

**TASK FORCE ON TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS, TF Tip
PROTECTION AND INCLUSION WORKING GROUP**

09.02.2023, 10:00

Palisády 29, Bratislava

Attendees:

In person:

Zuzana Vatrálková (IOM), Zuzana Čáčová (IOM), Tatiana Zlatos (IOM), Peter Piso (Slovak Catholic Charity), Katarína Štiglicová (UNHCR), Elvir Music (UNICEF), Ganna Schwachka (Sme spolu)

Online:

Lucia Baloghová (Information Centre of Ministry of Interior of the SR), Maroš Borza (Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the SR), Katarína Božík (IOM), Samantha Bernasovská (UNHCR), Petra Blažejová (Ministry of Interior of the SR), Renata Brennerová (Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family of the SR), Barbora Burajová (Institute for Labor and Family Research), Kamila Džurnáková (Ministry of Interior's Office, Crime Prevention Department), Peter Halas (Migration Office), Katarína Kožuchová (Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the SR), Estela Landeros (Rotary International, Danube Club), Darina Luščíková (Slovak Humanitarian Council), Barbora Maráková (UNHCR), Miroslava Mittelmannová (Human Rights League), Miroslava Mošonová (National Labor Inspectorate), Mirella Nicastro (ICRC), Igor Pacolák (The Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the SR), Paulína Pokorná (Association of Trade Unions and Transport), Gabriela Šaturová (US embassy), Lucia Šlosárová (IOM), Adam Šulík (Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic), František Toth, Karina Trofimová (IOM), Miroslava Vrábeľová (Ministry of Interior of the SR),

Zuzana Kianičková (interpreter), Ivona Zorn (interpreter)

Agenda:

The proposed agenda for the next meeting is as follows:

- Approval of the minutes from the last meeting (Minutes from the last meeting are attached)
- Presenting of findings and recommendations from the 2022 Task Force on Trafficking in Persons
- Regular update of partners

Ms Zuzana Čáčová (IOM) welcomed participants and thanked them for attending the sixth meeting of TF on TiP. She introduced the agenda for the meeting, confirmed that TF TiP will take place on by-monthly bases and began with the presentation of findings and recommendations from 2022 TF on TiP. Ukraine conflict continues to dramatically increase the vulnerability of Ukrainian people to exploitation - every second Ukrainian is ready to accept at least one risky job offer that may lead to exploitation. There was no Ukraine conflict-related identified TiP victim in Slovakia in 2022. Work exploitation of Ukrainian citizens continues to be a major challenge. Areas that need a particular focus include strengthening communication with UA law enforcement authorities and strengthening the support to victims filing criminal reports, as well as an improvement in the area of legislation and law enforcement. Ensuring appropriate protection mechanisms during data collection is essential. Recommendations from the 2022 task force emphasized the need to avoid secondary victimization; ensure improved transparency in the process of identifying unaccompanied minors; strengthen reporting procedures to ensure help for TiP victims; and raise awareness of risks and vulnerabilities and TiP capacity building.

[The 2022 UNODC Global Trafficking in Persons Report](#) shows that the number of identified TiP victims has decreased first time in 20 years - the pandemic limited opportunities for TiP perpetrators but as well limited law enforcement agencies' capacities. It emphasizes that conflicts exacerbate TiP in crisis areas and beyond. War in Ukraine increases the risk of TiP for the displaced Ukrainian population (the 2014 conflict in Ukraine quadrupled the number of Ukrainian victims identified in Western Europe in 2016). The report further suggests that most of the victims manage to escape on their initiative and fewer cases are detected through the initiative of law enforcement agencies or civil society. Fewer cases of TiP for sexual exploitation were detected during the pandemic due to restrictions – pushing sexual exploitation to more clandestine and less secure locations, making it more difficult to identify victims. Globally, the number of convictions for human trafficking offenses also fell by 27% in 2020 compared to the previous year – with more significant declines recorded in South Asia (56%), Central America and the Caribbean (54%) and South America (46 %). Climate change increases the vulnerability of trafficking victims as it acts as a stress multiplier. **Ms Čáčová** thanked the participants and opened the floor to questions.

Ms Miroslava Mittelmannova (HRL) highlighted the need to strengthen the rights of victims when filing criminal reports and the need for more organizations with qualified people to assist people in regions with legal actions. **Ms Čáčová** responded that the staff of the Information Centre for Fight Against Human Trafficking and Crime Prevention has been trained in this field. **Ms Kamila Džurnáková (Department of Crime Prevention, Office of the Minister of the Interior of the SR)** responded that the Information Offices for Victims of Crime provide victims and potential victims with a support service in the area of legal guidance – this is provided by an external lawyer (note: legal guidance and legal support in the Information Offices for Victims of Crime does not include the provision of legal services

