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MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SOCIAL POLICY



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INFORMATION BROCHURE

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES - EQUAL BENEFITS

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy

Equal Opportunities Department

ul. Dame Gruev no. 14, 1000 Skopje

www.mtsp.gov.mk

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DEAR READER

You have before you the information brochure aimed at professionals working in areas connected with human trafficking. Why was this information brochure made, and what is its purpose?

Human trafficking is a violation of human rights and an obstacle to achieving the fundamental freedoms and rights of the victims of this type of organised crime, who in most cases are women and children.

Taking into consideration that states, including our own country, have the obligation to respect and protect the human rights of all their citizens, and help citizens exercise those rights, all necessary measures must be taken in order to prevent, investigate and punish human trafficking.

In line with the amendments to the Family Law, the new Social Protection Law and the Child Protection Law, laying down the obligation of the state to provide prevention and protection for victims of human trafficking, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy established the National Referral Mechanism for victims of human trafficking, and, at the beginning of last year, opened the state shelter for victims of human trafficking in Skopje.

One of the strategic objectives and priorities of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is to continuously provide the knowledge and skills necessary to recognise human trafficking through trainings and seminars for professionals from the competent institutions, but also through public awareness raising campaigns.

I believe that this information brochure will enable strong networking and improved communication between professionals working in this area, but also with vulnerable groups in the population, with the aim of exchanging experiences aimed at improving the quality of social services, coordination, cooperation, problem-solving and handling different situations.

Emphasising the value of two-way communication, I hope that this brochure will motivate all our partners and collaborators to submit information and data and to raise issues and topics for the following editions, with the aim of improving the protection of victims of human trafficking.

Thank you,

Spiro Ristovski

Minister of Labour and Social Policy

NATIONAL REFERRAL MECHANISM FOR VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

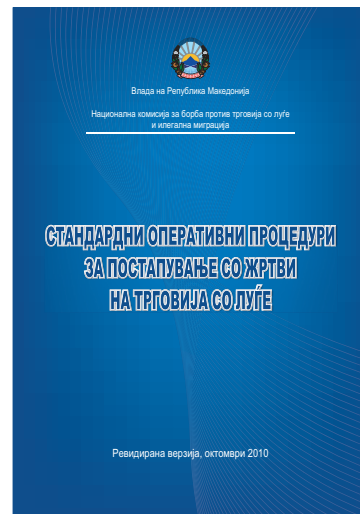
Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Equal Opportunities Department, MLSP, Office of the NRM provides coordinated assistance and protection for victims of human trafficking, especially for women and children, in cooperation and continuous coordination with professional social workers from the centres for social work, with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Unit for Combating Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration and civil society.

Assistance is offered through the following measures:

1. **Initial estimate of the needs of persons assumed to be victims of human trafficking, as well as organisation and coordination of the appropriate assistance (crisis intervention, psycho-social support and counselling, food, clothing and medical care).**
2. **Referral to and accommodation in the state shelter, appointing a guardian, returning the person to their family or finding suitable accommodation.**
3. **Nominated social workers from the CSW and the competent departments in the MIA and the MFA track down the family and assess the family's ability and readiness to accept the minor who is a victim of human trafficking; assistance with the appropriate documentation, personal identification documents, healthcare identification documents etc.**
4. **Free legal assistance, consisting of information on the victim's rights and status, the course of the procedure, i.e. their role as victims in the investigation procedure and during the main hearing.**
5. **Individualised resocialisation and reintegration programmes for children who are victims of human trafficking (inclusion in education, completing education etc.).**

All these procedures are laid down in the standard operating procedures (SOP) for work with victims of human trafficking, which offer help and assistance for all victims of human trafficking, through a holistic approach based on the victims' human rights; the SOP contain special measures aimed at children who are victims of human trafficking.

During 2010, the Government of RM issued the revised version of the SOP, with the aim of harmonising the SOP with the newest amendments to legislation and overcoming the obstacles in implementation.



According to the data from the Office of the NRM, 11 victims of human trafficking were identified in 2011, 6 of which were minors (4 from the country and 1 from abroad (sic!)) and 5 were adults (4 from the country and 1 from abroad). All 11 victims were women.

