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**ACTION PLAN**

**ON COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**

**FOR THE 2023–2024 PERIOD**

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**Introduction**

The Inter-ministerial Group for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (hereinafter the IWG) has prepared a new Action Plan on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in accordance with the decision of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia No. 01203- 9/2019/6 of 17 October 2019 as amended by decisions No. 01203-9/2020/4 as of 11 June 2020 and No. 01200-8/2022/4 as of 21 July 2022, which will be carried out in the 2023–2024 period.

In Slovenia, trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation or prostitution is still the most frequently detected, while other forms of exploitation are less frequently detected. The detection, investigation and especially providing evidence of criminal offences of trafficking in human beings is a difficult, time consuming and complex process, since it usually involves an international organised criminal activity of a large number of people over a long period of time. Thus, the detection and addressing of trafficking in human beings demands specialised know-how and understanding as well as integrated, effective and coordinated action not only by governmental, but also by non-governmental organisations.

In the new Action Plan, the IWG has envisaged the implementation of fundamental activities of prevention of trafficking in human beings to be implemented within the scope of cooperation of the competent national authorities while non-governmental and humanitarian organisations will also be included in various prevention and assistance activities for trafficked victims. This document is a logical continuation of the projects that are already in place and have proven to be successful and which, due to the nature of the work, need continuity. Based on past experience, the activities will enhance the work done so far. In preparing the Action Plan, the IWG followed the measures set out in the EU Strategy on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2025) and the recommendations of the GRETA Monitoring Mechanism from the second and third cycles of assessment of Republic of Slovenia's implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (hereafter referred to as the "GRETA Recommendations").The Action Plan also includes activities that have not been implemented in the period for the preliminary Action Plan.

The Action Plan is divided into six chapters as follows: Prevention; Detection, investigation and prosecution of the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings; Identification, protection and assistance to victims; International cooperation; Improvement of system solutions and proposals for legislative changes; Coordination and support activities. The chapters briefly define tasks or coherent sets of tasks, the responsible institutions, the organisations involved in the implementation and deadlines.

The table appended to the Action Plan presents the institutions that carry financial responsibility for individual activities, the type of budget item and the amount of funds available.

### 1 Prevention

Raising awareness about the issue of trafficking in human beings is one of our core preventive activities. The IWG will therefore continue and further develop the existing prevention activities with the aim of raising awareness among at-risk groups, the general public and expert communities, and consumers and users of services provided by victims of trafficking in human beings.

In order to achieve the objectives and reach target audiences, a variety of communication tools will be used, such as the website, social media, events intended for the expert public (symposia, seminars, etc.), various materials (e-manual, info graphics, statistics, etc.), media relations, press releases and press conferences. Communication activities will be clearly identified through the “Let's act against trafficking in human beings” logo.

When planning and implementing individual activities, the members of the IWG will co-operate within their line ministries with the media and other stakeholders in an effort to raise public awareness and provide information about anti-trafficking measures. Prevention activities are an important element of a comprehensive approach to trafficking in human beings, therefore, the IWG will ensure that they are implemented in the scope as envisaged in the Action Plan, whereas individual providers of services may use remote-work communication tools, as appropriate.

**1.1 General public**

**1.1 Website**

The website <https://www.gov.si/zbirke/projekti-in-programi/boj-proti-trgovini-z-ljudmi/> is the essential tool for providing up-to-date information in the fight against trafficking in human beings. It contains a presentation of the issue and the different forms of trafficking in human beings, information on the work of the IWG, key international and national documents, studies and reports, as well as links to organisations that provide assistance to victims of trafficking.

The focus of activities is on the situation in Slovenia, Europe and the rest of the world, therefore, the marking of the EU Anti-Trafficking Day (18 October) and the World Day against Trafficking in Persons (30 July) have a special place on the website. The content of the website will be continuously added to and updated. Published content will be shared via governmental social media, and we will encourage other stakeholders involved in the IWG to do the same.

Objective: To edit and update the website over the course of the two-year period.

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| Institution responsible:  | Ministry of the Interior, Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.12 Press releases, press conferences**

Trafficking in human beings is increasingly expanding and, in view of current global development, has acquired new forms. The European Union and international institutions (United Nations, Council of Europe, Organisation for Security and Co-operation of Europe, International Migration Organisation, International Labour Organisation, etc.) have been strengthening activities into identifying the phenomenon and fighting against it. There has been a marked increase in research and measures adopted, which Slovenia is also striving to achieve.

The media and the public will continue to be provided with information on the above-mentioned content, the IWG’s work and anti-trafficking measures (press conferences upon the adoption of annual reports, seminars, consultations, successfully solved cases, etc.).

Objective: To provide credible information to the media and the public about the issue, the work of the IWG and anti-trafficking activities. This includes press conferences on the adoption of annual reports, seminars, panel discussions, successfully resolved cases, etc.

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| Institution responsible:  | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator  |
| Participating parties: | Government Communication Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior, experts in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG)[[1]](#footnote-1) |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.1.3 Marking October 18, the European Anti-Trafficking Day**

An event focusing on trafficking for forced labour and labour exploitation will take place on 18 October, the European Anti-Trafficking Day. The event, which will be attended by the National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator and members of the IWG, will also be covered by the media. The Communication Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia (hereinafter referred to as Government Communication Office/GCO) will cooperate with the Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) in the organisation and implementation of the event in terms of media support.

Objective: To raise the awareness among the general public by organising events (round tables, panels, etc.) on the occasion of the European Anti-Trafficking Day on 18 October.

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| Institution responsible: | Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior |
| Source of funding: | Ministry of the Interior and Government Communication Office (GCO) |
| Participating parties: | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, experts in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG), GCO |
| Deadline:  | October 2023 and October 2024 |

**1.2 Target groups at risk**

**1.2.1 Raising awareness among potential and identified victims of trafficking under the project "Providing assistance to victims" (in conjunction with Chapter 3.1)**

The procedures for identifying victims of trafficking in human beings are based on awareness-raising among identified victims as well as potential or presumed victims of trafficking. Awareness-raising activities are mainly targeted at the vulnerable group of foreign nationals, with a focus on violations of the rights of foreign workers in Slovenia, and at the vulnerable group of young people.

The most effective way to reach these at-risk groups is through support and care mechanisms. Therefore, “Providing assistance to victims” project will develop specialized content for at-risk groups. The provider will be selected through a public tender. It will be responsible for raising awareness among this target population. Awareness-raising among the at-risk group of foreign nationals will be included in a public tender for safe accommodation, while awareness-raising among the at-risk group of young people will be included in a tender for crisis accommodation (see Chapter 3.1). The content will be disseminated by government authorities and through the NGO network.

Objective 1: To publish information material for foreigners. Publication of information material in languages understood by foreigners, which is to be made available at diplomatic and consular representations, border crossings and administrative units, at the Asylum Centre and at the offices of the Employment Service of Slovenia to persons seeking employment in Slovenia, to persons who have crossed the state border illegally, and to applicants for international protection (with a special focus on unaccompanied minors and single women).

Objective 2: To publish information material and to carry out workshops for the citizens of the Republic of Slovenia, in particular to raise the awareness among children, young people and people working with young people and other target groups about the dangers and pitfalls of trafficking in human beings. The emphasis will be on the recruitment of victims, identifying risks, proper response and self-protective behaviour. The content will be published on relevant websites that act as "virtual communities" connecting young people, as well as in social work centres, schools and healthcare facilities.

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| Institution responsible:  | Anti-trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities |
| Source of funding: | Ministry of the Interior; Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities |
| Contractor: | Non-governmental organisations selected on the basis of a public tender |
| Deadline:  | Continued activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.2.2. Preventive awareness-raising activities and education campaigns targeting higher-grade primary school pupils and secondary school students**

Children and young people are among the most vulnerable people who can become potential victims of trafficking. The International Labour Organisation estimates that approximately 1.2 million children are victims of trafficking each year. Both girls and boys are vulnerable to trafficking and various forms of exploitation. For girls and women, the most common form of exploitation is sexual exploitation, usually as a result of gender inequality and gender-based violence; in certain communities, there are also forced marriages, while boys and men are usually exploited for forced labour and labour exploitation.

