

JERICH0

Speak out to break down the wall that makes underage prostitution invisible

Press Kit

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OIKOGENEIAS KAI PAIDIOU



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What is the JERICHO Project

"Everyone knows it exists, but it is a little-known subject and no one wants to get out of numbers." Jorge Fernández del Valle, University of Oviedo (Spain).

The invisibility or quasi-invisibility of the prostitution of minors in public institutions, youth workers, social workers, and educational professionals in Europe, but also to parents or young people themselves means that no action is taken to respond to it, no training exists, and no preventive or accompanying measures are really in place.

It remains a serious and widespread issue, impacting hundreds of thousands of children across Europe which persists despite being illegal under national, European, and international laws. The lack of specific measures to prevent and combat this issue, along with the sensitive nature of the topic and limited data, brought together the partners from France, Italy and Greece in an attempt to better understand and address this problem.

The main aim of the Jericho project is to **tackle the phenomenon of prostitution of minors, prevent and combat this violence against young women, and support and protect the direct and indirect victims by breaking the silence on this taboo topic** so that public stakeholders take this matter even more seriously.

In more detail, the "Jericho" project aims to increase public awareness of the issue of prostitution of young persons by bringing it into the spotlight and encouraging open discussion about it. More specifically, the project has the following objectives:

- *To gather and expand knowledge about the prostitution of minors, engage with a community of stakeholders, and create informative content across various media for different audiences.*
- *To initiate an awareness and prevention campaign targeting young people, their families, and institutions, with the primary objective of raising awareness and prompting action from the authorities.*

In this **Press Kit**, you will find essential information about the project and **the situation of prostitution of minors in France, Italy and Greece**, where you can find more information about each country and you will get a first look at all the material, we created for the **informative campaign we launch in November 2024** and where you can find them.

What the research of the JERICHO Project has shown us so far

In **France**, estimates suggest that between 7,000 and 10,000 minors are involved in prostitution, though this is likely an underestimate. Research by Aziz Essadek indicates that the number of minors involved in prostitution under Child Social Assistance could be as high as 15,000 (Centre de victimologie pour mineurs, 2021). Moreover, the perpetrators involved in pimping and those purchasing sex are predominantly men. From 2016 to 2020, cases of minor prostitution reported to the police, gendarmerie, and prosecutors' offices increased by 68%. In 2020, among victims of trafficking who held French nationality, one in two was a minor. Research showed us that the victims are:

- *Girls of French nationality, aged 13-17.*
- *In vulnerable situations and from all social backgrounds.*
- *Often have been victims of or exposed to violence, particularly within the family, before entering the prostitution system.*
- *Often minor victims are put in touch with their future pimps via the Internet and social networks.*
- *Minors often downplay their actions, valuing perceived benefits like financial autonomy, attention, control, and group belonging.*
- *Experience emotional and relational difficulties, along with poor mental health.*

Italy also struggles with the hidden nature of prostitution and the complex interplay of trafficking and child sexual abuse, which complicates data collection. In 2012, there were 174 registered criminal proceedings related to the exploitation of children in prostitution. By 2014, there were 221 offences committed by minors related to child prostitution, child pornography, and the possession of pornographic material. In 2021, among the 757 new trafficking victims identified in Italy, more than half were women, and 35% were children. In 2022, 850 people received support through anti-trafficking projects, 14 of whom were minors. Of these cases, 38% were involved in sexual exploitation. The majority of victims were young women of Nigerian origin, often from vulnerable economic and family backgrounds. Research in Italy showed us that:

- *The exploitation of children in prostitution is often triggered by poverty and gaps in the welfare system.*
- *Minors from privileged socio-economic backgrounds can also be involved in sexual exploitation, driven by consumerism, peer pressure, and weak parental support (such as in the case of the “baby squillo” scandal in Rome).*
- *Victims often do not recognise themselves as such, believing they have control over their situation.*

In **Greece**, the situation is particularly even more concerning as there is no dedicated agency for gathering data on child sexual exploitation. However, the National Referral Mechanism (NRM)

reported 177 child trafficking victims between 2020 and 2022, with 20 of these children trafficked for sexual exploitation. Our research showed us that victims usually can be:

- Minors living in low-income socio-economic households.
- Children living in child protection units or other institutional settings (a target group which is extremely vulnerable to prostitution).
- Children who have experienced sexual abuse or violence within the family.
- Children who do not attend school.
- Unaccompanied minors.
- Roma children and children whose families are pressuring them to send money.
- Most victims of child prostitution fall within the age group of 12-16 years old.