The identified foreign victims come from the Republic of Bulgaria and from the Republic of Albania.

During this year, 2 alleged victims of human trafficking were discovered, who are nationals of Kosovo.

A total of 9 persons are accommodated in the Centre for Victims of Human Trafficking (1 adult and 8 minors), and the process of their reintegration is underway. The minors come from dysfunctional families from rural areas around Gostivar, Prilep, Kriva Palanka, Ku-manovo and Skopje.

During 2011 the Office of the NRM coordinated the procedure for appointing a guardian for 17 children who are illegal migrants from the total of 28 children accommodated in the Reception Centre for Foreigners.

- ❖ According to age: 1 at the age of 14 and 16 between the ages of 14 and 18;
- ❖ According to gender: 2 female and 15 male children;
- ❖ According to country of origin, nationals of: Afghanistan (9), Morocco (1), Algeria (1), Iran (2), Libya (2), Kosovo (1), and Albania (2);

“The first state shelter for victims of human trafficking, i.e. the Centre for Victims of Human Trafficking, was established in February 2011”.

Two non-governmental organisations that have signed a memorandum of cooperation with the MLSP are providing direct assistance and support to the victims in the Centre for Victims of Human Trafficking:

- ❖ Social support from the NGO „Open Gate“, and
- ❖ Psychological support from the NGO „For a Happy Childhood“.

MLSP covers the operating expenses (rent, electricity, district heating, water supply, and telephone and internet connection) for the Centre, and the two non-governmental organisations carry the costs for the programmes being implemented by them.

CENTRE FOR VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Pursuant to Articles 26 and 31 of the Social Protection Law (Official Gazette of the RM no. 79/09), the state shelter for victims of human trafficking, i.e. the Centre for Victims of Human Trafficking (Article 132), was established on 20.01.2011. Internal documents for the operation of this Centre, based on international human rights standards, have been issued regarding the procedures for referral, accommodation, stay, rules of conduct for the personnel, protection protocols etc.



Creative work of the persons sheltered in the Centre

- ❖ The social support team consists of 7 persons, namely a coordinator, a coordinator’s assistant and 5 persons rotating as on-duty personnel. According to profession, the team has 4 social workers, 2 pedagogues, and 1 sociologist.

The social work is implemented through group and individual sessions, depending on the beneficiaries' needs and interests, in the form of assistance with studying, medical interventions, assistance in coping with problems, organised contact with the family, visits to zoos, and cinema visits accompanied by a social worker. The aim of the social programme is to have a positive impact on the sheltered persons and on their mindset, to promote self-confidence, to help overcome difficulties in life, to promote cohabitation with people from different nationalities, and to offer opportunities for socialisation and helping and supporting peers.

❖ The psychological support team consists of 3 persons, 2 of which are tasked with carrying out the daily individual and group psycho-educational activities, and one person supervises their work. From the aspect of professional background, the psychological support team consists of 2 psychologists and one social worker.

The psychological programme is implemented through a diagnostic psychological evaluation of each person, including their stress level, emotional state and intellectual faculties, on the basis of which an individual working plan for each victim is elaborated. The individual plan is elaborated on the basis of the person's psychological state, their ability for social interaction and their relationships with others, the person's needs and potentials, as well as on the basis of the evaluation of the person's needs for specific counselling and treatment (cognitive, emotional or behavioural). These activities should lead to the victims overcoming their traumatic experiences, regaining the will for positive actions, regaining self-confidence and developing awareness of the need to make constructive decisions and motivation to be successfully integrated in society. The educational, individual and group activities are implemented by the psychological support team as a whole or by individuals. The team's psychologist, apart from the aforementioned activities, also elaborates a report on the victim's emotional state, which is presented to the court, and accompanies the victim during the judicial process.

The Centre's daily activities are carried out according to a schedule developed by the professional teams, which organises their professional work, as well as the activities for maintaining hygiene in the shelter and for preparing meals. Excursions are organised under the supervision of employees or unaccompanied, based on the team's joint assessment.

The Centre for Victims of Human Trafficking keeps comprehensive records of its activities, and monthly reports are submitted to the NRM/MLSP according to the Centre's operational rules. Communication with the NRM/MLSP is carried out on a daily basis, depending on current activities; additionally, regular monthly meetings are held, at which current cases and all topics of interest for the Centre's operations are discussed.

