



CONTRIBUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA TO THE WORKING SESSION 11 HUMANITARIAN ISSUES AND OTHER COMMITMENTS

Human Dimension Implementation Meeting,

Warsaw, 18 September 2017

Fight against trafficking in human beings

In order to enhance the societal system's response to the problem of trafficking in human beings in the Republic of Serbia, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted, on 4 August 2017, a Strategy for the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings, in particular Women and Children, and for the Protection of Victims 2017-2022, along with the supplementary Action Plan for 2017-2018 ("Official Journal of RS", No. 77/2017), aimed at ensuring a comprehensive and continued response of society to trafficking in human beings, in line with the dynamics of new challenges, risks and threats, by improving the system of prevention, assistance and protection of victims and suppression of trafficking, particularly of women and children.

The above strategic document envisages that the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Council should, *inter alia*, assess the progress made in the implementation of the Strategy and the Action Plan, and propose measures concerning resolution of identified problems, engagement of necessary resources and coordinated action by relevant governmental authorities and other organizations and institutions, significant in combating trafficking in human beings.

The new Strategy further provides for the appointment of the National Coordinator for Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, and establishment – for the purpose of operational implementation of the Action Plan - of a Working Group tasked with the implementation and review of the Strategy, comprising representatives from Ministries and governmental bodies with expertise in areas relevant to the implementation of the Strategy.

In order to ensure that the adopted Strategy and its Action Plan are implemented, at the Headquarters of the Police Directorate, the Office for Coordination of Action against Trafficking in Human Beings has been established on the national level, with a multi-disciplinary approach.

Migration policy

Republic of Serbia has continued its constructive approach in providing respond to the increased influx of migrants and strengthened migration management and asylum policies.

On September 4, 2015, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted **the Response Plan in the event of an increased influx of migrants** with needs assessment. The Response Plan

identifies the competent authorities, organizations and institutions, their tasks in the event of a mass influx of migrants, measures and activities to be taken, as well as human, financial and other resources necessary to provide urgent accommodation to migrants and the smooth access to their rights. Revised **Response Plan to the increased number of migrants on the territory of the Republic of Serbia** for the period **April-December 2017** was adopted in December 2016.

In order to prepare and regularly update these plans, the key co-ordination of the competent bodies is achieved through the work of the **Working Group for Solving the Problem of Mixed Migration Flows** that was established by the Government in June 2015. Following new government, new Working group was established in August 2017. The Working Group was formed with the task of monitoring, analyzing and discussing the issues of mixed migration flows in the Republic of Serbia with a special emphasis on problems in this area, analyzing the situation and proposals for measures to solve the identified problems and aligning positions of competent state authorities and other organizations and institutions dealing with the issue of mixed migration flows. Meetings of the Working Group are held regularly.

In accordance with the Law on Migration Management, the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration proposes to the Government measures aimed at the provision of care of irregular migrants. From the beginning of a massive influx of migrants from Macedonia's direction in June 2015, 14 reception centers were opened in order to secure the acceptance and accommodation of migrants. Centers were opened based on the development of the situation and related needs (mass inflow, change of the main directions of movement, closing of the WB route, prolonged retention in the territory of the Republic of Serbia, large number of families with children), and at this moment, there are 13 reception centers. The total capacities in both the reception centers and asylum centers are 6,000 places, with the possibility of increasing them by using facilities intended for shorter retention in case of need.

Given that migrants will remain in Serbia for longer period of time steps were undertaken to establish standards in reception-transit centers that will be approximate to those in the centers for asylum, as also the continuous improving of living conditions and services provided therein.

Asylum policy

The Government unanimously accepted the draft Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection. The draft law would soon be included in the parliamentary procedure. Having regard the commitments undertaken in the EU accession process, the new Law has been harmonized with the European Union directives regulating the field of asylum, in particular Directive 2011/95/EU, Directive 2013/32 /EU, as well as Directive 2013/33/EU.

The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration is responsible for the implementation of asylum regulations related to the accommodation of asylum seekers in the asylum centers and the provision of basic living conditions while the status determination process is ongoing as well as integration of persons who were granted international protection. The Commissariat manages five centers for asylum: Banja Koviljača, Bogovađa, Sjenica, Tutin and Krnjača. In these facilities, 810 beds were available until the beginning of the migrant crisis (June 2015). During the migration crisis, the capacities in these centers have been further increased to over 1.800, in order to respond to the increased influx of migrants.

In order to support the integration of persons who have been granted international protection, the relevant secondary legislation was adopted (Regulation regulating housing assistance provision (July 2015) and the Regulation on the manner of inclusion in the social, cultural and economic life of persons granted the right to asylum (December 2016)). This enabled the implementation of the provisions of the laws that provide assistance in the integration of persons who were granted protection. The Regulation regulating housing assistance provision is being implemented for nearly two years. The implementation of the Regulation on the manner of inclusion in social, cultural and economic life has practically begun with the development of individual integration plans, organization of classes of the Serbian language for persons who have been granted international protection, provision of one-time financial assistance by the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration etc.

The Republic of Serbia is committed to improve the asylum system and is working intensively in accordance with the AP for Chapter 24 on the implementation of all necessary measures in order to fully comply with EU practices and standards.