

Task force on Trafficking in Persons

18.4.2024

Attendees:

In person: Olga Pietruchová (UNHCR), Renáta Brennerová (Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family of the SR), Lucia Baloghová (Information Centre, Department of Crime Prevention), Katarína Štiglicová (UNHCR), Miroslav Kováč, Viktor Valla (Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, SR), Miroslava Mošonová (National Labour Inspectorate - NIP), Daniela Repková, Zuzana Bartalská (IOM), Marek Bango (Specialized Unit for Fight Against Illegal Migration – NJBPNM), Gabriela Šaturová (US Embassy), Kateryna Vyšnevská, Katarína Levčíková, Lenka Vestenická, Miroslav Kováč, Katarína Božík (IOM), Zuzana Kianičková (interpreter), Petra Blažejová (Migration Office)

Welcome to the participants of the Task Force, which takes place every two months.

Agenda:

- Approval of the minutes from the last meeting, the Minutes from the last meeting are attached
- Presentation of the Department of Crime Prevention on Report on trafficking in Persons in Slovakia in 2023
- Presentation of the National labour Inspectorate results and findings from the 2023, Miroslava Mošonová
- Regular update of partners from Department of Crime Prevention and Information Centre Office of Minister of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, Slovak Catholic Charity, Program for support and protection of victims of human trafficking, National Unit for Fight against Illegal Migration, National Labour Inspectorate, IOM
- AOB (Any other business)

L. Baloghova - Information Centre for Combating Trafficking in Persons was transferred to the Department of Crime Prevention.

Situation report for the year 2023 on THB issued a report. It is worked out annually. Data comes from NJBPNM, the report is developed in close cooperation with NJBPNM. There is prevalence of males in labour exploitation, and prevalence of females in sexual exploitation. The age of the victims is dated from the moment the act of recruitment is initiated. Half of the identified victims are child victims, mostly victims of sexual exploitation, 32% come from the Banská Bystrica region - mainly children, for sex. 32/44 victims were exploited in Slovakia. It is different from last year when Slovakia was mainly a source country. In 2023, three foreigners were identified (Moldova, Bulgaria). Only 25% of identified victims expressed interest in joining the programme. There has been a positive change regarding judges and prosecutors in relation to the topic of TiP. 20 cases, 18 perpetrators, 3 juvenile perpetrators, 15 of them have Slovak citizenship, 1 is from Pakistan, 2 from Turkey. There is no recorded increase in online recruitment, most of the recruitment is done through personal contact. The online space is used for offering victims rather than recruiting them. Prostitution is happening in private space, disappearing from streets.

Discussion:

K. Božík: Why is it that there are more child victims identified in 2023?

O. Pietruch: Will a prevention campaign targeting UA citizens be carried out? In which sectors was TiP for the purpose of forced labour occurring?

Answer: Especially in packaging companies, agriculture, and construction companies. Employers mostly do not commit trafficking, but traffickers drive workers, and take the money from them.

A case of TiP in the Czech Republic was mentioned, where Romanian workers were exploited in the forestry sector in the Czech Republic (they were paid 1,000 Czech crowns per week), they did not speak Czech. Exploitation of vulnerable position by traffickers was considered as a means. **Mr. Bango** stated that such a case would not pass as a case of TiP in our country.

M. Mošonová NIP - Presentation: labour inspection activities from the informative report on searching for and combating illegal employment.

Illegally employed are mainly Slovak citizens, followed by nationals with residence permits. Sectors where illegal employment of foreigners is most frequent: construction, administrative support services – activities of agencies of temporary employment, wholesale/retail industry, industrial production.

The sectors in which illegal employment of Slovak citizens and foreigners takes place are: construction, accommodation and catering establishments, wholesale/retail trade.

In 2023, 683 fines amounting to EUR 2.5 million were issued.

The violations that appeared most frequently were: the phenomenon of false business, where workers had a business permit but were proven to be dependent workers; undeclared work (also incompletely, incorrectly declared), where payments were made by hand, the actual working hours did not correspond to the working time records and forcing employees to perform dependent work for a business - also in the case of Slovak citizens.

Discussion: 60% of the fines legally imposed have been paid, the rest is reclaimed through executions. The NJBPNM cooperates with the NIP on investigation.

K. Bozik presented IOM activities, mainly the e-learning course on Prevention on CT.

The campaign is targeted for the period of April-May, because the housing allowance is being reduced and we expect more people at risk of trafficking, and also because young people in particular are going abroad for work - especially for temporary jobs.

O. Pietruchová reported on her participation in the conference organized by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe OSCE, 15-16 April 2024.

She highlighted the following points: Less known forms of exploitation are becoming more prevalent, especially exploitation for the purpose of forced criminality (online financial frauds e.g. scams) where the line between victim and perpetrator is blurred - the victim becomes the perpetrator. These are so-called scam factories where young people are forced to sell fraudulent products. People with computer and language skills are recruited for the purpose of trafficking, which is different from characteristics of the traditionally vulnerable victim.

At the conference, CNN also reported on their prevention project, ELA reported on the fine line between labour exploitation, forced labour, TiP and slavery. It was emphasized the need to

emphasize the participation of the victims of TiP themselves in the development of support programs for survivors of TiP.

Information can be found on the website of [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe | OSCE](#).

The next meeting of the Task Force should take place in mid-June 2024.