the CPRSI to become increasingly involved in the issue, especially in trafficking in children, i.e. in the Porto Ministerial Declaration on trafficking and in recommendations from Roma NGOs. The CPRSI has been tasked to collect data on trafficking in human beings, especially in children, through the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings.¹

It is important to address the issue since the Roma as an impoverished and marginalised group in society is vulnerable to trafficking. Further, as a cause of the marginalisation of the Roma community, it is very likely to assume that the group is more difficult to reach in preventive efforts.

The CPRSI is in the first stage of starting to address the issue of trafficking in human beings. As regards the technicalities and theoretical framework of trafficking in human beings, the CPRSI is relying on existing standards and the expertise of the ODIHR Anti-trafficking Unit. However, one issue for the CPRSI to address is the way in which information on trafficking in relation to Roma should be handled. For example, is it important and/or truthful to specify the percentage of Roma victims of trafficking or is it

¹ OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings,
http://www.osce.org/press_rel/2003/pdf_documents/07-3447-pc1.pdf

just damaging for the situation of Roma in their countries? How much should the CPRSI be engaged in the issue and how should the issue be approached without making it into a "Roma problem"?

2. SENSITIVE ISSUES INVOLVED

The complexity of trafficking and the unawareness of its definition appears to be closely linked to the reluctance of Roma leaders to address the issue, as well as the racist bias connected to the problem. There is also a great distrust in the ways that statistical data has been generated, giving numbers and percentages of Roma victims and traffickers.

A. Unawareness regarding the definition of trafficking

There is a need of raising awareness about the UN definition of trafficking², as there appears to be a great amount of confusion and unclarity in mixing up smuggling, migration and trafficking. This confusion may be one of the reasons why some Roma representatives have been reluctant to address the issue as it is not completely clear what should be considered as trafficking. In connection to child trafficking, the issue of children travelling with their parents for seasonal labor and helping their parents in the work, a practice strongly linked to poverty, becomes relevant. There seems to exist a strong uncertainty and fear among the Roma community that child labour be considered as trafficking.

B. Racist stereotyping of Roma in connection to trafficking

Trafficking has many times been labeled a "Roma/gypsy problem" by governmental representatives and NGOs/institutions. This view increases discrimination against Roma and generates stereotypes. Other frequently used stereotypes in connection to this are begging and the selling of babies. Roma representatives are worried that trafficking will be labeled an aspect of Roma culture. As Roma many times, in a racist way have been blamed for being guilty of trafficking, Roma representatives have become very defensive on the issue. Thus, viewing trafficking as a "Roma-problem" without acknowledging the vulnerability of the group, has had the effect of making it even more difficult to try to reach the Roma representatives for co-operation in the fight against trafficking.

² The "Palermo definition", The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

C. Data collection and identification

There exists reluctance among some Roma representatives to take into account statistical data mentioning percentages of Roma among victims of trafficking and traffickers. This may be due to the fact that, in particular during the past years, these statistics very seldom were connected with a discussion regarding the vulnerability of the Roma population as a cause of racial discrimination and socio-economical status. Further, there is a request from Roma representatives for a more transparent generation of statistical data. It is important to address the reliability of collected data, as there are many factors, which may influence the accuracy. For example there is a question of how victims have been identified as belonging to the Roma population. Mostly it seems as if the identification is done via self-identification. However, this might be more problematic in the case of unaccompanied minors.

It is difficult to gather information on trafficking as it affects Roma as almost none of the NGOs/institutions working with trafficking victims keep segregated data. This is a very complicated and sensitive issue, since there might be some positive aspects in keeping this kind of segregated data, but it could also be used against Roma, because of cultural bias, as described above.³ Furthermore, the NGOs have to respect the confidentiality of the client, which also makes data collection hard.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSESSMENT

The CPRSI is concerned about recent reports on child trafficking in Albania highlighting the vulnerability of Roma and Egyptian children.⁴ Further, some interest has previously been shown by Roma NGOs in Albania to address the problem.

As a first step to addressing the issue, the CPRSI has undertaken an assessment trip to Albania in order to collect data and establish contacts. During the trip, data on the current situation of anti-trafficking initiatives including available data regarding trafficking as it affects the Roma and Egyptian community, were collected. The trip included meetings with Roma/Egyptian NGOs and NGOs working with anti-trafficking efforts in order to map the currently existing anti-trafficking initiatives, to what extent those initiatives involve Roma and Egyptians and to see how initiatives coming from Roma and Egyptian NGOs could connect with these already existing projects.

Another objective of the assessment was to find out to what extent Roma and Egyptians are open to and perceive the need to address the issue of trafficking and how existing

³ For an elaborated discussion, consult the report of the joint Council of Europe and Project on Ethnic Relations conference "Roma and Statistics", Strasbourg, 22 – 23 May 2003, available on <http://www.eumap.org/library/datab/Documents/1016203428.08/tistics.pdf>

⁴ The Egyptians do not consider themselves as Roma, but share the same characteristics as a marginalised group in society and therefore the Egyptians are also included in this assessment

anti-trafficking initiatives can be more efficient in reaching the Roma and Egyptian community.

Prior to the assessment,

- the following questions were envisioned to be answered:
 - to what degree Roma and Egyptian representatives want to be involved in existing efforts against trafficking and in what way it could be accomplished
 - how the existing NGOs working against trafficking envision that they can involve the Roma NGOs
- The following outcome was envisioned:
 - A set of recommendations on how the CPRSI can be more involved in the issue of trafficking in children from Roma and Egyptian communities in Albania

4. METHODOLOGY

Interviews were held with Roma/Egyptian NGOs, NGOs working against trafficking, relevant governmental representatives and representatives from IGOs.

The interviews were semi-structured and a questionnaire was prepared for the interviewer to fill in. However, in order to let the interviewee speak freely, the questions could be answered in a different order and the interviewer had to be very flexible.

In the start of the interviews the purpose of the trip was explained to the interviewees. Further, it was made clear that the respondents can remain anonymous or that parts of the interviews can be kept confidential.

