

RENATE SUMMER NEWSLETTER

RELIGIOUS IN EUROPE NETWORKING AGAINST TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION



**ENDING TRAFFICKING
BEGINS WITH US**



**RENATE
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RENATE SHELTERS AND SAFE HOUSES TASK GROUP MEET IN-PERSON IN EINDHOVEN, APRIL 2024.

RENATE MEMBERS
FROM ALBANIA,
ROMANIA, MALTA,
THE UK, SPAIN
AND
GREECE ATTEND
SESSION IN
EINDHOVEN, NL.

Last month, the RENATE Shelters Task Group met in-person in Eindhoven, to discuss best practices, their shared experiences, and future planning for the task group. RENATE members from Albania, Romania, Malta, the UK, Spain and Greece attend the session, both online and in-person, and the prospects for future collaboration are exciting and in full bloom.

Read what Rania, the Shelters Core Group representative, who attended the meeting on behalf of Dar Hosea, Greece, had to say after their meeting:

"We had a great time together, presenting our organizations in depth, discussing about best practices, and shining a light on our challenges as well as our finances. As a group, we were able to come up with some suggestions and solutions moving forward. We also had the chance to connect with Maria Buckle (Malta) and Anna Ringler (UK) via Zoom. Now it is time to put all of these things into practice!"





TALITHA KUM ASSEMBLY, ROME, MAY 2024

“FOR THE LONGEST TIME IN MY LIFE, I HAVE NEVER FELT THIS SAFE!” SURVIVORS TELL THEIR STORIES AT TALITHA KUM ASSEMBLY 2024

Article by RENATE Member Brian O’Toole.



“For the longest time in my life, I have never felt this safe”.

These heart-breaking words, spoken by a survivor, for me, and for many others have had a deep and significant impact. In one session at the Talitha Kum Assembly, we were spoken to by a number of survivors (indeed many prefer now to be referred to as thrivers) who spoke so movingly of their experiences whilst being trafficked and enslaved.

Amani, (not her real name) told us that despite being free, everywhere she goes can be a trigger. She told us: “I didn’t think that I deserved to be here (at the TK Assembly)”, “I was reminded that I too needed compassion.”

[...] When Amani had finished, the entire room was in tears and she sat down while we stood up in appreciation, in awe of her strength and confidence, in solidarity with her requests and out of respect, empathy and compassion. Amani was smiling at the appreciation and the standing ovation. Back in our groups we began our Synodal conversation in the Spirit where those in our group offered that we must “stand strong as a prophet”, “be unafraid” and that we are being called to “challenge and face the consequences, and that for love we must take the risk.”

[Read the full report here.](#)



TALITHA KUM: TOWARDS A DISCERNED FUTURE - A GATHERING THAT COUNTS.

Article by RENATE member, Brian O'Toole.

I was one of the 148 Delegates from over 70 countries that attended this 2nd Talitha Kum Assembly that marks 15 years of Talitha Kum (TK). I was attending as one of the 6 delegates from RENATE, the Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation. The guiding theme of the Assembly was "Journeying Together to End Human Trafficking: Compassion in Action for Transformation". 60 Talitha Kum networks were represented in Rome, and it is significant to mention that there was a strong youth and lay contingent present to help discern the next steps for Talitha Kum for the next five years.

[...] Since the last TK Assembly there has been a noticeable increase in the numbers being trafficked. There is an increased number of undocumented workers tied to unscrupulous employers, increased surrogacy, and a pronounced increase in organ harvesting, forced marriage, organised crime, terrorism, kidnapping, war and displacement. We were told that "thousands are rescued while millions are still in darkness." [...]

Again and again, the spirituality of TK was referenced as a guiding beacon, a powerful tool, a sustaining and energising force that binds us together, strengthens our network and takes care of all when the path becomes tough. In an effort to discern, we were guided in our reflection by carefully prepared inputs, one of which referenced migration as the issue of the times. For us, we understand that when people move, they are vulnerable and often the sudden reason for the move may indeed exacerbate the vulnerability [...].

[Read Brian's full report here.](#)





TALITHA KUM RELEASE THEIR FINAL DECLARATION FOLLOWING THEIR 2ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY - MAY 22ND, 2024.