Raising awareness among young people is very important from two perspectives, i.e. we need to consider them as potential victims of trafficking in human beings and as potential future consumers. Therefore, by raising awareness among this target group, we will also contribute to reducing the demand for such services, which is one of the main objectives of the EU Strategy on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2025).

The Ministry of the Interior will therefore continue the systematic and long-term awareness-raising for children and minors that it started in 2021. Based on a multi-year plan, workshops will be held in the ninth grade of primary schools and the second year of secondary schools in all regions of Slovenia, including in areas where members of the Roma community live. The workshops will be attended by teachers, and possibly by social studies educators, teaching assistants and school management.

Objective 1: To systematically raise awareness among children and adolescents about the risks of trafficking in human beings and recruitment techniques and inform them on how to identify these risks, take appropriate action and behave self-protectively. In 2023 and 2024, workshops will be held in primary schools in the Coastal and Karst regions (Obalno-Kraška), the Notranjska, South-Eastern and Posavje regions, in secondary schools in the Podravska, Pomurska, Koroška and Savinjska regions, and in primary and secondary schools in the central Slovenian, Gorenjska, Goriška and Zasavska regions. At least 100 workshops will be carried out for a minimum of 2,000 pupils.

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| Institution responsible:  | Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior |
| Source of funding: | Ministry of the Interior |
| Deadline:  | Continued activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.2.3 Preventive action and awareness-raising activities on trafficking in human beings in Roma communities**

The Office of the Republic of Slovenia for National Minorities plans to include in its work content on trafficking in human beings, particularly from the perspective of early and forced marriages in Roma communities. Representatives of the Office will participate in activities related to combating trafficking in human beings, raising awareness of the negative consequences of forced and early marriages and activities to empower Roma women and girls (as well as men and boys). In pursuing this objective, in particular through the involvement of competent institutions, i.e. through inter-institutional and multidisciplinary cooperation, the Office will seek to raise awareness among relevant institutions and potential victims of trafficking in Roma communities of the need to abandon the rationale and justification of such practices under the guise of Roma culture and tradition; it will also raise awareness among competent institutions of the need to focus their decisions and actions on guaranteeing and exercising children’s rights and ensuring compliance with existing legislation. The Office will also strive to provide all key stakeholders and institutions with relevant information and contribute to a comprehensive view of such phenomena and to an integrated approach to dealing with such cases or to appropriate preventive measures.

In cooperation with the relevant institutions, the Office published in 2021 a Handbook on the identification and intervention of early and forced marriages in the Roma community, and subsequently carried out a series of professional trainings and consultations with practitioners in the regions/environments where this problem is occurring. The office cooperates with all competent institutions, especially the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, social work centres, Ministry of the Interior and the Police, Ministry of Justice, the Roma community (its representatives and Roma community organisations), NGOs and other competent institutions. In the coming period, the office will continue its activities aimed, on the one hand, at representatives of institutions (e.g. conducting trainings for Roma assistants in schools and, if necessary, for other school professionals and court experts), and, on the other hand, at the Roma community, where awareness-raising activities will be conducted in particular in cooperation with NGOs and organisations that carry out activities in the Roma community (the Office's role will be that of a networking body).

Objective 1: To address the issue of forced and early marriages in the Roma community on an inter-institutional and multi-disciplinary basis, with the aim of reducing the incidence of such cases, raising awareness among the members of the Roma community and all relevant institutions about these cases and addressing them appropriately.

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| Institution responsible:  | Office of the Republic of Slovenia for National Minorities  |
| Participating parties: | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, members of IWG and other competent institutions |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.3 Discouraging the demand for services provided by victims of trafficking**

Experience shows that the problem of trafficking in human beings needs to be tackled comprehensively by preventing the demand for services provided by victims under coercion. Awareness will be raised among employers in sectors where exploitation is most prevalent and where there is a high risk of workers becoming victims of trafficking, as well as among the general public and the categories of workers at risk.

**1.3.1 Raising awareness among consumers of products and users of services provided by victims of trafficking**

Trafficking in human beings is driven by the demand for the goods and services provided by victims of trafficking in human beings under various forms of coercion. Preventive measures will therefore aim to discourage such demand by focusing attention on the responsibility of those who use such goods and services.

To this end, the project will be supported over a two-year period to raise public awareness and inform the media about trafficking in human beings for forced labour and labour exploitation. The project will draw attention to the responsibility of consumers of goods and services that are produced using forced, exploitative or child labour. Indirectly, it will target employers, particularly those engaged in industries where exploitation is most prevalent and where there is a significant risk of employees becoming victims of trafficking. It will also draw attention to the social responsibility of companies and the need to audit and verify their subcontractors throughout the supply chain. The members of the IWG will liaise and disseminate information provided by stakeholders whose programmes aim to raise public awareness of goods and services produced by children and victims of trafficking.

Providers will be selected through annual public tenders and will be awarded funds of approximately **EUR 5,000 per year.**

Objective: To reduce demand by focusing attention on the responsibility of the users of such products and services and to raise public awareness of trafficking in human beings for forced labour and labour exploitation among the public.

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| Institution responsible:  | Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior |
| Participating parties: | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, members of IWG and other competent institutions |
| Contractor: | NGO selected through a public tender |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.3.2 Strengthening cooperation with the private sector**

A stronger link with the private sector is needed to make the prevention of trafficking in human beings more effective, as the private sector is both directly and indirectly involved in the majority of cases of forced labour.

The GRETA Group suggests that the Slovenian authorities work closely with trade unions, the civil society and the private sector to raise awareness of trafficking in human beings in the context of labour exploitation, to prevent trafficking in human beings in supply chains and to strengthen corporate social responsibility based on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and CM/Rec(2016)3.

The EU Strategy on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2025) also calls on Member States to further develop public-private initiatives with companies in high-risk sectors and environments and to promote due diligence initiatives in the global product supply chain.

The Ministry of the Interior issued the employers’ manual entitled “Stop Forced Labour” to mark the European Anti-Trafficking Day on 18 October 2020 in order to provide information to employers where there is a risk that they could be connected to forced labour. This especially refers to industries that employ unqualified and potentially poorly paid foreign workers, especially in construction, hospitality, agriculture, transport, logistics, forestry, the food industry and many other.

With the coordination of the Anti-Trafficking Service at the Ministry of the Interior, the IWG will carry out various activities to further promote the mentioned manual and to raise awareness among employers where there is a risk that they could be connected with trafficking in human beings for the purposes of forced labour. The IWG will also continue to actively participate in the implementation of the National Action Plan on Human Rights in Business, which promotes the development of due diligence of human rights in business.

As most victims of trafficking in Slovenia are exploited for the purpose of prostitution or other forms of sexual abuse, the IWG will also intensify its activities to raise awareness among potential victims of sexual exploitation and users of sexual services. Awareness-raising activities will particularly target websites advertising sexual services, where both providers and users of sexual services interact in one place.

Objective 1: To raise awareness in the private sector about trafficking for forced labour and encourage the development of human rights due diligence in business.

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| Institution responsible:  | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator |
| Participating parties: | Anti-trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia, Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

Objective 2: To establish cooperation with the administrators or editors-in-chief of websites advertising sexual services.

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| Institution responsible:  | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator |
| Participating parties: | Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.4 Training and raising awareness among professionals whose work is related to the issue of trafficking in human beings**

**1.4.1 Training programmes for police officers**

In an effort to combat trafficking in human beings, the police will continue to provide training for police officers at local, regional and national levels. This programme will be targeted at and tailored to groups of police officers and criminal investigators as well as to new forms of exploitation of victims of trafficking.

Objective 1: The police organisation systematically trains police officers from all police units. The aim of the training is to identify the red-flag indicators of trafficking and to familiarise officers with further procedures in dealing with trafficking in human beings.

Objective 2: Once a year, the police will organise multi-day specialist training programmes for criminal investigators dealing with offence of trafficking in human beings. The training sessions are aimed at recognising the red-flag indicators of trafficking in human beings and new forms of trafficking in human beings (forced labour, forced criminal activity, forced begging, exploitation of children). The training process includes knowledge of procedures for dealing with victims of trafficking in human beings, assistance and protection programmes and the importance of international cooperation. The Specialised State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia and NGOs involved in anti-trafficking will also participate in the implementation of the training.

