

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
GREEK NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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PRESS RELEASE

**ECtHR, *Chowdury and others v. Greece*.
Recommendations for the full compliance of the Greek State
(27.8.2018)**

The Greek National Commission for Human Rights (GNCHR), in the framework of its institutional role as the independent National Institution and advisory body to the State on matters pertaining to human rights promotion and protection, releases its Recommendations with regard to the immediate full compliance of the Greek government with the landmark ECtHR judgment, *Chowdury and others v. Greece* (known as the "Manolada case") and, above all, with the State's obligations arising from the international and European commitments undertaken regarding the effective action to combat, as well as to prevent trafficking in human beings or/and forced labour.

The GNCHR, focuses on the emblematic character (*leading case*) of the ECtHR judgment in the "Manolada case", since it was the first occasion on which the Strasbourg Court had to examine the situation of forced labour and trafficking in the agricultural sector and refers back to its previous and – unfortunately – repeatedly addressed recommendations, which remain relevant and up to date due to the prevailing situation in Greece, which demonstrates that the case's facts do not constitute "isolated incidents". At the upcoming 1324th Meeting of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, which will be held in Strasbourg, on 18-20 September 2018, the assessment of the level of compliance of the Greek State with the judgment will begin.

For the formulation of its Recommendations, the GNCHR took into account, among others, critical data arising from two large scale participation hearings of relevant national stakeholders, which were held by the GNCHR in its premises (23.11.2017 and 20.2.2018), a possibility provided for by the Greek legislator who recognises the GNCHR as a *bridge builder* between the State and Civil Society. During these hearings, special emphasis was placed on combatting trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation and forced labour, as well as on the absolute need for the elaboration by the Greek State of a specific strategic plan for the prevention and suppression of both phenomena.

Through its Recommendations, the GNCHR:

- attempts a more focused approach to the phenomenon of trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation, while drawing attention to the particular link between human trafficking and forced

labour and recording the current regulatory and institutional framework for combatting both of them,

- assesses the implementation of the regulatory and institutional framework in practice, with special emphasis on matters pertaining to the prevention of human trafficking and forced labour, the promotion and protection of the rights of victims, as well as the effective investigation and prosecution of human trafficking and severe labour exploitation cases,
- draws attention to the particular connection between trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation and undeclared employment in Greece, while at the same time noting with great concern the linkage between labour exploitation in the agricultural sector and – in many cases extremely – racist behaviors and
- in view of the urgent need to immediately and effectively deal with both trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation and forced labour in general, the GNCHR formulates specific recommendations and suggestions for the adoption of appropriate measures to combat the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings or/and forced labour and, therefore, for the full compliance of the Greek State with the ECtHR judgment on the *Chowdury and others v. Greece* case.

**The full text of the GNCHR Recommendations [in Greek] is available [here](#) and
a resume of the Recommendations [in Greek] is available [here](#)**

The Greek National Commission for Human Rights (GNCHR) is the independent advisory body to the Greek State on matters pertaining to human rights protection. It was established by Law 2667/1998 in accordance with the UN Paris Principles. Thirty-two institutions whose activities cover the field of human rights are currently represented in the GNCHR (independent authorities, departments of university-level educational institutions, workers' and disabled persons' confederations, NGOs, political parties and ministries).