provided by lawyers, legal representation of victims in criminal proceedings, assistance in out-of-court proceedings, etc. In the event that the client's situation requires the provision of legal services, the client is directed by the Information Offices for Victims of Crime to the relevant subject entitled to provide these services). **Ms Džurňáková** added that since August 2022 the activities of these regional offices, including prevention activities, are focused directly on Ukrainian refugees. Counseling and other support are provided in the Ukrainian language, via informal interpreters. **Ms Mittelmannová** inquired about the number of victims who were assisted with criminal report filing (note: all cases of clients in which circumstances indicate the commission of a criminal offense are within the meaning of the provisions of § 3 paragraph 2 of the Criminal Code notified by the law enforcement authorities). **Ms Džurňáková** answered that since August 1, 2022, a total of 35 clients, victims, who are refugees affected by the crisis in Ukraine, have requested help from the Information Offices for Victims of Crime (these concerned a civil law dispute, labor law dispute, war crimes – torture and sexual assaults, family law dispute, bodily harm, blackmail, theft, consumer protection, etc.). **Mr Peter Piso (SCCH)** added that their program includes legal support as well and communication in Ukrainian with UA-speaking clients is ensured. **Ms Darina Luščiková (SHC)** then described their experiences with suspicious buses transporting women from the border – in 2022 SHC reported to the Information Center one such case, however, women included in the case wished to stay anonymous. Last week they managed to assist a group of women in filing a criminal complaint against a specific employer. SHC now asks women in the buses at the border to provide the name of the employment agency they will work for. **Ms Čáčová** added that IOM implementing partners or consultants have the same experience with buses at the border. **Ms Miroslava Vrábelová (Ministry of Interior of the SR)** ensured participants that their office will investigate every report that will get to them and that SHC has the possibility of contacting them. **Ms Zuzana Vatrálková (IOM)** asked **Ms Vrábelová** if cases are also reviewed when the victim wishes to stay anonymous. **Ms Vrábelová** responded with yes. **Ms Miroslava Mošonová (National Labor Inspectorate)** added to the issue of employment agencies that Ms Luščiková mentioned – National Labor Inspectorate can conduct a preventive check if SHC provides information on the agency. **Ms Džurňáková** reacted that victims who wish to stay anonymous can contact the Information Offices for Victims of Crime. She added that cooperation with the regional Labor Inspectorate offices will take place. **Ms Čáčová** thanked for the discussion and opened the floor for the update on the partners.

M. Džurňáková shared that the **Department of Crime Prevention** continues with the activities from the National Plan for the period 2019-2023 and that a new Action Plan for the period 2024-2028 will be created. Cooperation with the National Labor Inspectorate is expected in the near future. The department continues with preventive activities and Ukrainian interpreters were hired for the Information Offices for Victims of Crime. Their goal is also to expand the Information Offices for Victims of Crime to district offices in Slovakia.

Mr Elvir Music, representing **UNICEF**, continued with an update of partners. UNICEF continues cooperation with Bratislava city police in the field of child communication. Police officers and now cadets as well are trained by international experts in child-friendly communication.

Ms Miroslava Mošonová provided an update for **Labor Inspectorate**. In the previous year the Inspectorate conducted inspections aimed at banning illegal employment and inspecting working conditions. These focused as well on employment of foreigners, included inspection of the working conditions of Ukrainian people and checking whether they are employed legally. The results of these inspections will be presented in the upcoming months. In 2023 cooperation with the Information Offices for Victims of Crime of the Police Force is anticipated. **Ms Mošonová** then emphasized that they can inspect anonymous requests, but they always need to know details on the reported workplace – they can inspect the workplace as a whole, without directly investigating into working conditions of the person reporting. **Mr Piso** from Slovak Catholic Charity which operates the Helpline for Victims of TiP asked **Ms Mošonová** and **Ms Džurňáková** what steps they should take when a person on the line is not a TiP victim but a victim of work exploitation - where they can refer such client. **Ms Mošonová** responded that such client can be referred to the Labor Inspectorate, Information Office or to helping organizations. In this case, a victim of work exploitation can as well write a complaint to the Labor Inspectorate without stating personal information, only details on the workplace (as many as possible) and a description of labor law issues are needed. When the complaint is anonymous, the person filing will not receive information about the results of the investigation of the workplace.

Mr Piso then presented an update for **Slovak Catholic Charity**. No TiP victims from UA were identified, 3 calls from Ukrainian citizens they had were related to the loss of accommodation and employment and lacking knowledge of the labor law of the SR. In one case a 19-year-old man lost his job in CZ and went to Slovakia to get a new job – he is missing now. The experience of SCCH and also other organizations that work directly with Ukrainians is that great trauma and frustration from the fact that the war lasts a long time makes people from UA even more prone to accept a risky offer.

Ms Vrábelová provided an update for the **Ministry of Interior of the SR**. Slovakia is a destination country for labor exploitation. Since the beginning of the war no identified TiP victim from UA in Slovakia. Since the beginning of the war around 1,100,000 Ukrainians crossed the border, of which 900,000 returned.

Ms Vatrálková then provided an update for the **IOM**. Last year IOM started to focus more on the topic of labor exploitation in connection to TiP. This year IOM in cooperation with other organizations and agencies will focus on how to define labor exploitation. This definition is missing not only in Slovakia but in many other countries as well. IOM also continues to conduct trainings. These will focus on work exploitation - prevention, identification and related topics. **Ms Vatrálková** then thanked the participants representing various organizations and agencies for the cooperation in the previous year and looks forward to

cooperation in 2023. **Ms Čáčová** added that IOM is opening 6 regional Migration Information Centers that will include Protection Focal Point trained in the topics of GBV, PSEA, CT, etc. When needed, Protection Focal Point will be able to refer clients to partner organizations specializing in these topics. **Ms Čáčová** then emphasized that a sensitive approach to victims and victim identification are one of the major challenges. The Ministry of Education launched a public consultation on the creation of a new state education program. The sensitive approach to victims can be included in the part Human Rights and Migration - you can add your comment until 20.2.2023. <https://verejnakonzultacia.vzdelavanie21.sk/>

Ms. Čáčová then thanked for the participation and reminded that the seventh TF on TiP is on 20.4.2023.

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- **Department of Crime Prevention, Office of the Minister of the Interior of the SR** - <https://prevenciakriminality.sk/p/potrebujem-pomoc>
- **Miroslava Mošonová (National Labor Inspectorate)** - miroslava.mosonova@ip.gov.sk