



**Implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2012-2015) "Growing with Children's Rights"  
Good Practices and Initiatives**

**Comprehensive Social Inclusion Programme for Victims of Human Trafficking**  
*NGO Atina, Serbia*

**Country(ies):** Serbia

**Title of practice:** Comprehensive social inclusion programme for victims of human trafficking

**Main scope/theme:**

- Eliminating violence against children: sexual violence, trafficking of children
- Children in vulnerable situations: children 'on the move' (refugees, asylum-seeking, unaccompanied and separated, internally displaced and stateless children), Roma children

**Managing organisation(s):** NGO Atina, <http://atina.org.rs/>, contact person: Marijana Savic, phone: +38111 322 00 30, marijana.savic@atina.org.rs

**Brief description:** The key objectives of the comprehensive reintegration programme for victims of human trafficking are: the establishment of a structured mechanism for long-term social inclusion assistance to children and youth victims of human trafficking and other forms of exploitation regardless of their place of residence; access to long-term quality reintegration assistance throughout Serbia; inclusion and active participation of children and youth victims in the design and implementation of their individual reintegration programmes; their full physical and psycho-social recovery and empowerment; and introduction of evaluation standards to provide for the adaptability of the programme to the beneficiaries' needs.

**Timeframe:** Ongoing

**Type of activities:** The key objectives of the programme are achieved by delivering the following services to victims: assistance in fulfilling basic needs (including accommodation); assistance in obtaining related rights (from obtaining personal documents and cooperation with relevant institutions, to enrolment into the educational system and labour markets); psychosocial, legal and medical assistance; family mediation and counselling; and the provision of all other relevant forms and means of support. The activities are arranged into the following categories: 1) solving the most critical problems upon entering the programme and ad hoc responding to emerging

problems; 2) determining beneficiaries to be included in the programmes according to the key areas; 3) establishing deadlines for assessing beneficiaries' statuses and setting goals for and with each individual beneficiary; 4) creating individual plans together with beneficiaries; 5) monitoring and evaluating the progress in all areas; 6) contacting government institutions and NGOs involved in or relevant to the programme; 7) assessing the outcomes in each case after completion of the programme; 8) following-up on cases after the official completion of the programme. In addition to directly assisting the victims of human trafficking, Atina organises, as a separate programme, trainings for professionals from different fields to build the capacity of institutions and organisations to provide adequate support to victims of human trafficking. Within the capacity building of the institutions and policy development, Atina participates in the research and analysis of human trafficking and similar phenomena, as well as in the process of formulation of possible mechanisms and good practices in the field of social inclusion.

**Results and outputs:** NGO Atina was chosen by Child Recovery, UHI Centre for Rural Childhood, Scotland, to organise consultations with youth and children, Atina's beneficiaries. For that purposes consultations were conducted with nine beneficiaries of NGO Atina, and the majority of them emphasised the importance of family counselling, mediation and assistance they received within Atina's programmes as a key point in their development. They said this kind of support helped them realise that they are not alone in the world, and that they have been supported in their decision-making regardless of whether their choices were good or bad. Consultations with children, beneficiaries of NGO Atina, were organised in order to help professionals to better understand the effectiveness of interventions designed to support children, what children and young people think about reintegration, and the 'changes' that are most important to them. This served as a good monitoring tool for Atina's employees who were able to see their role in the process of social inclusion of beneficiaries, as well as to receive feedback from them about the programmes Atina is implementing.

In 2012 -2013, a joint program of Save the Children, Atina and Group 484, entitled "Setting an Agenda for Child Oriented Social Reform in Republic of Serbia," funded by the European Commission, Open Society Fund in Serbia and Save the Children, was implemented. The overall objective of the action was to provide support to children on the move in Serbia. Although the state has a legislative framework for the protection of children's rights and provides services to children at risk, it is of utmost importance to improve and enable the implementation of the legislation. The objectives are to strengthen CSOs and institutions with child protection mandates and to develop child-friendly assistance, services and policies grounded in the best interest of children on the move. In the reporting period, a comprehensive analysis of the characteristics and consequences that children on the move face in Serbia, complemented by mapping of services and other programmes available to children on the move, has been drafted. Research activities became an important part of the project's implementation. The research phase was focused on identifying current trends that children on the move face in Serbia. A comprehensive analysis of the characteristics, nature and consequences of children's movement was implemented and recommendations were given to governments for the improvement of the position of this group. Research methodology: three focus groups were organised as well as ten in-depth interviews with professionals. Desk research was finalised. Within the research activity a consultation with boys and girls was conducted where 43 children were consulted. Five case studies were drafted. The study "Children on the move - Status and programmes of support and protection of children on the move in the Republic of Serbia" is attached to this document.