Objective 3: The Police Academy includes the fight against trafficking in human beings in the curriculum of the Police Officer Candidate and Associate Degree Programme at the Police College (short-cycle higher vocational study programme). The aim of the subject is to make students aware of the problem of trafficking in human beings, the indicators and all the necessary procedures for identifying and providing appropriate protection and assistance. A total of eight lessons are devoted to the topic of trafficking in human beings in the first and second years of study.

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| Institution responsible:  | Ministry of the Interior – the Police, Criminal Police Directorate (CPD) of the General Police Directorate, Police Academy |
| Participating parties: | Specialised State Prosecutor's Office, National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior , NGOs |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.4.2 Specialist training for state prosecutors and judges**

Considering that training and specific knowledge on combating trafficking in human beings is also needed for prosecutors and judges, the issue of trafficking in human beings will continue to be part of the training, in particular the training programmes for judges and prosecutors of the Judicial Training Centre. The content will be adapted to the trends in the prosecution of trafficking in human beings and will focus in the next period on the amendments to the Criminal Code related to the recommendations of the GRETA Group and the implementation of the provisions of Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2022/629/JHA (hereinafter referred to as "Directive 2011/36/EU").

Objective: The Ministry of Justice - Judicial Training Centre organises training concerning the issue of trafficking in human beings.

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| Institution responsible:  | The Ministry of Justice - Judicial Training Centre  |
| Participating parties: | Experts engaged in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG), Specialised State Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Slovenia, courts |
| Deadline:  | Single activity in 2023 or 2024 |

**1.4.3 Training for inspectors of the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia**

The inspectors at the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia will be informed about the issue of labour exploitation and forced labour as one of the purposes of trafficking in human beings during their regular expert consultations. This topic will be presented to inspectors at least once a year by experts in the field. Due to the increasing trend of forced labour and labour exploitation as forms of trafficking in the EU, the inspectors also participate in training at the international level.

Objective 1: The Labour Inspectorate, in cooperation with IWG experts, will organise an annual consultation, inviting experts on forced labour or labour exploitation.

Objective 2: In accordance with their needs and competences, representatives of the Labour Inspectorate will participate in the national and international training and education covering trafficking in human beings and forced labour.

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| Institution responsible:  | Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia |
| Participating parties: | Experts engaged in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG), other external organisations, trade unions |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.4.4 Specialist training for staff at the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia**

The relevant legislation governing the work of the Financial Administration enables the inspectors and agents of the mobile units to detect trafficking in human beings offences in the course of their work. These are particularly prevalent in labour-intensive industries employing large numbers of low-skilled foreign workers.

Objective: The staff of the Financial Administration (inspectors, employees of mobile units) will be informed about the issue of forced labour as one of the purposes of trafficking in human beings during their regular expert consultations. These topics, including new trends, will be presented to Financial Administration staff by experts at least once a year during the regular annual expert consultations.

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| Institution responsible:  | Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia |
| Participating parties: | Experts engaged in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG), trade unions |
| Deadline:  | Single activity in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.4.5 Training for staff of Government Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants and organisations engaged in the Asylum Centre or its units in early detection and prevention of trafficking in human beings**

The Office regularly trains staff and raises awareness among the employees of the Asylum Centre and all those who come into contact with people accommodated in centres on identifying indicators of abuse and trafficking in human beings. It also provides information to Asylum Centre residents on their rights and obligations arising from their status and raises awareness on self-protection, action and seeking help.

Objective: To train the staff of the Office and of the support services (security service, cleaning service, volunteers, etc.) who deal with migrants as part of their work, using the content produced for this purpose. With regard to their respective roles, the training will provide information on what constitutes trafficking in human beings and how to recognise trafficking through red-flag indicators.

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| Institution responsible:  | Government Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants |
| Participating parties: | Experts engaged in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG), NGOs operating in the field of trafficking in human beings  |
| Deadline:  | Single activity in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.4.6 Training for staff of the Ministry of the Interior (Migration Directorate) in early detection and prevention of trafficking in human beings**

In the decision-making process for granting the status of eligibility for international protection status in Slovenia, the staff of the Directorate are also confronted with cases where applicants for international protection are identified as victims or are potential victims of trafficking in human beings. In such cases, the awareness and competence of public officials (decision-makers) is a key element in taking appropriate measures in accordance with the Manual on the Identification, Assistance and Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings.

Objective: To provide training in the framework work processes and is based on the training materials specifically prepared for the purpose. The training aims to sensitize the staff on how to detect trafficking in the course of migration and asylum granting procedures.

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| Institution responsible:  | Migration Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior,  |
| Participating parties: | Experts engaged in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG) |
| Deadline:  | Single activity in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.4.7 Training for staff of social work centres in identification of cases of trafficking in human beings**

The training will focus on assisting victims of trafficking in human beings, especially minors, and will provide the necessary tools to recognise a case of trafficking when working with individuals from vulnerable social groups. As this category of victims is the one most frequently encountered by the staff of social work centres, the objective of such training programmes is to inform the staff of social work centres about THB issues and to create a practice that will meet the needs of the identified victims of trafficking in human beings as well as to strengthen the capacity of the operators.

Training sessions are envisaged to take place under the auspices of the Social Chamber of Slovenia, which – on the basis of a contract on public authority funding concluded with the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities – is to organise a seminar for the professionals and assistants at social work centres.

Objective: To facilitate the identification of trafficking in human beings cases as well as to take action on the basis of the produced Manual on the Identification, Assistance and Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings.

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| Institution responsible:  | Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs |
| Participating parties: | Experts engaged in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG), other external organisations, social work centres |
| Deadline:  | Single activity in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.4.8 Information and awareness-raising activities for teaching and counselling staff**

Educators should become familiar with the variety of threats and violence experienced by adolescents and should be able to link them to trafficking in human beings. Teachers should be encouraged to include THB content in their school activities. Awareness-raising will focus on primary and secondary school teachers, counsellors and teachers in student accommodation facilities.

Objective 1: At regular working sessions, the body responsible is to ensure that this topic with an emphasis on the preventive raising of awareness of children and the young about the dangers of trafficking in human beings, is presented to principals and, through education seminars, to teachers. To this end, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia will hold an expert seminar also covering trafficking in human beings. The seminar will be implemented in cooperation with experts and IWG members.

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| Institution responsible:  | Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia |
| Participating parties: | Experts engaged in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG) |
| Deadline:  | Single activity in 2023 and 2024 |

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Objective 2: In the framework of the prevention awareness-raising workshops for primary and secondary school pupils (points 1.2.1 and 1.2.2), information is also provided to teachers and counsellors on the issue of trafficking in human beings.

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| Institution responsible:  | Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior |
| Participating parties: | Staff at primary and secondary schools  |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

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**1.4.9 Information and awareness-raising activities for healthcare staff**

Knowledge transfer and awareness-raising are also needed for health professionals who are confronted with cases of trafficking when providing health care. These contacts may be direct contacts with the victims or indirect contacts through people living with them.

Objective 1: The operator shall, in accordance with its competences, organise training in the context of the consultations attended by the participating representatives of health care institutions and provide appropriate organisational and content support to the training providers.

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| Institution responsible:  | Ministry of Health |
| Participating parties: | Healthcare institutions, experts engaged in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG) |
| Deadline:  | Single activity in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.4.10 Information and awareness-raising activities for consular staff focusing on early detection of trafficking in human beings in the course of visa and residence application procedures at consular missions abroad**

Raising the awareness of consular staff at diplomatic and consular missions abroad about the possibilities of encountering trafficking in human beings when issuing visas and temporary residence permits to foreign citizens has been an effective preventive measure in the past. Therefore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will include these topics in the 2023-2024 training.

Objective: By prior agreement, this training programme will be held as part of the annual consular consultation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whose agenda will also include the issue of trafficking in human beings.

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| Institution responsible:  | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Participating parties: | Experts engaged in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG) |
| Deadline:  | Single activity in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.4.11 Information and awareness-raising activities for diplomatic staff prior to their deployment abroad**

It is important to continue to raise awareness of the forms of trafficking and the obligation to comply with local labour laws among diplomats before they are posted abroad. This may help to prevent certain forms of trafficking in the recruitment of domestic workers for the households of diplomats working abroad.

