

**TASK FORCE ON TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (TF TIP)  
PROTECTION AND INCLUSION WORKING GROUP**

**Attendees:**

In person:

Zuzana Bartalská (IOM), Oľga Pietruchová (UNHCR), Gabriela Šaturová (US Embassy), Tatiana Zlatos (IOM)

Online:

Teona Aslanishvili (UNICEF), Petra Blažejová (Ministry of Interior), Katarína Božík (IOM), Renata Brennerová (Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family), Barbora Burajová (Institute for Labor and Family Research), Silvia Dancová (Caritas Slovakia), Kamila Džurnňáková (Ministry of Interior's Office, Crime Prevention Department), Natalia Kochanová (Ministry of Justice), Katarina Levčíková (Mareena), Lucia Majerčiaková (UNHCR), Alexandra Malangone (GRETA), Barbora Moravčíková (Human Rights League), Miroslava Mošonová (National Labor Inspectorate), Helena Panková (Caritas Slovakia), Viktor Valla (MZVEZ SR), Lenka Vestenická (Človek v ohrození), Miroslava Vrábelová (National Unit to Combat Illegal Migration, ÚHCP P PZ)

Zuzana Kianičková (interpreter), Katarína Rezníková (interpreter)

Agenda:

- Approval of the Minutes from the last meeting, the Minutes from the last meeting are attached
- 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 Labor Inspectorate, IOM
- Presentation of the GRETA independent expert, John Hopkins University Alexandra Malangone
- AOB (Any other business)

**Ms Zuzana Bartalská (IOM)** welcomed participants and thanked them for attending the meeting of TF on TiP. She opened the floor to **Ms Džurňáková** who update participants on the activities of **the Crime Prevention Department** as well as of **the Information Centre Office**, which has been since 01.12.2023 organizationally integrated under the Crime Prevention Department of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic. Between 26.02. - 01.03.2024 Information Center ensures the organization of the assessment visit of the Group of Experts of the Council of Europe (GRETA) in the field of combating human trafficking. This is the start of the 4th round of evaluations of the Slovak Republic for the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings on the subject of the vulnerability of victims of TiP. In 2024, 6 victims (including child victims) have entered the Program for the support and protection of victims of TiP. All of these victims are cooperating with law enforcement and, among other services, each victim is provided with legal advice. In this context, on February 15, 2024, a working group met in order to discuss problematic areas related to victims included in the program, a program itself and its evaluation as well as mutual cooperation between stakeholders with the participation of representatives of the OPK of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, National Unit to Combat Illegal Migration and non-governmental sector organizations providing care and assisted voluntary returns to victims. In connection with the crime of human trafficking, in 2024, 3 clients, of which 2 were women, turned to the Information Offices for help. In the period 2018-2024, there were a total of 28 clients, of which 13 were women. No victim of trafficking among UA population in SK has been identified. The Crime Prevention Department continues in its activities, including discussions focused on the prevention of human trafficking. In the upcoming period, the Department will continue its cooperation with interpreters in order to minimize language barriers in the contact of information office workers with the UA population.

**Ms Bartalská** thanked **Ms Džurňáková** and opened the floor to **Ms Malangone**, GRETA member, who presented the activities related to the application of Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. Please find the presentation of **Ms Malangone** attached to the Minutes of this meeting.

**Ms Bartalská** thanked **MS Malangone** for the presentation and opened the floor to **Ms Vrábellová** who updated participants on the activities of the **National Unit to Combat Illegal Migration**. In 2023 inspected members of the Police Force in cooperation with Labor Inspectorates 77 business entities and 437 persons, of which 266 were citizens of the Slovak Republic and 171 were foreigners. The inspections revealed 2 business entities that violated the provisions of the Act on Illegal Work and Illegal Employment by illegally employing 2 citizens of the Slovak Republic and 5 foreigners. Illegally employed were foreigners from the following countries of origin: Ukraine 1 and Moldova 4. No victims of TiP were identified by the inspections. There was a ceremonial opening of the special interrogation rooms last week. These will be used for the interrogation of trafficking victims. The project was funded by the EU project, the aim was to make the fight against cross-border crime more effective and to obtain tools that would make interrogations more effective. One interrogation room is in Bratislava and the other one in Humenné. No criminal prosecution related to TiP has been initiated this year. However the criminal prosecution that began last year continues - it is a

specific case where the perpetrators are two minors and the victims are girls from Slovakia who were sexually exploited. **Ms Malangone** asks about the situation where the perpetrators are minors - whether non-punishment applies in this situation and whether it can be the case that these juvenile perpetrators are also victims. **Ms Vrábellová** replies that she cannot comment on that as the investigation is ongoing.

**Ms Bartalská** thanked **Ms Vrábellová** and opened the floor to **Ms Mošonová** who provided updates from the **National Labor Inspectorate**. There are trainings of labor inspectors ongoing in all regions of Slovakia organized in cooperation with the IOM. So far, there are no identified victims in of human trafficking, identification of labor law violations is more common. National Labor Inspectorate has set its plans for the next period.

**Ms Bartalská** thanked **Ms Mošonová** and opened the floor to **Ms Dancová** from **Caritas Slovakia**, the provider of the program of support and help to victims of human trafficking. The program has provided help for a Moldavian woman trafficked in Slovakia, another victim which was recently provided help was a Slovak trafficked in the UK. There are currently 17 clients in the program. Child victims joined the program in January. There are no calls from UA population regarding the situation of human trafficking. **Ms Božík** asks for the trafficking purpose in case of the lady from Moldova. **Ms Dancová** answers that it was in 2023 and it was forced begging.

**Ms Bartalská** thanked **Ms Dancová** and opened the floor to **Ms Aslanishvili** from **UNICEF**. She updated Task Force on a specific issue that affects UA children that are enrolled as first or second year students in universities in Slovakia and who are still underaged (and who don't have their guardians with them in Slovakia) and live at dormitories. This issue also affects underaged students that are in high schools and live as well at dormitories. In both cases, UA children are exposed to a variety of protection risks. There have been 5 concerning issues identified:

1. How children travel here – they may use agencies, that promise that they will help them with access to universities, language course, etc. However, these agencies eventually often do not fulfill their promises as well as legal duties that are specified in the contract.
2. Children who have moved to Slovakia through the means mentioned above often don't have access to temporary protection or access to other legal status, as their guardians are not with them in Slovakia.
3. Children who have moved to Slovakia with support of agencies, or whose parents went back to UA are often left without assigned guardians.
4. Safeguarding of children at dormitories is necessary – they live at dormitories for adults over 18 years, but they are underaged and need different safeguarding. More than 3000 students at universities are underaged UA students – dormitories need to be safe for them.
5. There is a high drop-out rate of these students from universities.

In all these areas there is a risk of children being victims of TiP or other forms of exploitation. UNICEF raised this issue with Commissioner for Children's rights and agreement was made to explore specific actions. 5 working groups will be created to look into the problems associated with this issue. **Ms Malangone** has added to the issue that it copies modus operandi of labor

agencies – they charge a lot of money for their services, promise a wide a range of services but eventually leave the children on their own. Boys before the age of 18 use these agencies often to avoid military drafting. Such agency business is running not only for UA children but as well for children from other countries, including from countries of Latin America. **Ms Bartalská** added that from anecdotal evidence we know that the agencies ask for their services between 2000 and 5000 euros. IOM Slovakia communicates with IOM Ukraine in order to ensure spreading of awareness among families in Ukraine who wish to send their children to live and study in Slovakia.

**Ms Bartalská** thanked the participants for attending and closed the meeting of the TF TiP.