The following cities were visited; Korca, Elbasan, Durrës and Tirana. The choice was made because of prior knowledge of existing Roma NGOs working in the cities and the existence of NGOs, like Terre des Hommes (TdH), working against trafficking. Also Korca, Elbasan and Tirana have been reported as main cities of origin for child victims of

trafficking⁵ whereas Durres has been reported to have replaced Vlora as a main port for trafficking to Italy.⁶ Further, Korca, Elbasan and Tirana have significant Roma and Egyptian populations.

The later the stage of the assessment, i.e. the more interviews had been conducted, the more the CPRSI representative was able to discuss general trends of findings with the interviewees and also double check some of the information.

5. THE SITUATION OF ROMA AND EGYPTIAN CHILDREN IN ALBANIA

The Roma and Egyptian minorities are not legally considered as national minorities in Albania. The Roma are considered a linguistic minority whereas the Egyptians have no minority status at all.⁷ Thus, no national strategy will be drafted to improve the living situation of Egyptians as has been done for the Roma.

The Roma is one of the most marginalised minority groups in Albania with estimates of the size of population varying between 30.000 and 120.000.⁸ The Roma were the first to loose their jobs after the fall of communism and their societal status greatly deteriorated after the transition.⁹

The Egyptians, with an estimated population of 200,000 according to an Egyptian NGO, which is considered a great exaggeration by the government, are often perceived as a sub-group to the Roma, but it is important to note that both groups consider themselves as distinct minority groups and the Egyptians consider themselves as having their origins in Egypt.¹⁰ The similarities between the two groups are their social-economic exclusion and marginalisation from society whereas a difference would be that the Egyptians do not speak Romanes. The groups are often confused or put into the same category, often called "Gabelë/Arixhinj - Gypsy" by the majority population.¹¹ The two groups do mostly not interact and intermarriage is rare.¹²

Roma and Egyptian children, belonging to marginalised groups, encounter discrimination in various areas. Children from these groups will in general face a shorter and harder life

⁵ Limanowska(2002), p. 145

⁶ Head of OSCE field station Elbasan, personal communication

⁷ According to the Department for Minorities of the Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, due to the fact that the Egyptians do not have their own language and that the ambassador of Egypt does not agree that the group has its origins in Egypt, it will be very difficult for the Albanian government to consider the Egyptians a national minority.

⁸ OSCE Presence in Albania, Office of the Legal Councilor, p.3.

The population of Albania is about 3,6 million people according to <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>

⁹ Council of Europe(2002a), p.11

¹⁰ OSCE Presence in Albania, Office of the Legal Councilor, p.3

¹¹ ERRC(1997), p. 12-13, Mile, e-mail communication

¹² OSCE Presence in Albania, Office of the Legal Councilor, p.2-3

than the majority population.¹³ Because of the poverty of the Roma and Egyptian communities, the children can be found begging on the streets or collecting scrap metal for sale.¹⁴

Many Roma children do not attend school, even though it greatly varies from town to town. The non-attendance is due mainly to the poverty of Roma families, long distances of schooling facilities from Roma settlements and discriminatory practices at school.¹⁵ According to the ERRC report on the situation of Roma in Albania, many parents are afraid that their children will be abducted on the way to school.¹⁶

Roma and Egyptian children and their parents have complained about beatings and humiliations from non-Roma children and teachers both in and outside school.¹⁷ Roma and Egyptian children often face physical punishment including beatings from their teachers.

Also many families are dependent on their children to carry out certain work, and therefore children are also taken out of school at an early age. Children from families that migrate for seasonal labor have a very irregular schooling as they go abroad around half of the year.¹⁸ Within the family, boys are prioritized for education and girls seem to drop out earlier than boys partly due to early marriages and, by extension, childbirth.¹⁹

Another problem is related to the frequent non civil-registration of newly born Roma children, which results in the denial of the right to register the child in the public school later in life.²⁰ The non-civil registration of children is also directly linked to their vulnerability to trafficking.²¹ In the case of the Roma, as they are not considered a national minority, the Roma children do not have the right to get education in their own language.

Many Roma and Egyptian children grow up in very poor living conditions, without running water and electricity²² and their access to healthcare is restricted due to poverty, discrimination and bad infrastructure.²³ The discrimination in relation to health care is mostly connected to non-ability of paying for the medical care and sometimes the doctors set higher prices for Roma, relying on the solidarity within the Romani community.²⁴

¹³ CoE and Children's Human Rights Center in Albania, p. 4

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 5, p. 20

¹⁵ Roma for Integration (Refik Tare), p. 5

¹⁶ ERRC, p.67

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 64

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 67

¹⁹ Roma for Integration (Refik Tare), p. 5

²⁰ Ibid, p. 3

²¹ Colombia University/UNICEF, p.34

²² CoE and Children's Human Rights Center in Albania, p. 18

²³ CoE and Children's Human Rights Center in Albania, p. 16

²⁴ Mile, e-mail communication

6. PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON TRAFFICKING IN CHILDREN FROM ROMA AND EGYPTIAN COMMUNITIES

There are three relatively recent reports, which concentrate on different aspects of trafficking in children in Albania and which, to different extents, highlight the vulnerability of the Roma and Egyptian communities. A brief review of the reports can be found in the appendix.

- Columbia University report "Not for Sale. Child Trafficking Prevention in South Eastern Europe" from May 2003
- Terre des Hommes report "The trafficking of Albanian children in Greece" from January 2003
- Save the Children report "Child trafficking in Albania", from March 2001, which focuses on trafficking in children to Italy

The three reports are based mainly on the same research methods including discussion groups, questionnaires and interviews with different target groups in Albania.

The report from 2001 puts some attention on the vulnerability of minorities to trafficking and at several points raises the issue of trafficking in Roma and Egyptian children for begging, mainly in Greece. The Tdh January 2003 report is specific in raising concerns regarding the trafficking in Roma and Egyptian children also using data from co-operating institutions and organizations in Greece.

Currently, there are 3 new reports about to be launched in the closest future, all dealing with trafficking in children in Albania and involving the Roma and Egyptian target group.

