

**Report of the Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings** **for 2018**

# Ljubljana, April 2019

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**Introduction**

Human trafficking is a complex phenomenon with many forms which knows no boundaries. It is affected by social, economic, cultural and also other factors specific according to individual types of trafficking and the countries in which they appear. Recognition and discussion of this phenomenon thus require a lot of expert knowledge and understanding. Human trafficking usually involves internationally organised criminal activity of a large number of people which takes place over an extended period of time thus making the discovery and proving of these criminal offences difficult, lengthy and complicated. This multi-layered problem requires comprehensive, effective and harmonised action at the national level and in nearby regions and the broader international environment.

A system has been established at the national level which according to past experience provides efficient measures relating to the prevention of, and fight against, human trafficking. With the decision of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia no. 240-05/2003 of 18 December 2003 and decision no. 01201-7/2012/4 of 5 July 2012, the Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (hereinafter: IWG THB or the Inter-Ministerial Working Group) was established which steers and harmonises the activities of individual institutions, and enables inter-ministerial cooperation, harmonisation and a multidisciplinary approach to prevention of human trafficking.

In 2018, the IWG THB managed by the national anti-trafficking coordinator (hereinafter: national coordinator) implemented the tasks within the framework of its competence and activities laid down in the Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the 2017–2018 Period. During the reporting period, the national coordinator convened three sessions of this group, i.e. on 4 April, 11 July and 6 December 2018. At the sessions, the IWG THB discussed topical issues relating to the fight against human trafficking and adopted suitable measures for more effective implementation of policies in this field.

Based on the activities implemented, the IWG THB drafted the report on the work in 2018, which is divided into five chapters. The first chapter describes the changes in the field of legislation and institutional arrangements and the activities relating to the adopted national and international obligations. The second chapter discusses the activities for preventing human trafficking which include various forms of awareness raising of the broader public and high-risk groups of potential trafficking victims, raising awareness of consumers and users of services performed by victims of human trafficking, and the training of the expert public whose work is related to the relevant topic. The chapter on detection, investigation and prosecution of criminal offences covers the report on the work of the police and prosecutor’s offices which play a crucial role in this field. Furthermore, the activities of the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia and the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia are also described since the content of their work is intertwined and linked in the broader context with the issue of labour exploitation, undeclared employment and work, and exploitation of migrant workers. The fourth chapter includes information on the assistance to victims of human trafficking and their care provided by non-governmental and humanitarian organisations based on calls for programmes and co-financed by the state. International activities of the IWG THB in the reporting year and partnerships at the national level are described in the final chapter.

# Legislation and policies

## Amendments to legislation

On 25 October 2018, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia received an initiative to sign the Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs (hereinafter: Convention) adopted in Santiago de Compostela on 25 March 2015. The Convention was signed on the behalf of the Republic of Slovenia by Eva Tomič, Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to the Council of Europe, on 6 December 2018. The purpose of the Convention is to prevent and combat trafficking in human organs with criminalisation of certain deeds, protect the rights of victims of criminal offences defined in accordance with the Convention and enable cooperation at the national and international levels when taking action against trafficking in human organs. Although transplantation practice in Slovenia is transparent and no poor or illegal practices have been detected so far, it is necessary to draft comprehensive legislation to prevent trafficking in human organs and enable cooperation with other countries when this is necessary.

On 7 November 2018, the Protocol on the Implementation of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Republic of Serbia on the Employment of Citizens of the Republic of Serbia in the Republic of Slovenia was signed. The agreement on employing migrant workers from Serbia determines the conditions and the scope of employing Serbian citizens in Slovenia, the conditions and procedures for the issue of work permits, and the obligations of employers and employees.

## Institutional framework

As per the long-standing recommendations of the GRETA supervisory mechanism and certain other international supervisory mechanisms, the Anti-Trafficking Service was established on 26 November 2018 under the auspices of the Ministry of the Interior. The relevant service provides expert support to the national coordinator combating human trafficking and when drafting proposals to enhance the efficiency of policies and measures to fight against trafficking in human beings, periodical reports for the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, action plans and other strategic documents in this field and monitors the implementation of the measures planned. The service ensures inter-ministerial cooperation and harmonisation of activities relating to the prevention of human trafficking and fight against it at the level of the entire country. It cooperates with EU institutions and international organisations combating trafficking in human beings and ensures the realisation of requests and recommendations of various relevant international supervisory mechanisms.

## Implementation of activities in accordance with adopted national and international obligations

In the reporting year, the national coordinator drafted the report on the work of the IWG THB for 2017, which was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia on 6 June 2018. The Commission for Petitions, Human Rights and Equal Opportunities of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia became acquainted with the report at its 2nd regular session on 10 October 2018.

At the end of 2018, the IWG THB drafted a new Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the 2019–2020 Period (hereinafter: action plan) confirmed by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia on 10 January 2019. Based on the action plan, certain projects already underway will continue and certain activities upgrading the current work will be implemented.

At its 22nd session in Strasbourg on 9 February 2018, the Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings adopted Recommendations CP(2018)7 on the implementation of the Convention by the Republic of Slovenia within the framework of the second assessment cycle. The recommendations summarise the progress achieved following the first report, the problems requiring immediate action and other fields where further measures are needed. The Committee of the Parties also asked the Slovenian Government to submit information on the measures adopted and the implementation of recommendations in fields requiring immediate action within a year. The implementation of certain key recommendations of the GRETA Group of Experts is anticipated within the realisation of the action plan.

In the beginning of the year, the national coordinator collected extensive statistical data for 2015 and 2016 which the European Commission requested on the grounds of Articles 19 and 20 of the Directive on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims. The national coordinator also drafted a contribution regarding human trafficking for the report on migration and asylum prepared annually by the European Migration Network.

In the beginning of 2018, the national coordinator also prepared a contribution for the trafficking in persons report published annually by the United States Department of State. In this regard, additional interviews were conducted with the representatives of the US Embassy in the Republic of Slovenia. The annual report was published in June 2018 and the Republic of Slovenia was again placed in the group of countries which fully meet the minimum standards in combating human trafficking (so-called Tier 1).

Within the framework of other international mechanisms of Slovenia’s reporting about trafficking in human beings, the national coordinator prepared contributions in 2018 on the basis of several requests from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime *(*UNODC*),* the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children.

# Prevention

Preventive activities are one of the fundamental fields in comprehensive discussion of trafficking in human beings, which incorporate various forms of raising the awareness of the broader lay public and high-risk groups of potential victims of trafficking. Furthermore, awareness raising of consumers and users of services provided by victims of human trafficking is also taking place within preventive activities in order to reduce the demand for services of victims of labour exploitation and forced labour. The last of the four sections of preventive activities includes the training of experts, particularly public employees who deal with the issue of trafficking in human beings in their work.

## Raising awareness among the wider public

### 18 October – EU Anti-Trafficking Day

On the occasion of the EU Anti-Trafficking Day, a roundtable on labour exploitation and forced labour took place in cooperation with the non-governmental organisation DrogArt. The roundtable was organised during the opening of the escape room on the exploitation of workers and was intended for the media. Tjaša Škreblin of the Ministry of the Interior and the representative of the Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Katjuša Popović, President of the Ključ Society, Goran Lukić, representative of Delavska svetovalnica (Counselling Office for Workers) and Gregor Inkret of Mladi Plus Trade Union participated in the roundtable which was led by the head of the project, Tanja Rudolf Čenčič. The event was attended by seven journalists.

The Government Communication Office updated the infographics with statistical data on trafficking in human beings in Slovenia in the 2010–2017 period and submitted it together with a press release to the media and published it on the website and social media. The content of the release referred to forced labour and labour exploitation and it also included information on projects "Za-govor" (Defence/For Speech) and "Escape Room – Exploitation of Workers" (more in chapters 2.2.2 and 2.3).

The press release and infographics were also communicated through governmental Facebook and Twitter profiles.

On the occasion of the EU Anti-Trafficking Day, the Ključ Society organised a free concert in Kino Šiška on 19 October 2018.

Similarly as in 2017, Caritas Slovenia cooperated with Ljubljanski potniški promet d.o.o. so that preventive content on the issue of human trafficking was being shown on digital displays of city buses on 18 October. The content was shown on 135 buses or 380 digital displays every 15 minutes. Some 90 per cent of passengers noticed it.

### Website

In 2018, the Government Communication Office further updated the content on the website in Slovenian (http://www.vlada.si/boj\_proti\_trgovini\_z\_ljudmi/) and English (http://www.vlada.si/en/projects/combating\_trafficking\_in\_human\_beings/combating\_trafficking\_in\_human

\_beings/).

The website contains content on trafficking in human beings, information on the activities of the IWG THB and fundamental documents drafted by the Group, international documents regarding this field, and research and studies.

The website also enables anonymous e-reporting and connecting with NGOs providing assistance to victims. Key activities of detection, investigation and prosecution of criminal offences and their prevention are also presented on the website. The topical content is shown on the entry page.

The statistics reveal 6,300 visits and 9,263 views of the Slovenian page in 2018, and 1,214 visits and 1,527 views of the English page.

### Media

According to the data accessible, Slovenian print, electronic and web media published more than one hundred contributions about trafficking in human beings; the majority of them were published in the web media. The media dedicated the most attention to the activities of detecting and prosecuting criminal offences of human trafficking, whereby a lot of attention was paid in particular to the discovery of trafficking in human beings for the purpose of exploiting services for criminal offences (phone scams). The media also reported about the findings of the GRETA Group of Experts, preventive activities of NGOs and trade unions, and the EU Anti-Trafficking Day where they summarised the key messages of the IWG THB.

NGOs also appeared in the media – independently or with joint announcements – regarding human trafficking.

The Ključ Society participated independently in seventeen media contributions, and it contributed to raising the awareness of the broader lay public by managing the following communication channels:

* www.drustvo-kljuc.si; 3,316 users and 15,549 visits to the website,
* www.telesnica.si;1,535 users and 1,792 visits to the website,
* https://www.facebook.com/drustvo.kljuc/ has 2,856 likes and 2,800 followers,

– #drustvokljuc has 376 followers.