From 18th - 24th May 2024, 153 delegates and participants from 71 countries, representatives of the 60 Talitha Kum (TK) networks committed to ending human trafficking on all continents, gathered at the 2nd General Assembly of Talitha Kum at Fraternal Domus in Sacrofano, Rome, with the theme “Journeying Together to End Human Trafficking: Compassion in Action for Transformation,”

The aim of their gathering was to share experiences and listen to the grassroots, embrace identity and diversity as an international network of networks, strengthen relationships, networking, and collaboration, and celebrate 15 years of Talitha Kum.

[You can read their final declaration here.](#)



RENATE CO-PRESIDENT, IVONNE VAN DE KAR SPEAKS TO VATICAN NEWS AT TALITHA KUM ASSEMBLY - RELIGIOUS ORDERS AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING: EXPLOITATION HAPPENS EVERYWHERE:



Ivonne van de Kar, from the Netherlands, is one of the two vice presidents of the European Network of Religious Communities Against Human Trafficking (RENATE).

In an interview with Vatican Radio, she praised the action plan of the German Bishops' Conference against human trafficking and urged everyone to remain vigilant about supply chains in their personal purchasing behaviour. Ivonne van de Kar emphasizes that human trafficking occurs everywhere in all societies, even if we often do not want to acknowledge this.



In this context, van de Kar also praises the action plan against human trafficking presented by the German Bishops' Conference in December 2022 after two years of joint work with the Santa Marta Group. With nine specific recommendations, the consulted experts provide guidance on how human trafficking can also be combated at the political and law enforcement levels.

We have heard about this action plan from the German Bishops' Conference, and we are also using it in Europe because it is so important," underscores van de Kar: "Where does exploitation occur, and where can something be done? It is not always far away. Sometimes it is very, very close."

[Read the full report here.](#)



"EMBRACING A SHARED VISION": RENATE CO-PRESIDENT MARIE POWER (HFB) REPRESENTS AT MEETING IN ZAMBIA WITH THE CONRAD N. HILTON FOUNDATION



From May 29-31 in Lusaka, Zambia, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation held its semi-annual meeting with partners involved in the Catholic Sisters initiative. This project supports congregations of religious women worldwide who are committed to promoting peace, equity, and justice. RENATE Co-President Marie Power, HFB, traveled to Zambia to represent RENATE at this significant gathering.

Titled "Embracing a Shared Vision: Impact, Learning, and Collaboration in Service to the Common Good," the event brought together 118 partners from 15 countries to foster unity and community. Through the Catholic Sisters initiative, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and its partners provide tangible support to consecrated women who work tirelessly to uphold the dignity of the most vulnerable and foster hope.



RENATE AT THE SISTERS ANNUAL TRAFFICKING AWARDS 2024, RENATE MEMBER BRIAN O'TOOLE'S REFLECTIONS ON ATTENDING SATA AWARDS.

On Thursday May 23rd last, I was privileged to attend the SATA Awards in the Augustinianum in Rome with a gathered audience of approximately 200, and far more attending online. The names of the three laureates were being kept as a closely guarded secret. We had been informed that the three had been selected from a list of over 120 nominations from around the world. The event was organised by Arise Foundation, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and the UISG and the prizes awarded were not insignificant either.

Sr. Grasy Luisa Rodrigues, FDCC, from India received the Common Good Award for her unstinting courage in the face of real threat when rescuing girls from the grips of criminals. Her work is described as "inspiring work of the Holy Spirit which is transformational." Like all the other recipients, Sr Grasy explained that "I cannot do it alone! I need God and others in my community. We are working together to reply to the call which God has given us. Friends, I am unworthy of the awards bestowed upon me, but it reflects the efforts of so many who collaborate in our Mission. We see and value the inherent dignity of all human beings. St. Josephine Bakhita, our universal Sister... it is your turn now to work for victims of human trafficking."

The Servant Leadership Award was presented to Sr. Anne Victory HM from the USA. Sr. Anne built networks with a vision, championing best resources with courage in

abundance and reminded us that in our everyday lives we are touched by MSHT, but that we must be alert and notice this to be able to make a collective response to combat all forms of MSHT.

The Human Dignity Award, went to Sr. Marie Claude Naddaf RGS from Lebanon and this got a really loud cheer (there was even a whistle!) from the auditorium as we at the Talitha Kum Assembly had the privilege of working during the week with Sr. Marie Claude who made regular interventions and comments during our gathering. Sr. Marie Claude is so small in stature that when she stood behind the podium to accept her award, she just couldn't be seen. The irony was not lost on the audience either, who could recognise a huge contribution that was spearheaded by such a petite Sister.