- ILO report on trafficking in Human Beings. The pilot study in Albania has been carried out by ICMC Center for Refugee and Migration Studies. Some of the findings of this study are presented in this report as a meeting was held with the researchers and a draft report was obtained during the assessment trip.
- ILO IPEC (International Program for the Elimination of Child Labour) report on child trafficking in Albania

- “World Bank Needs Assessment of Roma and Evgjit²⁵ Communities in Albania”, conducted in co-operation with the research team of the Center for Economic and Social Studies (CESS), Tirana. This research project includes the component of trafficking and some of its findings were presented to the CPRSI representative during a meeting with Ilir Gedeshi and his research team and are thus included in this report. To be launched officially during 2003.

III. ROMA AND EGYPTIAN CHILDREN AND TRAFFICKING IN ALBANIA

1. TRAFFICKING IN ROMA AND EGYPTIAN CHILDREN

Before 2001, the Albanian government did not support the view of Albania being a country of origin for victims of trafficking. However, because of international pressure, mainly from the United States (following the publication of the State Department Report on Trafficking placing Albania in Tier 3), the OSCE and the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings,²⁶ the country started to address the issue by drafting a National Strategy to Combat Trafficking, which was adopted in January 2002.²⁷ As well, anti-trafficking units were installed within the Ministry of Public Order in 2001.²⁸ However, these units are, despite assistance from the EU, US and OSCE, lacking in resources like cars, computers etc, which would enable them to be more efficient and enhance their work.²⁹ Likewise a strategy for Roma has been drafted called: “Strategy to Improve the Living Condition of the Roma Linguistic Minority”. This strategy includes anti-trafficking activities, but there is no funding yet for any parts of the implementation of the strategy.³⁰

Due to the clandestine nature of trafficking it is very difficult to give numbers of the extent of trafficking in children from Albania including to estimate the numbers of the children trafficked from Roma and Egyptian communities. However, all Roma and Egyptian NGOs included in the study except one, stated that the trafficking in children constitutes a big and widespread problem for the Roma and Egyptian communities and they all gave examples of cases from their close communities. According to NGOs working against child trafficking in Albania one of the biggest contributing factors to trafficking in children from the Roma and Egyptian population in Albania, for all kinds of purpose including prostitution and begging, is the deep poverty and marginalisation of the families.³¹ The US State Department “Trafficking in Persons Report” of June 2003,

²⁵ “Evgjit” is the Albanian word for Egyptian

²⁶ ODIHR Anti-trafficking Officer & ODIHR Rule of Law Officer, personal communication

²⁷ Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, OSCE Section representative, interview

²⁸ Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania to the international organizations in Vienna(2002), p. 1

²⁹ Head of OSCE field station Elbasan, personal communication

³⁰ Communicated during meeting with Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representatives of Department for Minorities & OSCE Section

³¹ Stated by NPF and TdH, in reports and in interviews during the assessment trip

points on sources in Greece reporting on a decrease in child trafficking to the country at the same time as the problem persists in Albania with children reportedly being trafficked to Greece.³²

To make a rough division, there appear to exist two main directions of trafficking in children from the Roma and Egyptian families and several more anecdotal forms. The first one is trafficking in children around the age of 6-10 with the main purpose of begging on the streets in Greece or Italy, depending on the city of origin. The second type of trafficking is in girls around 15-17 years old for the purpose of prostitution. According to some sources, the children are sometimes used as carriers for drugs, when they cross the borders to Greece and Italy. An alleged type of trafficking, which is not possible to neglect as it frequently was brought into attention by the Roma representatives is trafficking in children for the selling of their organs. However, there exist no evidence and the worries of Roma and Egyptian representatives may be the result of rumors reproduced by sensationalist journalism. There are also some cases reported of pregnant mothers, both Roma and from the majority population, going abroad to give birth and then selling the baby.³³

1) Trafficking for begging and similar purposes

Trafficking for begging and other informal/unprotected labor activities like selling roses, washing car windows, playing an instrument, seems to be the most widespread form of trafficking for children in the Roma and Egyptian community. However, this form of trafficking also includes forms of sexual exploitation as many of the children, especially girls, are sexually abused in prostitution or child pornography. In the case of girl children, in many cases they seem to be turned into prostitution when they reach a certain age.³⁴ Working on the streets the children are exposed to all types of dangers and some of them disappear from the streets without returning home, which may signify that they have been transferred to a different work sector, e.g. prostitution or that they changed country.³⁵ According to one source, in the cases that Roma families accept for their children to go abroad to work on the streets, it seems as if the daughters can go only until the age of 9, as thereafter their future marriage could be jeopardized.³⁶

According to TdH, NPF and several Roma NGOs, the trafficking in Albanian children for begging mostly affects the Egyptian community but the traffickers are from the Roma community.³⁷ According to a representative of the Roma NGO Disutni Albania, 5-7 years ago, mainly children from the Roma community were trafficked by the majority population. Today, these Roma children have grown up and are now themselves

³² US State Department(2003), p. 71

³³ Romani Baxt, UNICEF, interviews

³⁴ TdH (2003), p. 22, and interview with ICMC

³⁵ NPF Korca, interview

³⁶ CESS, interview

³⁷ TdH Korca, NPF Korca, Romani Baxt Korca, Disutni Albania, interviews

trafficking children from the Egyptian community.³⁸ According to NPF in Korca, two 8-year old boys, repatriated from Greece, were asked about what they wanted to work with in the future. Both of them wanted to become rich and one of them said that he wanted to become a smuggler of persons and the other boy wanted to be a customs official. This shows that the boys who had been passing the borders several times, were aware of corruption and bribes taken by the customs officials.

