



Trafficking in human beings and gender equality issues

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Article 17 of the CoE Anti-Trafficking Convention

- Each Party shall, in applying measures referred to in this chapter [Chapter III - Measures to protect and promote the rights of victims, guaranteeing gender equality] aim to promote gender equality and use gender mainstreaming in the development , implementation and assessment of measures.
- Other relevant provisions: Article 1.1.b and 5.3 (gender mainstreaming in the development, implementation and assessment of prevention policies and programmes)

Article 6 – Measures to discourage demand

- Positive duty upon States to discourage demand, through a variety of measures, including “educational programmes for boys and girls during their schooling which stress the unacceptable nature of discrimination based on sex .. the importance of **gender equality** ... “

Monitoring mechanism: GRETA



- **Article 36 of the Convention:**
“GRETA shall be composed of a minimum of 10 members and a maximum of 15 members, taking into account a **gender** and geographical balance, as well as a multidisciplinary expertise.”

GRETA's experts (2012-2016)

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Monitoring procedure

- Divided in rounds:

 - 1st evaluation round: launched in 2010

 - 2nd evaluation round: launched in May 2014

- GRETA

 - selects the Convention provisions to be monitored in each round

 - determines the means of evaluation (questionnaire, country visit ..)

GRETA's second round questionnaire (used since May 2014)

- What specific measures are taken in your country to address the gender dimension of THB and incorporate gender equality into the policies to prevent and combat THB and to protect and promote the rights of victims, including through the empowerment of women and girls?

Examples from 2nd round reports

- **Bulgaria:** The National Strategy for Encouraging Gender Equality (2009-2015) aims to create guarantees for equal treatment, equal access to public resources and equal participation in decision-making for women and men in Bulgaria. Eliminating gender-based violence and trafficking in human beings is one of the strategic goals of this National Strategy. This goal is pursued through specific measures set forth in annual national action plans for the implementation of the Strategy. These national action plans contain measures for encouraging economic independence of both women and men, preventing gender-based violence in all its forms, eliminating gender-based stereotypes and counteracting gender-based stereotypes and discrimination.
- Since 2013, an inter-institutional Action Plan implementing the concluding observations of CEDAW). The Action Plan includes, *inter alia*, measures in the areas of gender equality, counteracting trafficking in human beings and overcoming stereotypes and discriminatory practices. There are 14 measures in the area of “Trafficking and Exploitation of Prostituting Women”.
- **Recommendation:** GRETA considers that ...further efforts should be made to promote gender equality, combat gender-based violence and stereotypes, and support specific policies for the empowerment of women as a means of combating the root causes of THB.

Examples from 2nd round reports

- **Republic of Moldova (1st round report):** The difficult situation of women victims of THB is further exacerbated by strong gender stereotypes and their stigmatisation. This is why it is crucial that the Moldovan authorities pay particular attention to promoting gender equality and use gender mainstreaming in the development, implementation and assessment of the anti-THB measures.
- **2nd round report:** The Moldovan authorities have referred to a number of initiatives to promote the economic inclusion of women. The programme "Women's Economic Empowerment through Increasing Employability ", implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family and the Ministry of Economy, in partnership with UN Women and with the financial support of the Swedish Government, aims at informing, empowering and enabling women from rural areas to enjoy their social and economic rights.
- Victims of domestic violence have the status of potential victims of THB and access to the support measures under the National Referral System. In this way the National Referral System also serves to prevent and combat domestic violence and to support vulnerable categories such as women exposed to violence. The Moldovan authorities run several centres for psycho-social rehabilitation of domestic violence victims across the country. Further, the 2010-2015 National Plan on gender equality envisages measures to strengthen the social programmes and the rehabilitation and re-socialisation measures for victims of violence and victims of THB.

Measures to discourage demand

- **UK:** In Northern Ireland, the purchase of sexual services has been criminalised through the recently adopted Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2015. In line with its statutory obligations under the Act, the Northern Ireland Department of Justice will review this legislative provision by June 2018 and assess the extent to which the law has operated to reduce human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation.
- GRETA has stressed the importance of keeping under review the impact of the legislation criminalising the purchase of sexual services on the identification of victims of trafficking, the provision of protection and assistance to victims of THB, and the effective prosecution of traffickers. The impact of the criminalisation of the purchase of sexual services on the reduction of demand for the services of trafficked persons, and more broadly on the phenomenon of THB for the purposes of sexual exploitation, should also be continuously assessed.

Different forms of human trafficking and the gender perspective

- Sexual exploitation remains the predominant form as far as formally identified victims are concerned; the majority of victims are women and girls.
- In some countries, forced labour has emerged as the predominant form of exploitation and the majority of the victims are men and boys.

Other gender related issues in GRETA reports

- ❑ Comprehensive approach to human trafficking: criticism of focus exclusively on women/girls and sexual exploitation. This has an impact on national coordinating structures (e.g. **Spain** - Government Delegation against Gender-based Violence)
- ❑ GRETA has urges the Spanish authorities to take steps to ensure that national and regional action to combat THB is comprehensive, in particular by ... addressing all victims of trafficking for all forms of exploitation in the anti-trafficking legal and policy framework, while taking into account the gender-dimension of trafficking, including through a comprehensive national action plan against THB.
- ❑ Lack of assistance measures, including safe accommodation, for male victims of trafficking.

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Thank you!