[Read the full report here.](#)

RENATE MEMBER'S RETREAT, VIENNA, AUSTRIA: A JOURNEY OF SOLIDARITY AND REFLECTION



The RENATE Members retreat began on 4th June at the serene Kardinal König Haus in Vienna. Members gathered, not just as individuals, but as pilgrims on a shared journey. Their mission was to reflect deeply on the plight of those trafficked and to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit during this dedicated time for quiet contemplation.

From the very beginning, there was a sense of solidarity. The group drew inspiration from the powerful words of Pope Francis, who reminded them that courage is at the heart of creating a world without human trafficking. He said, "Prayer enables us to be beacons, capable of discerning and making choices oriented towards the good. Prayer touches the heart and impels us to concrete actions, to innovative courageous actions, able to take risks, trusting in the power of God."

As the days of reflection came to a close, the participants felt a renewed sense of strength and encouragement. They were deeply moved by the signs of suffering they saw in the world around them. This retreat was a reminder of their duty to show compassion to those in desperate need – refugees, the impoverished, widows, orphans, and all who suffer exclusion and oppression. It became clear that their responsibility was not just to offer sympathy, but to actively work towards creating just communities and peaceful places to live.

With hearts filled with persistence, hope, and love, the Renate members renewed their commitment to justice. As they prepared to go back to their everyday lives, they carried with them a sense of purpose, ready to make a tangible difference in the lives of those who need it most.

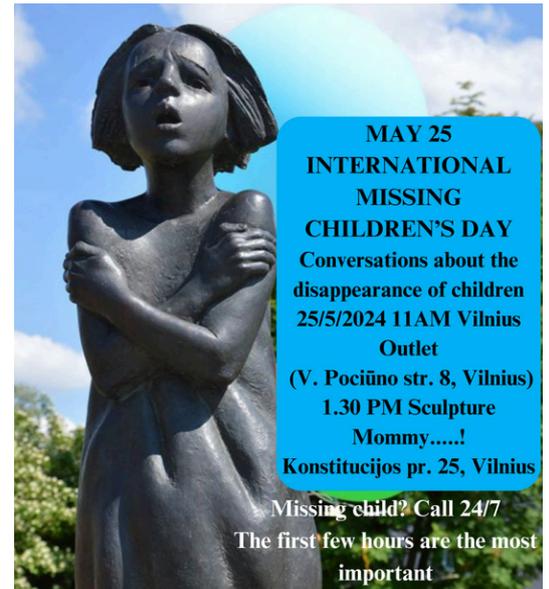
This retreat was more than a time of reflection; it was a powerful call to action. The Renate Community Network left Vienna inspired and united, ready to face the challenges ahead with courage and faith.

MAY 25TH 2024, INTERNATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY:

Every year on 25th May, Lithuania and the world marks the International Day of Missing Children. The day focuses on the causes of child disappearances around the world, including sexual and physical violence, paedophilia and human trafficking.

According to Missing Children Europe, there is a missing child report every two to three minutes in Europe. In Lithuania, according to the Missing Persons Register, about 2000-2500 cases of disappearance of minors are registered each year. It is observed that the main cause of disappearance of children is running away from home or care institutions. Children who go missing or run away from home can become easy prey for criminals not only outside the home but also online.

Lithuania, like 31 European countries, has an international 116 000 hotline for missing children, and was the first Nordic country where the Centre, together with the US Embassy, the Ministry of the Interior, the Lithuanian Police Department and Facebook, launched the Amber Alert Facebook child alert system in Lithuania in 2018.



RENATE WEBINARS 14TH, 15TH, 16TH MAY: "THE EFFECTS & CONSEQUENCES OF WARS/WAR-SITUATIONS ON TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION"



In order to bring attention to the issue of the effects and consequences of wars/war-situations on trafficking and exploitation, especially for women and children, the RENATE Europe network held three morning events/webinars online, each of three hours duration, 14-16 May, 2024.