A. Ways of trafficking for begging including some contributing factors

It seems to be quite rare that children are kidnapped for trafficking, rather the trafficking mostly seems to happen with an initial (although mostly not fully informed) acceptance from the parents. Usually families are unaware of the harsh conditions that the child will experience in the foreign country. Many of the parents give their child away with promises of education and a better living condition for the child. The most usual way is that the parents and the trafficker agree on a contract, orally or written, in which it is stated how much money the parents will receive each month.³⁹ Many times the parents get a sum in advance. In the case that the child is "rented out" by the parents, the monthly or weekly quota usually stops coming to the parents after some time and that is the point when some problems may arise between the parents and the traffickers as the parents want the child back. There are also cases in which the child goes by him or herself and other cases when the child goes together with the parents abroad. In the last case it may be difficult to determine whether it should be considered as trafficking or child labor. A part of the Roma community in Albania is moving for seasonal labor within Albania and also to Greece and Italy. Many times the children are working with the parents or beg on the streets. The representative of Alba Rom, a Roma NGO in Durrës, reported on the kidnapping of 5 children, most of them disabled, from his community.⁴⁰

What has been seen is that families who have had a trafficked child repatriated, mostly do not send their child away again.⁴¹ This means that awareness raising among the families regarding the situation that children face while working on the streets in a foreign country may be successful in preventing the parents from giving their children to the traffickers.⁴²

According to the World Bank study, one contributing factor to trafficking for begging in the cases when children are rented out, apart from the main reason being poverty, is the high levels of trust within the Roma communities. The trust between the families allows for parents to rely on other families or individuals to take their child for a longer period of time.⁴³

³⁸ Disutni Albania, interview. Information also given by the head of OSCE field station in Elbasan

³⁹ TdH Korca, NPF Korca, CESS, interviews

⁴⁰ Alba Rom, interview

⁴¹ TdH Elbasan, interview

⁴² UNICEF, interview

⁴³ CESS, interview, findings to be presented in forthcoming World Bank publication

2) Trafficking for prostitution

There seems to exist a significant number of cases of trafficking in children from the Roma and Egyptian community with the purpose of using them in prostitution, mainly in Italy and Greece. According to the president of the Vatra shelter for trafficked women in Vlora, a great part of the girls who come back from prostitution in Italy are from the Roma and Egyptian community.⁴⁴ According to the director of the Center for Economic and Social Studies (CESS), which has served as the research team of a recent World Bank Roma needs assessment study, Roma representatives were very openly spoke about trafficking for prostitution. Many families communicated that their relatives or close family members were abroad working in prostitution, of which a number may have fallen prey to traffickers. The Egyptians on the other hand, were much more reluctant to speak about trafficking for the purpose of prostitution.⁴⁵

As many Roma girls are married and have children at an early age and thus are considered women, mostly around 13, there seems to be a tendency for the Roma representatives to consider trafficking in older girl children as trafficking in adult women, i.e. not to include the trafficking in girls older than 13, which mostly is for the purpose of prostitution, under the label of trafficking in children.

A. Ways of trafficking for prostitution including some contributing factors

The leader of the NGO Romani Baxt Tirana, stressed the main four ways of trafficking in children for prostitution as kidnapping, selling by the family, fake marriage or the child going by herself/himself. Some case stories were given by the representatives of Alba Rom in Durres and Romani Baxt in Tirana of parents in their communities who sold their daughters into prostitution. According to the director of the Center for Economic and Social Studies, the three main reasons for trafficking for prostitution is poverty, early marriage and negative social capital as found in the recent World Bank study carried out by CESS.⁴⁶ According to the study, the connection between early marriages and trafficking for prostitution is very strong and worrying. Many girls are married at an age of around 13. Thus, it is not unusual for a girl to have two babies around the age of 15. The early marriages are not registered as they are illegal and the children of these young couples are very seldom registered, which makes them vulnerable to trafficking and illegal adoptions. The young families are often very poor and often there are a lot of problems between the couple and the consequence is many times a separation in which the girl takes the children and moves back to her parents' house. However, as the parents are poor as well, the girl has to find a way to feed the children and this is the time when she is very vulnerable to trafficking. There seems to be many cases of young divorced

⁴⁴ E-mail communication with Vatra Center in Vlora. The shelter does not keep any statistics dividing data according to ethnic origin and can thus not give any exact numbers.

⁴⁵ CESS, interview

⁴⁶ The term negative social capital quoted directly as used by CESS. The rest of this chapter is based on information received during the meeting with CESS

Roma mothers who have been trafficked for prostitution.⁴⁷ According to the findings of the World Bank study carried out by CESS, in 70% of the cases, there is no transfer of money back to the family after she has left, which means that the trafficking in the girl contributes to a deepening of poverty for the girl's family and children.

According to the findings of the World Bank study, in the areas with the highest living standard among Roma, the phenomena of trafficking in girls for prostitution still seems to happen. According to the study, the proximity of Roma to Albanians in more integrated and quite prosperous areas, appears to make them into easier targets for traffickers. This phenomena has been called "negative social capital" referring to the fact that traffickers from the majority population seem to easier be able to approach and have easier access to young vulnerable girls from these areas, as they are not living in isolation.

3) Trafficking in organs

There exists a great concern among the Roma community regarding the children who have been trafficked abroad but who did not return and who have not been found anywhere.⁴⁸ Sometimes these disappearances are linked with rumors regarding trafficking in organs. However, most NGOs seem to base their concerns regarding trafficking in organs on anecdotal media stories.⁴⁹ Rumors exist in Albanian society about a clinic on the Macedonian side of the Ohrid lake and somewhere in Greece, to which children are taken and their organs removed. However, no bodies have ever been found.⁵⁰ Some of the Roma representatives spoke about direct knowledge of clinics and houses in Greece where children are allegedly closed in until removal of the organs. However, it is questionable how realistic and truthful these stories are. Actors like TdH and UNICEF take a very careful approach on this matter, as they find that they have to little data to be able to confirm the existence.

4) Possibilities for reintegration of the child victims of trafficking

The issue of reintegration and victims' assistance is very broad and cannot be explored very deeply here. However, it is important to account for some issues highlighted during the assessment in Albania.

It seems as if mostly NGOs, as opposed to the state, are involved in the repatriation and reintegration of child victims of trafficking.⁵¹ According to TdH, their work with

⁴⁷ According to CESS, 5 % of the 660 families (330 Roma and 330 Egyptian) that were interviewed had such a case in the family.

