

## Launch of IOM Information Campaign Sensitising the Population to the Dangers of Human Trafficking



Launching the Information Campaign on a press conference held in July 2005

As part of its largest current counter-trafficking project, "Prevention and Capacity Building Activities in the Province of Kosovo and FYR of Macedonia, which is funded by Finland" IOM launched a one-year prevention-based information campaign in July 2005. This campaign aims to combat trafficking in human beings and to dispel misperceptions of the problem and stereotypes of its victims.

"IOM's prevention-based efforts incorporate a broad array of capacity building and awareness raising activities, targeting a wide spectrum of groups, from school children to government officials. This information campaign exemplifies this commitment," elaborated IOM Chief of Mission Mr. Enrico Ponziani in the press conference organized to mark the official launch of the information campaign.

This awareness raising initiative is grounded in the insights gained by IOM's assistance to victims of trafficking over the last five years. From the statistical data gathered from over 50 assisted Kosovar victims, Mr Ponziani reported that "58% of them were under 18 years of age; 68% of these victims had completed only eight years of formal education, 40% of them fell prey to traffickers after believing in a false job offer, and most disturbing of all, 16% of the total number were kidnapped by traffickers."

In addition, Mr. Ponziani referred to an IOM initiated survey of on "Attitudes and Beliefs about Human Trafficking in Kosovo. Out of the 900 Kosovars interviewed, "only 9% believe that trafficking exists within Kosovo," said Mr. Ponziani.

IOM's information campaign will be implemented in coordination with a local multi-media company, OK Division, over the next 12 months and will include a song, billboards, TV and radio spots, and various mass media components to ensure that the greatest percentage of the population will be exposed to the campaign's messages and images. One of the highlights of IOM's awareness raising initiative consists of a song and video clip written and produced by well-known local musicians, Aida Baraku and Armend Rexhepagiqi, and performed by the popular Kosovar singers, Vesa Luma and Benet Kaçi.