Objective: To raise awareness among diplomats about the issue of trafficking in human beings as part of their regular pre-deployment preparations at diplomatic missions and consulates.

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| Institution responsible:  | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Participating parties: | Experts engaged in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG) |
| Deadline:  | As part of each pre-deployment training and yearly consular consultationsin 2023 and 2024  |

**1.4.12 Expert meeting of the representatives of all relevant institutions engaged in preventing and combating trafficking in human beings in the Republic of Slovenia**

In addition to training programmes focusing on specific areas for experts working in the field of preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, an annual expert consultation is organised for a wider range of stakeholders from all national institutions and organisations involved in the work of IWG. Participants will be provided with the latest information and content in the field of anti-trafficking at national and international level. Through an in-depth discussion, they will be able to develop solutions for more successful prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of criminal offences of trafficking in human beings.

Objective: Through regular consultations, participants will receive up-to-date information and content in the field of combating trafficking in human beings at the national and international level and they will develop solutions for more successful prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of criminal offences of trafficking in human beings.

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| Institution responsible:  | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator |
| Participating parties: | Anti-Trafficking Service of the Ministry of the Interior, experts engaged in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG) |
| Deadline:  | Single activity in 2023 and 2024 |

**1.4.13 Information and awareness-raising campaigns for Defence Ministry staff before peacekeeping operations and missions**

Personnel of the Ministry of Defence and the Slovenian Armed Forces participating in peacekeeping operations and missions may be exposed to services that may originate from trafficking in human beings and exploitation of persons, especially for sexual purposes. Due to this exposure, the recommendations of international experts are aimed at raising the awareness of mission members about the manifestations of trafficking in human beings. The aim of the experts is to reduce the demand for such services and to identify and report any potential cases that may indicate the existence of trafficking in human beings and the exploitation of persons for sexual purposes. Such awareness-raising and training is part of NATO’s anti-trafficking policy.

Objective: To raise awareness among military and civilian personnel of current anti-trafficking issues and their responsibilities when detecting such crimes, and to reduce the demand for services and goods provided by trafficked persons on the basis of exploitation.

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| Institution responsible:  | Ministry of Defence, Slovenian Armed Forces |
| Participating parties: | Anti-Trafficking Service of the Ministry of the Interior, experts engaged in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG) |
| Deadline:  | Once a year or before the deployment in international operations and missions. |

**1.4.14 Information and awareness-raising for administrative unit staff**

The anti-trafficking training is aimed at administrative officials, especially registrars, who may also be confronted with cases of forced marriage. It is important for registrars to be aware, when conducting marriage procedures that forced marriage may also lead to further exploitation in slavery, servitude or slavery-like conditions. When such cases are combined with other elements, forced marriage may also be considered a crime of trafficking in human beings under Article 113 of the Criminal Code.

Objective: To inform the employees of administrative units about the dangers of trafficking in human beings and its manifestations, and to train them to identify the indicators of trafficking in human beings, with a focus on vulnerable groups, especially in the Roma ethnic communities.

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| Institution responsible:  | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator |
| Participating parties: | Anti-Trafficking Service of the Ministry of the Interior, experts in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG) |
| Deadline:  | Single activity in 2023 and 2024 |

### 2 Detection, investigation and prosecution of trafficking in human beings

**2.1 More effective police action aimed at detecting and investigating criminal offences of trafficking in human beings**

Trafficking in human beings offences will continue to be investigated by criminal investigators trained in the fight against trafficking in human beings and working in the eight regional Criminal Police Divisions and in the General Police Directorate – Criminal Police Division. Pre-trial investigations into trafficking offences are led by the Specialised State Prosecutor’s Office and include financial investigations.

There is a contact point in place at the General Police Directorate responsible for coordinating the activities of the regional Criminal Police Divisions and the activities and cooperation in criminal investigations of trafficking in human beings with the law enforcement authorities of other EU Member States and those of third countries.

Sexual exploitation is still the most common form of exploitation of victims of trafficking in human beings in Slovenia. The police also note that there are many other forms of trafficking in human beings such as forced labour, servitude and forced crime. The detection and investigation rates of these types of THB remain low. Trafficking in human beings crimes are rarely reported to the police. Victims of trafficking offences are usually identified on the basis of police and NGO anti-trafficking activities.

The police will carry out activities focusing on identifying other less visible forms of exploitation of trafficking in human beings. Special attention will be paid to identification of victims of trafficking among children, migrant workers and illegal migrants. In line with the EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2025), efforts will also focus on improving the digital capacity of law enforcement agencies and the expertise to keep up with technological developments.

Objective 1: The police will continue to target and effectively use their police powers in the detection and investigation of criminal offences of trafficking in human beings and will carry out activities in the procedures of identification of victims of trafficking at the local, regional and national levels.

Objective 2: At all levels of operation, the police will strengthen proactive activities that will be focused on identifying the victims of trafficking in human beings exploited due to forced labour and other forms of exploitation. In the detection of trafficking in human beings offences, the police will cooperate with the competent state authorities that may encounter trafficking in human beings in the exercise of their powers (the Financial Administration, Labour Inspectorate and others), NGOs and trade unions involved in the fight against trafficking in human beings. The activities will take the form of joint action days and will target specific industries where indicators of forced labour or other forms of exploitation of victims have been identified.

Objective 3: Within the scope of the EU policy cycle to tackle organised and serious international crime and the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats in Trafficking in Human Beings (EMPACT THB), the police will carry out the activities envisaged in the Operational Action Plan on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. The police will implement the so-called “joint action days”, which will focus on identification of victims of trafficking.

Objective 4: The criminal police will carry out their operational activities with the purpose of identifying criminal organisations and individuals who exploit victims of trafficking in human beings. These activities will focus on identifying exploitation for forced labour.

Objective 5:  The police will carry out activities to identify all and all forms of exploitation of victims of THB in cyberspace.

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| Institution responsible:  | Ministry of the Interior – the Police (GPD CPD) |
| Participating parties: | Specialised Office of the State Prosecutor of the Republic RS, Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, Market Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia, Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia, NGOs, trade unions |
| Deadline:  | Ongoing activity in 2023 and 2024 |

**2.2 Strengthening activities for detecting criminal offences of trafficking in human beings for forced labour purposes**

Trafficking for forced labour is difficult to detect, investigate and prove, and a more proactive approach is needed. In its evaluation recommendations, GRETA also suggests that the Slovenian authorities take further measures to prevent trafficking in human beings for labour exploitation, in particular to strengthen cooperation between labour inspectors, law enforcement agencies, tax authorities, trade unions and other civil society actors in order to gather the evidence necessary to successfully investigate and prosecute cases of trafficking in human beings for labour exploitation.

EU Strategy on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2025) also calls for improving the capacity of labour inspectorates and/or social partners and facilitating inter-agency cooperation to identify victims of trafficking for labour exploitation and to bring offenders to justice.

In order to work more effectively in this area, it is therefore necessary to ensure a regular exchange of information between all relevant actors and to carry out activities aimed at identifying victims of trafficking in human beings exploited for forced labour.

The Labour Inspectorate will continue to carry out regular and extraordinary inspections, while labour inspectors will be alert to identification of indicators of trafficking in human beings and will inform the competent authorities and cooperate with them. The Labour Inspectorate will also continue to be involved in the activities of other state bodies with regard to the identification of victims of trafficking in human beings at national and international level.

Objective 1: Regular exchange of information between competent national authorities dealing with trafficking for forced labour in the course of exercising their duties and powers. Activities focusing on risk groups will be implemented on the basis of analysis and working guidelines and following prior agreement. If necessary, the group will also include a representative of the Specialised State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia.

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| Institution responsible:  | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator |
| Participating parties: | Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of the Interior – the Police (GPD CPD), Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, trade unions, Specialised State Prosecutor's Office, Ministry of the interior (ATS) |
| Deadline:  | Continued activities in 2023 and 2024 |

Objective 2: To identify indicators of trafficking in human beings during regular and emergency inspections and inform the contact point. Inspectors work in accordance with the Guidelines for Labour Inspectors on the Identification of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings. The Labour Inspectorate is also involved in the activities of other state bodies with regard to the identification of victims of trafficking in human beings at national and international level.