Caritas Slovenia was also present in the Slovenian media with numerous contributions and statements:

* as part of International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, Caritas Slovenia published a press release on 23 March 2018 entitled *Sodobno suženjstvo: izguba osebne svobode in dostojanstva. Izkušnja Ivana, ki je v Sloveniji postal žrtev trgovine z ljudmi* (Modern Slavery: Loss of Personal Freedom and Dignity. The Experience of Ivan Who Became a Victim of Trafficking in Human Beings in Slovenia) (https://www.karitas.si/sodobno-suzenjstvo-izguba-osebne-svobode-in-dostojanstva-izkusnja- ivana-ki-je-postal-zrtev-trgovine-z-ljudmi-v-sloveniji/),
* on World Day Against Trafficking in Persons on 30 July 2018, Caritas Slovenia published a press release (available at: https://www.karitas.si/30-julij-svetovni-dan-boja-proti-trgovini-z-ljudmi/),
* on the occasion of the EU Anti-Trafficking Day on 18 October 2018, it published a press release (available at: https://www.karitas.si/18-oktobra-obelezujemo-evropski-dan-boja-proti-trgovini-z- ljudmi/),
* on 16 December 2018, Caritas Slovenia participated in the broadcast *Gradimo odprto družbo* (Building an Open Society) on Radio Ognjišče (interview is available at: https://avdio.ognjisce.si/oddaja/god\_2018\_12\_16\_Trgovina\_z\_ljudmi).

### Other activities

In the framework of raising awareness of the general public, the Ključ Society organised in the reporting year the following activities:

* sports polygon for children under the age 10 in May,
* all-day INFO point in the centre of Ljubljana in June,
* setting up of a stall at the public event, Lupa – festival of non-governmental organisations, in September,
* talk afternoons in the Pritličje bar.

## Raising awareness among high-risk target groups

On the basis of a public call, the Government Communication Office co-financed five projects by non-governmental and humanitarian organisations in the total amount of EUR 25,000 in 2018. The activities were aimed at vulnerable groups (adolescents, potential victims of labour exploitation and forced labour, refugees and migrants, and particularly unaccompanied minors) and the staff who come in contact with these people in their work. An additional EUR 5,000 was provided by the Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for National Minorities for raising the awareness of adolescents living in the Roma communities. Substantive awareness raising focused on the methods of recruiting, exposure to risk and appropriate ways of taking action and self-protective behaviour.

Non-governmental organisations carried out 235 awareness-raising events attended by almost 3,800 participants. They organised training of volunteers, over 1,200 informative events and consulting sessions with victims of labour exploitation and forced labour, and provided printed material and dissemination of information material.

Based on the public call for co-financing programmes of assistance, counselling and care for persons with no compulsory health insurance in 2017 and 2018, the Ministry of Health earmarked EUR 160,000 for the projects of non-governmental organisations. Within the framework of these groups, the selected organisations also helped the victims of trafficking in human beings.

###  Raising awareness among adolescents

* **Project *Vijolica – kako se izogniti pastem trgovine z ljudmi?* (Violet – How to avoid the traps of trafficking in human beings?)**

The project was aimed at raising awareness of primary school pupils in the last three grades. It was implemented by the Ključ Society – Centre for the Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings, which held 59 workshops in primary schools across Slovenia (of which four were two-hour workshops) attended by 1,149 children, and three preventive workshops in district youth centres in Ljubljana attended by 12 children. About one third of the workshops were implemented in the areas where the Roma community lives. The workshops took place in Ljubljana, Murska Sobota, Kočevje, Maribor, Novo mesto, Litija, Vitanje, Dragomelj and Brezovica.

1. On 27 May 2018, the Ključ Society organised a polygon of non-violence in Zalog, which was attended by 50 children and adolescents in cooperation with NGOs which are members of the Prava zveza. The pupils of Spodnja Šiška Primary School were visited by the author of the youth novel, *Loverboy*, on the reading night on 9 November 2018, who among other things answered many of their questions. A day later, the author attended workshops at Brezovica Primary School, where pupils read *Loverboy* for their book reports.

A total of 1,228 adolescents across Slovenia were thus addressed.

### Project *Telesnica – kako prepoznati trgovanje z ljudmi in se mu izogniti* (Telesnica – How to recognise trafficking in human beings and avoid it)

The second project co-financed by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia in 2018 was intended to raise awareness of older adolescents. This project was also implemented by the Ključ Society – Centre for the Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings, which organised nine preventive workshops for 151 adolescents in residential treatment institutions, youth homes and residential groups. Some 75 workshops took place in secondary schools across Slovenia which were attended by 1,886 adolescents. About one third of the workshops were implemented in the areas where members of the Roma community live. Some children in residential treatment institutions had already attended the workshops in the previous year or a year before and their participation was thus active. The providers thus adjusted the workshops somewhat and emphasised the choice of non-violent behaviour and highlighted the traps on the Internet. They also showed a ten-minute film discussing online sexual abuse and online extortion of children. The workshops were extended due to great interest.

Some of the workshops in secondary schools also lasted two 45-minute periods since these enabled longer discussions and more in-depth presentation of concrete examples.

Both projects of the Ključ Society also involved summer socialising at Kodeljevo swimming pool with 25 children from vulnerable groups (Roma children, migrant children). Informal discussions with adolescents focused on the choice of non-violence and various forms of exploitation. The participants also received cards (with basic information on trafficking in human beings and important contacts) and bracelets of the Society with slogan #protitrgovinizljudmi (#againsttraffickinginhumanbeings).

On its Facebook and Instagram profiles, the Society published numerous products (short essays, poems, illustrations, photos, etc.) created by adolescents on the basis of what they heard at workshops.

### Other activities

The representatives of the Ključ Society visited Radio Romic in Murska Sobota and Radio Univox in Kočevje. With the selection of radio stations, they directed preventive action into the environment where more Roma people live. The workshops of the Vijolica and Telesnica projects were presented during both broadcast discussions. They also participated in a radio interview on Radio Slovenija and in the Roma broadcast, So Vakeres? on TV Slovenija.

They spoke about the choice of non-violence and the prevention of trafficking in human beings on 22 June at the info point on Prešeren Square in Ljubljana, and within the Lupa – festival of non-governmental organisations on 13 September. They talked with passers-by, particularly young people, and asked them to take photos with slogans #protitrgovinizljudmi and #semzanenasilje (#againsttraffickinginhumanbeings and #imfornonviolence).

In 2018, the Ključ Society also organised three workshops for unaccompanied minors.

Caritas Slovenia implemented 41 preventive workshops in primary and secondary schools in five Slovenian regions within the contract on co-financing the "Providing Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings – Crisis accommodation" project in 2018, which were attended by 933 children and adolescents. The purpose of the workshops was to raise awareness of children, adolescents, staff working with them and other target groups about the risks and traps of human trafficking.

###  Raising awareness among potential victims of labour exploitation and forced labour

* + - * **"Za-govor" (Defence/For Speech) project**

The project was implemented by Delavska svetovalnica in 2018. The objectives of the project were to enhance awareness and informing, strengthen the role of potential victims of labour exploitation, and recognise and provide immediate assistance to victims.

Delavska svetovalnica attained the objectives by means of concrete direct informing of, and counselling for, potential victims of labour exploitation and victim advocacy, and:

* held 815 informing sessions where users were equipped with information helping them to exercise their rights;
* held 406 in-depth counselling sessions and
* provided comprehensive active support to users relating to the advocacy when eliminating labour exploitation and exercising their rights.

Furthermore, Delavska svetovalnica also issued and distributed leaflets on the rights arising from labour and procedures in the case of violation of rights in three languages (three language versions, a total of 1,500 copies). It published seven regular monthly reports which revealed the number of complaints as per the type of violation to which workers were exposed and the branches where violations occurred most frequently. The project provider also held two press conferences.

The findings of the project revealed that workers need to be urgently informed and counselled on their rights.

### Other activities

Independently from the relevant project, the Ključ Society carried out seven informing sessions on human trafficking in the reporting year among employees in high-risk professions (hospitality, tourism, construction, agriculture, transport) which were attended by 300 people.

###  Raising awareness among refugees and migrants

* + **Project *Boj proti trgovini z ljudmi – širjenje informacij je orožje proti izkoriščanju* (Combating trafficking in human beings – Dissemination of information is a weapon against exploitation) (2018)**

The project was implemented by Slovenian Philanthropy, the Association for Promotion of Voluntary Work, in 2018. It was aimed at raising awareness of the most vulnerable groups of applicants, i.e. persons with granted international protection and persons whose application for international protection has been rejected (hereinafter: refugees and migrants), and the staff and volunteers working with the target population.

The main focus was on individual informing of refugees and migrants for whom seven informative workshops were organised. Furthermore, five workshops for experts (staff of the Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for the Support and Integration of Migrants working in all branches of asylum centres, staff in residence halls where unaccompanied minors live, staff in the integration house, staff in various non-governmental and other organisations and services implementing programmes for refugees and migrants or coming in contact with them) and volunteers were organised.

The provider also printed informative posters (50 copies) and leaflets by means of which it raised awareness of the target public about human trafficking. The flyers (500 copies in Slovenian and 1,200 copies in Arabic, Farsi and English) were available in asylum centres in Logatec and Vič and Kotnik Street in Ljubljana, the integration house in Maribor, hall of residence in Postojna, offices of Slovenian Philanthropy (Ljubljana, Maribor, Velenje and Logatec) and in some other organisations and institutions.

The provider gave information about trafficking and the project through its website, e-news to 1,450 addresses of media, organisations and individuals and at various events (festival of volunteering, event organised on the occasion of World Refugee Day, Festival of Migrant Film, the Lupa – festival of non-governmental organisations, etc.).

### Other activities

The Ključ Society implemented three workshops in 2018 on trafficking in human beings for applicants for international protection or refugees.

###  Preventive action in the field of raising awareness and prevention of human trafficking in the Roma community

The National Programme of Measures for Roma of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Period 2017–2021 (NPUR 2017–2021) encompasses three target-oriented measures in the field of social assistance which respond to the issues or challenges of so-called early and forced marriages or fleeing of minors to harmful environments and the procedures for discussing these cases.

There are three objectives and measures in this field:

1. preparation of guidelines and recommendations for the work of social work centres’ experts in cases of minors fleeing to harmful environments;
2. activities for dealing with the issue of early, agreed and forced marriages (within the scope of the public call for establishing multi-purpose Roma centres);
3. preparation of a protocol of action in proceedings discussing cases of cohabitation involving minors.

The holder of the first two measures is the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and of the third one is the Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for National Minorities in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and other competent institutions.