⁴⁸ Romani Baxt Tirana, interview

⁴⁹ ICMC, interview

⁵⁰ Head of OSCE field station Elbasan, personal communication

⁵¹ According to TdH Tirana, the provisions for reintegration are included in the National Strategy to Combat Child Trafficking, but it has not been fully implemented.

reintegration starts already when a trafficked child has been identified. The child's family is contacted, an assessment is done of the possibility for the child to return to the family and the family is prepared for the return of the child.⁵² In the case that the child cannot return to the family, TdH and NPF try, to the largest extent possible, to find foster families. According to TdH, most of the foster families that TdH collaborate with are from the Roma and Egyptian community as most of the children are from these communities. Only as a last option the child is placed in a state institution, as TdH and NPF work according to the principle that the best place for a child is the family. However, as the Anti-Trafficking Officer of the OSCE Presence in Albania pointed out, in a small country like Albania it is difficult to find a suitable foster family where the child will be safe, as there is always a risk for the child to be re-trafficked.⁵³

It seems as if the leaders of the Roma community in general are unaware of existing reintegration mechanisms. Also, when a child returns without involvement of TdH and NPF, there seem to exist very few options for reintegration, especially in the case of victims of trafficking for prostitution who may require special psychological and health attention. Several Roma representatives stated that they were unaware of the existence of any psychological or other health services in their community for the girls who have come back from prostitution to attend, which means that they are completely relying on the family and community for their reintegration. According to the representative of a Roma NGO in Durrës, who has seen several cases of girl children coming back from prostitution, their reintegration in society remains a big challenge. The girls have a problem with being accepted by the community and will never be able to marry or re-marry and they are almost inevitably blamed for having worked in prostitution. Further, he communicated some cases from his community when traffickers have come to take girls back who have returned to their family from Greece and Italy. In many cases the family lets the girl be taken, as they feel threatened with the situation and there are weapons involved. Mostly, such incidents are not reported to the police.

2. PERCEPTIONS OF THE SITUATION OF TRAFFICKING IN CHILDREN AS IT AFFECTS ROMA AND EGYPTIANS

According to the Roma and Egyptian NGOs participating in the study, all except one stressed their great concern with the widespread phenomena of child trafficking in their communities. The Roma and Egyptian representatives all stressed the causes of trafficking as being the severe poverty and discrimination of the community. The Roma NGO denying cases of trafficking in their community stressed that trafficking only happens in the Egyptian community. There could be several reasons why an NGO is denying the existence of trafficking. According to CESS it may be a result of an identity problem or feeling of shame, which makes the NGOs and/or individuals stress only positive aspects. Another NGO representative stressed the fact that, on the other hand,

⁵² TdH Tirana, e-mail exchange as follow up to interview

⁵³ Anti-trafficking Officer OSCE Presence in Albania, e-mail exchange as follow-up to discussions in Albania

some of the Roma NGOs may be exaggerating their concern and will to work against trafficking as they may have understood that there presently exist a lot of funding possibilities.⁵⁴

It was also clear that some non-Roma NGOs saw the reasons for the high number of victims of trafficking from Roma and Egyptian communities as to some degree being cultural. However, all the non-Roma NGOs seemed to agree that the Roma and Egyptian community is exposed to discrimination and racism shown by indifference from the majority population.

3. CO-OPERATION BETWEEN NON-ROMA NGOs AND ROMA/EGYPTIAN NGOs⁵⁵

It is clear that there is a great lack of co-operation both between the Roma/Egyptian NGOs and between Roma/Egyptian NGOs and non-Roma NGOs working against trafficking.

The heads of the Roma and Egyptian NGOs are community leaders; many times they serve as a bridge between the Roma and the outside community which makes them the persons to whom parents turn if they are worried about their child missing abroad. Because of this it seems very important for the actors working with anti-trafficking efforts to closely co-operate with the leaders of the Roma and Egyptian community. For example, the leader of the only Egyptian NGO in Korca, communicated that many individuals approach him asking for help with finding their children. According to him, he can not do anything to help them.⁵⁶ There does appear to be a certain lack of awareness within Roma NGOs of existing anti-trafficking mechanisms.

A network of NGOs exists "All together against child trafficking" (Albanian abbreviation: BKTF) including NGOs from different parts of the country. This network is somehow envisioned to function as a referral mechanism and when TdH has cases of trafficking in areas where it does not operate, the cases are referred to BKTF.⁵⁷ However, there are currently no Roma or Egyptian NGOs or representatives included in the network yet although according to Save the Children, there has been some interest shown from Roma NGOs for inclusion.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Children of the World, interview

⁵⁵ The Egyptian community is much less organized than the Roma community, which means that the non-Roma NGOs have had very little experience of co-operation with Egyptian NGOs. Therefore, this chapter will mainly focus on co-operation between Roma and non-Roma NGOs.

⁵⁶ Kabaja Korca, interview

⁵⁷ UNICEF, TdH Elbasan, interviews

⁵⁸ Save the Children, interview

A. Mutual distrust

A great degree of distrust characterizes the relationship between the Roma NGOs and the relationship between Roma NGOs and non-Roma NGOs working against trafficking. This is also identified as a major obstacle to co-operation by some non-Roma NGOs. The distrust from the Roma NGOs towards NGOs like NPF and TdH seems to be higher among those Roma NGOs that have already, to some extent, been engaged in work against trafficking. They seem to think that the work of TdH and NPF is insufficient and they cannot understand why these organizations are not collaborating with them, as they are the real "experts" on the Roma community. There is also a great distrust from the Roma NGOs towards the Albanian police because of alleged police involvement in trafficking, which makes them reluctant to approach the police.⁵⁹

Distrust on the part of the non-Roma NGOs is common regarding the trustworthiness of the Roma NGOs. TdH and NPF communicated their confusion with the changing leadership and fragmented nature of the Roma NGOs, which according to them makes it very difficult to co-operate with the Roma NGOs. The Roma NGOs have a lot of tensions in between them and it seems almost impossible for an outsider to understand these conflicts.

B. Attitudes to Roma and Egyptian NGOs

There seems to exist very differing views on the part of the non-Roma NGOs on the value and importance of including Roma and Egyptian NGOs in the already existing work against trafficking. Some representatives of non-Roma NGOs seemed very interested in at least discussing or attempting to start a direct co-operation with Roma NGOs, seeing it as something positive for reaching the Roma and Egyptian community. Other representatives were very negative, partly because of previous negative experiences resulting in distrust in the Roma NGOs. The Roma NGOs are seen by most non-Roma NGOs as having problems of organization and there appear to be frequent problems with the leadership. All non-Roma representatives expressed difficulties in their previous experience of co-operation with the Roma and Egyptian NGOs. It should also be stated that to some extent there appears to be a measure of residual stereotyping of Roma amongst some non-Roma NGOs.