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| Institution responsible:  | Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia  |
| Participating parties: | Other organisations and experts from the field of the fight against trafficking in human beings, trade unions, NGOs, other interested organisations |
| Deadline:  | Ongoing activity in 2023 and 2024 |

### 3 Identifying, protecting and assisting the victims of trafficking in human beings

**3.1 Providing assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings**

The implementation of assistance to and protection of victims of trafficking in human beings is defined in the Act Ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia – International Treaties, No. 14/09 of 4 August 2009). Article 4 of the above-mentioned Act provides an appropriate platform for relevant ministries to cooperate with NGOs and defines funding procedures.

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia finances various assistance programmes carried out by NGOs selected through public tender. This type of assistance relates to helping victims with their physical, psychological and social recovery, as well as assistance with regularising their status and assistance with criminal proceedings. The procedure for assisting and accommodating victims is specified in the Manual on the Identification, Assistance and Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Objective 1: To provide crisis accommodation to enable victims to leave the abusive situation. A victim is entitled to assistance and support as soon as there is reason to believe that he or she is a victim of trafficking in human beings. Such assistance and support is not conditional on the victim’s cooperation before or during the criminal proceedings. Each victim will be granted a 30-day period of recovery and reflection, i.e. for the period of secure crisis accommodation arrangement. The purpose of this period is to allow the victim to recover, to escape the influence of the traffickers, and to receive information about the voluntary forms of further support programmes and possibilities of cooperation. If the victim is staying in Slovenia illegally, Article 50 of the Foreigners Act applies; this article stipulates that the police, ex officio or at the request of the victim, shall offer the victim to stay in the country for a period of three months, with the possibility of extension (which includes the 30-day period of recovery and reflection, i.e. crisis accommodation). Crisis accommodation provides for the following basic care:

* + - * + adequate accommodation, food and care,
				+ psychosocial assistance,
				+ assistance with primary health care in accordance with the Act governing healthcare and health insurance,
				+ security for victims and participating staff, if necessary;
				+ 24-hour availability for victims in crisis accommodation,
				+ 24-hour presence of the provider if a child is accommodated,
				+ translation and interpretation services, if necessary,
				+ assistance in securing appropriate support for child victims,
				+ counselling and providing information, in particular on victim’s rights, in a language that the victims can understand,
				+ assistance in returning victims to their country of origin;
				+ assistance in arranging the status in the Republic of Slovenia,
				+ informing and raising awareness among potential other target populations about the dangers to children, young people and educational staff, and the pitfalls of trafficking in human beings;
				+ other forms of empowerment.

The current contract expires in 2023, therefore, the implementation and financing of the programme "Providing assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings – Crisis accommodation" is to be ensured through a public tender for the two-year period from 2024 to 2025. The programme provider will be required to ensure the continuity and interconnection of all procedures aimed at providing assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings.

The selected programme provider will also be responsible for raising awareness among the target group of young people. To this end, the programme provider will be responsible for the production and distribution of appropriate awareness-raising materials among these at-risk groups as defined in Chapter 1.2.1.

A total of EUR 45,000 will have to be provided in the budget of the Republic of Slovenia.

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| Institution responsible:  | Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs |
| Contractor: | An NGO or a humanitarian organisation qualified to provide assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

Objective 2: To ensure accommodation in safe facilities, which is a continuation of the placement and assistance to victims covered by the crisis accommodation programme. This is a longer-term form of assistance which, in the case of third-country nationals, is conditional on their having an authorisation to stay or a temporary residence permit, as defined in the provisions of the Aliens Act and EU regulations. In addition to the basic care included in the crisis accommodation, the following forms of assistance are provided under this programme:

* + - * + assistance in informing child victims of their rights, their role and the scope, the timing and progress of the proceedings and the manner in which their cases will be resolved,
				+ assistance in ensuring that the rights and interests of victims of trafficking in human beings are represented and taken into account at the appropriate levels of prosecution of perpetrators of criminal offences;
				+ assistance in ensuring appropriate support for child victims of trafficking,
				+ specialised training for those providing assistance together with other parties (the police, staff of social work centres, etc.) involved in the process of assisting victims and prosecuting perpetrators;
				+ other measures for social integration and re-integration.

The current contract expires in 2023 and can be extended for another year. The implementation and financing of the Programme "Providing assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings – Safe accommodation for the period from 2024 to 2025" is to be ensured through an annex to the existing contract or through a public tender. This will require the programme provider to ensure continuity and coherence of all processes with the ultimate aim of assisting victims of trafficking in human beings.

The programme provider selected through a tendering procedure will also be responsible for awareness-raising among the target group of foreign nationals. To this end, the programme provider will be responsible for the production and distribution of appropriate content to raise awareness among these at-risk groups as described in Chapter 1.2.1.

For the implementation of the programme, the Ministry of the Interior will therefore have to allocate EUR 40,000 per year in the budget of the Republic of Slovenia.

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| Institution responsible:  | Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior |
| Contractor: | An NGO or a humanitarian organisation qualified to provide assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**3.2 Introduction of a mechanism for identification, assistance and protection of victims of trafficking in human beings and/or sexual abuse in procedures of international protection in Slovenia**

The project "Introduction of a mechanism for identification, assistance and protection of victims of trafficking in human beings and/or sexual abuse in procedures of international protection in Slovenia (PATS)" is aimed directly at potential victims of trafficking in human beings. It offers intensive individual awareness-raising sessions on the dangers of trafficking in human beings in their own language or in a language they understand, and informs potential victims about protection and assistance possibilities.

Objective: To inform and identify vulnerable groups in need of special treatment. The specific objective of the project is to identify and inform potential victims of trafficking in human beings, sexual or gender-based violence, to provide victims with appropriate treatment and to support the working group appointed on the basis of the Standard Operating Procedures for the Prevention of and Action in Cases of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence against Persons Treated under the Provisions of the Law on International Protection.

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| Institution responsible:  | Government Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants |
| Contractor: | NGO selected through a public tender  |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**3.3 Identifying cases of trafficking in human beings in procedures dealing with cases of sexual violence and gender-based violence**

In February 2020, the Government Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, the Police, the Ministry of Justice, eleven cooperating NGOs and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) signed the updated Standard Operating Procedures for the Prevention of and Response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence with respect to persons who are dealt with under the provisions of the International Protection Act. The document aims to ensure the safety of persons who have experienced sexual and gender-based violence, to prevent the escalation of violence, to reduce and eliminate the consequences of violence, and to empower them. Based on the agreement, a group of experts meets regularly to discuss sexual violence and gender-based violence. As the programme targets a very large population of potential victims of such violence, the likelihood of identifying victims of trafficking is very high.

Objective: To address and assist potential victims in a holistic way and achieve a cohesive response between the different procedures and assistance providers.

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| Institution responsible:  | Government Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants |
| Contractor: | Government Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants and other organisations qualified for this type of assistance |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**3.4 Reintegration of victims of trafficking in human beings**

The Ministry of the Interior, specifically the Police, will provide funding for the implementation of the project "(Re)Integration of victims of trafficking in human beings" in the Republic of Slovenia for the 2023-2027 period in the framework of the new multi-year financial perspective. The implementation and coordination of the project will be entrusted to the Ministry of the Interior (Anti-Trafficking Service).

The target groups of the project are:

* the citizens of the Republic of Slovenia who have been processed as victims of trafficking in human beings abroad;
* the nationals of the EU Member States and third-country nationals who have been subject to pre-trial or criminal proceedings in Slovenia as victims of trafficking in Slovenia and who legally reside in Slovenia.

Objective: To implement measures and activities to integrate trafficking in human beings victims into the education system and the labour market, to help them develop and improve their professional skills and qualifications, and to ensure adequate care or placement with a family or appropriate care institutions (applicable to child victims). This will also prevent re-victimisation of trafficked persons.