COOPERATION:

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy signed a memorandum of cooperation with the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) on the implementation of the Programme on Combating Human Trafficking and Social Protection and the regional programme on tackling the problem of human trafficking and social protection implemented in Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Programme has a duration of five years - first phase of two years (starting in January 2011). The programme aims to strengthen decentralised social services in order to successfully combat human trafficking.

The Programme's Operational Plan contains four components:

1. Support to the national level to strengthen social structures, facilitate systemic solutions and social policy making;

2. Support of decentralised social service delivery mechanisms at regional, local and municipal level by public institutions and non-governmental organisations;
3. Direct support measures for improved social inclusion of people affected by human trafficking;
4. Establishing regional cooperation and introducing coordination mechanism regarding social protection of vulnerable groups;

REGIONAL FORUM

On 28 November 2011 the Minister Spiro Ristovski opened the regional forum Social Dimensions of Human Trafficking in the Western Balkans, which lasted until 30 November and was organised by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Macedonia and the King Baudouin Foundation from Belgium.






**Regional Forum on the
Social Dimensions of
Human Trafficking**

Skopje, 28th to 30th of November 2011

This forum offered the venue for gathering approximately eighty persons involved in human trafficking, including representatives from the relevant ministries, but also professionals dealing with this

subject, such as social workers, NGOs and experts from various European countries.

The central focus of the regional forum was placed on the two most important components of any policy aimed at combating human trafficking, namely prevention and protection; participants emphasised the need to strengthen and upgrade these two components through a holistic approach based on human rights. This forum proved to be unique from several aspects. Participants were offered the opportunity to give their contributions by proposing measures within the series of round tables dedicated to various issues related to prevention of and protection from human trafficking.

The conclusions from the forum emphasise the fact that preventive strategies, besides being aimed at education and raising awareness about the risks of human trafficking, should in the future increasingly include measures aimed at social strengthening and inclusion of vulnerable groups that are potential victims of human trafficking.



Regarding the issue of protection, most participants at the forum agree that, even though there are organisations in the region offering a series of services within the process of reintegration of victims, there is still a need to expand and develop the scope and duration of the reintegration process. Reintegration programmes should include measures aimed at social and economic strengthening that are tailored to the individual need of the person, taking into consideration age, gender etc.



**Panel discussion at the regional forum,
28-30 November 2011**

In order to continue the successful work commenced at the forum, five working groups were established consisting of forum participants, which will continue to elaborate the proposed measures in the next ten months. The best concept will be developed into pilot projects during the Summer School, which will be organised by the GIZ until the end of 2012.

REGIONAL WORKSHOP

On 24 January 2012 the Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policy Mr. Ibrahim Ibrahimi opened the first regional workshop „Prevention and Identification of Children who are victims or are at risk of Human Trafficking in Skopje„.

This workshop was organised by the OSCE mission, as part of the regional project for improving prevention, identification, referral and protection of children who are victims of human trafficking, a project financed by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and their office in Vienna.

Representatives of 11 non-governmental organisations from different countries in the region took part in the workshop, namely from: Albania, Greece, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova.

Workshop participants discussed issues related to human trafficking with children, with special focus on identifying and exchanging good practices regarding the approach and role of non-governmental organisations in preventing this phenomenon.

Best practices and recommendations on the treatment of children who are victims and children who are at risk of human trafficking will be summarised and published.

CENTRE FOR VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING



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MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL POLICY EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES DEPARTMENT

Elena Grozdanova

State advisor

+389 (0)2 3129-308

egrozdanova@mtsp.gov.mk

Svetlana Cvetkovska,

Advisor for prevention and protection of victims of human trafficking

+389 (0)2 3106-443

scvetkovska@mtsp.gov.mk

**Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
Republic of Macedonia**

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www.mtsp.gov.mk

ul. Dame Gruev no. 14

1000 Skopje

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
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BMZ 

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperati
and Development

Supported by the GIZ Regional Programme for Social Protection and Human Trafficking Prevention on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Telephone: +389 2 3103 580, E-mail: vlatko.aleksovski@giz.de