When implementing the third measure, i.e. the preparation of a protocol of action in proceedings discussing cases of cohabitation involving minors, three inter-ministerial and inter-institutional work meetings were convened where participants exchanged experience, views and approaches relating to the draft of the protocol and discussed the relevant topic. Regarding raising awareness among and educating the staff in judicial bodies about working with the Roma community, activities were determined in this field with the Judicial Training Centre which have taken place between autumn of 2018 and spring of 2019. The Judicial Training Centre included awareness raising about the Roma community in its educational content with the emphasis on forced and early marriages and human trafficking. In 2018, Manuel Vesel, senior police inspector of the General Police Directorate (Police Academy, Centre For Research and Social Skills) held a lecture entitled *Izzivi pri delu z romsko skupnostjo ter njene posebnosti* (Challenges when working with the Roma community and its particularities) which was part of the following educational events:

* labour and social judicial seminar between 19 and 21 September 2018,
* seminar on minor offences between 7 and 9 November 2018,
* seminar on land registry between 26 and 28 November 2018,
* seminar for state attorneys between 28 and 29 November 2018,
* seminar on juvenile crime on 17 December 2018.

Discussions with the representatives of multi-purpose Roma centres operating at seven locations (in seven municipalities) took place about the consequences of adolescents’ running away to harmful environments or to live in cohabitation (so-called early marriages) and the consequences of so-called forced marriages. It was agreed that awareness-rising activities on this topic would become a composite part of the programme of the multi-purpose Roma centres in 2019.

On 8 November 2018, the Office for National Minorities organised a broader consultation session entitled *Skupaj smo uspešnejši: begi mladoletnih oseb v škodljiva okolja (prezgodnje poroke) in prisilne poroke romskih otrok* (We are more successful together: Minors’ running away to harmful environments (early marriages) and forced marriages of Roma children) within the framework of a project of the National Roma Platform,

*Krepitev nacionalnega posvetovalnega procesa v Sloveniji preko nadaljevanja in nadgradnje dela Nacionalne platforme za Rome – SIFOROMA2* (Reinforcing of the national consultation process in Slovenia by continuing and upgrading the work of the National Roma Platform – SIFOROMA2). The objectives of the consultation were: (a) to speak openly about the occurrence of so-called early and forced marriages of Roma girls and boys and listen to the views and experience of all institutions and communities which are in any way involved in the discussion of these phenomena, (b) to define levers for progress, effective interventions, and systemic and preventive operations with multi-disciplinary approach. The event was attended by the representatives of social work centres, NGOs, police, prosecution service, judiciary, competent ministries, the Human Rights Ombudsman, the Advocate of the Principle of Equality and the Roma community. Information on the consultation is available on the website of the Office for National Minorities (<http://www.un.gov.si/si/nacionalna_platforma_za_rome/aktualno/>). The activities relating to the implementation of conclusions of the consultation and inter-ministerial working meetings are underway on this topic. The organisation of further inter-institutional and multi-stakeholder consultations on early and forced marriages is planned in 2019 among other things, which will take place in regions or environments where the issue is most topical (i.e. particularly south-eastern Slovenia and Maribor).

Furthermore, awareness raising about forced and arranged marriages was also included in *Javni razpis za sofinanciranje ozaveščevalnih in izobraževalnih projektov nevladnih in humanitarnih organizacij v letu 2018* (Public call for co-financing awareness-raising and educational projects of non-governmental and humanitarian organisations in 2018) (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia [*Uradni list RS*], No. 75/17) on the basis of cooperation between the Office for National Minorities and the Government Communication Office (more in chapter 2.2.1).

In 2017, the Ministry of Health carried out the public call for co-financing health-care programmes with the emphasis on health of Roma adolescent girls, women and children. The total value of the call for 2017 and 2018 amounted to EUR 110,000, on the basis of which the Ministry of Health co-financed the programmes of assistance, awareness raising, counselling and care for Roma adolescent girls, women and children. The programme included content referring to sex education, care for general and personal hygiene, contraception, breast self-examination, health and social care, and legal protection of adolescent mothers and their children, the role of women in connection with their rights on decision making about birth and rearing of children. Special attention was also dedicated to so-called running away of minor Roma girls to harmful environments.

## Raising awareness among consumers and users of services performed by victims of human trafficking

### Project "Escape Room – Exploitation of Workers"

The project intended to raise awareness of the broader public in order to reduce demand for services performed by victims of labour exploitation and forced labour was implemented by Slovensko združenje za zmanjševanje škodljivih posledic drog DrogArt, socialno podjetje within the project *Iz principa.*

On the occasion of the EU Anti-Trafficking Day in 2018, the provider re-opened a realistic escape room where visitors were able to experience first hand the struggles of exploited workers. As part of the project, the provider upgraded the creative image, organised a roundtable on trafficking in human beings, attracted the attention of the public and the media, and recorded a large number of free media publications. An effective creative solution for the promotion on various channels was established within the project, and the mechanics and equipment of the escape room at a new location were upgraded (four new challenges). The provider also provided printed material and distributed leaflets and posters. All times available for visiting the escape room were booked and the visitors were excited about the concept and the experience.

After each escape, a discussion took place about the issue which was of exceptional importance since the participants received information in the authentic environment with great interest. A few participants also shared their stories of being trapped in detrimental employment relationships and were then referred to the organisations which actively engage in helping exploited workers. In the last phase of the project, the provider also provided additional informative material for further raising of awareness of the visitors.

Some 70 groups (4 to 5 participants were on average in a group), i.e. a total of some 350 people experienced the escape room in 90-minute sessions in 12 days.

## Raising awareness among, and training of, expert public

In 2018, the IWG THB further ensured the implementation of regular training of experts dealing with trafficking in human beings (law enforcement authorities) and was raising the awareness of expert workers who may come across such cases in their work (social workers, teachers, etc.).

The Criminal Police Directorate of the General Police Directorate regularly trains criminal police officers and police officers at the local level. Whereby attention is dedicated to recognising various forms of human trafficking, indicators to detect potential victims and offenders, and the understanding of special further procedures when discussing victims and implementing investigation in pre-trial proceedings.

On 7 and 8 May 2018, the Criminal Police Directorate of the General Police Directorate organised training of criminal police officers from regional criminal police divisions dealing with investigation of criminal offence of trafficking in human beings. The training encompassed the implementation of procedures involving victims of human trafficking and the recognition of these victims. The training was attended by 49 criminal police officers from all regional criminal police divisions and the Criminal Police Directorate of the General Police Directorate. It was also attended by three prosecutors from the Specialised State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia and four judges of Ljubljana District Court.

In cooperation with the Police Academy, the Criminal Police Directorate of the General Police Directorate carried out the basic training on trafficking in human beings for candidate police officers supervising the national border, including the recognition of indicators of various forms of human trafficking on 17 May 2018. The training was attended by 70 candidate police officers supervising the national border.

State prosecutors of the Specialised State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia attended training sessions on human trafficking abroad and also sessions organised by the Police and the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia in the reporting year. They actively participated in the training with their contributions and experience.

The Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia organised a professional training event on 15 May 2018 and an additional one for public employees where the national coordinator informed the participants about the problem of human trafficking within the framework of covert forced labour and/or labour exploitation, and a police representative spoke about recognising indicators of trafficking in human beings. The training was attended by 71 employees of the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia.

A representative of the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia and a representative of the Police attended an international training event on human trafficking in Madrid. The training took place within the framework of the I-LEAD project organised by the Spanish National Police and Guardia Civil (ESMIR).

The Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia organised a professional training event for 57 employees in mobile units, 32 inspectors and 11 employees involved in the fight against human trafficking on 19 November 2018. The purpose of the training was to determine human trafficking, provide information about the activities of the IWG THB and the recognition of victims of human trafficking. The prosecution service informed the participants about concrete cases, and NGOs about preventive and curative activities. The national coordinator, representatives of the Police, the Specialised State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia and the Ključ Society participated in the implementation of the training.

In the beginning of 2018 (15 January, 15 February and 22 March), awareness raising and training of employees of administrative units was implemented in order to promptly detect and prevent human trafficking. A total of 181 public employees of administrative units performing work and tasks in the field of issuing residence permits for foreigners – citizens of third countries, and heads of administrative units who are members of the working group for interior affairs and transport. The national coordinator, the Police, the Specialised State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia and the Internal Administrative Affairs, Migration and Naturalisation Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior participated in the substantive implementation of activities. The attendees were informed of the occurrence of trafficking in human beings and response to this phenomenon in Slovenia and broader. Police investigation, prosecution of the criminal offence of human trafficking and a study of a concrete case were presented. The administrative procedure of issuing a temporary residence permit to a victim of human trafficking was also explained in detail.

In 2018, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also implemented activities to raise awareness and educate consular officials (regular annual and regional consular consultations, preparations to conduct consular service at diplomatic and consular representations) and diplomats before assuming their posts abroad about different forms of human trafficking.

As part of the programme for the implementation of public powers of the Social Chamber of Slovenia for the period from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018 financed by the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, the Social Chamber of Slovenia carried out a training event on 25 October 2018 for expert workers and assistants of social work centres entitled "Working with Migrants and Victims of Human Trafficking". The seminar was attended by 37 expert workers and assistants of social work centres. Three lectures were implemented within the seminar: To Whom, in What Way and Why Entrust a Person with the Experience of Human Trafficking, Trafficking in Human Beings – Police Procedures and a presentation of experience when working with victims within the "Providing Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings – Crisis Accommodation" programme.

On 6 November 2018, the lecture on human trafficking was carried out within the framework of the expert meeting of head teachers of primary schools. This topic was also presented at the expert meeting of head teachers of secondary schools on 20 November. At both meetings, the Government Communication Office presented preventive activities aimed at adolescents. The national coordinator spoke about Slovenia’s activities in this field, and the Ključ Society presented the objectives and experience of the Vijolica and Telesnica projects. The first meeting was attended by 425 and the second by 152 participants.

As part of the seminar for investigating judges on 31 May 2018, Srečko Škerbec, a judge at Ljubljana District Court, gave a lecture on various forms of human trafficking. The seminar was attended by 53 participants. Furthermore, regular annual training of judges took place on 17 October and 23 November 2018. Within the framework of the topic, "Human Trafficking – Recognising the Phenomenon in Society", the national coordinator also presented the measures to provide access to compensation for the victims of trafficking and informed them about recommendations of the GRETA Group of Experts regarding this issue. On the first day, the training was attended by 132 judges and on the second day 145 judges.