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| Institution responsible:  | Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior |
| Contractor: | NGO or humanitarian organisation, selected at a public tender |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**3. 5 Awareness-raising, information and counselling for potential and actual victims of trafficking in human beings**

The Ministry of Health will fund the Detection Room project from 2023 to 2025 on the basis of a call for proposals for the co-financing of programmes for counselling, activities and care for vulnerable and disadvantaged persons to be implemented by humanitarian organisations until 2025. The project will focus on awareness-raising, information and counselling for potential and actual victims of trafficking in human beings and will be implemented through fieldwork higher-risk sectors (agriculture, tourism, construction, etc.) and within existing programmes for the care of victims of trafficking in human beings. The programme provider will ensure the referral of the victims to the appropriate institutions and support them in obtaining health care and improving their psycho-physical condition. In addition, the project will raise awareness among health students and provide in-house training for health professionals.

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| Institution responsible:  | Ministry of Health |
| Contractor: | An NGO or a humanitarian organisation selected at a public tender |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

### 4 Participation in regional and international organisations for the prevention of and fight against trafficking in human beings

**4. 1 Participation in the informal EU Network of National Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanisms (NREM) on Trafficking in Human Beings**

Based on the Council Decision (8723/09) of 4 June 2009 on establishing an informal EU Network of National Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanisms on Trafficking in Human Beings, the representatives of EU Member States meet annually, mostly in Brussels, under the auspices of the presiding country and the European Commission. Participation in these meetings is essential for monitoring and implementation of the EU’s common policies in the fight against trafficking in human beings.

Objective: The National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator attends the NREM meetings and informs the IWG of the adopted conclusions.

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| Institution responsible: | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator |
| Participating parties: | Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior |
| Deadline:  | Twice per year in 2023 and 2024 |

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**4.2 Meetings of the informal network of National Anti-Trafficking Coordinators (NATC) of South-East Europe**

Slovenia places the fight against trafficking in human beings at the forefront of international cooperation, at the operational and strategic level, and pays special attention to South Eastern Europe. Of particular importance is the participation in the informal Network of National Anti-Trafficking Coordinators for South-Eastern Europe (hereafter: NATC SEE), which was established on the initiative of Slovenia at the Ministerial Conference of the Brdo Process in 2010.

In the next two years, we plan to continue our active cooperation within this network and to organise a meeting in Slovenia.

Objective 1: To actively participate in the meetings of the NATC SEE network by exchanging information, good practices and experiences, and to implement activities based on the adopted strategy document (2020-2024).

Objective 2: To organise the NATC SEE meeting in Slovenia, probably in 2024. The discussion will be guided and themed on the basis of the most prominent issues identified in the region. The budget for the event is estimated at around EUR 10,000, including accommodation and travel expenses for one representative per country.

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| Institution responsible: | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator |
| Participating parties: | Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior |
| Deadline:  | Once a year in 2023 and 2024 |

**4.3 Cooperation within the scope of the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe**

In July 2009, Slovenia ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, i.e. GRETA, which also provides for the mechanism for monitoring of the implementation of the provisions of the Convention. In 2021 and 2022, Slovenia will be the subject to the third round of GRETA assessments, which requires good cooperation with the Executive Secretary and other representatives of the Convention Secretariat.

In addition, cooperation on combating trafficking in human beings has been established with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), where the Office of the Special Representative and Anti-Trafficking Coordinator has been working since 2003 to assist participating countries in developing and implementing effective anti-trafficking policies.

Both the Council of Europe and the OSCE convene regular meetings of national anti-trafficking coordinators, at which a representative of the Republic of Slovenia is expected to participate.

Objective: To actively participate in the meetings of National Anti-Trafficking Coordinators within the scope of the Council of Europe and OSCE.

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| Institution responsible: | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator |
| Participating parties: | Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior |
| Deadline:  | Continued activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**4.4 International operational cooperation of the Slovenian law enforcement authorities**

International cooperation is operational and mainly reflects cooperation between individual authorities (the Police and State Prosecutor’s Office) in detecting and prosecuting trafficking offences. These tasks are defined in the EU plan on best practices, standards and procedures for combating and preventing trafficking in human beings.

The EU Strategy on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2025) recommends that Member States: make full use of the support of relevant EU agencies (such as Europol, Eurojust, Cepol and Frontex) and strengthen the capacity building of their operational actors, including the identification of potential victims of trafficking in human beings; make full use of existing operational cooperation instruments, such as joint investigation teams, with the support of Europol, and seek operational cooperation in the framework of the European Multidisciplinary Platform against Threats of Crime (EMPACT); consistently exchange information on investigations of trafficking in human beings, with the support of Europol.

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Objective: To strengthen the exchange of information and intelligence on trafficking in human beings and related crimes and criminal networks, and facilitate cross-border and international operational and judicial cooperation in countries affected by trafficking in human beings, in particular in the Western Balkans, neighbouring countries, Africa, the Middle East and South-East Asia, including by supporting EU agencies such as Interpol, Europol and Eurojust.

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| Institution responsible: | Ministry of the Interior – the Police |
| Participating parties: | Specialised State Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia |
| Deadline:  | Continued activities in 2023 and 2024 |

### 5 Improving systemic solutions and proposing legislative changes

As the prevention of and the fight against trafficking in human beings is constantly evolving and changing, it is important to respond appropriately to these developments. One of the basic ways to do this is to amend or supplement the legislation regulating trafficking in human beings, and to seek for more effective systemic solutions.

**5.1 Introduction of the function of the national rapporteur on trafficking in human beings**

In 2002, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia appointed the National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator who heads the IWG and coordinates the work of competent national authorities, non-governmental and humanitarian organisations in the field of prevention and combating trafficking in human beings.

At the state level, the work of the IWG is indirectly monitored through annual reports and action plans presented to the Commission for Petitions, Human Rights and Equal Opportunities of the National Assembly. In order to allow for an objective assessment of the situation and the state’s activities in the fight against trafficking in human beings, it would be useful to introduce a national rapporteur function, which would independently analyse information and draft reports including the proposals for improvement.

Already in the course of the second assessment cycle, the GRETA Group called upon the Slovenian authorities to introduce the independent national rapporteur or the possibility of appointing a separate organisational unit or another independent mechanism to monitor the activities of member states in combating trafficking in human beings (paragraph 23). The GRETA Group also suggests the introduction of an independent evaluation of the implementation of the national action plan as a tool to assess the impact of activities and to plan of future policies and actions to combat trafficking in human beings (para. 27). The same recommendations were underlined by GRETA in its third assessment cycle.

Trafficking in human beings is a serious violation of fundamental human rights and therefore the most appropriate place for this function is in the institution of the Human Rights Ombudsman, who is independent of other national authorities and can provide objective findings on the current situation in this area.

Objective: To examine the possibility of establishing an independent mechanism for monitoring activities implemented by national authorities in preventing and combatting trafficking in human beings within the framework of the Human Rights Ombudsman institution. The main task of the National Rapporteur will be to prepare independent reports on the country’s actions in this area and to propose improvements, especially from the perspective of the situation of victims of trafficking in human beings and the protection of their rights. The content would be part of an amendment to the Human Rights Ombudsman Act, and the system (model) of the independent mechanism will be developed in dialogue between the IWG, the Ministry of Justice and the Ombudsman.

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| Institution responsible: | Ministry of Justice |
| Participating parties: | Ombudsman, Inter-ministerial Working Group for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings |
| Deadline:  | Inter-ministerial and expert coordination of the draft amendment to the Ombudsman Act to start in early 2023. |

**5.2 Ensuring comprehensive and sustainable assistance to children who have experienced trafficking in human beings**

Addressing the issue of shelter for children is one of the commitments of the preliminary action plan. Assistance to child victims of trafficking is currently provided through crisis and safe accommodation programmes intended for victims of trafficking in human beings. While the programmes oblige providers to assist and protect child victims of trafficking, they do not define a clear content or form of assistance that would ensure that the best interests of the child are taken into account.

The provision of appropriate accommodation and assistance programmes for children identified as victims of trafficking in human beings is particularly important because the history of the cases handled in Slovenia shows that such child victims are mainly foreign nationals and that they need to be provided with comprehensive care, which must be in their best interests. Furthermore, the care of an identified child victim of trafficking requires the involvement of the competent social work centre, the provision of a legal representative for the child (court) and the subsequent appointment of a guardian (social work centre). Such accommodation itself requires the presence of professional staff 24 hours a day, as well as appropriate programmes for the psychological and social recovery of victims and other forms of assistance.

