

Netherlands Red Cross – THB activities

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1. Legal-practical support to foreign victims of THB

Assistance to victims of trafficking (VoTs) during the residence permit procedures specifically available to trafficked persons (reflection period up to continued residence permit on humanitarian grounds). One to one support is provided by specially trained legal volunteers, such as:

- Information on legal (residence permit) procedures and rights and obligations.
- Application for extension of a temporary residence permit and for continued residence after the residence permit for human trafficking.
- Collecting documents on medical/ psychological conditions and victim statements.
- Application for financial compensation victim solidarity fund.
- Accompanying clients to embassies, municipalities, and lawyers.
- Obtaining personal and identification documents.
- (Personal) safety reports with country of origin information.
- Referral to other services.
- Promotion of self-reliance and resilience: we aim to improve the resilience of clients, so that they are more able to build a safe future, in the Netherlands or the country of origin.

Although all our clients are represented by lawyers, the Red Cross legal-practical assistance is a valuable addition, as lawyers have very limited time and struggle to stay up-to-date with these specific legal residence procedures. Volunteers are requested to be available up to 8 hours per week for assistance and training/ team meetings. The coordinator monitors progress in the legal support in an online (secure) workspace.

Start date program: 2009

Number of VoTs supported in 2018: 69 persons

2. Humanitarian diplomacy

Regular dialogue with stakeholders and policymakers in the Netherlands to share findings and advocate for improvements. Based on our own research and external reports, NLRC raises concerns about risks of human trafficking and exploitation to refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants. Evidence-based lobby is performed with the aim to improving the protection arrangements for trafficked migrants.

3. Capacity building to promote identification of victims of THB

Training for staff and volunteers working with migrants:

We launched a 35 minute [e-learning module](#) in February 2018: 'Recognizing Human Trafficking' (an adaptation of the British Red Cross e-module). Along the migration routes in Europe, aid workers, including employees and volunteers of the Red Cross, work with migrants that might be at risk to be risk, or are currently trafficked. The more people are able to recognize the signals and respond adequately, the more victims can receive appropriate help. To increase the impact of our assistance we collaborated with three main stakeholders in the Netherlands: the Dutch Refugee Council, the Central Agency for Reception of Asylum seekers and CoMensha, the Dutch coordination center on

THB (Dutch La Strada). Volunteers, employees and course participants from these and other organizations will be able to follow the e-module and workshops on early identification of trafficked persons among migrants. In 2018 over 500 persons had finished the e-learning module.

For Red Cross professionals and volunteers working with migrants, the e-module followed by a workshop will become part of their standard training program. We also advocate for other actors, such as migration detention centers, to train their staff on recognising signs of THB, and provide training where needed. The training we deliver is an adaptation of the IFRC/ATN toolkit 'Human Trafficking in the context of migration'.

4. Awareness-raising on THB among migrants

To promote awareness about risks of THB, as well as self-identification among potential victims, NLRC developed a method to increase awareness among asylum seekers in cooperation with the above-mentioned main stakeholders in the asylum sector. Information about THB risks, rights in the Netherlands and available assistance for victims has been mainstreamed into existing information delivered to asylum seekers (with and without status) by staff and volunteers from among others COA, UAM guardianship organisation NIDOS and Refugee Council. The objective is that every year thousands of asylum seekers above 12 years old receive basic information about THB as part of thematic discussions or sessions about, for example, general safety, healthy relations or the labour market. Focus groups with over 50 asylum seekers and former victims of human trafficking gave input to the development of the information messages, which were compiled and explained in the toolkit "Discussing human trafficking/exploitation with (former) asylum seekers". [An English version can be downloaded here.](#) This project was part of the AMIF-funded STEP project, led by British Red Cross between March 2017 and May 2019.

If funding is located, we aim to adapt this project to raise awareness of THB among undocumented migrants outside the asylum sector by cooperating with grassroots organisations.

5. Co-chair Action for Trafficked persons Network (ATN)

NLRC is a long-time active supporter of the ATN. As one of three co-chairs, we aim to build capacity of National Societies in the European region on THB response and to facilitate the sharing of expertise by organising annual meetings and webinars, and together with the IFRC developing the Guidance note on THB and the Training of Trainers on THB in the context of migration. We also provide input to IFRC policy documents and advocacy statements and exchange experiences with networks in other regions or focusing on relevant topics.