On 4 December 2018, Caritas Slovenia organised a lecture for the working group of the "Providing Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings – Crisis Accommodation" programme to which other expert workers and associates of the Caritas network and two representatives of the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities were also invited. The lecture entitled "Assistance and Support to People in Distress" was given by mag. Miran Možina, MD, specialist/psychiatrist, systemic psychotherapist, educational therapist and supervisor.

In 2018, the Ključ Society implemented 11 training events for various expert groups: medical staff of a psychiatric clinic, lawyers, prosecutors and criminal judges, employees in the network of safe houses, maternity homes/crisis centres, diplomatic staff, social workers of various social work centres, teachers, head teachers, police officers, employees of the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia (mobile units), volunteers and employees of the Red Cross. A total of 963 persons attended expert training events.

The Society also executed 17 workshops and training sessions for future expert workers (volunteers of the Ključ Society and the Slovene Philanthropy, a meeting of the Prava zveza Network and training of its members, workshops at faculties) where 281 persons were informed on the topic of human trafficking.

On 23 November 2018, the members of the IWG THB attended a conference on support to persons who have experienced human trafficking organised by the Slovenian Red Cross.

# Detection, investigation and prosecution of criminal offences related to human trafficking

The chapter on detection, investigation and prosecution of criminal offences mainly covers the activities of the police and prosecution service, including measurable results, i.e. the number of discussed offenders, injured parties, charges and final convictions. This chapter also includes the activities of the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia and the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia since when supervising the implementation of sectoral legislation in their competence the content of operations is intertwined and linked in the broader context with the problem of labour exploitation, undeclared employment and work and the exploitation of migrant workers.

## Police activities

When implementing activities in the field of combating human trafficking, the Police determine the continuation of the trend from previous years. Thus, the majority of cases of trafficking in human beings in 2018 were recognised as a form of exploiting prostitution and sexual abuse of victims of trafficking. Furthermore, cases of exploitation for forced commission of criminal offences and forced begging as forms of forced labour were also detected in the reporting year. In general, it was established that individuals and criminal organisations recruit vulnerable persons from weak social and economic environments, whereby they promise them employment and good earnings.

In the field of trafficking in human beings, the Republic of Slovenia particularly remains to be:

* a country of destination:
	+ for female citizens of third countries from East and South-Eastern Europe exploited in the Republic of Slovenia for prostitution (Ukraine and Serbia);
	+ for girls from the EU (Romania) who are involved in the Republic of Slovenia in so-called apartment prostitution. These girls hold no temporary residence permits, are not employed and do not hold suitable social and health insurance either;
	+ for persons from the EU (Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia) and Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and China who are assumed to be involved in organised begging and execution of criminal offences against their will;
* a country of transit:
	+ for persons from the EU (Romania, Slovakia) and Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina due to forced begging and execution of criminal offences.

It was also determined that Slovenia was not a country of origin for victims of trafficking in human beings who would be exploited in Slovenia or other countries.

### Statistics

In 2018, the police detected and discussed 71 criminal offences of trafficking in human beings in three investigations as per Article 113 of the Criminal Code (hereinafter: KZ-1). It also discussed six cases where reasons for suspicion were determined that a criminal offence of trafficking in human beings had been committed, whereby there were no bases to file criminal complaints. In this regard, suitable reports were submitted to competent prosecutor’s offices.

### Suspects and victims in criminal offences of trafficking in human beings (Article 113 of the KZ-1) 1

The police discussed 33 natural persons and three legal entities relating to the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings in 2018. According to gender, the suspects were mainly men (27), i.e. Slovenians (16) and Chinese (11).

 *Table 1: Number of suspects discussed by gender and citizenship for the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CITIZENSHIP** | **MEN** | **WOMEN** | **TOTAL** |
| Austria | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| China | 11 | 0 | 11 |
| Slovakia | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Slovenia | 11 | 5 | 16 |
| Hungary | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| **TOTAL** | **27** | **6** | **33** |

In the reporting year, the police discussed 101 victims of criminal offence of trafficking in human beings. It was determined in investigations that 32 persons from China (four women and 28 men) were exploited to commit criminal offences, two persons were victims of forced begging, while others were determined to be victims of the criminal offence of human trafficking and were exploited for prostitution and sexual abuse.

According to the gender of victims, women prevailed; they were mostly citizens of China (32), Hungary (19) and Romania (18). All victims were adults.

*Table 2: Number of determined victims of trafficking in human beings in 2018 by gender and citizenship*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CITIZENSHIP** | **MEN** | **WOMEN** | **TOTAL** |
| Austria | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Bulgaria | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| The Dominican Republic | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| France | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| China | 28 | 4 | 32 |
| Madagascar | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Hungary | 0 | 19 | 19 |
| Poland | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Portugal | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Romania | 0 | 18 | 18 |
| Slovakia | 1 | 9 | 10 |
| Slovenia | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Spain | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Ukraine | 0 | 10 | 10 |
| Venezuela | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| **TOTAL** | **31** | **70** | **101** |

1 When providing statistical data, individual persons are given which means that a person (suspect, victim) is observed only once in the investigation irrespective of the fact of how many criminal offences they were processed for.

*Table 3: Number of determined victims of trafficking in human beings in 2018 by gender and form of exploitation*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FORM OF EXPLOITATION** | **MEN** | **WOMEN** | **TOTAL** |
| Sexual exploitation | 1 | 66 | **67** |
| Forced execution of criminal offences | 28 | 4 | **32** |
| Forced begging | 2 | 0 | **2** |
| **TOTAL** | **31** | **70** | **101** |

### Police findings

According to the form of exploitation, the exploitation of victims of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual abuse still prevails in Slovenia. Other forms of exploitation are established more rarely. In the beginning of 2018, we first encountered a form of human trafficking for forced execution of criminal offences when the police and the prosecution service broke up an international criminal organisation with a criminal investigation where several persons from China were exploited for implementing criminal offences of phone scams.

In the reporting year, the police also detected presence of organised criminal groups which recruit, transport and force victims to execute criminal offences of daring thefts on the Slovenian territory.

The problem of human trafficking is frequently closely linked with some other criminal offences, and the police thus also discuss criminal offences of prostitution and violation of fundamental workers’ rights in connection with trafficking in human beings.

### Exploitation of prostitution, employment of foreign women in nightclubs and prostitution advertising

In 2018, the police detected 24 criminal offences of exploitation through prostitution as per Article 175 of the KZ-1, and discussed 12 suspects and 11 victims due to this criminal offence.

 *Table 4: Number of suspects by gender and citizenship for criminal offence "Exploitation through Prostitution" as per Article 175 of the KZ-1 in 2018*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CITIZENSHIP** | **MEN** | **WOMEN** | **TOTAL** |
| Slovakia | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Slovenia | 9 | 2 | 11 |
| **TOTAL** | **9** | **3** | **12** |

 *Table 5: Number of victims by gender and citizenship for criminal offence "Exploitation through Prostitution" as per Article 175 of the KZ-1 in 2018*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CITIZENSHIP** | **MEN** | **WOMEN** | **TOTAL** |
| Slovakia | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Slovenia | 0 | 6 | 6 |
| Serbia | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| Ukraine | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| **TOTAL** | **0** | **11** | **11** |

When monitoring the problem of prostitution in Slovenia, a trend similar to that of previous years was determined.

Due to the lack of reliable data on the number of people involved in offering and performing prostitution services, including the demand for the services and the use of payable sexual services, it is difficult to assess the actual situation. Nevertheless, the police assess that citizens of third countries (recently particularly female citizens of Ukraine and Serbia) and citizens of other EU countries (Slovakia, Romania, Hungary) are involved in prostitution in Slovenia in addition to Slovenian citizens.

It is characteristic of prostitution in Slovenia that it is less noticeable since it is performed in closed spaces, usually in hired or owned flats and hotel rooms. Street prostitution or outdoor prostitution has almost not been detected. A medium level of prostitution prevails in Slovenia in which foreign women are particularly involved who live in Slovenia on the basis of temporary residence permits due to work or employment and are usually employed in nightclubs as dancers, entertainers, assistant workers and stage performers. Relating to prostitution at a higher level, the police assess that prostitutes with permanent residence in Slovenia are occasionally and temporarily involved in it, and are usually independent in their work.

In connection with exploitation through prostitution, the police also regularly monitor the operations of nightclubs and determine that perpetrators of the relevant criminal offence acquire, accommodate or have the assumed victims at their disposal in some other way whereby they abuse the legal framework of obtaining work permits. Recently, the perpetrators no longer force victims in prostitution with the use of physical force and restriction of movement, but apply more refined methods of economic coercion or financial dependence to control them (financial punishment for disrespecting house rules and regulations in the workplace, fictitious minimum wages, repayment of debt occurring when obtaining a work permit and arriving in Slovenia). A new mode of operation has also been detected where in addition to foreign women working in nightclubs on the basis of a single residence permit there are also foreign women, particularly from Serbia, who stay in clubs on the basis of a tourist application and present themselves as guests at police controls.

In 2018, the police detected and discussed several cases of criminal offences of human trafficking where victims were exploited due to prostitution or sexual abuse. The victims in most cases did not recognise themselves as victims of trafficking in human beings. We assess that the reasons are similar to those in previous years. These were particularly seen in the exploitation of vulnerability of victims coming from poor social and economic backgrounds while living in Slovenia enabled these victims to survive on the basis of the described way of making a living. The police found that female victims maintained relatives in their countries of origin with the majority of the money earned. Thus, recognised victims rarely cooperate in pre-trial and criminal proceedings.

When monitoring the problem of prostitution, the police also determined a continuation of the trend from previous years referring to advertising of prostitution in printed and online media, which takes place by publishing photos of prostitutes, the location of prostitution, contact phone numbers and prices of sexual services, and the relevant activity is carried out in apartments, hotel rooms, erotic massage salons, etc. Furthermore, there are also forums on websites where users comment on services, prostitutes and nightclubs.

### Forced labour

In 2018, the police detected and discussed a large number of criminal offences of "Violation of Fundamental Rights of Employees" as per Article 196 of the KZ-1, where elements of labour exploitation of injured parties were established. No elements of forced labour as a form of exploiting victims of trafficking in human beings were determined in pre-trial proceedings, and these elements were also not found in further criminal proceedings.