In its recommendations of the second assessment cycle, GRETA urged the Slovenian authorities to provide, beyond the recovery and reflection period, specialised support and services that are adapted to the needs of child victims of trafficking, including appropriate accommodation, access to education and vocational training, and long-term monitoring of their reintegration (para. 116). The same recommendations were underlined by GRETA in the third assessment cycle. In the light of the above, the IWG will endeavour to find an appropriate solution that provides specialised support to children who have been trafficked, including during the period of recovery and reflection.

Objective: Improvements need to be sought in terms of comprehensive and sustainable assistance and support for trafficked children, including the establishment of specialised accommodation for them.

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| Institution responsible:  | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator |
| Participating parties: | Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Ministry of the Interior (Anti-Trafficking service), NGOs and humanitarian organisations qualified to provide assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings, other representatives of the IWG. |
| Deadline:  | The second half of 2023. |

**5. 3 Examination of the adequacy of the definition and understanding of forced labour and labour exploitation**

In the Republic of Slovenia, the forms of labour exploitation related to trafficking in human beings are manifested in practice by illegal employment, violation of workers' fundamental rights, vulnerability of victims and abuse of legislative institutions. In order to prove the crime of trafficking in human beings under Article 113 of the Criminal Code, it is necessary to identify the element of forced labour, irrespective of the perceived forms of labour exploitation, which in practice is a difficult circumstance to prove. ILO Convention No 29 (Official Gazette of the RS, No 54/92 of 13 November 1992) defines forced or compulsory labour as any work or service which requires a person to perform work which he or she has not undertaken voluntarily, on pain of any penalty. In practice, investigations into alleged trafficking in human beings are often reclassified as other formally prosecutable offences, most often the offence of violating the fundamental rights of workers under Article 196 of the Criminal Code.

The IWG will therefore seek to carry out an expert analysis examining the legislative framework for forced labour in the context of trafficking in human beings in the EU Member States. On the basis of the expert analysis, the IWG will take appropriate action, including, if necessary, proposals to amend criminal and other sectoral legislation.

Objective: To analyse foreign legislation in the field of forced labour and labour exploitation in relation to the offence of trafficking in human beings and, if necessary, to propose amendments to legislation in this area.

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| Institution responsible:  | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator |
| Participating parties: | Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Ministry of the Interior (ATS), NGOs and humanitarian organisations qualified to provide assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings, other representatives of the IWG. |
| Deadline:  | The first half of 2024. |

**5.4 Review of case law and re-evaluation of criminal law provisions related to trafficking in human beings**

The divergent case law on trafficking in human beings issued by four district and higher courts in Slovenia has highlighted the need for a comprehensive and detailed professional analysis of criminal law provisions and judicial practice on trafficking in human beings.

In its recommendations, the GRETA Group stated that the Slovenian authorities should carry out a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of criminal law provisions on trafficking in human beings and related offences. The content and application of the relevant provisions should therefore be adjusted in order to remedy the shortcomings.

This action is a continuation of the previous Action Plan, as it was agreed in 2022 that the Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security would carry out an analysis of existing criminal law provisions and case law on trafficking offences.

Objective: To analyse all cases of trafficking in human beings that have been closed with a final decision in the last ten years. The analysis will provide an objective assessment of the current situation and recommendations for more effective prosecution of such crimes, including proposals for possible legislative changes.

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| Institution responsible:  | Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security  |
| Participating parties: | Ministry of Justice, justice representatives, Specialised State Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Slovenia, experts in the field of trafficking against human beings (IWG)  |
| Deadline:  | Second half of 2023 |

**5.5 Amendment to Article 5 of the Compensation to Victims of Crime Act**

Compensation to victims of trafficking is an important factor both in terms of ensuring victims’ rights and in terms of possible restoration of normal circumstances and conditions for their social rehabilitation. Article 5 of the Compensation to Victims of Crime Act provides for this, but only for the citizens of the Republic of Slovenia and the European Union.

It also follows from the second cycle of GRETA recommendations that the Slovenian authorities should adopt measures to facilitate and guarantee access to compensation for victims of trafficking and include all victims of trafficking within the scope of the Compensation to Victims of Crime Act, irrespective of their nationality. The same recommendations were underlined by GRETA in the third assessment cycle.

Objective: The Compensation to Victims of Crime Act should remove the reference to nationality in cases involving victims of violence and violation of sexual integrity.

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| Institution responsible:  | Ministry of Justice |
| Participating parties: | Specialised State Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Supreme State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia, National Attorney General Office |
| Deadline:  | The second half of 2023. |

**5.6 Update of the Manual on the Identification, Assistance and Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings**

On 5 May 2016, the Slovenian Government adopted the Manual on the Identification, Assistance and Protection of Victims of Trafficking (Decision of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 02402-2/2016/5). Over the years, certain shortcomings have become apparent, so the document should also be expanded to cover health care protection for victims of trafficking, to establish the procedure for returning victims to their countries of origin, and to establish the procedure for treating minors who are victims of trafficking. A special chapter will also be devoted to the principle of impunity for victims of trafficking in human beings for their participation in illegal activities if they have been forced to do so, as set out in Article 26 of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

This action has been carried over from the previous Action Plan, as the updating of the Manual is linked to the provisional adoption of some measures and systemic solutions, in particular in relation to the care of children and the protection of victims of trafficking.

Objective: To update the Manual on the Identification, Assistance and Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings.

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| Institution responsible:  | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator |
| Participating parties:  | Anti-Trafficking Service of Ministry of the Interior, experts engaged in combating trafficking in human beings (IWG) |
| Deadline:  | The second half of 2023. |

**5.7 Issuing an opinion with regard to prostitution in Slovenia**

The European Parliament Resolution of 26 February 2014 on sexual exploitation and prostitution and its impact on gender equality[[3]](#footnote-3) stresses that there are several links between prostitution and trafficking, and recognises that prostitution — both globally and in Europe — feeds the trafficking of vulnerable women and underage girls. According to the European Commission data, victims are mostly trafficked for sexual exploitation (62%), while women and under-age females represent 96% of identified and presumed victims. The document recommends that Member States introduce various methods of regulating this issue and calls on them to adopt the so-called Nordic model, which criminalises the purchase of sexual services and prohibits all forms of enticement and abuse of women for prostitution, except for the sale of sexual services.

In Slovenia, prostitution has been decriminalised since 2003 when the Act on Minor Offences against Public Order abolished the ban on prostitution. Pursuant to the Protection of Public Order Act, only offering sexual services in public places in an intrusive manner, thereby disturbing people and causing distress or outrage among people, remains punishable by law (paragraph three of Article 7 of ZJRM-1).

From a criminal law point of view, the criminal offence of prostitution is defined in Article 175 of the Criminal Code, i.e., taking part in the prostitution of another person to engage in prostitution by force, threat or deception. The Criminal Code protects minors by criminalising both the demand for their prostitution and their exploitation.

Statistical data show that a vast majority of identified victims in Slovenia are exploited for prostitution and other forms of sexual abuse. Prostituted persons are very vulnerable in terms of their economic, social and emotional situation, and in most police procedures they are not identified as victims of trafficking in human beings and therefore rarely participate in pre-trial and criminal proceedings. This makes it very difficult for law enforcement authorities to detect, investigate and prove such crimes, and demonstrates the need for more effective regulation of this area at the national level.

Objective: Organisation of an expert panel on prostitution in Slovenia

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| Institution responsible:  | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator  |
| Participating parties:  | Ministry of the Interior (ATS), experts and interested public |
| Deadline:  | The second half of 2024. |

**5. 8 Examination of GRETA's recommendations in the context of the third round of assessment and preparation of proposals for their implementation**

The IWG will carefully examine the GRETA report on the third round of assessment and the recommendations requiring immediate action, and will make proposals for their implementation.

In line with GRETA's recommendations, the Slovenian authorities should, inter alia:

* investigate the reasons for the lack of compensation claims and payments to victims of trafficking in human beings;
* make compensation available to victims of trafficking in human beings by ensuring that compensation awarded in criminal proceedings is paid in advance by the State and that the State assumes responsibility for recovering the amount from the perpetrator;
* promote the specialisation of judges in dealing with trafficking offences;
* extend the application of procedural safeguards currently aimed at children under the age of 15 to cover all child victims and witnesses of trafficking up to the age of 18, taking into account the best interests of the child
* adopt legislation that integrates the prevention of trafficking in human beings and labour exploitation into public procurement policies and promotes transparency in supply chains to enable monitoring of the performance of companies in preventing trafficking in human beings and labour exploitation;
* review the remuneration system for lawyers.

