



Direttorat għad-Drittijiet tal-Bniedem

Human Rights Directorate

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Press Release

For the third consecutive year, Malta is participating in the Blue Heart Campaign and is broadening its commitments in the fight against the World's Global phenomenon of Trafficking in Human Beings (THB) while at the same time it will continue to collaborate with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

During the week starting 25th to 30 Julyth 2022, there will be a promotion for activities which are being organised to raise awareness among the general public on the national fight against Trafficking in Human Beings (THB), both on National Television and radio stations, as well as on electronic sites and on the social media of the Secretariat for Reforms and Equality, as well as of the Directorate for Human Rights.

Tuesday, 26th July 2022, a series of awareness raising events will begin in collaboration with the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS), Agenzija Appogg, and the Correctional Services Agency. These sessions will be coordinated by the Human Rights Initiatives Unit (HRIU) within the Human Rights Directorate (HRD) Through the All EqualProject, supported by AMIF European fund AMIF, which is managed by Agenzija Appogg Support Agency, a number of immigrants in Ħal Far Open Center will be provided with information about labour and sexual exploitation. These sessions have been designed on the basis that knowledge is the key to combat human trafficking. While every person can end up a victim of human trafficking, we are aware that certain situation increases the risk of persons to be trafficked. The sessions are aimed towards those marginalized groups that would include migrants, homeless persons



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and persons working in the sex industry. This initiative will be implementing action number 11 of the Current National Action Plan on Human Trafficking (2020 -2023).

Tuesday 26th and Thursday 28th July 2022, a special night for all family members will be organised in the localities of Gzira and Bugibba whereby information will be provided to the public about various support services and protection measures available to victims of trafficking by officer from the Victim Support Agency, the Malta Police Force and the Foundation for Social Welfare Services- Agenzija Appoġġ. During this activity, pop-corn, doughnuts and day-tarts will be offered to the public free of charge. T-shirts and freebies with the logo of the United Nations Blue Heart campaign will be distributed and available from the Human Rights Initiatives Kiosk.

The Human Rights Initiative Unit (HRIU) within the Human Rights Directorate (HRD), together with the Parliamentary Secretariat for Reforms and Equality, will organise two networking events. The first one will be aimed at senior officials in the Public Service, Civil Society Organisations and members of the Diplomatic corps. This event will take place on **Wednesday 27th July 2022, at 10.30am**, with the theme being *'Use and Abuse of Technology'* which also reflects this year's United Nations theme of the Blue Heart Campaign. The aim of this initiative is to increase the transnational cooperation between Malta and the international institutions and third countries in the fight against trafficking in Human Beings (THB).

Friday, 29th July 2022, the Human Rights Initiative Unit (HRIU) within the Human Rights Directorate will organise the second networking event at 8.30am inside the Old University of Malta in Valletta. This initiative is aimed at strengthening the national cooperation among the



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Policy Development and Programme Implementation Officers (PDPIs) on matters related to combatting THB

During this event, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry for Home Affairs, Security, Reforms and Equality will announce the setting up of the Anti-Trafficking Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC), which will enable the administration of the Government of Malta to adhere to international obligations as well as those arising from EU Directives against Trafficking in Human Beings holistically and with more efficiency and accuracy.

With the collaboration of the officials of the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade (MFET), who coordinate the requests for reporting from the international institutions, as well as the European Union, the Human Rights Initiatives Unit advocates for better national cooperation on THB so that the reports submitted by Malta will include accurate and actual information. Through the intervention of the DG Global Issues Directorate and the PDPI of the Ministry for Home Affairs, Security, Reforms and Equality, this initiative shall focus on the need for better reporting by all entities whose feedback is required to reach the national rapporteur on matters related to THB in a timely manner so that their response will be communicated to the permanent representatives for Malta within the foreign institutions.

The Manager of the Information Security and Governance Department within MITA will be giving a presentation on the relevance of this year's UN Blue Heart Campaign theme '*Use and Abuse of Technology*' and explain how in these modern times criminals abuse of technology and how the public service can overcome such modern challenges through technology.



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During the same event, there will also be a presentation by the National Statistics Office and the Malta Police Force. These interventions will specifically focus on the mechanisms to facilitate the collection of data and evidence for the purpose to investigate crimes upon suspicion flagged by public officials, as well as any reports made by the general public related to any type of exploitation related to this complex criminal activity. The cooperation of all the public entities is necessary for the evidence to be collected on time and kept by the police in charge of this field of crime in order to effectively investigate reports related to THB.

The Human Rights Initiatives Unit (HRIU) within the Human Rights Directorate (HRD) will provide additional information about the achievements made so far, including the successful application for funds under the *'Technical Support Instrument'* of the European Union, whereby a foreign expert will be engaged by the European Commission to assist in the drafting of the first National strategy against Trafficking in Human Beings. Moreover, an explanation on a set of guidelines aimed at PDPI officers will be provided. These will assist the focal persons appointed on the Anti-Trafficking IMC to collect the information requested from each ministry in the form of an Action Plan against Human Trafficking.. This must reflect the goal/s of each department and/or public entity falling under the represented Ministries to implement preventive measures, or other measures that offer protection to vulnerable persons. The main goal is to establish a national referral and reporting structure to make sure that any kind of irregularity is followed and processed by the responsible body,, allowing the concerned institutions to be formally notified in order to enable the necessary investigation to commence and effectively prosecute traffickers in human beings

The Human Rights Initiatives Unit will continue to promote the need of partnerships with the Civil Society Organisations and the Private Sector. In order to fight this organised criminal activity, it is imperative that Malta maintains this national effort to manage its legal obligations

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MINISTRY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, SECURITY,
REFORMS AND EQUALITY

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and address the root causes of trafficking to ensure that all the fundamental rights of every human being are safeguarded.