The JERICHO Campaign

For all these reasons the project “JERICHO” runs a **campaign** to raise awareness and prevent the prostitution of minors, by targeting young people and their families, as well as institutions to raise awareness and provoke reactions from the authorities. The **Jericho campaign**:

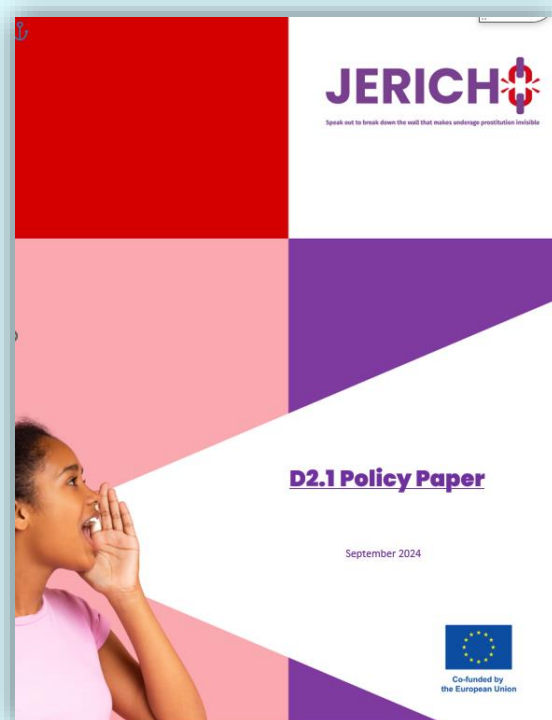
- Provides a single space for resources on the subject for the various actors and potential victims
- Will run awareness-raising workshops with young people in France, Italy and Greece
- Develops multi-media informational material: press for young people, youth organisations, schools etc.
- Implements a lobbying campaign with representatives of European institutions to raise awareness on the subject
- Provides answers and ideas for action to parents and young people through a website dedicated to victims, families and children

Please check the outputs of the informational campaign in the following section.

The "JERICHO" project has been submitted under the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) to prevent and combat gender-based violence and violence against children.

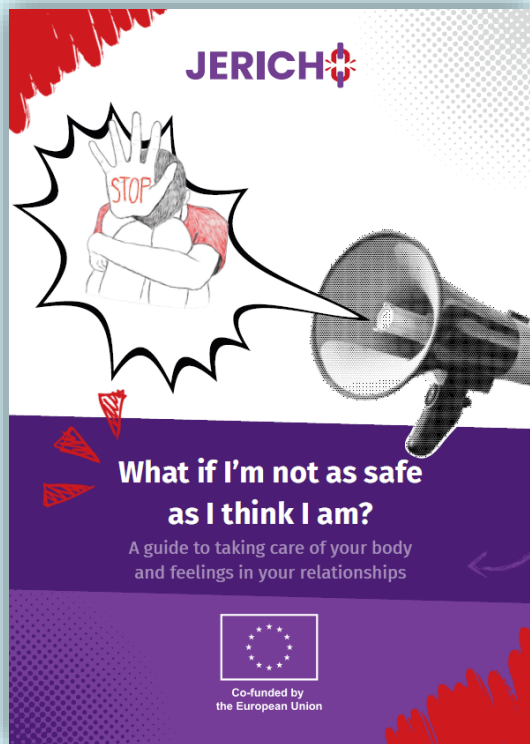
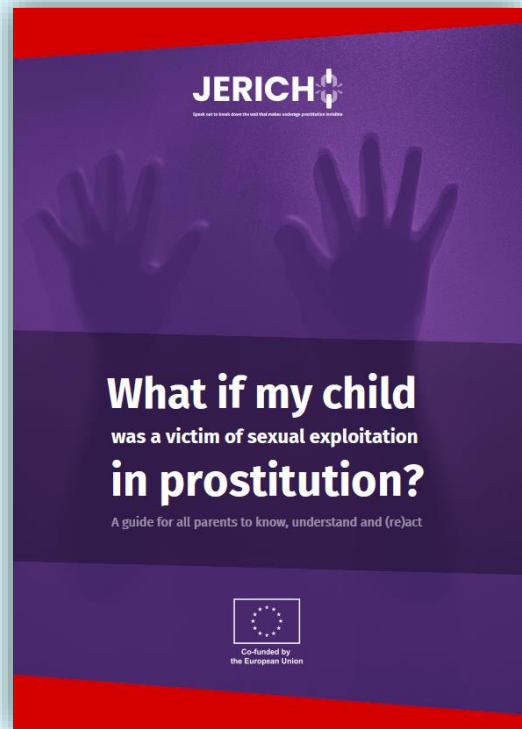
Our Outputs