Objective: The inter-ministerial working group will examine the main GRETA recommendations from the third evaluation round and make proposals for their implementation.

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| Institution responsible:  | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator  |
| Participating parties: | Anti-trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior, members and external members of IWG |
| Deadline:  | The second half of 2023. |

### 6 Coordination and support activities

The Anti-Trafficking Service provides support to the National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator and the IWG. It monitors the work of all national authorities and other organisations involved in the fight against trafficking in human beings, maintains common statistics in this area and ensures the printing of specialist and information materials for the media, the general public and professionals.

**6.1 Follow-up cross-sectoral cooperation and cooperation with the civil society within the framework of the IWG and multi-disciplinary groups for handling cases of accommodation of trafficked victims**

On 18 December 2003, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia established the IWG, which is composed of representatives of line ministries, constituent bodies and government agencies, as well as external members from NGOs, trade unions, the Specialised State Prosecutor's Office and the National Assembly. The IWG is headed by a national coordinator who convenes regular meetings of the working group to coordinate the activities of individual institutions and to formulate positions, proposals and initiatives to strengthen the effectiveness of policies to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings. In addition, the IWG will implement the activities set out in the Action Plan on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the period 2023-2024 and will prepare an annual report on its work for each current year, which will be submitted to the Government of the Republic of Slovenia.

The National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator appoints a multidisciplinary team to monitor the implementation of the programme, to take decisions on the implementation of additional measures to ensure the victim's safety, to take decisions on the modification of the individual assistance programme, and to take decisions on the loss of the victim's entitlement to the programme each time a victim is admitted in the Care for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings - Safe Space programme, and, if necessary, during the stay in the crisis accommodation.

Objective 1: Regular meetings of the IWG, implementation of the measures set out in the Action Plan on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and preparation of annual reports on the work of the IWG.

Objective 2: Effective functioning of multidisciplinary teams dealing with cases of accommodation/sheltering of trafficked persons. The approach of all actors must focus on the victim and his/her needs as a priority.

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| Institution responsible:  | National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator  |
| Participating parties: | Anti-trafficking Service of the Ministry of the Interior, members and external members of IWG |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**6.2 Ensuring coherence of the statistical incidence of forms of trafficking in human beings in the Republic of Slovenia**

International documents and EU documents determine monitoring and assessing policies on combating trafficking in human beings. In particular, Directive 2011/36/EU requires a report to be made to the European Commission every two years on the indicators and trends in trafficking in human beings in each Member State as well as the measures taken to reduce the demand. A prerequisite for this is the accurate and harmonised collection of statistics by law enforcement authorities and in other sectors, including NGOs involved in the identification of victims of trafficking.

Objective: To ensure that the collection of statistical information is coordinated both between law enforcement authorities and in other sectors, including by NGOs involved in the identification of victims of trafficking. Data on the victims will be disaggregated by gender, age, type of exploitation, country of origin and/or destination. Statistical data shall also be collected on criminal proceedings initiated against the perpetrators of trafficking in human beings offences, including proposals for prosecution and convictions, should also be gathered. The Supreme State Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Slovenia, shall be included in the reporting, as it has an overview of all matters related to trafficking in human beings and determines the scope and method of reporting with regard to the stage of proceedings.

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| Institution responsible:  | Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior |
| Participating parties: | Police, Supreme State Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Slovenia, NGOs, other line ministries as appropriate |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**6.3 Monitoring of individual cases of prosecution of trafficking offences**

In the past, the investigation and prosecution of trafficking in human beings was characterised by a lack of information on the status of specific proceedings, due to the length and time lag of individual cases. In 2018, we introduced the obligation to provide the National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator with written information on all ongoing proceedings of the Specialised State Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Slovenia every six months. This practice has proved to be very useful and should be continued in the future.

Objective: Regular monitoring of individual cases of trafficking in human beings offences leading to final convictions. It is also necessary to further ensure the transparency of THB cases, including the merits used to achieve a certain outcome of the prosecution, and to regularly (annually) inform the National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator thereof. The Supreme State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia is also involved in reporting.

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| Institution responsible:  | Specialised State Prosecutor’s Office  |
| Participating parties:  | Office of the State Prosecutor General of the Republic of Slovenia; Ministry of the Interior – the Police; Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, Labour Inspectorate, NGOs  |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024 |

**6.4 Design and production of printed materials**

Annual reports and biennial action plans are professional documents, the preparation of which is the basic task of the interdepartmental working group defined in the government decision. These materials are also suitable for informing the media and thus the general public. In addition, the IWG regularly produces procedural materials for the training and work of professionals (such as the Manual on the Identification, Assistance and Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings), as well as individual manuals and brochures to raise the awareness among target groups (such as the Manual on the Identification of Hidden Forced Labour).

In addition to online publication, it is desirable to publish a small number of printed copies of THB content.

Objective: An appropriate number of copies of the annual reports, the 2023-2024 Action Plan and infographics to be printed for press conferences and other presentations; procedural manuals and other technical materials to be printed for training and practical use. The planned budget is approximately EUR 1,000 per year.

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| Institution responsible:  | Anti-Trafficking Service (ATS) of the Ministry of the Interior |
| Source of funding: | Ministry of the Interior |
| Deadline:  | Continuous activities in 2023 and 2024  |

**ANNEX**

**Review of project funding by individual ministries for 2023 and 2024**

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| **Budget user** | **Activity** | **Budget heading** | **2023** | **2024** | **Total** |
| **Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs** | Provision of care to victims - crisis accommodation | 170084 Assistance to victims - safe accommodation | 45,000.00 € | 45,000.00 € | **90,000.00 €** |
| **Ministry of the Interior** | Provision of care to victims - safe accommodation | Material expenses | 40,000.00 € | 40,000.00 € | **80,000.00 €** |
| Awareness-raising  | 3107 Salaries | 30,000.00 € | 30,000.00 € | **60,000.00 €** |
| Awareness-raising - project  | Material expenses | 5,000.00 € | 5,000.00 € | **10,000.00 €** |
| Printed materials  | Material expenses | 1,000.00 € | 1,000.00 € | **2,000.00 €** |
| Organisation of the meeting of network NATC Southeast Europe | Material expenses | / | 10,000.00 € | **10,000.00 €** |
| Organisation of an expert meeting | Material expenses | 3,000.00 € | 3,000.00 € | **6,000.00 €** |
| Reintegration of victims of trafficking in human beings | 140005 ISF – EU participation 75 % | 37,500.00 € | 37,500.00 € | **75,000 €** |
| 140005 ISF – own participation 25 % | 12,500.00 € | 12,500.00 € | **25,000 €** |
| **Government Communication Office** | Awareness Raising – 18 October | 1322 Direct Government communication with the public and campaigns | 5,000.00 € | / | **5,000.00 €** |
| **Government Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants** | PATS programme | 180011 AMIF – SI participation (25 %) | 13,125.00 € | 13,125.00 € | **26,250.00 €** |
| 180010 AMIF – EU participation (75 %) | 39,375.00 € | 39,375.00 € | **78,750.00 €** |
| **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND SPORT** | Awareness-raising | 716010Innovative projects | 2,500.00 € | 2,500.00 € | **5,000.00 €** |
| **Ministry of Health**  | Aid programmes | 221092 – Support programmes for vulnerable groups | 24,000.00 € | 24,000.00 € | **48,000.00 €** |
| **Total** |  |  | **258,000 €** | **263,000 €** | **521,000 €** |

1. Including non-governmental and humanitarian organisations that deal with human trafficking. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.gov.si/assets/vladne-sluzbe/UKOM/Boj-proti-trgovini-z-ljudmi/Dokumenti/Prirocnik-o-identifikaciji-pomoci-in-zasciti-zrtev-trgovine-z-ljudmi.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2014-0162+0+DOC+XML+V0//SL [↑](#footnote-ref-3)