The webinars helped raise awareness about the issue of human trafficking and exploitation specific to areas of conflicts and wars. Thanks to the first-hand experiences of the presenters who work at grass-roots level in the UKRAINE; South Sudan and Kenya, participants were provided first-hand information about the realities of living and trying to function in areas of conflict, where traffickers ply their trade taking advantage of newly-vulnerable people.

[You can read more and access the recordings here.](#)



LAUNCH OF RESEARCH INTO LEGAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FOR VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING, 4TH JULY.

Following 18 months of dedicated work by the RENATE Law Task Group and research team at St. Mary's University Twickenham, the RENATE Foundation were delighted to invite all friends and colleagues to attend the launch of this new research report on July 4th at St. Mary's University.

Commissioned by The Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse, at St Mary's University, Twickenham, the research focuses on the gaps in the training and resources required by legal practitioners of 5 European countries who work for and with victims of human trafficking.

This research builds upon previous RENATE research (June 2021), and there are a number of country specific recommendations as well as recommendations specifically for RENATE that will be followed up by many of the RENATE Task Groups.

You can read the report [here](#).



RENAME LAW WATCH, MAY 2024: AMARANTA FOUNDATION FROM ADORERS' SISTERS SENDS ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DRAFT BILL OF THE COMPREHENSIVE ORGANIC LAW AGAINST TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION OF HUMAN BEINGS.

Amaranta Foundation of the Adorers, an organization specializing in comprehensive care for women victims and survivors of trafficking, has submitted its contributions to the Draft Bill of the Comprehensive Organic Law Against Trafficking and Exploitation of Human Beings on April 26, 2024. This submission comes as part of the Ministry of Equality's hearing and public information process. Adoratrices has long advocated for a victim-centred human rights approach to combating trafficking, emphasizing care, protection, and access to justice.

You can access the Law Watch document in full [here](#).



»»»
RENATE MEMBERS “DIFFERENT AND EQUAL” PARTICIPATE IN EUROPE WEEK 2024 , SHIROKA, ALBANIA.

During Europe Week 2024 in Shiroka Albania, representatives from Shkodra Municipality, NGOs, EU projects, and local artisans joined forces, emphasizing their commitment to progress and unity in Albania.

A significant project discussed was “Consolidation of Victim Empowerment Systems in Albania @ Shkodra (TVESA@Sh)” led by RENATE members within Different and Equal, along with Shkodra Municipality and KMOP – Center for Social Action and Innovation (Greece).

This project, funded by the EU Program “Support for Social Inclusion in Albania,” aims to strengthen support for victims in the region. These collaborative efforts demonstrate a dedication to improving communities, empowering individuals, and promoting social cohesion, aligning with the EU’s vision for an inclusive society.

The successful execution of such initiatives represents progress toward social inclusion and sustainable development in Albania.

Congratulations to all involved on such a successful event!

AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES CONTINUE ACROSS THE RENATE NETWORK:



SR. VIKTORIJA ŠIMIĆ (SCSC), DELIVERS AWARENESS RAISING TALK WITH STUDENTS IN CROATIA:

On the 24th May 2024, workshops were organized with eighth-grade students to raise awareness of human trafficking. The workshops were led by Sr. Viktorija Šimić, a Sister of Mercy of the Holy Cross and member of RENATE.

The workshop started with a short PowerPoint presentation and then students were given quotes from victims of human trafficking who were exploited in various ways.

Towards the end of the meeting, Sr. Viktorija distributed an information leaflet to each student with basic information on European and World Day against Human Trafficking, online safety and St. Bakhita, who herself was a victim of human trafficking.



SR. STANKA ORSOLIC (SND), RAISES AWARENESS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND THE WORK OF RENATE ON YOUTH DAY IN GOSPIC, CROATIA

Sr. Stanka Orsolc (SND), RENATE member and representative for Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina was present in the town of Gospić to participate in their Youth Day events.