**Target group(s):** Children and adolescents, parents, professionals working with children, decision makers, public authorities and civil servants, civil society organisations

**Success factor(s):** Only in the Republic of Serbia in the last three years there were 259 identified trafficking victims, most of whom were youth, women and children. The reasons for human trafficking, taking into account existing practices in Serbia, can be described by all aspects of social exclusion - from material poverty and unavailability of healthcare and education, to gender-based violence and discriminatory and oppressive practices. According to official data, more than 50% of human trafficking victims are children and adolescents up to the age of 18 years. Over 90% of juvenile victims are Roma children. Children who live and/or work on the street are recognised as the most vulnerable among the vulnerable. In addition, there is a reasonable suspicion that 80% of the children who live and/or work on the street are actively exposed to some kind of exploitation. Beneficiaries of the project for sustainable social inclusion are the victims and potential victims of human trafficking, including child victims and potential victims, citizens of Republic of Serbia, victims of sexual and labour exploitation, forced begging and forced marriages, as well as victims' families and close neighbours who are indirectly affected. Beneficiaries of the programme are victims of trafficking on the territory of the Republic of Serbia and they receive assistance in the Belgrade area (if there is need for accommodation in transition houses or alternative accommodation) and/or in the municipality of origin or residence. Only in 2013, the following services were provided to beneficiaries of the Atina's reintegration programme: safe accommodation, assistance in fulfilment of basic life needs, medical assistance, psychological assistance and counselling, legal assistance and counselling, assistance in formal/alternative education and job placement, assistance in social skills' building, family assistance and family mediation and counselling, individual and group experiential support (peer) and other specific services. All mentioned activities have been implemented within three phases of the reintegration process, namely: crises intervention, transition phase and reintegration/social inclusion. Atina has assisted 72 children and youth by providing different services and has achieved a significant progress in supporting beneficiaries through the reintegration process. Bearing in mind that the most of the beneficiaries are from different parts of Serbia, they were assisted by field support teams. Atina has provided medical assistance (doctors, specialists, laboratory analysis, minor health interventions, gynaecological testing, HIV and STD tests) for 43 youth and children, psychological assistance (individual and group therapy, counselling, thematic workshops, crisis interventions, online sessions, family mediation, partners therapy) for 52 youth and children, legal assistance and counselling (trial preparations, providing legal counsellors, assistance during trials) for 21 youth and children, assistance in providing food, clothes, hygiene kits, household necessities (heating, appliances, basic furniture) to 67 children and youth, assistance in skills development (literacy courses, professional orientation courses, job interview workshops, courses for hairdressers and beauticians, jewellery workshops) to 29 youth and children. More than 100 peer support activities were organised. Every activity, planned and implemented by NGO Atina, has been discussed and prepared in partnership with all beneficiaries. In the planning and implementation processes, beneficiaries who had previous experience showed great interest in participating in the planning sessions. Nevertheless, all beneficiaries participated in the development and revisions of all individual reintegration plans and programmes. A significant improvement in service quality and high level of motivation, competence, responsibility and rationality of the beneficiaries participating in the process was achieved. Programme evaluation is predominantly implemented in cooperation with beneficiaries through questionnaires, focus groups and interviews. NGO Atina's case managers organise regular weekly meetings with beneficiaries in order to discuss all aspects of the social inclusion programme. Experience has shown that monitoring and assessment could be considered as one of the essential components of the victims' overall empowerment. Individual social inclusion plans serve as a good monitoring tool as well. Every two months, Atina's

professionals together with beneficiaries analyse related plans and revise them in order to meet newly identified and expressed needs of victims. In respect to the creation of the mechanism for victim's assistance (one of the most significant accomplishments), networks of professionals were developed on a case-by-case-basis. Atina supported local networks in the implementation of a case management system of care. Over 56 consultative meetings and case conferences initiated by Atina were organised on a case-by-case basis just during 2013. In order to further develop this mechanism, Atina has created the programme "Local communities against trafficking", which is approved for funding by the European Commission. The project is implemented in seven local communities (Subotica, Novi Sad, Sremska Mitrovica, Kragujevac, Kraljevo, Nis and Vranje) with the aim to improve the capacity of local communities and civil society organisations to effectively participate in the prevention of trafficking and the protection of victims of trafficking. In addition, the project will contribute to the networking and strengthening of relevant local institutions fighting against human trafficking in order to provide better support to vulnerable groups. Seven Local Stakeholder Networks were established. MoUs are signed by all members of the local networks. The networks consist of representatives of the Police Department, the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office, the Centre for Social Welfare, Red Cross professionals, representatives of healthcare institutions, a branch of the National Employment Agency, Youth office, schools, civil society organisations, and local authorities. This network involves multi-sectorial cooperation, and its goal is to form clear procedures for the prevention of human trafficking that will contribute to better protection of victims, and at the same time provide information to professionals and ordinary citizens on the meaning of human trafficking. State officials consider Atina's project "Local communities against trafficking" a pilot project. They will start to develop networks in 10 other cities in Serbia.

**Estimated budget and human resources:** In 2013, Atina's total budget was approximately 150 000 euros. There are seven full-time employees, 15 occasionally engaged and 4 volunteers working on this project.