

## **Side event «enhancing protection of unaccompanied minors along the migration routes»**

### **Coordination by NGOs Atina (Serbia), La Strada Open Gate (FYROM) and ARSIS Association for the Social Support of Youth (Greece) – Project financed by France**

The Permanent mission of France to the UN in Vienna and the Permanent mission of Greece to the UN in Vienna organize a side event back to back to the thematic session organized within the framework of the UN Global Compact for Safe Orderly and Regular Migration which will take place at the UN Headquarters in Vienna on 4 and 5 September 2017. The side event will take place at lunch time on 4 September.

The panel will be composed of 3 NGOs representatives – Atina (Citizens Association for combating trafficking in human beings and all forms of gender-based violence) from Serbia ; La Strada Open Gate (European Network Against Trafficking in Human Being) from FYRoM and ARSIS (Association for the Social Support of Youth) from Greece – a French sociologist (Olivier Peyroux) and a moderator from the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA).

#### **I. Project presentation**

##### ***Context***

Since the closure of the Balkan route in March 2016, the situation of unaccompanied minors has deteriorated, in particular for the following reasons:

- Distrust of authorities (fear of return as they are irregular migrants), encouraging minor migrants to disappear underground;
- Border crossing are increasingly difficult (closure of borders), leading to hire smugglers with raising prices.

To better identify and protect unaccompanied minors along the Balkan route, France has cofinanced a project amounting to 60 000€. It has been implemented since 1st December 2015 in Serbia, FYROM and Greece by NGOs Atina (Serbia), La Strada Open Gate (FYROM) and ARSIS Association for the Social Support of Youth (Greece).

##### ***Objectives***

Improve the identification and protection of unaccompanied minors in Greece, FYROM and Serbia by strengthening the institutional arrangement to protect unaccompanied minors and reinforce the formation of fields' professionals.

##### ***Results***

- Mobile team 24 hours per 7 days were created or reinforced;
- Field actors in direct contact with minor migrants were formed;
- A platform for the transnational exchange of information on the situation of those migrants was put into place by the three NGOs.

## **II. Presentation of the NGOs**

### **NGO Atina – Citizen association for combating trafficking in human beings and all forms of gender-based violence (Serbia)**

The aim of Atina's work is the creation of sustainable support mechanism for social inclusion of marginalized and discriminated groups (mainly women and children who are victims of human trafficking). Activities of prevention are carried out toward public sphere and vulnerable groups. Atina also works with public authorities to improve legislation and governmental decisions. Through its activities, the NGO aims to protect the victims of human trafficking and/or violence (hotline, mobile team, accommodation centre). The organisation also runs a social enterprise in the form of a bagel shop, which provides funding for the organisation. It also gives young women the opportunity to gain valuable work experience and build their confidence to be able to get back into the labour market.

### **NGO La Strada Open Gate - European Network Against Trafficking in Human Being (FYRoM)**

The La Strada programme in FYRoM is implemented by the NGO "Open Gate - Women Lobby and Action against Violence and Trafficking in Women". In the past years, La Strada developed into a leading NGO against trafficking in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In this capacity, La Strada presents recommendations and suggestions to the government to improve identification and protection of victims of trafficking. Activities of prevention throughout the particularly vulnerable groups (children, women and the Roma community) are carried out, as well as assistance to victims (hotline and accommodation centre).

### **NGO ARSIS - Association for the Social Support of Youth (Greece)**

ARSIS Association for the Social Support of Youth is a Non-Governmental Organization, specializing in the social support of youth that are in difficulty or danger and in the advocacy of their rights. The main target is the prevention of youth marginalisation, the elaboration of policies which defend youth rights and the active social support towards disadvantaged young people.