According to Save the Children, the gap between Roma NGOs and other NGOs working against trafficking is not only due to prejudice between Roma and non-Roma, but also to the fact that there is no formalization of links and that only 10 years have passed since the country opened up.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ NGO Roma for Integration, interview

⁶⁰ Save the Children, interview

4. FUNDING FOR ANTI-TRAFFICKING PROJECTS

Most of the funding agencies have as a leading objective to focus on vulnerable groups, including Roma and Egyptians.⁶¹ However, there is almost no funding given directly to Roma and Egyptian NGOs. It appears that donors are reluctant to fund Roma and Egyptian NGOs directly because of lack of trust, which means that funding earmarked for the Roma/Egyptian community always is channeled via a non-Roma NGO, which is supposed to involve and/or co-operate with the Roma/Egyptian community in their work.⁶² There appears to be limited oversight as to whether this co-operation really happens. According to Romani Baxt, the best way for the funders to ensure that Roma NGOs really are included would be to facilitate the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the non-Roma NGOs and the Roma NGOs.⁶³

Donors take the view that the commonly existing hostility between the Roma NGOs is seriously counter productive and for this reason are reluctant to co-operate directly with them as one leading funder stated.

Some of the NGOs with donor functions recall some bad experiences from previous direct work with NGOs and thus do not want to risk getting involved in something similar again, stating that "the donors have had their fingers burnt".⁶⁴

5. POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION/FOLLOW-UP AS RECOMMENDED BY ACTORS IN ALBANIA

Lately, there have been several national and international research teams carrying out interviews and surveys with the Roma and Egyptian community on the issue of trafficking. It is clear that there is a strong need for action as Roma and Egyptian NGO representatives state that they are tired of only speaking about the problem.

The recommendations on future action have been divided into different categories of focus of action although most of the following recommendations link and complement each other. However, the categories were set up to make the material easier to process.

A. Awareness raising

There appears to be a significant awareness among the Roma and Egyptian representatives participating in the study that trafficking is a problem, equally there appears to be awareness as to how the process of trafficking works. What is seriously lacking is knowledge of what can be done for those families who fall victim to

⁶¹ Save the Children, interview

⁶² SIDA and Save the children, interviews

⁶³ Romani Baxt Tirana, interview

⁶⁴ ICMC, Save the Children, speaking for donors in general

trafficking. Further, the most pressing need is as ever the provision of suitable alternatives to trafficking.⁶⁵ A future anti-trafficking project should importantly involve tangible outcomes for the beneficiaries, including ownership.⁶⁶ According to the representative of the NGO Alba Rom, there is a need for door to door discussion with families rather than big trainings due to the fears and potential dangers of speaking openly about trafficking in smaller communities.⁶⁷

Information on where to get assistance if your child is trafficked, would be much needed as well as building up confidence between Roma/Egyptian NGOs and already existing NGOs working against trafficking.

Also there seems to be a need for sensitizing the NGOs working on anti-trafficking, as well as the Albanian society as a whole, on Roma and Egyptian culture and living situation. According to TdH Elbasan, the effects of an awareness raising campaign directed only to the Roma, might be destroyed if general society is not sensitized to the minority issue. Additionally, Unicef requested sensitization trainings for police on Roma issues.

B. Repatriation actions and reintegration

When asking the Roma and Egyptian NGOs about the way that they would like to increase their work on anti-trafficking, they all requested resources to go to Greece or Italy to pick up their children from the streets. Some of the representatives participating in the study have been involved in unofficial (mostly individual) actions of repatriation of children from Greece.⁶⁸ However, this action has become illegal as new legislation has been enacted in Greece, allowing for only the police to pick up the children from the streets.⁶⁹ Further, as TdH is already working with the Greek authorities, identifying children and repatriating them in Albania, a network for repatriation is already established. Street workers of the Greek NGOs Filoxenia and Arsis, which also has Albanian TdH staff, approach children to identify them, but in the end asks the police to take them from the streets.⁷⁰ There is an obvious need of utilizing already existing structures and making them more efficient in reaching and collaborating with the Roma and Egyptian community.

Some Roma representatives requested reintegration programs including health and psychological health services for children returning from trafficking.

⁶⁵ Stressed by OSCE Presence Civil Society Development and Gender Adviser, UNICEF, Head of OSCE field station Elbasan

⁶⁶ Head of OSCE field station Elbasan, personal communication

⁶⁷ Alba Rom, interview

⁶⁸ Roma for Integration Tirana, Romani Baxt, Korca, Disutni Albania Korca, interviews

⁶⁹ Filoxenia, Thessaloniki, interview

⁷⁰ Filoxenia, Thessaloniki, interview

C. Facilitating increased co-operation between Roma and non-Roma NGOs

The Roma and Egyptian representatives all stressed that they in most cases know which children have been trafficked and where and who the traffickers are. The wish of the community representatives to go to Greece and Italy shows a lack of awareness of existing mechanisms for repatriation of children and also a lack of trust in the existing structures.

As described in the previous chapter on co-operation, there seems to exist a barrier between the staff of the Albanian and international NGOs and the Roma/Egyptian NGOs, partly because of prejudice and lack of trust. As was pointed out by TdH and NPF and also by several Roma representatives, the Roma NGOs appear to have very high thoughts of the OSCE. Therefore, the OSCE and ODIHR have the potential for facilitating co-operation between the actors in Albania. One possibility for enhancing co-operation could be via trainings and/or practical manuals on victims assistance/referral supported by the OSCE or ODIHR and elaborated in co-operation with existing anti-trafficking NGOs. This may have effect in establishing increased trust among the Roma and Egyptian NGOs in existing anti-trafficking mechanisms. However, this would have to go together with sensitizing of the non-Roma NGOs to Roma culture.

All the Roma NGOs in Korca requested a networking meeting for the Roma and Egyptian NGOs, TdH, NPF and other actors working with trafficking in children, to be able to get to know each other's activities and explore possible future co-operation.