 *Table 6: Number of discussed criminal offences of "Violation of Fundamental Rights of Employees" as per Article 196 of the KZ-1*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2017** | **2018** |
| **Grounds for discussing a criminal offence (KZ-1)** | **Number of criminal offences** | **Number of criminal offences** |
| 196. Violation of Fundamental Rights of Employees | 1,329 | 1,518 |

In connection with the criminal offence of "Violation of Fundamental Rights of Employees" as per Article 196 of the KZ-1, the police detected and processed 224 suspects and 1,763 injured parties in 2018.

 *Table 7: Number of persons suspected of the criminal offence of "Violation of Fundamental Rights of Employees" as per Article 196 of the KZ-1*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CITIZENSHIP** | **TOTAL** |
| Bulgaria | 1 |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 7 |
| Croatia | 5 |
| Kosovo | 9 |
| Hungary | 4 |
| Macedonia | 9 |
| Poland | 1 |
| Slovenia | 186 |
| Serbia | 2 |
| Unknown | 1 |
| **TOTAL** | **224** |

*Table 8: Number of injured parties of the criminal offence of "Violation of Fundamental Rights of Employees" as per Article 196 of the KZ-1*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CITIZENSHIP** | **TOTAL** |
| Bulgaria | 21 |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 265 |
| Czech Republic | 2 |
| Montenegro | 4 |
| Egypt | 1 |
| Croatia | 8 |
| Kosovo | 116 |
| Hungary | 4 |
| Macedonia | 57 |
| Romania | 1 |
| Slovakia | 3 |
| Slovenia | 1,225 |
| Serbia | 20 |
| Ukraine | 6 |
| USA | 2 |
| Unknown | 28 |
| **TOTAL** | **1,763** |

Regarding forced begging as one of the forms of forced labour, the police also found in 2018 that organised groups of beggars for whom this is a way of life are occasionally present in the Republic of Slovenia. These groups come from Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania, and implement their activities particularly in territories of police directorates of Ljubljana, Maribor, Celje and Koper. When conducting its activities, the police did not recognise victims of human trafficking in the relevant groups or persons who would be forced into begging and no persons who would consider themselves as victims of trafficking in human beings. The trend from previous years continued otherwise, typical of which was that these persons refuse to cooperate in police procedures and do not recognise themselves as victims of human trafficking.

## Activities of the State Prosecutor's Office

The Specialised State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia, which is exclusively competent to prosecute criminal offences related to human trafficking, actively performed its function in 2018 in the field of criminal offences of trafficking in human beings as per Article 113 of the KZ-1, criminal offences of enslavement as per Article 112 of the KZ-1 and criminal offences of exploitation through prostitution as per Article 175 of the KZ-1.

### Statistics2

1. **Criminal offence of trafficking in human beings (Article 113 of the KZ-1)**

In the reporting period, the Specialised State Prosecutor's Office received and discussed two criminal complaints regarding the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings as per Article 113 of the KZ-1, i.e. against 15 natural persons and two legal entities to the detriment of 91 victims (27 of whom were men).

As per the adoption of state prosecutors' decisions in the reporting year, state prosecutors of the Specialised State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia:

* filed two requests for investigation regarding the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings as per Article 113 of the KZ-1, i.e. against 17 natural persons and two legal entities to the detriment of 91 victims (27 of whom were men);
* filed one charge regarding the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings as per Article 113 of the KZ-1, i.e. against seven natural persons to the detriment of 32 victims (27 of whom were men).

Individual cases in the field of trafficking in human beings were also discussed by other district state prosecutor’s offices in the reporting year, i.e.:

* Celje District State Prosecutor’s Office received one criminal complaint regarding the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings as per Article 113 of the KZ-1 and the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution as per Article 175 of the KZ-1, i.e. against eight natural persons and one legal entity to the detriment of 14 victims (women). A request for investigation was filed against ten natural persons and one legal entity due to the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings as per Article 113 of the KZ-1 and the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution as per Article 175 of the KZ-1, i.e. to the detriment of 14 victims (women).

In connection with criminal offences of trafficking in human beings in 2018, the court:

* found one natural person guilty (to the detriment of one victim) of the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings as per paragraph one of Article 113 of the KZ-1 and sentenced them to two years’ imprisonment followed by

2 With regard to the statistical data of the Specialised State Prosecutor's Office, it must be explained that individual cases in the same reporting period were discussed in various phases, i.e. from the receipt of the criminal complaint or the report to be amended as per paragraph ten of Article 148 of the Criminal Procedure Act to the adoption of the state prosecutor’s decision, i.e. from filing the request for investigation, filing an indictment and to the issue of a decision dismissing the indictment, or only in a certain section. Given the above, the same case is often reported under the item of receiving a criminal complaint or report as per paragraph ten of Article 148 of Criminal Procedure Act, under the item of dismissal, filing of a request for investigation and filing the indictment.

an overall sentence of four years’ imprisonment (after a second sentence for the same type of criminal offence to the detriment of one victim) and was ordered to pay unlawfully acquired proceeds in the amount of EUR 1,240,

* found two natural persons guilty (to the detriment of nine victims) of the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings as per paragraph one of Article 113 of the KZ-1 in connection with Article 20 of the KZ-1 and sentenced the first person to an imprisonment of two years and two months, a secondary sanction of EUR 2,000 and it confiscated the proceeds in the amount of EUR 105,000, while the second person was sentenced to two years’ imprisonment and a secondary sanction of EUR 2,000. One natural person was acquitted of claims due to the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings as per paragraphs two and three and in connection with paragraph one of Article 113 of the KZ-1. The higher court increased the sentences and sentenced the first person to an overall sentence of five years’ imprisonment and an overall secondary sanction of EUR 3,000, while the other person was sentenced to an overall imprisonment of three years and six months and an overall secondary sanction of EUR 3,000; in the remaining part, the judgment imposed was confirmed;
* found two natural persons guilty (to the detriment of ten victims) of ten criminal offences of trafficking in human beings as per paragraph one of Article 113 of the KZ-1 in connection with Article 20 of the KZ-1, and sentenced the first person to an overall imprisonment of three years and four months, while the second person was sentenced to an overall sentence of two years and eleven months (admission of guilt during the main hearing). The higher court dismissed the judgment against the first person and returned it to the court for a re-trial (capacity to bring proceedings), and reduced the sentence of the second person to two years and six months;
* found one natural person guilty (to the detriment of three victims) of three criminal offences of trafficking in human beings as per paragraphs one and two of Article 113 of the KZ-1 in connection with Article 20 of the KZ-1, and sentenced them to a suspended sentence by which it determined an overall imprisonment of three years and six months and a secondary sanction of EUR 5,000 both with a probation period of six years, and they had to pay proceeds in the amount of EUR 2,778.25;
* found one natural person guilty (to the detriment of one victim) of the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings as per paragraphs one and two of Article 113 of the KZ-1 and other criminal offences, and sentenced them to an overall imprisonment of eight years and a fine of EUR 3,000.

It must be highlighted that cases relating to trafficking in human beings are usually extensive cases initiated against several people operating in a criminal group, and covert investigative measures had to be used in almost all cases for investigation and detection. Due to the foregoing, proceedings before court take more time. This particularly refers to the main hearing which may last several years.

*Table 9: Criminal proceedings and sanctions for perpetrators of the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings in 2018*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criminalisation of trafficking in human beings** |  |
| Number of persons in criminal proceedings |  **46** natural persons and **3** legal entities |
| Number of investigations launched | **3 (**against **26** natural persons and **3** legal entities) |
| Number of indictments | **1 (**against **7** natural persons) |
|  |  |
| **Sanctions and measures** |  |
| Number of convictions for the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings (convicted persons) | **7 (6 + 1 suspended)** |
| Number of convictions due to the use of services of a victim of trafficking in human beings | **0** |
|  |  |
| **Length of imprisonment related to deprivation of freedom** |  |
| – shortest duration | 1 year, 4 months – suspended 1 year – community service |
| – longest duration | 8 years |
| Number of court decisions resulting in confiscation or seizure of property | 4 cases with seizure of unlawfully acquired proceeds |

### Criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution (Article 175 of the KZ-1)

In connection with the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution, district state prosecutor’s offices discussed the following cases in the reporting year:

* + Novo mesto District State Prosecutor’s Office received one criminal complaint in the reporting year due to the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution as per Article 175 of the KZ-1, i.e. against two natural persons and to the detriment of three victims (women). A request for investigation was filed against two natural persons for the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution as per Article 175 of the KZ-1, i.e. to the detriment of three victims (women), and an indictment in the same scope was filed.
	+ The District State Prosecutor’s Office in Koper discussed one case in which Koper District Court found one person guilty of committing the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution as per Article 175 of the KZ-1 to the detriment of one victim, and sentenced the person to imprisonment of one year and eight months. An indictment was filed in one case due to the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution as per Article 175 of the KZ-1, i.e. against two natural persons and to the detriment of three victims (women).
	+ The District State Prosecutor’s Office in Kranj discussed one case in which Kranj District Court found two persons guilty of committing the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution as per Article 175 of the KZ-1 to the detriment of six victims, and a suspended sentence was imposed on both persons.
	+ The District State Prosecutor’s Office in Maribor filed one indictment due to the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution as per Article 175 of the KZ-1, i.e. against one person and to the detriment of several victims. One request for investigation was filed due to the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution as per Article 175 of the KZ-1, i.e. against one person and to the detriment of one victim. Furthermore, two cases were also discussed where Maribor District Court found four natural persons guilty in the first case for the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings as per Article 113 of the KZ-1 and imposed two years’ imprisonment and a secondary sanction of EUR 1,500 (confession at the pre-trial hearing), which will be implemented through community work (1,440 hours in one year) while the second person was sentenced to an imprisonment of one year (confession at the pre-trial hearing), which will be implemented through community work (720 hours in one year). The court imposed two years’ imprisonment on the third and fourth person (a plea agreement was concluded) which will be executed by means of community work (1,440 hours in two years). In the second case conducted against three natural persons due to the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings as per Article 113 of the KZ-1, the court found one of these people guilty and imposed a suspended sentence of one year and four months with a period of probation of four years (admission of guilt).
	+ The District State Prosecutor’s Office in Ljubljana received one criminal complaint due to the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution as per Article 175 of the KZ-1, i.e. against two natural persons. One complaint was dismissed for the same criminal offence because the element of exploitation was not established.