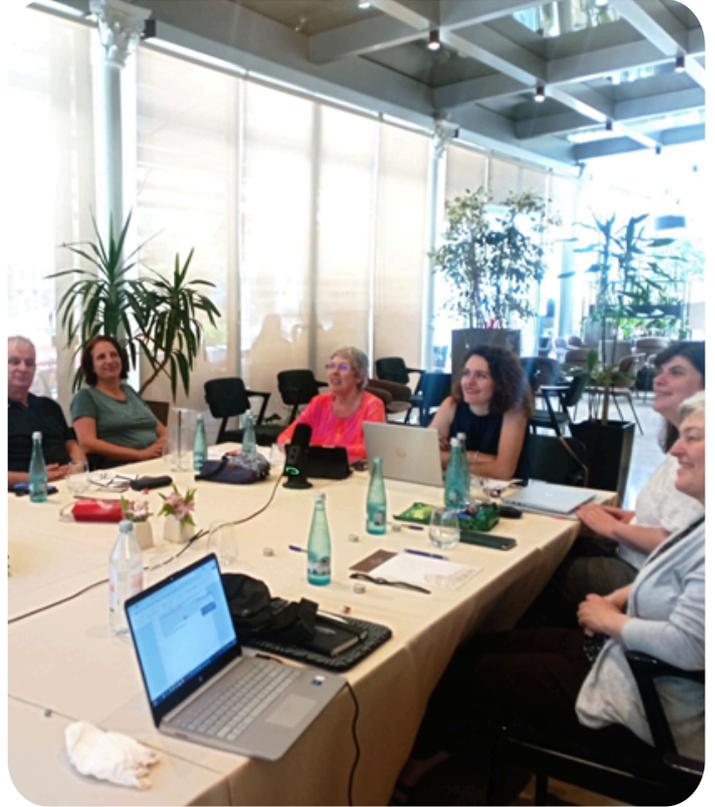
Sr. Stanka and her colleagues organised a stand with an immense array of information and resources, raising awareness of human trafficking, the work of RENATE and other such issues. It encouraged huge engagement from the public and youth!





RENATE CORE GROUP AND LOGISTICS TEAM MEET TOGETHER IN TIRANA, ALBANIA, JUNE 2024.

**RENATE
STRATEGIC
PLANNING TAKES
PLACE IN TIRANA,
14TH - 16TH JUNE
2024**



LtoR. Jakup Sabedini, Joana Terzieva, Marie Power, HFB, Ardita Korriku- Keraj, Rania Ioakeimidou & Judit Knab, CJ. Ivonne van de kar joined online via Zoom.

The RENATE Core group held an in-person meeting in Tirana, Albania, from 14-16 June 2024, with full attendance by Marie Power, HFB, RENATE Co-President; Ivonne van de Kar, RENATE Co-President, Ms. Ardita Korriku-Keraj, Mr. Jakup Sabadini, Ms. Joana Terzieva, Judit Knab, CJ and Ms. Rania Ioakeimidou.

Both the RENATE Finance Officer, Mr. Tan Toska and RENATE Communications Team Anne Kelleher were also in attendance, with Sorcha Mallen joining online Saturday morning with input from Christopher Poole, Director of Client Development EMEA, Milliken & Co, UK.

It was a most valuable and constructive in-person meeting, with the focus on reviewing work to date and forward planning for the future, now that the current Core Group are approximately halfway through their term of office.

[Report on CG for Newsletter June 2024 on Core group meeting Albania .docx](#)



ADDITIONAL REPORTS AND NEWSLETTERS:



- [SOLWODI GERMANY: June Newsletter, No.140](#)
- [KAVOD Newsletter: Issue 12](#)
- [KAVOD Newsletter: Issue 13](#)
- [Damaris House: May Newsletter](#)
- [GRETA 13th General Report](#)
- [Adorer's Sisters 2023 Memory](#)
- [2024 Trafficking in Persons \(TIP\) Report](#)



**May we work together
against human trafficking,
walking with those
who are destroyed by the violence
of sexual and labour exploitation,
as well as with migrants
and displaced persons.
May we courageously reaffirm
the value of human dignity!**

(Pope Francis, February 8, 2023)

Image created by Susan Daily (IBVM)



Religious in Europe Networking
Against Trafficking and Exploitation

STAY TUNED.

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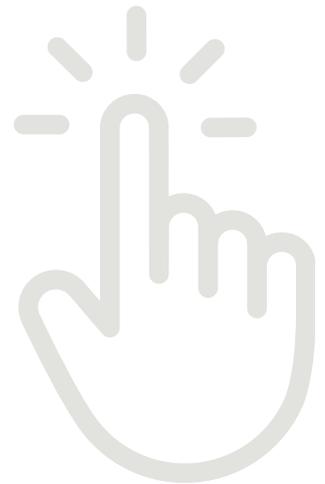
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