



PARLIAMENTARIANS AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

STUDY VISIT - HELSINKI, FINLAND

THURSDAY 21 JUNE 2012

The fifth event of the PAHT project had a different format from the four seminars and good practice exchange visits already implemented. The main aim of the study visit was to provide a group of MPs from different countries with the possibility to meet their counterparts and to discuss their parliamentary work. Another aim was to meet and learn about the work of the leading anti-trafficking actors, including the law enforcement representatives – police and prosecutors, researchers, NGOs. Additionally, the special focus of the visit – in line with the PAHT project outlines – was to meet the Finnish National Rapporteur and to learn about her role and activities. The meetings during the visit provided a platform for extensive discussion and exchange of good practice and experiences.

Participants

There were **6** representatives of parliaments from 5 countries attending the seminar, 1 participant from an NGO in the UK and 2 project staff.

PAHT participants:

1. Robert Biedron_MP, Poland
2. Michael Connarty_MP, UK
3. Dragutin Mate_MP , Slovenia
4. David McIlveen_MLA, Northern Ireland
5. Ruta Ragaliauskiene, Parliament of Lithuania



With the financial support from the Prevention of and Fight against Crime Programme of the European Union,
European Commission – Directorate-General Home Affairs

the
Tudor trust

and the Tudor Trust

6. Anthony Steen, HTF, UK
7. Stana Buchowska, PAHT Project Coordinator
8. Emma Makey, PAHT Project Assistant.

Senator Alberto Maritati from Italy cancelled his visit at short notice due to unexpected duties in Italian Senate.

Programme

The programme started with a dinner hosted by Eva Biaudet, Finnish National Rapporteur, on Wednesday 20 June 2012.

The one day intensive programme comprised of 4 visits that enabled PAHT participants to meet 5 Finnish MPs, 2 Finnish Parliaments advisors, 3 policemen, a prosecutor, a researcher, 4 NGO's representative, the Finnish National Rapporteur and two members of her office.

Eduskunta – Parliament of Finland

The first visit was paid to the Finnish Parliament, where PAHT participants met with Finnish MPs, including members of the Parliamentary Human Rights Group, Citizens' and Consumer Rights Committee of the Nordic Council, Employment and Equality Committee.

The host of the meeting was Mr Ilkka Kantola, (soc-dem), Chair of the Human Rights Group, other participants were Ms Satu Haapanen, (green), Chair of the Citizens' and Consumer Rights Committee of the Nordic Council; Ms Leena Harkimo, (coalition party), Ms Anna Kontula (left alliance), Member of the Employment and Equality Committee, Ms Elisabeth Naucler, MP, Ms Paula Molisander, Secretary for International Affairs, Secretary of the Human Rights Group, Nordic Council, Ms Maria Fagerholm, Secretary for International Affairs, Council of Europe and Ms Elina Sorvari, Trainee.

Mr Kantola provided visitors with an overview of Finnish Parliamentary work and some aspects of Finnish anti trafficking legislation. Discussion focused on cooperation, Finnish anti-trafficking legislation, obstacles in identification of trafficked persons, cooperation within the National Referral Mechanism, including cooperation with the Finnish National Rapporteur. MPs from other countries presented also their experiences in the discussed areas.

Helsinki Police Department



With the financial support from the Prevention of and Fight against Crime Programme of the European Union,
European Commission – Directorate-General Home Affairs

the
Tudortrust

and the Tudor Trust

PAHT participants met with law enforcement representatives, including prosecutor and researcher from European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control (HEUNI). The host of the meeting was Inspector Timo Sundqvist, information officer from Helsinki Police. The overview of the Helsinki police work was presented by Chief Inspector Petri Rainiala, Head of the anti –trafficking work of the Helsinki Police, followed by a presentation from Natalia Ollus, Senior Programme Officer, on HEUNI research on trafficking for forced labour in Finland, which was published last year, as well as HEUNI's new EC-funded project on exploitation in recruitment practices and employers' responsibilities. The third presentation was delivered by Mr Mikko Sipila, District Prosecutor from Vantaa, highlighting the role of his office in combatting the crime of trafficking.

Discussion followed on statistics, the number of prosecutions and conviction, legislation, identification, cooperation with the judiciary and approaches to victims/witnesses during the trials.

Office of the Ombudsman on Minorities and the Finnish National Rapporteur

The meeting with Eva Biaudet and two members of her staff focused on explanation of the background of establishment of the office, on the role and mandate of the National Rapporteur, its activities and initiatives. The impact of Report submitted by the Rapporteur was briefly discussed. Most questions concerned her cooperation with MPs, government and her international initiatives. Possibilities of enhancing cooperation with PAHT project were briefly discussed as well.

Pro Tukipiste Finland

Lunch with NGO representatives at Pro Centre Finland, including representatives from Pro-Centre Finland, Multicultural Women's Association, and Refugee Advice Centre, provided PAHT participants with opportunity to learn about the first-hand experience of NGOs working directly with victims of trafficking. Jaana Kaupinnen from Pro Tukipiste, Petra Kjallman from Victim Support Finland, Anastasia Nurmi from Monika Association presented the work of their organisation. The discussion followed, concentrated on cooperation between the governmental and non-governmental organisation, MPs and law enforcement. Financing of NGOs project and activities by the state in Finland was discussed as well.

Outcomes

- a. **New MPs reached** – during the visit the PAHT project reached 5 new members of Parliament, including 4 Finnish MPs and MLA, Northern Ireland.
- b. **New Contact with the Nordic Council representatives established**



- c. Raised awareness amongst MPs about the role and importance of Finnish National Rapporteur and EU Directive's recommendation on this subject in general. Participants learnt about the situation in Finland and shared good practice on anti-trafficking work in their countries.
- d. Possibilities of establishment of the anti-trafficking parliamentary group within the existing Finnish framework were considered by Finnish MPs.
- e. Increased cooperation between MPs, NGOs and public authorities: all MPs exchanged views and shared experience with the NGOs representatives, police, border guards, prosecutors, academia and NGOs representatives.
- f. The seminar enhanced the grounds for the future MPs network by enhancing the number of MPs and countries involved.

With the 5 new MPs involved the PAHT project reached a number of 45 MPs involved, which constitutes 45% of the final target of MPs in the project. There is a big chance to have at least 55 additional MPs involved during next project activities - seminars and conferences.

Conclusions

After the success of this study visit, maybe it will be worthwhile to consider organising smaller, thus more interactive meetings instead of bigger seminar, to enable participants to gain more knowledge and benefit from more contacts and more efficient networking. We are looking ahead to the Lisbon seminar on trafficking data collection, mapping and research that will be held on 13-14 September 2012. The commitment of MPs from 14 European countries, who are interested in working to raise awareness of human trafficking and to prevent it, is really encouraging. This was the fifth of 10 events planned across Europe that will enable parliamentarians to learn good practice, share information and expand their contact with specialist NGOs, experts and business leaders in Europe.