One suggestion for facilitating co-operation between Roma/Egyptian and non-Roma NGOs was to start a new small scale social project, i.e. addressing root causes of trafficking, in which the links between the Roma/Egyptian NGOs and other NGOs would be reinforced from the very start, including the involvement of the local authorities. With a new project there would be the possibility of appointing new staff, including representatives of the Roma and Egyptian community. This might best be implemented in Korca where the NGO Children of the World already started the first step in implementing such a project, but was forced to stop because of lack of funding.

D. NGO and leadership capacity raising

Most non-Roma NGOs requested a more credible and organized leadership of the Roma and Egyptians for future co-operation. More specifically, according to TdH and NPF, the best way for the ODIHR and the CPRSI to be involved in future action in order to facilitate co-operation between Roma/Egyptian NGOs and TdH/NPF would be to assist in fostering the creation of a credible leadership of the Roma/Egyptian community.

E. Addressing root causes

Many NGOs, both Roma and non-Roma requested the addressing of root causes, mostly the access to education. Save the Children is not carrying out any project directly labeled anti-trafficking project, but sees it as important to address the issue holistically and therefore sees all their activities as connected to anti-trafficking.⁷¹

The recommendations on education included activities to increase access to education including sensitizing teachers and school personnel on Roma and Egyptian culture and living situation.

F. Other issues to be addressed

According to several NGOs, civil birth registration has to be promoted among Roma children, as well as Albanian children in general, in order to decrease the vulnerability of the children to trafficking.⁷² Further the view seems to exist that it would be important to raise awareness about the damaging practice of early marriages in connection to trafficking, education, poverty and the health of girls.⁷³

⁷¹ Save the Children, interview

⁷² Point given by NPF, TdH and Unicef

⁷³ CESS and UNICEF, interviews

5) Recommendations

Regional

- To increase the political will of institutions working with Roma issues including Roma NGOs to address the issue of trafficking in human beings
- To address root causes of trafficking, including exclusion, discrimination and marginalisation among Roma and related vulnerable groups. Working for increased access to education including sensitizing teachers and school personnel on Roma and Egyptian culture and living situation.

In Albania

- To support a networking meeting in Korca (and potentially in other cities), including the possible follow up activities of such a meeting. Encouraging the participating NGOs to jointly come up with project proposals.
- To encourage non-Roma NGOs to work closer with Roma and Egyptian NGOs by supporting projects undertaken jointly by Roma and non-Roma NGOs, with clearly defined sharing of tasks and responsibilities for any project's design, implementation and final reporting.
- To support training materials for Roma and Egyptian NGOs, practical manuals for what to do in the case your child is trafficked/in risk of being trafficked.
- To support of training/sensitizing material for non-Roma NGOs on the culture and situation of Roma and Egyptians
- To co-operate closely with Council of Europe on activities related to Roma and trafficking in Albania.

IV. REFERENCES

- Columbia University/UNICEF(2003), *Not for Sale. Child Trafficking Prevention in South Eastern Europe. Pilot Research in Albania, Moldova and Romania*
- Council of Europe & Children's Human Rights Center in Albania(2000), *The forgotten children. A report on the Roma Children's Rights Situation in Albania*
- Council of Europe(2002), *Document on the situation of Roma in Albania*,
- Council of Europe(2002), written by Bujar Taho, *Roma in Albania*
- Council of Europe and Project on Ethnic Relations (2000), *Roma and Statistics*, available on <http://www.eumap.org/library/datab/Documents/1016203428.08/tistics.pdf>
- ERRC(1997), *No Record of the Case. Roma in Albania*. Country Reports series, No 5, available on www.errc.org/publications/reports/albania.pdf
- ICMC Center for Refugee and Migration Studies(2003), *Draft National report on Human Trafficking from Albania*
- ILO IPEC(2002), *Street Children in Albania. A Rapid Assessment survey in Tirana, Shkodra and Vlora*
- Limanowska Barbara(2002), *Trafficking in Human Beings in South Eastern Europe*, available on <http://www.unicef.org/sexual-exploitation/trafficking-see.pdf>
- Marcel Courthiade & Jeta Duka, *A Social and historical profile of the Roms in Albania*
- OSCE, *OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings*, http://www.osce.org/press_rel/2003/pdf_documents/07-3447-pcl.pdf
- OSCE Presence in Albania, Office of the Legal Councilor, *Report on Minorities in Albania*,
- Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania to the international organizations in Vienna(2002), *Albania: Country report on trafficking in Human Beings*, presented at the HDIM 2002, available on http://www.osce.org/odihr/documents/trafficking/cp_al.pdf
- Republic of Albania, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Minorities' Office, *Information on the platform for the National Strategy Improvement of the Roma Life Conditions*
- Roma for Integration, Refik Tare (2003), *Round Table on Roma and Education, Report for the Round Table Consultation 7-10 January 2003*
- Save the Children, Daniel Renton (2001), *Child trafficking in Albania*, available on www.globalmarch.org/child-trafficking/virtual-library/child-trafficking-in-albania.pdf
- Terre des Hommes (2003), *The Trafficking of Albanian children in Greece*, available on http://www.childcentre.baltinfo.org/uploaded/Terre_des_hommes_report.pdf
- US State Department (2003), *Trafficking in Persons Report*, available on: <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2003/>

Relevant Albanian National Action Plans

National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking, http://www.osce.org/odihr/attf/pdf/nap_al.pdf

National Strategy for Combating Child Trafficking

National Strategy for the Improvement of the Roma Living Condition

Meetings between 16 - 21 June 2003

Alba Rom, Durres,

Amaro Drom, Korca, Artur

Center for Economic and Social Studies (CESS)

Children of the World, Tirana

Disutni Albania, Korca

ICMC, Tirana

Kabaja Korca Egyptians of Albania, Korca
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, OSCE Section,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Minority Department
NPF (Help for Children), Korca
OSCE Field Station Elbasan
OSCE HQ, Human Rights Officer
OSCE HQ, Anti-trafficking Officer, accompanying on field visit
OSCE HQ, Civil Society Development and Gender Adviser
Roma for Integration, Tirana
Romani Baxt Korca branch
Romani Baxt, Tirana,
Save the Children, Tirana
Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)
Terre des Hommes Elbasan
Terre des Hommes Korca
Terre des Hommes Tirana
UNICEF, Pierre Ferry

Other meetings/contacts

Filoxenia, Thessaloniki, 050503
Arsis, Thessaloniki, 050503
Vatra Center in Vlora, e-mail communication after assessment trip
Saimir Mile, e-mail communication after assessment trip

ANNEX I. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH
on trafficking in children from Roma and Egyptian communities

Not for Sale, Child trafficking Prevention in SEE, Pilot study Albania, Columbia
University, May 2003

The research was carried out through focus groups with children, in debt interviews and questionnaires. The report explores perceptions and awareness of trafficking in human beings of adults and children, with focus on awareness raising campaigns. The report continuously points at the vulnerability of the Roma and Egyptian groups in connection to trafficking as a cause of their marginalised and impoverished situation.

