

2008 OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

Working sessions 14: Focus on identification, assistance and access to justice for the victims of trafficking

Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine

Ukraine was one of the first states in Europe which introduced in 2002 a new article on “trafficking in human beings” (149) to the Criminal Code, by which all forms of trafficking are prohibited. Since that time more than 2000 cases were filed. In 2007, 359 facts of trafficking in human beings were elicited, 369 victims were returned home, activity of 16 criminal groups was seized.

Among the main achievements of Ukraine in this field are the following:

- In 2007 the State Program on countering trafficking in human beings persons for the period up to 2010 was adopted. The Program ensures the comprehensive approach to trafficking in human beings at national and regional levels. It is planned to prolong the Program for the period to 2012;
- national referral mechanism of victims of trafficking is being elaborated with the assistance of Project-Coordinator OSCE in Ukraine. It is planned to be implemented in 2009 in two pilot regions of Ukraine;
- Public Social Services started delivering assistance to the victims of trafficking, while earlier only non-governmental organizations rendered appropriate help. Social workers and lawyers, who are involved in the activities of Social Services Centers, are continuously trained. There are 1500 regional, municipal, district and country centers of the social services for family, children and youth;

- With the assistance of the International Organization of Migration 7 reintegration centers for victims of trafficking in persons are operating in the most vulnerable regions of Ukraine;
- legislation act “Countering trafficking in persons and victims’ protection”, based on the model UN-law on preventing trafficking in human beings, is being worked out;
- Interagency Council for family, gender equality, population development and countering trafficking in human beings was established in September 2007. In 2008 two meetings of the Interagency Council took place and adopted important decisions;
- In 2007 15 trainings were carried out for the local authorities and in summer 2008 further 10 regional trainings were organized for civil servants;
- dissemination of objective information to public has a crucial role, therefore the education and training of journalists is one of the priorities. We have issued a compendium for journalists “Dissemination through media information about trafficking in human beings”.

Although Ukraine has made progress in countering trafficking in human beings we recognize that some problems still exist:

- national legislation in this field needs to be improved, first of all, with regard to identification of the complainant, granting victim status, fulfillment of the restitution of the victims rights and compensation of damages;
- Ukraine’s prevention efforts and delivering assistance to victims remained reliant on international donor funding. In this context state funds allocated at the national and regional level should be increased.

Ukraine plans to establish new posts of National Coordinator and National Reporter on countering trafficking in human beings, in accordance with the best world practice.

It would be very useful to set up within the Public Prosecutor's Office a special subdivision to deal with the issues of trafficking in human beings, as well as to support the state prosecuting in the court.

Ukraine also intends to introduce a new subject into secondary school curricula on preventing trafficking in human beings.

We appreciate the effective assistance of the OSCE-Project Coordinator in Ukraine, especially for the research of the activities of the 6 rehabilitation centers for victims of trafficking and the prepared report that will be published at the end of 2008. We hope that cooperation with OSCE in this field will continue successfully and bring tangible results.