In connection with criminal offences of exploitation through prostitution in 2018, the court:

* found one natural person guilty (to the detriment of ten victims) of the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution as per paragraph three and in connection with paragraph one of Article 175 of the KZ-1 and sentenced them to four years’ imprisonment, a secondary sanction of EUR 4,000 and confiscated their proceeds in the amount of EUR 10,233,

while it acquitted two natural persons of claims of abetting the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings as per paragraph two and in connection with paragraph one of Article 113 of the KZ-1. The higher court confirmed the judgment rendered;

* acquitted two natural persons (to the detriment of five victims) of claims of the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution as per paragraphs one and three of Article 175 of the KZ-1;
* acquitted four natural persons (to the detriment of 33 victims) of claims of the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution as per paragraphs one and three of Article 175 of the KZ-1, and acquitted one natural person (to the detriment of one victim) of claims of the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings as per paragraph one of Article 113 of the KZ-1;
* acquitted two natural persons (to the detriment of three victims) of claims of three criminal offences of exploitation through prostitution as per paragraphs one and two of Article 175 of the KZ-1;
* found eight natural persons guilty (to the detriment of ten victims) of the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution as per Article 175 of the KZ-1 (six natural persons according to paragraphs one and three, and two natural persons according to paragraph one) and one legal entity for the same criminal offence and imposed:
	+ imprisonment of three years and six months on the first person, including a fine of EUR 8,850 and it confiscated the proceeds in the amount of EUR 80,925;
	+ imprisonment of one year and six months on the second person;
	+ imprisonment of two years on the third person;
	+ a suspended sentence of one year and six months on the fourth person with a probation period of two years;
	+ a suspended sentence of one year and six months on the fifth person with a probation period of two years;
	+ a suspended sentence of two years on the sixth person with a probation period of three years;
	+ a suspended sentence of nine months on the seventh person with a probation period of one year and six months, and to jointly and severally pay EUR 140 of proceeds;
	+ a suspended sentence of nine months on the eighth person with a probation period of one year and six months, and to jointly and severally pay EUR 140 of proceeds;
	+ a fine of EUR 50,000 on the legal entity and the payment of proceeds in the amount of EUR 9,485;
* found six natural persons guilty (to the detriment of 20 victims) of the criminal offence of exploitation through prostitution as per paragraphs one and three of Article 175 of the KZ-1, and imposed:
	+ overall imprisonment of six years on the first person, including a secondary sanction of EUR 8,000 and the payment of proceeds in the amount of EUR 850,268.92;
	+ overall imprisonment of five years on the second person, including a secondary sanction of EUR 7,500 and the payment of proceeds in the amount of EUR 280,000;
	+ overall imprisonment of five years on the third person, including a secondary sanction of EUR 6,000 and the payment of proceeds in the amount of EUR 105,000;
	+ overall imprisonment of five years on the fourth person, including a secondary sanction of EUR 6,000 and the payment of proceeds in the amount of EUR 102,400;
	+ a suspended sentence of two years on the fifth person with a probation period of two years;
	+ a suspended sentence of two years on the sixth person with a probation period of two years;
	+ the court also seized eight passenger cars and one motorcycle which were owned by individual convicted persons or other persons related to them.

###  Findings of the Specialised State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia

The latest trends in human trafficking show one common characteristic, i.e. that the accused treat people as objects and thus exploit their vulnerability or another personality trait in order to obtain pecuniary advantage. It is typical that victims usually have certain personal freedom, they voluntarily enter into relationships with criminal organisations, possess personal documents, some of their own money and may use a telephone and the Internet. They also frequently hold valid residence and work permits in the Republic of Slovenia. The victims of relevant criminal offences are almost always foreigners, usually women and exceptionally minors. The victims always come from economically poor countries (Ukraine, the Dominican Republic, Moldova, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary) and are vulnerable due to some personal reason (e.g. unemployment, poor employment possibilities, low level of education, low earnings, indebtedness, obligation to maintain minor children, disabled or unemployed partners, obligation to support an extended family, serious illness in the family, state of war, etc.). Injured persons do not usually recognise themselves as victims, which makes the process of proving even more difficult since they justify, accept or even deny the actions of the accused. Due to their vulnerability, the victims are seemingly satisfied with earning at least some money, although the major share goes to the accused persons. With poor earnings, they support themselves and their relatives. The core of trafficking in human beings is the vulnerability of victims which is why they agree to a subordinate position.

The majority of criminal offences in 2018 referred to the form of exploitation through prostitution. There were some cases of slavery/servitude and forced labour, and the execution of criminal offences was recorded for the first time. Increasingly more cases relating to human trafficking have been discussed in recent years. The reason on the one hand lies in poor economic possibilities for subsistence of an individual and their relatives and on the other hand in better recognisability of the element of vulnerability.

Based on cases discussed by the Specialised State Prosecutor's Office, it was established that in the past these criminal offences were conducted by means of physical violence, restriction of personal freedom, illegal residing and working in a country, while members of criminal organisations in recent years no longer use violence and force since earnings are much higher if a victim works for the accused "voluntarily". Sophisticated psychological violence is thus used frequently which the victims have difficulty in recognising and describing since they accept it as a part of their lives enabling their survival.

Finding victims via the Internet is one of the newest forms of recruitment detected in Slovenia. In this regard, the European Union asked its Member States to invest sufficient funds in the technology and expert knowledge to identify and detect abuse of the Internet by criminal organisations for recruiting victims and offering services the objective of which is the exploitation of victims. The Internet and new technologies namely enable access to a large number of possible victims and simultaneous concealment of their activities.

The trend of improving execution of criminal offences also continued, which additionally aggravated the provision of evidence of the criminal offence discussed and the use of covert investigative measures is therefore urgent in such cases. The accused also closely monitor court decisions and thus skilfully adapt their operations and forms of exploitation. International cooperation is also necessary for obtaining evidence. This phenomenon is entering into all pores of modern society and is becoming a structural element of certain economic sectors, and in particular it encroaches upon fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals who become victims of such exploitation.

## Activities of the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia

The findings of labour inspectors regarding the control over employment and work of foreigners in 2018 are provided below on the basis of provisions of the Employment, Self-Employment and Work of Foreigners Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia [*Uradni list RS*], Nos. 47/15 and 59/17; hereinafter: ZZSDT) and the Employment Relationships Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia [*Uradni list RS*], No. 21/2013 with amendments; hereinafter: ZDR-1).

If compared with 2017, the number of determined violations of the provisions governing conditions of employment, self-employment and work of foreigners in the Republic of Slovenia dropped in 2018, i.e. 29 violations of the ZZSDT were established (45 in 2017)3. The following violations were determined:

* two violations of paragraph four of Article 7 of the ZZSDT, i.e. these were cases where the employers enabled foreigners to carry out work other than that for which the consent was given in the procedure of issuing or extending the single permit or EU Blue Card, issuing a written approval, or for which seasonal work permit was issued;
* 24 violations of paragraph four of Article 7 of the ZZSDT, i.e. these were cases where the employers enabled foreigners to carry out work other than that for which the consent was given in the procedure of issuing or extending the single permit or EU Blue Card, issuing a written approval, or for which seasonal work permit was issued;
* two violations of paragraph five of Article 7 of the previously applicable ZZSDT stipulating that employers and contracting authorities must cooperate with competent authorities and enable them access to all available evidence on the basis of which documents allowing employment, self-employment or work in the Republic of Slovenia were issued;
* one violation of paragraph three of Article 45 of the previously applicable ZZSDT regarding the storage of documentation at the location where the service is rendered during the posting of workers in Slovenia.

On 1 January 2018, the Transnational Provision of Services Act entered into force (hereinafter: ZČmIS). When supervising the implementation of the relevant Act, the inspectors established 20 violations, i.e.:

* two violations of paragraph one of Article 4 stipulating the conditions according to which Slovenian employers may implement cross-border services abroad;
* seven violations of Article 12 stipulating the conditions for cross-border implementation of services by foreign employers in the Republic of Slovenia;
* three violations of paragraph one of Article 14 stipulating that a foreign employer must register at the Employment Service of Slovenia before cross-border implementation of their service, and
* eight violations of paragraph three of Article 14 stipulating that a foreign employer must store and provide the documentation determined in the Act at the request of the supervisory authority during cross-border implementation of services in the Republic of Slovenia.

The Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia usually examines violations relating to the mandatory registration of implementing services on the basis of reports received by reporters or the findings of other inspection authorities which establish in the field that the implementation of services was not registered at the Employment Service of Slovenia. In these cases, prompt action and good cooperation between various supervisory authorities are crucial since the periods in which services are implemented on the territory of the Republic of Slovenia are often very short.

When violations are detected, the inspectors take action as per their competences within minor offence proceedings and by issuing decisions with which they prohibit the performance of work or a work process or the use of resources until the elimination of irregularities if it is established during the inspection that *inter alia* an employer provided work for a foreigner or a stateless person in contravention of regulations governing the employment of foreigners.

In the field of employment and posting of foreign workers or workers who are citizens of EU Member States, the labour inspectors still notice that the employers carrying out a direct production process in the Slovenian market find it hard to obtain suitable workers. In such cases, several legal entities or individuals provide these employers with workers from abroad or the EU Member States in practice.

Furthermore, the inspectors establish that the employers employing foreign workers in certain cases display much higher wages on payslips than actually paid to workers who file applications to acquire residence permits in the Republic of Slovenia for their family members (family reunification)

3 The Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia statistically monitors violations according to their various forms which is why violations relating to foreigners are also discussed under other items of labour legislation.

by means of which the foreigners provide evidence at administrative units of their ability to support their family members. Before and after a three-month period of filing the application, the inspectors found that the wages of these foreigners usually do not exceed the amount of minimum wage and are frequently not even paid. Thus, foreigners or their family members exercise their social assistance rights at social work centres immediately after obtaining residence permits.

In terms of providing rights to workers posted to temporary work in the Republic of Slovenia based on an employment contract as per foreign law, no violations of Article 210 of the ZDR-1 governing the status of foreign posted workers were established in 2018 by labour inspectors.