According to the report, the Roma and Egyptian community fall into the high-risk group for being trafficked, with a high percentage of illiteracy and deep poverty. Many families from Roma and Egyptian communities allow their children to go to work abroad as they do not see any other solution to their economic distress. (p. 29) According to the report, the characteristics of victims of trafficking are; female, from rural areas, low education, single and/or a victim of domestic violence. (p. 5) Further, for the Roma and Egyptians, there are very few places available to get assistance in case of trafficking. (p. 29) At the same time the research showed that only the children who had attended anti-trafficking training were aware of how to behave to limit the risks of being trafficked. (p.12) According to the report, more traditional communities also put the blame and burden of guilt on the girls who have been trafficked into prostitution and thus it is more difficult for the girls to be reintegrated into their families. (p. 28)

In the border regions to Greece there is a high awareness of trafficking due to a large number a trafficked children from the area. (p.11) Generally awareness is higher in urban than in rural areas in general. (p. 12) The Roma community in Tirana seemed to be the most out spoken regarding trafficking in children from its community. (p. 27) According to the report "Trafficking awareness campaigns have been successful at making the general public aware. However, awareness and understanding of issues facing minority groups is still lacking."(p. 34)

One of the recommendations of the report is that programs focusing on high-risk communities and which address repatriation and reintegration of children need greater funding

Trafficking in Children from Albania to Greece, TdH, January 2003

The findings of the report show a decrease in children working on the streets in Greece, and an increased awareness among Albanian families. (p. 11) However, it also raises concerns regarding the children who were trafficked from Albania and who did not come back and now are missing. (p. 12)

According to the report, 95% of the Albanian children trafficked to Greece belong to the Egyptian community. (p. 16) The Egyptian community is the most vulnerable group in Albania and "combines the risk criteria for child trafficking". (p. 16)

Readmission agreements between Greece and Albania enable Greek authorities on a legal basis to send back Albanian persons who are residing illegally in Greece. The agreement does not refer to trafficking in children, which means that children are treated like illegal migrants and thus are deported together with adults. (p. 28)

Child trafficking in Albania, Save the Children, Daniel Renton, 2001

According to the report, trafficking in human beings is widespread in Albania and the majority of the victims are children. (p. 1) The report mentions an estimation of 1000 Albanian gypsy children in Thessaloniki (p. 2) including evidence of Roma families selling babies and children. (p. 14)

According to the report the profile of a victim is mainly someone below 18 from a rural area with a low education and from an impoverished family, which are criteria that would fit many Roma and Egyptian children. Further, Renton mentions that many parents do not send their daughters to school in rural areas because of fear of trafficking. (p. 3)

According to the report, many of the children who are trafficked for begging belong to the Roma and Gypsy ⁷⁴ population. (p. 45) Ninety percent of the Albanian children trafficked to Greece are Gypsy and the rest are Roma or from the Albanian majority population. Most of the children come from Korca, Elbasan, Berat and Tirana.

According to TdH and NPF, one of the causes of trafficking for begging is discrimination against minorities in Albania. (p. 46)

⁷⁴ The Renton report refers to the Egyptians as Gypsies

ANNEX II. ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

CPRSI Assessment on trafficking in children Questions for NGOs/IOs working with anti-trafficking

Introduction: Purpose of the meeting and the assessment

- The work of your organisation in connection to the Roma and Egyptian community
- Do you co-operate with any Roma and Egyptian NGOs?
- Do you through your work get into contact with the Roma and Egyptian communities directly or indirectly?

- The work of your organisation in connection to trafficking
- Which are your main co-operating partners in this area?

- What are the obstacles to reaching the Roma communities in your anti-trafficking projects, if any?

- How do you think that your organization could contribute to working against trafficking in children from Roma and Egyptian groups?

- How do you think that your organization could involve the Roma and Egyptian NGOs and community in the fight against trafficking?

- How would you recommend that the CPRSI could be involved in the issue of trafficking in children?

- How to avoid the generation of negative stereotypes of Roma and Egyptian in relation to trafficking?

Further questions:

- Data on trafficking, cases in relation to Roma and Egyptians
- Which people do you classify as Roma and Egyptian? How do you know that someone belongs to these communities?

CPRSI Assessment on trafficking in children

Questions for Roma and Egyptian NGOs

Introduction: Short introduction to the CPRSI. Purpose of the meeting and the assessment

- Please tell shortly about the work of your organisation
- Do you work with trafficking in children in any way?
 - Which are your main co-operating partners in this area?
- Do you know if there is any trafficking in children in your community. Aware of any cases? Concerns about the issue? Recent reports from UNICEF, etc (show reports) state that the Roma and Egyptian communities are the most vulnerable to trafficking in Albania, would you agree to that?
- Would you like to work (increase your work) against trafficking in children in some way
 - Do you co-operate with other NGOs, Roma or non-Roma in the fight against trafficking in children?
 - What are the main obstacles for your NGO to start working/ increase your work against trafficking in children? Main obstacles to work with NGOs like TdH and NPF?
- How sensitive is the issue of trafficking in human beings within the Roma and Egyptian communities?
- What do you think that your NGO could bring to the fight against trafficking in children?
- What are your main concerns related to your NGO being involved in the work against trafficking in children?
- How would you recommend that the CPRSI could be involved in the issue of trafficking in children?
- How to avoid the generating of negative stereotypes of Roma and Egyptian in relation to trafficking?

Further questions:

-Do you collect any data on trafficking (in children), cases, statistics. View on how many victims are Roma, Egyptian or come from majority community, what the proportions are?