

SISTERHOOD FIGHT CLUB

#MIDDAYBABYMIDDAY #SETYOURALARM #BETHECHANGE #PRAYINGFORTHEWORLD

#3: EASTERN EUROPE & WESTERN/CENTRAL ASIA

- BULGARIA
- CZECH REPUBLIC
- ESTONIA
- HUNGARY
- LATVIA
- LITHUANIA
- POLAND
- REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA
- ROMANIA
- RUSSIAN FEDERATION
- SLOVAKIA
- UKRAINE
- ARMENIA
- AZERBAIJAN
- BAHRAIN
- GEORGIA
- KAZAKHSTAN
- KYRGYZSTAN
- TAJIKISTAN
- TURKMENISTAN
- UZBEKISTAN



THE REGION

Eastern Europe & Western Central Asia is a region that boasts an array of cultural and architectural highlights, spectacular scenery, folklore and festival traditions, and dramatic and complex history. Historically, Eastern Europe and Western/Central Asia has been a crossroads for the movement of many people, goods and ideas shared to the rest of Europe and Asia. Despite past and present conflict and famine, there has been a report in economic development. For example, in Uzbekistan the GDP is projected to grow by 5.3% in 2019; the largest increase in the last 3 years.¹

KEY STATISTICS

- » 1 in 5 Eastern Europeans are living below the poverty line.
- » Conflict in Ukraine has spiraled and there is growing international tension in the region.
- » Countries in this region are source, transit and destination countries for forced labour and sex trafficking of men, women and children.
- » 80% of the victims of trafficking are women and 69% of all of those trafficked were victims of sexual exploitation.

THE CHALLENGES

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, many countries are still going through a difficult economic, social and political transition. An estimated 1 out of 5 Eastern Europeans are living under the poverty line.² Poverty is a particularly complex issue in Europe and Central Asia, where approximately 80 million people live on under \$5 per day and meeting basic needs is a struggle.³ This region experiences long and intense winters and energy costs are crippling. Families may be forced to choose between a decent meal or staying warm and free of illness. The Roma people are among the poorest people in Europe and make up almost 40% of those considered poor in Romania and Bulgaria.

There is growing international tension in the region, which has led to the landscape of certain countries to change and increasing division between neighbouring countries.⁵ Conflict in Ukraine has spiraled due to governmental disputes.⁶ Ukraine is Europe's second largest country and since independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, has suffered ongoing economic crisis. Today, families fall into poverty in the face of rising food prices, growing unemployment and a buckling welfare system.⁷

Countries in this region are source, transit and destination countries for men, women and children who are subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking.⁸ The European commission reports that 80% of the victims of trafficking are women and 69% of all of those trafficked were victims of sexual exploitation.⁹ In Moldova alone, an estimated 25,000 Moldovans are trafficked abroad each year. Men are taken to work in construction and farming while women are predominantly sold into the sex trade in Turkey, Russia, Cyprus, the United Arab Emirates, and elsewhere.¹⁰ In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, nearly all (99%) of the victims detected are either domestically trafficked or trafficked from neighboring countries. The vast majority (90%) of convicted traffickers are local citizens.¹¹

Poverty, lack of employment opportunities and discrimination against women has resulted in young women from Eastern Europe searching for jobs in the EU, looking for a better life. Most girls grow up with no awareness of human trafficking or the high demand of women in the international sex trafficking industry. Fake job offers or 'boyfriends' claiming to be offering a new life can trick girls into a trafficking situation.¹² Trafficking in persons is an intricate crime¹³ and responses to trafficking need to be tailored and specific to the national and regional context in order to be effective.

There is persecution of the Christian Church in this region. According to the World Watch List, created by Open Doors, six countries in this region are in the list of the top 50 countries with the most severe Christian persecution. They are Russia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan.

SO WHAT DO I PRAY FOR?

PRAY FOR STABILITY AND FREEDOM OF CHOICES.

We pray for economic stability that people might be able to flourish and live healthy and safe lives, that they might have the ability to choose wisely for their children and protect their future. Isaiah 60:1-3, Isaiah 61:4

PRAY AGAINST CORRUPTION.

We pray against greed and political corruption that robs this region of its resources and potential. We pray that just leaders will be birthed and elected. We pray that military conflict will cease allowing nations to be restored. Psalm 7:9, Psalm 2:10-11, Jeremiah 22:3

PRAY AGAINST WAR.

We pray against wars that tear apart the land and its people, displace the innocent, and expose the vulnerable to dangers. We pray for the oppressors to be brought to justice, and to have their authority and influence removed. We pray that peace will reign throughout the land. Leviticus 26:6; Psalm 99:4, John 16:33

PRAY FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

We pray for the government officials in each of these countries. We pray for strength, courage, peace, and wisdom to govern well the people they have been entrusted with. 1 Timothy 2:1-2, James 1:5, Psalm 29:11, John 16:33

PRAY FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH.

We pray for the Church, for those who are facing persecution for the name of Jesus. We pray that those being persecuted will be strengthened, and those who are persecuting will be convicted, repent, and receive salvation. Isaiah 55:7, Romans 5:6-8, 2 Timothy 2:25, Psalm 94:16, Proverbs 31:8, Matthew 9:37-38

I BELIEVE THAT THE WEAPON
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
MUST BRING TO THIS CURRENT
GLOBAL TABLE OF UNREST AND
CRISIS IS PRAYER. IT'S A WEAPON
THAT MANY OUTSIDE OF FAITH
MAY NEVER TRULY UNDERSTAND
NOR EVER APPRECIATE - BUT
REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY
DO OR DON'T PRAYER IS WHAT
ENGAGES THE SPIRITUAL REALM
THAT IS SO OFTEN AT THE CORE
AND CAUSE OF TODAY'S
PROBLEMS."

Bobbie Houston
excerpt Chapter Twenty-one
The Sisterhood

BRAVE WOMEN

Run in Our Family

Women have been at the forefront of significant social, political and economic transformation in Eastern Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Female participation in business is thriving compared to other global regions. Eastern Europe is top of rankings for female representation in senior corporate roles (7 of the 10 top countries). With an increase over the last 10 years of female political leaders, it is unsurprising that several candidates from the region have been mentioned as possible candidates for the position of United Nations Secretary General. The leadership and success of women in Eastern Europe is inspiration for women in the region and around the world.

Source: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ernesta-redi/the-rise-of-eastern-europe_b_8758796.html

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The Sisterhood Fight Club is all about letting prayer do the heavy lifting as we turn our attention to a world that is broken on many levels and in need of restoration. Our world is a place of beautiful and challenging complexity. We do not claim to be experts, nor to understand or represent this complexity fully. This is a brief collection of information and examples based on our research.

Through prayerful reflection we seek to learn, empathise, add our support to the efforts of brave women everywhere, and continue to grow in our understanding through the help of the Holy Spirit. Let our churches and homes be known as "a house of prayer for all peoples" (Isaiah 56:7).

Join us! Set your alarm at #middaybabymidday and pray with us for the world.



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 The Colour Sisterhood

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