

Contribution by Romania to working session 2 and 3

ROMANIA



MINISTRY OF ADMINISTRATION AND INTERIOR NATIONAL AGENCY AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

National Agency against Trafficking in Persons - Presentation -

Considered to be a modern form of the “slave trade” and one of the most serious violations of the human rights, the trafficking in persons has experienced an alarming evolution in the last years. This wide-ranging phenomenon has turned Romania into a transit country and, to a lesser extent, into a source and destination country for trafficking in persons, as mentioned in the Monitoring Report of the European Commission on May 16, 2006.

Therefore, the Romanian Government, taking into consideration by priority, the issue of the trafficking in persons, set up the National Agency against Trafficking in Persons through the *Government Decision no. 1584 of December 8, 2005* (Official Monitor of Romania no. 5 / January 4, 2006).

As a response to the late developments of the phenomenon, the Romanian Government decided to amend the GD no. 1584/2005 with the view of improving the quality of services provided to the victims and streamlining the effectiveness of prevention activities. In this respect, through the new *GD no. 1083/16 August 2006* the organisation chart was adjusted to the needs by extending the regional centres network (from 8 to 15 centers) and supplementing the total number of positions to 100, out of which 55 are in the headquarters and 45 on regional level. Furthermore, the Agency was nominated as the authorized institution to transmit official data on trafficking in person phenomenon and was empowered to contract assistance services for the victims of trafficking with specialized NGOs. Moreover, the Agency can draw up and manage national programs on preventing trafficking in persons and providing assistance to the victims of trafficking, using state budget funds.

The purpose of the Agency is to coordinate, evaluate and monitor, at the national level, the implementation of policies in the field of trafficking in persons by the public institutions, as well as those in the field of protection and assistance provided to its victims.

The Agency has as main attributions:

- to draft the National Strategies on trafficking in persons and the National Action Plans by taking into consideration the proposals submitted by the other institutions with responsibilities in the field;
- to coordinate and evaluate the trafficking in persons prevention activities at national level and to monitor the assistance provided to the victims of trafficking, in pursuant the achievement of the objectives stipulated in the National Action Plans and the National Strategies;

- to coordinate the collaboration activities carried out by the public institutions together with the NGOs for achieving the objectives in the National Strategy;
- to draw up the national standards in the field together with the involved public institutions and NGOs, which are submitted for approval to the Government;
- to establish the indicators and evaluation criteria of the trafficking in persons phenomenon;
- to collect, store, process and analyse statistical data and information in its area of responsibility;
- to carry out surveys and research on the diagnosis and evolution of the trafficking in persons phenomenon;
- to support the Human Rights information activity for the victims of trafficking in persons, both within the country and abroad;
- to facilitate statistical data and information exchange between the institutions with attributions in the field, within the country and abroad;
- to submit proposals for the amendment and completion of the legislation in the field;
- to disseminate, within the legal framework, official data and information in the field of prevention of trafficking in persons and assistance provided to the victims of trafficking in persons;
- to develop programmes and projects in the field of prevention of trafficking in persons and assistance provided to the victims of trafficking and to provide other institutions with needed support in running programmes, on request;
- to draw up, in cooperation with other structures of the Ministry of Administration and Interior, based on data supplied by the public institutions with attributions in the field, the annual report on the evolution and level of the trafficking in persons phenomenon, which is submitted for approval to the Romanian Government;
- to draw up national interest programs on preventing trafficking in persons and assistance provided to the victims of trafficking with the view of their social reintegration;
- to manage, or if the case, to monitor, the management of funds allocated for financing the programs in its field of activity;
- to carry out international cooperation activities in the field and to monitor and evaluate the international cooperation activities carried out by the public institutions in the field of competency;
- to have representatives in the specialized groups or structures of the European Union, as well as in the international organisations in the field.

In order to achieve its objectives, the Agency cooperates with governmental and non-governmental organisations within the country and abroad, as well as with inter-governmental organisations with the view of raising the public awareness on the phenomenon and its consequences.

The Agency is coordinated by a President. Among the main responsibilities of the president of the Agency, the following can be mentioned: the President is the national coordinator of the activity for preventing the trafficking in persons and providing protection and assistance to the victims of trafficking; coordinates the drafting of the National Strategy against Trafficking in persons and of its action plans and takes action towards their implementation; outlines and prepares proposals for the annual budget of the Agency; monitors and controls the implementation of his own decisions, of the international conventions and agreements in which Romania is signing party and recommends measures to ensure the accomplishment of the obligations deriving from these international documents.

Help Line

The Agency set up a Help-line (free line number is: 0 800 800 678) which became functional on August 19, 2006, when the Agency in partnership with ADPARE (Romanian NGO), and with the financial support of MTV Great Britain, organised the EXIT (End Exploitation and Trafficking) prevention campaign in Costinesti youth resort, at the Black Sea. Within the campaign there were distributed 2000 flyers which promoted the Help-Line free number.

Regional centres

Among the responsibilities of these centres, the following can be mentioned: taking the victim from the institutions for countering the trafficking (police or border police) and their assistance during the first interview; informing the victims on their rights and on the available assistance services, referring the victim to shelters or to other necessary types of assistance, informing them on their role in the criminal process, the specific procedures, etc., and assures their participation in the process. The centres also support the victims in obtaining their identity cards and establish the contact between victims and the professional reintegration or the re-inclusion in the educational system services, and the monitoring the reintegration of victims over a period of at least six months.

Within the SENS project, the Agency was involved, in partnership with the AIDRom (a Romanian NGO) and SOLWODI (a German NGO) in the initiation and development of a regional campaign for preventing the trafficking in persons during the Football World Cup, Germany, 2006. The campaign consisted in training of the Border Police officers and distribution of materials at the cross border points. These materials, entitled “Do not pass on human beings”, informed the potential victims of trafficking in persons on a few aspects of this phenomenon.

Priorities

A series of short and medium-term priorities were identified, as follows:

1. Development of the national IT integrated system, which will include a centralized database regarding trafficking in persons phenomenon;
2. Setting up the national victim identification and referral mechanism;
3. Setting up the quality standards for victim assistance;
4. Carrying out a national study regarding the trafficking in persons;
5. Training the personnel to identify the victims and provide them with effective assistance towards their social rehabilitation.

Taking into consideration the priorities stated above, the National Strategy on trafficking in persons 2006-2010, was drawn up in accordance with the *EU plan on best practices, standards and procedures for combating and preventing trafficking in human beings* and is currently under approval.

Thus, the draft of 2006-2007 Action Plan for the implementation of the National Strategy is focused on the victim rights, ensuring that it is fully protected at all stages in the process. The creation of an integrated IT system having at its core the centralized database on trafficking in persons is the first objective set in the Action Plan and its accomplishment will facilitate and increase the effectiveness of the prevention, identification, referral and assistance activities. The Action Plan stipulates the development of prevention strategies specific for vulnerable groups such as women and unaccompanied children, persons with disabilities, or persons requesting asylum. Furthermore, the chapter on protection, assistance and social reinsertion provided to the victims sets objectives aiming at putting in place appropriate mechanisms to enable the early identification and referral of trafficked persons. In the international cooperation field, strengthening the dialogue with origin, transit and destination countries on anti-trafficking policies represents the main objective.