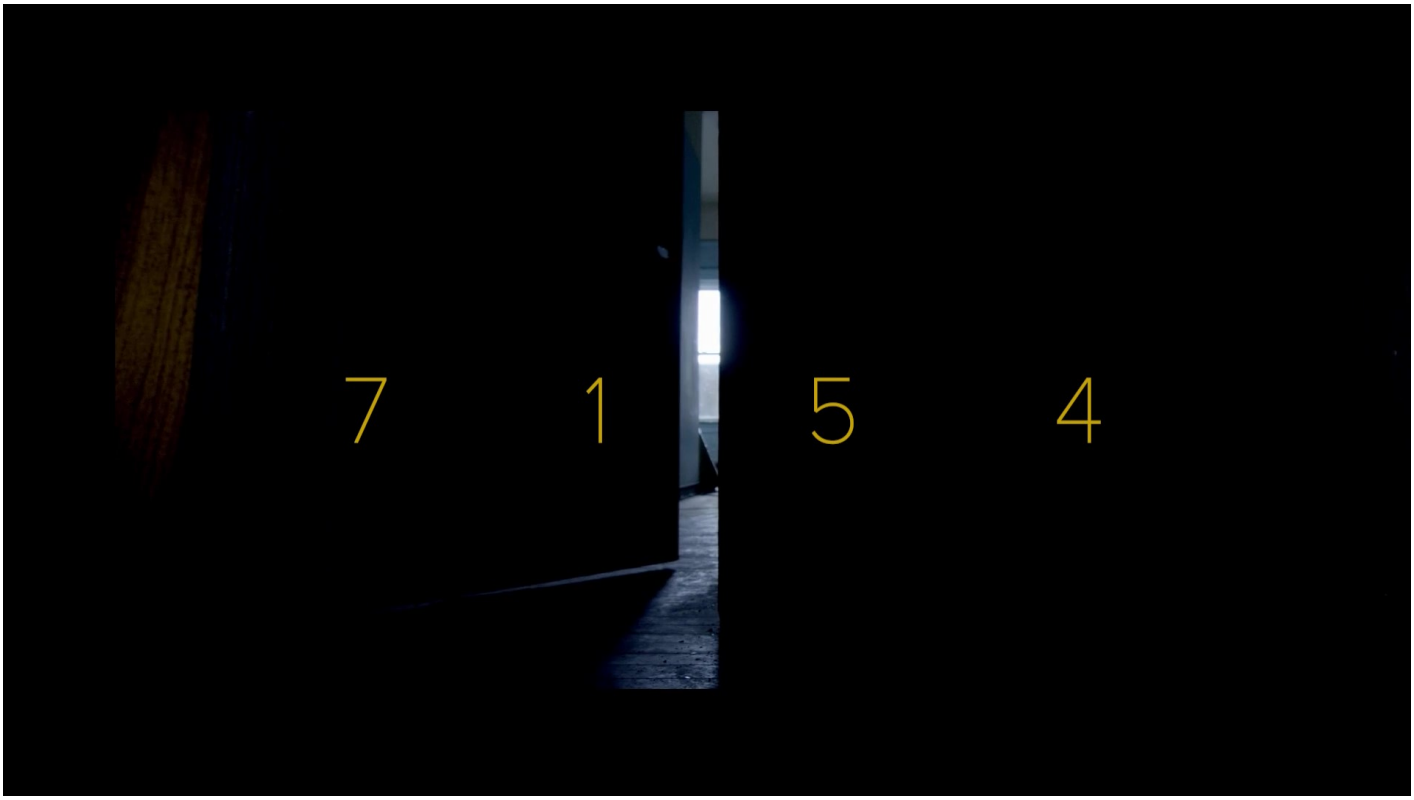
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EU Anti-Trafficking Day: EUAA helping to identify victims and refer them to the care they need



With over 7 150 registered in 2021, the number of human trafficking victims was already on the rise in Europe; even before the Russian invasion of Ukraine led to the largest forced displacement of people since the 2nd World War. With the number of asylum seekers projected to exceed 1 million in 2023, the EUAA continues to support Member States in identifying and referring potential victims of human trafficking to the specialised care that they need.

According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), war and conflict offer key opportunities for traffickers to exploit vulnerable individuals. In 2022, and as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine which **led to the largest displacement of people** since the 2nd World War, the EUAA regularly reported on those seeking temporary protection in Europe. In its analyses, it noted that women and girls consistently made up between 60 % – 70 % of weekly registrations. As part of the overall response, the EUAA not only provided significant training in implementing temporary protection, but as part of that process, also helped Member States identify potential victims of human trafficking.

An analysis by the European Commission earlier this year indicates that the number of victims of human trafficking is on the rise in Europe. In 2021, Member States **registered 7 155 victims of trafficking in human beings**, a 10 % increase year-on-year, of whom **more than two thirds (68 %) were women and girls**. Under EU law, Member States must provide assistance and support to victims of human trafficking; also insofar as they might seek international protection. The EUAA – with **its training activities, situational awareness products, and operational support with reception and vulnerability assessment** – helps identify and respond to the needs of victims, potential and otherwise.

In particular, the EUAA continues to support Member States in several ways:

- Since 2017, the Agency has trained **almost 1 800 individuals** using the EUAA Asylum Curriculum, which helps raise awareness of the international, regional, and EU-level legislation on trafficking. A specialised course focuses on **interview techniques and decision-making for asylum applications** with victims or potential victims of trafficking.
- In the early months of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and as millions sought protection in the EU, the EUAA set out practical recommendations on **providing private accommodation**. These included **screening hosts for criminal records**, sometimes an indicator of links to organised crime, as well as the ability to **raise confidential complaints with hosting arrangements**.
- In March 2023, the EUAA published an overview of the steps taken by the EU and its Member States – both legislative and operational – in addressing the needs of victims of human trafficking in the asylum procedure, including as regards **their identification and referral** to specialised care.

On this EU Anti-Trafficking Day, the Agency continues to partner with Member States in their fight against human trafficking. The Agency is working with national authorities to help raise awareness among asylum seekers, so that fewer people seeking international protection in the EU+ fall victim to this crime, and if they do, they are helped quickly and receive the specialised care they need.

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