



The 'EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016' has five key targets:

- 1 Better identification and protection of victims
- 2 Increased prosecution of traffickers
- 3 Development of child protection procedures
- 4 The setting up of national law enforcement units on human trafficking
- 5 Creation of joint investigation teams; national authorities & EU Agencies

COMBAT – Combining Against Trafficking – an EU Daphne III funded project [2011-2013] has been tackling the first three of these key targets, through training front line safeguarding practitioners to better identify victims, protecting those vulnerable by empowering them to resist exploitation and working with safeguarders and law enforcers to improve child protection procedures and increase the prosecution rates of the perpetrators of trafficking. www.combattrafficking.eu

Human trafficking is both a hidden phenomenon and a major escalating concern as highlighted by UNICEF, ECPAT UK 2007, Van de Glind and Kooijmans 2008, and the 2009 Report by the Platform for International Cooperation for Undocumented Migrants [‘Undocumented Children in Europe: Invisible Victims of Immigration Restrictions.’](#)

Research has uncovered a lack of targeted support for safeguarding professionals and front end operatives working in key transport hubs. This prevents professionals and volunteers from accurately recognising trafficking victims and taking appropriate action; vulnerable young people and women are at risk of being taken advantage of by traffickers and forced into a menacing life of crime, sex and violence.

COMBAT has concentrated its efforts at grassroots levels and in non-capital cities: West Midlands (UK), Haskovo (Bulgaria) and Kaunas (Lithuania), which are less well served in terms of services and protective systems for vulnerable and ‘at risk’ groups. Criminal gangs are aware of this weakness and increasingly this is where trafficking tends to occur.

What has COMBAT achieved?

In Haskovo, Bulgaria:

- **377** children aged 13-18 across three border districts (Haskovo, Lyubimets and Svilengrad) have been COMBAT trained over five two hour sessions [249 girls and 128 boys - 77 considered to be ‘at high risk of trafficking’, 209 ‘vulnerable’ and 91 ‘less vulnerable’]
- Professional seminars to 58 adults including 20 Youth Leaders

In Kaunas – Lithuania

- **287** children across Kaunas have been COMBAT trained in schools, foster homes, youth schools and children’s day centres.
- COMBAT training for **77** adults including 11 Volunteers, 28 Specialists, 20 Social Pedagogues, 18 Children’s Day Centre Specialists.

In Coventry – UK

- **1061** professional safeguarders across Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire [plus Birmingham and Leicester] have received the half day COMBAT - Raising Awareness in Trafficking training
- A further **1405** adults have received presentations regards COMBAT [presentation length ranging from 15 minutes to 1.5 hours]
- **67** referred vulnerable young people in Coventry have received ‘**EMPYRE**’ [Empowering Young People to Resist Exploitation] Protective Behaviours Training directly from the COMBAT Engagement Specialist – attending between one & seven sessions of two hours across 22 sessions. A further **40** young people have received EMPYRE training from other members of the multi-disciplinary team. This EMPYRE work has resulted in disclosure of Child Sexual Exploitation [CSE], increased safeguarding, direct involvement of law enforcement and ongoing police investigation
- COMBAT UK has been involved in the development and delivery of the ‘[Say Something if you See Something](#)’ campaign targeted at hotels used in trafficking and sexual exploitation across Coventry and the West Midlands. This campaign has been delivered in partnership with Coventry’s Community Safety Partnership, West Midlands Police, the Children’s Society and SWISH - the Terrence Higgins Trust sex workers outreach service in Coventry.
- COMBAT UK is active in the West Midlands Regional Anti-trafficking Network and liaises with all key stake holders in the anti-trafficking fight.

COMBAT dissemination

- The COMBAT website went live on 18.05.2011 and has been well received by front-line practitioners in the UK. Web membership is growing each week and has now exceeded 170 members – monthly average unique visitors are approximately 856 with **1,727** visits and **31,023** hits per month
- A COMBAT film to include contributions by David Dilnut, Head of the UK Human Trafficking Centre, Sheila Taylor of the UK National Working Group on CSE, Tim Godwin of West Midlands Police plus a victim of trafficking and all COMBAT partners will be complete for the Brussels conference in December
- Social Media such as a COMBAT [Twitter](#) profile [621 Tweets to date and 68 followers] and a COMBAT [Facebook](#) page [39 likes] are additional tools being utilised to advertise training events and current news

COMBAT - through European partnership working – has achieved:

1. Identification and exchange of models of good practice

Given the complexities related to this issue and the lack of support structures and services, the existence of such models is vital to combating the escalating problem of child trafficking across Europe particularly at grassroots level.

2. **Creation of sustainable multidisciplinary networks**

Through our relations with our partners we aim to foster the creation of a sustainable network of experts on the issue of child trafficking (in front-line situations) across Europe.

3. **Creation and design of educational packages**

These have been delivered to front-line staff in the children's workforce as well as community workers who may come across victims of trafficking. Educational packages have been developed to raise awareness of child trafficking in innovative ways and have been delivered to young people at risk of trafficking in all three member states. Knowledge and expertise is shared between all project partners.

4. **Development of awareness raising initiatives targeted to specific audiences**

Training programmes are adapted according to need and target audience: young people, children's workforce professionals, law enforcement, community outreach workers, staff at transport hubs, health workers etc.

5. **Actions contributing to the positive treatment of people at risk**

This is aimed particularly at Bulgaria and Lithuania, where young people are deemed at high risk of falling victim to trafficking. All training packages have a child and rights-based focus and build on best practice available to practitioners.

COMBAT partners:

- Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership (CSWP), UK;
- Opportunity and Protection Association (Association Shans I Zakrila - Chance), Bulgaria;
- Association Kaunas Women's Society (KMD), Lithuania;
- Coventry University, UK (Internal Evaluation partner);
- West Midlands European Centre, Belgium.

Contact:

<http://combattrafficking.eu/contact>