On the other hand, the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia also detected violations of the rights of workers posted abroad or the EU Member States by employers registered in the Republic of Slovenia in 2018. Whereby, it should be noted that employers post workers from the Republic of Slovenia who are citizens of the Republic of Slovenia and foreign workers. In 2018, the inspectors determined 73 violations of Article 209 of the ZDR-1, which stipulates a compulsory constituent of employment contracts of the employees posted abroad. The number of these violations was significantly lower in the reporting year than in 2017, when 156 violations of Articles 208 and 209 of the ZDR-1 were detected.

Since 2016, the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia has been participating in joint European actions being implemented in the field of human trafficking. Within the framework of the European action, the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia supervised the activity of haulage in 2018 together with the representatives of the Police, the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia and trade unions. The supervision of employment relationships regarding the implementation of the ZDR-1 was carried out, whereby the observance of provisions of the relevant Act was examined which refer to the payment of wages and holiday pay, and the provisions referring to working hours and daily and weekly rest periods. Supervision of the implementation of the Act Regulating the Working Time and Compulsory Rest Periods of Mobile Workers and on Recording Equipment in Road Transport also took place. During tighter supervision, the inspectors conducted 29 supervisions of 13 entities and determined 50 violations of labour legislation.

Based on suspicion of trafficking in human beings, the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia in cooperation with the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, the Police and the Market Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia carried out a night action in one of the nightclubs in Ljubljana, but the elements of trafficking in human beings were not found. A supervision of a nightclub in the Primorska region was also carried out due to suspicion of trafficking in human beings.

## Activities of the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia

In 2018, the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia discussed violations in the field of the Prevention of Undeclared Work and Employment Act (hereinafter: ZPDZC-1) and filed complaints or reports regarding criminal offences from the KZ-1. The number of criminal offences that may be connected with labour exploitation was also given. When conducting inspection as per ZPDZC-1, the Financial Administration most frequently supervised activities in construction, haulage, hospitality, transport, trade, maintenance and repair of motor vehicles and processing activities.

Relating to the violations of the ZPDZC-1 (undeclared work and employment, unlawful advertising), 2,790 decision concerning minor offences and payment orders were issued and served on offenders in the reporting period in the total amount of EUR 5,957,900 and 546 warnings.

Some 3,135 minor offences were discussed in minor offence proceedings, i.e.:

* 741 minor offences due to undeclared work, of which 112 offences were committed by foreign citizens;
* 2,008 minor offences due to undeclared employment, of which 175 offences were committed by foreign citizens and 147 offences were the result of illegal employment of a citizen of a third country;
* 386 minor offences due to unlawful advertising, of which 18 offences were committed by foreign citizens.

In 2018, the Financial Administration filed a total of 11 criminal complaints and one report of suspicion of a criminal offence as per paragraph one of Article 199 of the KZ-1 (Undeclared Employment). Foreign citizens were involved in four cases.

Due to violations as per Article 196 of the KZ-1 (Violation of Fundamental Rights of Employees), 81 criminal complaints were filed, of which 17 referred to foreign citizens and three involved Slovenian and foreign citizens simultaneously.

In 2018, the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia did not file any criminal complaints or reports as per Article 113 of the KZ-1 (Trafficking in Human Beings).

# Assistance and protection of victims of human trafficking

The field of assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings is regulated in Slovenia by Article 4 of the Act ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. On the relevant basis, the assistance is provided within the framework of two programmes financed by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and implemented by non-governmental and humanitarian organisations selected by means of a public call. In 2018, the programmes of assistance to victims of human trafficking were carried out by the Ključ Society and Caritas Slovenia. This chapter also provides information on the implementation of the project "Introducing a mechanism for identifying, assisting and protecting victims of trafficking in human beings and/or sexual abuse in the procedures of recognition of international protection in Slovenia (PATS)".

## "Providing Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings – Crisis Accommodation" programme

In 2018, the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities also co-financed the "Providing Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings – Crisis Accommodation" programme, and Caritas Slovenia was selected for its implementation. The programme involves a comprehensive and up to 30-day assistance provided to victims of human trafficking (adults and children) who must be removed immediately from their environment.

In 2018, 35 persons used crisis accommodation:

* 33 persons, of whom were 28 men and 5 women, all were citizens of China,
* one woman, citizen of Madagascar,
* one woman, citizen of Slovenia.

The reasons for crisis accommodation were recognised elements of exploitation through prostitution, forcing to execute criminal offences and forced labour.

People stayed in crisis accommodation for a total of 484 care days in 2018.

The costs of the programme, co-financed within the framework of contract by the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (80 per cent of wages for one employed expert worker, labour costs of three lay workers paid as per the hours of work done, costs of accommodation and preventive workshops), amounted to EUR 39,125.11 in 2018.

The persons in crisis accommodation were provided with accommodation, food, first psycho-social aid, emergency medical care, counselling, informing about their legal rights, interpreting, advocacy, social care, companionship, escort, protection and safety, assistance when returning to their homeland and material assistance. They also had 24-hour access to an expert worker. In addition to this worker, three lay workers and trained volunteers are also involved in working with these persons.

## "Providing Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings – Accommodation in a Safe Place" programme

On 26 February 2018, the Ministry of the Interior concluded a contract with the Ključ Society to implement the "Providing Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings – Accommodation in a Safe Place for the Period 2018–2019" programme. Until the selection of a new provider, the Ministry had concluded an annex to the existing contract for years 2016 and 2017 with Caritas Slovenia, which enabled uninterrupted continuation of the programme for two persons accommodated in the safe place in the preceding period.

From January to the end of February 2018, two persons were accommodated in the safe place of Caritas Slovenia, i.e. a citizen of Slovakia and her minor child. Relating to the particularity of their needs, both were accommodated in the alternative form of accommodation (maternity home) in February.

Between 1 January and 28 February 2018, the Ministry of the Interior earmarked EUR 1,374.48 for the programme of safe accommodation. Both persons stayed in safe accommodation for a total of 118 care days in this period.

Between 1 March and 31 December 2018, the "Providing Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings – Accommodation in a Safe Place" programme was implemented by the Ključ Society based on the contract concluded with the Ministry of the Interior. Four persons participated in the programme in this period. Two persons were accommodated in the safe place of the Ključ Society, another person and her minor child were accommodated in the alternative form of accommodation (maternity home).

Four persons were thus accommodated in the safe place in 2018:

* one woman, citizen of Slovakia,
* one child, son of the citizen of Slovakia,
* one woman, citizen of Madagascar,
* one woman, citizen of Slovenia.

Between 1 March and 31 December 2018, a total of 410 care days were spent in the safe place. People stayed in the safe place for a total of 528 care days in 2018.

The costs of the programme, co-financed by the Ministry of the Interior within the framework of a contract (100 per cent of wages for one employed expert worker, costs of accommodation and other costs of the programme), amounted to EUR 29,069.97 between 1 March and 31 December 2018. The costs of the programme in 2018 totalled EUR 30,444.45.

The persons accommodated in a safe place were provided with accommodation, food, counselling assistance, emergency medical care, counselling, informing about their legal rights, interpreting, advocacy, social care, companionship, escort, protection and safety, and material assistance.

## "Introducing a mechanism for identifying, assisting and protecting victims of trafficking in human beings and/or sexual abuse in the procedures of recognition of international protection in Slovenia" – the PATS project

The PATS project (Identifying, assisting and protecting victims of trafficking in human beings and/or sexual abuse in the procedures of recognition of international protection), carried out for several years in the asylum centre, is aimed at informing applicants for international protection (hereinafter: applicants) about the occurrence of trafficking in human beings. In 2018, the project was further implemented by the Institute for African Studies. The project is partly financed from the European and partly from national funds (budget of the Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for the Support and Integration of Migrants).

The purpose of the project is to raise the awareness of people who, in most cases, do not recognise the dangers and results of human trafficking, and to use a suitable approach to encourage them to actively participate in preventing various forms of exploitation. Interviews with unaccompanied minors and women were of the utmost importance, where individuals were informed about human trafficking and preventive action with the help of an interpreter. All applicants receive a brochure (in the language they understand) with basic information on trafficking in human beings and helplines where they can get assistance and advice. The project also includes the option of individual informing of adult men.

It is important that recognised victims of human trafficking or sexual violence and gender-based violence have access to help suitable for them. The project also involves the informing of employees and everyone who comes in contact with the applicants through their work about the occurrence and risks of this phenomenon.

The Institute for African Studies started implementing the project at the end of July 2017. In this period, a total of 342 interviews (311 unaccompanied minors and 31 women) were held. In 2018, some 246 interviews (218 unaccompanied minors and 28 women) were held.

In October 2018, the Institute for African Studies organised group workshops on the occasion of the EU Anti-Trafficking Day. The Institute also promptly informs the public about topical events in the field of human trafficking via online social networks.

# International activities and partnerships

Trafficking in human beings is a serious criminal offence which requires a comprehensive approach. For effective prevention of human trafficking and combat against it, cooperation between all stakeholders working in this field is vital. Since trafficking in human beings frequently extends beyond borders due to often internationally organised criminal activities, cooperation with competent authorities is also necessary, particularly with law enforcement authorities, countries in nearby regions and the broader international context. Criminal organisations adapt quickly to changes in the international environment, which is why the same type of adjustability is required of state authorities for an effective response in the fight against human trafficking.

## International activities

As part of their competence, the national coordinator actively participated at international events in 2018 related to the activities for preventing and combating trafficking in human beings.

Regular meetings of the Informal Network of National Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanisms (hereinafter: NREM) took place in the field of EU cooperation in Brussels. In the reporting year, the group met on 13 and 14 June 2018 during the Bulgarian Presidency, and on 3 and 4 December 2018 during the Austrian Presidency.

At the first NREM meeting, the heads of ten EU agencies (EASO, EUROPOL, EU LISA, EMCDDA, EUROJUST, EIGE, FRONTEX, EUROFOUND, FRA, CEPOL) signed a Joint Statement of commitment to working together to address trafficking in human beings. After the signing, a joint meeting with the representatives of the Informal Network of National Anti-trafficking Coordinators from South-Eastern Europe (hereinafter: NATC SEE) took place, the central topic of which was cooperation of the EU with countries of the Western Balkans. The attendees became acquainted with the Strategy for the Western Balkans with the emphasis on elements important for joint efforts in addressing human trafficking, the key findings of the research on the situation of integrating SEE countries in the EU, which was implemented within the framework of NATC SEE, and the conclusions of the conference taking place in Sofia in May. At the meeting, the national coordinator highlighted the important step made in the fight against human trafficking within the Brdo Process, whereby the ministers of the interior and national anti-trafficking coordinators adopted the Joint Declaration on Strengthening Regional Cooperation in SEE to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings in March 2018 at Brdo pri Kranju. The ministers thus confirmed further support to the successful work of the NATC SEE, and the activities of the Secretariat were further entrusted to the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). The activities in the region and operations of the Informal Network were also supported by the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator in her address who highlighted the regional network of coordinators as an example of excellent cooperation between EU Member States and the countries of the Western Balkans.

