



## **Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe**

Commission des Eglises auprès des Migrants en Europe

Kommission der Kirchen für Migranten in Europa

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December 2002 The following Press Release has been issued by the  
Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) and Caritas Europa.**

### **CHRISTIAN ACTION AND NETWORK AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN (CAT) LAUNCHED**

Churches and church-related organisations from all over Europe have engaged in combating trafficking in women for some years. Over the next year they will join their efforts. The CAT (Christian Action and networking against trafficking in women) project combines ongoing activities of different services in the Czech Republic, France, Italy, Greece, Germany, Lithuania, Romania and Russia, Ukraine as well as of the Conference of European Churches. The project has been initiated by the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) and Caritas Europa and will cooperate with other players active in the fight against trafficking. The CAT Project is launched today. The project will be carried out with the financial support of the EU-STOP-Programme. Welcoming the financial support from the European Commission, CCME's General Secretary Doris Peschke expressed "hopes that the excellent work already done by churches and their agencies on local and national level will become more visible and more effective through the international cooperation." Exchange of experiences, knowledge and best practice in the work against trafficking will be at the heart of the CAT project. Through mutual exchange visits, the participating organisations will get to know the work of partners in other parts of Europe and become familiar with different successful strategies in the work against trafficking. The partners will, for example, share their experiences of cooperation with the local police in crime persecution or liaison work with schools and youth centres in awareness-raising work. The exchange visits and two workshops will enable the staff and volunteers of the participating organisations to assess and improve their own training modules in order to make them available for a broader range of users and to raise awareness for assistance and protection of victims. The visits will also facilitate an exchange on the various legal situations in the different countries. Internal communication will be strengthened and project results will be shared with a broader public through an interactive extranet and an attractive Internet Website. The "Coatnet" (Catholic Organisations against Trafficking in Women), which is already in place as an initiative of Caritas, will become an ecumenical portal for Christian initiatives against trafficking. "All these measures should help to make our actions more effective and primarily aim at improving the assistance for and protection of victims", Martina Liebsch, coordinator of the Coatnet-project stated. The ecumenical CAT project is planned for one year. The partners involved are confident that the initiative will gain momentum and become even broader over the next year. "The criminal networks of traffickers are active internationally, so our responses need to be as international and as proactive as possible" underlined CCME's General Secretary Doris Peschke in Brussels yesterday. Peschke also

stated that faith based organisations "uphold the dignity of every human being. Therefore, we are committed to prevention and combating trafficking, but protection and assistance for trafficked persons must be the first priority of any response to trafficking"

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