

Press release, 20.06.2024: GRETA recommendations on Switzerland

## **GRETA sees great need for action to protect victims of human trafficking in Switzerland**

*The Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) today published its recommendations to Switzerland on combating human trafficking. GRETA recommends that Switzerland take measures to ensure the protection of victims through identification by specialised services, safe accommodation, support tailored to the needs and wishes of victims, access to a residence permit in accordance with the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (ECMT), and increased awareness among law enforcement authorities.*

### **Switzerland does not adequately protect victims of human trafficking**

Victims of human trafficking rarely receive a residence permit in Switzerland, even if they have been identified as such - and if they do, there are major differences between the cantons. This makes it impossible for victims to access adequate protection and support and hinders their co-operation with the authorities in possible criminal proceedings. According to GRETA, authorities should ensure residence permits for victims of trafficking during criminal proceedings and on the basis of their personal situation, including security risks and their medical and family situation. In the area of asylum, for example, Switzerland makes little use of its right to self-entry for victims of human trafficking who are in Dublin proceedings. This violates the rights of the victims. Leila Boussemaier, CSP Geneva, states : "Victims of human trafficking who are sent back to the Dublin country or to their country of origin are at renewed risk of falling into the hands of human traffickers".

### **Discrimination against victims trafficked abroad**

The Swiss Victim Assistance Act does not provide access to protection and support for people who have been trafficked abroad. Even if they are identified as such, victims are left on their own to deal with the trauma associated with human trafficking and have no protection against the risk of re-trafficking. This restriction violates Article 12 of the ECHR and Article 4 of the Istanbul Convention. Nina Lanzi, FIZ, explains : "By discriminating against victims of human trafficking if the offence was committed abroad, Switzerland is violating its international obligations and putting human lives at risk."

### **The implementation of the national strategy to combat human trafficking is urgent**

The third National Action Plan (NAP) to combat human trafficking in Switzerland includes measures to improve the protection of victims. Angela Oriti, ASTRÉE, notes : "So far, there is no budget for the implementation of the NAP measures." Clearer coordination between the federal government, cantons and municipalities is necessary in order to achieve an effective policy to combat human trafficking. Monica Marcionetti, MayDay, criticises : "In some cantons, victims are not adequately identified, protected and cared for because there are no specialised services or they are not sufficiently recognised and funded. In these cantons, where the phenomenon of human trafficking is trivialised or ignored, the accommodation and care of human trafficking victims is difficult to completely impossible".

**Plateforme Traite calls on the federal government, the cantons and the municipalities to implement the GRETA recommendations as soon as possible.**

The **Plateforme Traite** is a swiss network of four specialised organisations ([CSP Genève](#), [ASTRÉE](#), [FIZ Fachstelle Frauenhandel und Frauenmigration](#), [Antenna MayDay](#)) that are committed to combating human trafficking and identifying, advising and supporting victims. Their core values are based on respect for human rights and a focus on the needs of victims.

Plateforme Traite, with the support of ProCoRe, Unia Switzerland and Unia Ticino 2023, wrote [the shadow report to GRETA](#) on the implementation of the ERM in Switzerland.

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**Pictures:**

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