At the second NREM meeting in December 2018, the European Commission presented the results of statistical data collected for 2015 and 2016 which Member States submitted on the basis of Articles 19 and 20 of the Directive on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims. A joint meeting of representatives of the NREM and NATC SEE networks took place later on where a discussion on the cooperation between the countries of the Western Balkans and the EU with regard to preventing and combating human trafficking took place. The report of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) on the measures regarding the fight against human trafficking related to gender was also presented. The afternoon was reserved for a joint meeting of the NREM network with the representatives of civil society where the European Commission presented the second report on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings. The Commission determined that certain progress may be detected in some fields of the fight against human trafficking (cross-border cooperation, cooperation with civil society, application of financial investigations, formation of joint investigation teams, development of national referral mechanisms), but the progress in certain key fields is still not sufficient. In this regard, the report particularly mentioned the limited rights of victims to protection and support within the EU legislation, limited access to compensation and the lack of application of the non-punishment principle, and the number of convictions and criminal investigations also remains low.

Active cooperation within the framework of the informal network of the NATC SEE also continued in the reporting year, which operates on the basis of the ministerial conference decision of 2010 under the Brdo Process and was initiated by Slovenia. In March 2018, an informal meeting of ministers responsible for internal affairs took place at Brdo pri Kranju under the auspices of the Brdo Process which was also attended by the representatives of the NATC SEE network. On this occasion, the ministers and national anti-trafficking coordinators adopted the Joint Declaration on Strengthening Regional Cooperation in SEE to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings.

On 23 and 24 April 2018, a regular conference of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons took place in Vienna which is annually organised by the OSCE. The conference focused on the importance of partnerships in the efforts to combat human trafficking and to enhance cooperation at local, national, regional and international levels.

On 31 May and 1 June 2018, the national coordinator attended a conference on trafficking in human beings with an emphasis on the cooperation with the countries of the Western Balkans taking place in Sofia during the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU.

Organised by the Council of Europe and the Republic of Croatia as presiding to the Committee of Ministers,

a conference marking the 10th anniversary of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings took place on 22 May 2018 in Strasbourg, and a meeting of national anti-trafficking coordinators within the framework of the OSCE on 23 May. The purpose of the first event was to assess how the Convention affected the legislation, policy and practice of signatory states, and particularly improvement of the position and rights of victims of human trafficking. The emphasis was on human rights, victims and positive commitments of the countries to prevent trafficking in human beings, protect victims, prosecute traffickers and participate in partnerships to obtain the objectives of the Convention. The conclusions and recommendations of the 18th Alliance against Trafficking in Persons taking place in April 2018 in Vienna and the 7th General Report on GRETA's activities on trafficking in human beings for labour exploitation were presented at the meeting of national anti-trafficking coordinators within the framework of the OSCE. The participants exchanged information on topical trends relating to human trafficking, and the national coordinators discussed the methods for enhancing the role of national coordinators and the formation of strategic partnerships with civil society and the private sector. At the end of the meeting, a discussion about strengthening the role of national rapporteurs or other mechanisms for monitoring activities in the field of trafficking in human beings also took place.

The national anti-trafficking coordinator attended the kick-off event of a close inter-institutional project, Support to strengthening the fight against trafficking in human beings, on 28 September 2018 in Belgrade, and a regional workshop on combating trafficking in human beings for forced implementation of criminal offences in South-Eastern Europe held between 3 and 5 October in Sarajevo.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was also active in the field of human trafficking in 2018 in international organisations, whereby the support to the Resolution on strengthening and promoting effective measures and international cooperation on organ donation and transplantation to prevent and combat trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal and trafficking in human organs adopted by the UN General Assembly on 22 December 2018 must be highlighted in particular.

In 2018, the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia carried out the following activities in cooperation with foreign authorities or organisations in the field of human trafficking:

* filled out a questionnaire on the problem of car-wash facilities at the request of the British organisation, Gangmaster and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), in connection with the implementation of joint action days (JAD 2018);
* conducted a phone interview with an OSCE representative and completed a questionnaire to assess the project "Combating Human Trafficking along Migration Routes" taking place in 2017 in Vicenza,
* carried out a supervision of a Slovenian company at the request of the ASTRA – Anti Trafficking Action and the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy of the Republic of Serbia on the suspicion of trafficking in human beings from Serbia. The elements of trafficking were not found.

When investigating criminal offences of trafficking in human beings, the Police exchange information with EU Member States within its cooperation with Europol, and Interpol when cooperating with third countries. In 2018, the Police also took part in the activities on the basis of an operational action plan of Europol’s Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT). In the reporting year, the Police in cooperation with foreign security authorities (including Chinese) completed the investigation of an organised criminal organisation from China involved in the exploitation of persons for forced execution of criminal offences of phone scams with the use of the Internet. The operations of the criminal organisation were already detected and investigated in 2017, and the investigation was completed in the beginning of 2018.

## Partnerships and research

In the reporting year, no special research on trafficking in human beings was conducted.

The partnerships between organisations engaged in preventing and combating trafficking in human beings have been established in Slovenia for a number of years. When discussing individual cases of trafficking in human beings, the Police cooperated closely with the Specialised State Prosecutor's Office, and non-governmental and humanitarian organisations (Caritas Slovenia and the Ključ Society). It also cooperates with the latter two organisations when implementing programmes, Providing Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings – Crisis Accommodation and Providing Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings – Accommodation in a Safe Place. The Police has excellent cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which regularly informs the Police about findings of diplomatic and consular representations relating to the problem of third-country female citizens or cases in which suspicion may be raised that female job seekers could become victims of human trafficking.

Relating to preventive activities, good cooperation takes place between the Government Communication Office and non-governmental organisations as the providers of preventive programmes.

In 2018, the Police together with the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia, the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia and the Association of Free Trade Unions of Slovenia took part in the implementation of joint action days (activities of the EMPACT THB) relating to exploitation for forced labour. A joint coordinated action of supervising drivers of cargo vehicles was carried out as part of the activities. The supervision included drivers of cargo vehicles in international transport, drivers and passengers in multi-purpose and passenger vehicles and passengers in air transport in the area of Ljubljana. The purpose of the action was to recognise persons who could be victims of the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings or other officially prosecutable criminal offences, and raise the awareness of vulnerable groups in order to prevent this criminal offence.

# Conclusion

In 2018, the IWG THB was also implementing the key activities with regard to preventing and combating human trafficking in accordance with the Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the 2017–2018 Period.

It must be highlighted in the field of legislation and policies that the Republic of Slovenia signed the Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs on 6 December 2018 and thus became the 19th signatory to this Convention. In November 2018, the Anti-Trafficking Service was established at the Ministry of the Interior which ensures inter-ministerial cooperation and harmonisation of activities relating to the prevention of human trafficking and fight against it at the level of the entire country, and thus provides expert support to the national anti-trafficking coordinator. The IWG THB drafted the annual report about its work which was presented before the Commission for Petitions, Human Rights and Equal Opportunities of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia.

 In 2018, the field of prevention also focused on four target groups, i.e. broader public, high-risk target groups, potential users of services and expert public. For this purpose, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia co-financed five projects by non-governmental and humanitarian organisations in the total amount of EUR 30,000. It must be emphasised relating to raising awareness of the high-risk target groups that approximately one third of workshops within the framework of projects aimed adolescents were also carried out in areas where members of the Roma community live, whereby the topic of forced and arranged marriages was also added. In addition to regular annual training of public employees whose work is linked with the issue of human trafficking raising the awareness of, and training of, employees of administrative units performing work and tasks in the field of issuing residence permits for foreigners, citizens of third countries, and the heads of administrative units who are members of the working group for interior affairs and transport was also carried out in 2018. A lecture on trafficking in human beings for primary and secondary school head teachers was also held.

When detecting, investigating and prosecuting criminal offences related to human trafficking, it is determined that the exploitation of victims of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual abuse still prevails in Slovenia. In 2018, the form of human trafficking for forced execution of criminal offences was discussed for the first time. In three investigations, the police considered 71 criminal offences of trafficking in human beings against 33 natural persons and three legal entities. The Specialised State Prosecutor's Office filed one charge in the reporting year against seven natural persons, and the court issued judgments of conviction against seven accused persons. As part of their competence, the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia and the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia also implemented the activities related to detecting cases of human trafficking aimed particularly at the exploitation of forced labour, but no elements of a criminal offence of trafficking in human beings were detected in any of the cases.

Assistance and protection of victims of human trafficking were provided by the Ključ Society and Caritas Slovenia in 2018 within the projects issued by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Some 101 persons were recognised as victims of human trafficking, of whom 35 persons sought crisis accommodation and four persons were accommodated in a safe place. Other victims declined the offered possibility of accommodation. Relating to identifying, assisting and protecting victims of trafficking in human beings and/or sexual abuse in the procedures of recognition of international protection, the PATS project continued in 2018 whereby 246 interviews were held with applicants for international protection regarding the occurrence of human trafficking.

In the international sphere, members of the IWG THB, particularly the national coordinator, attended numerous events and conferences organised regularly by the OSCE, the Council of Europe, the United Nations and the European Commission. The Republic of Slovenia further strives to enhance international cooperation in the fight against trafficking in human beings, whereby it dedicates special attention to the region of South-Eastern Europe. The Ministry of the Interior thus organised an informal meeting of ministers responsible for internal affairs of the Brdo Process in March 2018, which was also attended by the representatives of the NATC SEE network initiated by Slovenia. The ministers confirmed further support to the successful work of the Informal Network of National Anti-trafficking Coordinators from South-Eastern Europe and adopted the Joint Declaration on Strengthening Regional Cooperation in SEE to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings. Since September 2018, Slovenia also participates in the implementation of a close inter-institutional project in the Republic of Serbia entitled "Support to strengthening the fight against trafficking in human beings", which will last two years.