If you are a stakeholder and want to get out **Policy Paper** on the phenomenon of prostitution of minors in France, Italy and Greece press [here](#)



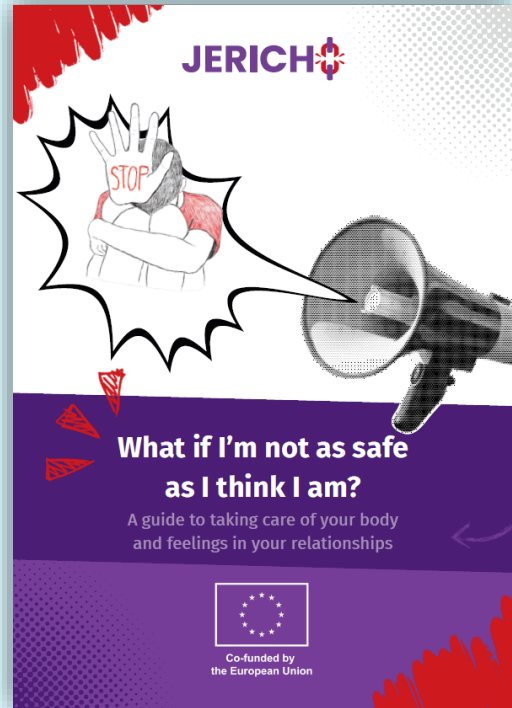
If you are a professional (i.e., social worker, psychologist, teacher etc.) and want to find out more about this phenomenon in France, Italy and Greece, you can find our **National Reports** here: [FR](#) [IT](#) [GR](#)

If you are a parent and want more information and advice on how to understand, prevent and (re)act on this phenomenon, you can find our **Parent's Guide** [here](#)



If you want to learn more about how you can provide essential information to young people, you can access our **Handout** [here](#)

If you are a professional (i.e., social worker, psychologist, teacher etc.) and want to give our **Flyer** to young people, you can find it [here](#)



Here you can find our **informational videos** on:

[*The existence of sexual exploitation of minors*](#)

[*How to stay safe online*](#)

[*How to feel safe in your relationship*](#)

[*How to express and perceive consent*](#)

If you want to check out our **web series of animated videos on different forms of sexual exploitation of minors** check daily our social media. Our social media campaign will be launched soon.



You can hear our series of **Jericho mini-podcasts** where experts answer the questions of young people on:

- *What are my rights as a Child?*
- *How do I know I am in love?*
- *What is consent?*
- *What are the feelings related to my relationship that should worry me?*
- *What can I do if I don't feel well and safe in my relationship?*
- *What can be considered sexual exploitation in prostitution for young people?*

You can find them here: [FR](#) [IT](#) [GR](#)

You can find more about the Jericho project on our website:

<https://childrensafe.eu/know/jericho/>

Responsible agencies/authorities to tackle the prostitution of minors in Europe

Name of service/organisation	Description	Role in preventing and combating prostitution of minors	Role in the provision of support or services to victims	Contact info (Phone, e-mail, website)
<p>EU agencies which signed a joint statement on addressing human trafficking</p>	<p><i>They have committed to working closely to address human trafficking, according to their areas of competence, which range from gathering intelligence and facilitating prosecution in trafficking cases to coordinating Member States' efforts to support victims and prevent victimisation.</i></p>			<p>Website: Press here</p>
<p>EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator</p>	<p><i>EU Anti-trafficking coordinator is responsible for improving coordination and coherence among EU institutions, EU agencies, Member States and international actors.</i></p>	<p><i>Responsible for:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving coordination among all the anti-trafficking stakeholders - Monitoring the implementation of the EU strategy on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings - Contributing to the reporting carried out by the European 		<p>Website: Press here</p>

		<i>Commission every two years on the progress made in the fight against trafficking.</i>		
ECPAT International	<i>ECPAT is a global network of civil society organisations working together to end the sexual exploitation of children.</i>	<i>ECPAT coordinates research, advocacy and action towards the aim of ending the sexual exploitation of children.</i>		Website: <u>Press here</u>

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pistes solidaires



Coordinator

Pistes Solidaires

France

www.pistes-solidaires.fr

MEITIS

France

home-meitis.com



KMOP

Greece

www.kmop.gr



CESIE

Italy

cesie.org



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