

Committee of the Parties  
to the Council of Europe Convention  
on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings



CP(2017)16

Report submitted by the Croatian authorities  
on measures taken to comply with  
Committee of the Parties Recommendation  
CP(2016)3 on the implementation  
of the Council of Europe Convention  
on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings

Second evaluation round

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### Recommendation CP (2016)3

#### On the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Croatia (round 2)

1. Recommends that the Croatian authorities take measures to address the following issues for immediate action identified in GRETA's report:
  - intensify their efforts to prevent child trafficking, including by:
    - addressing the vulnerability of unaccompanied children and children placed in institutions and avoid that they go missing;

*In addition to care and protection provided to foreign-national unaccompanied minors, staff of social welfare homes also care of their psychological and physical condition, mental health, socialisation, leisure time as well as learning. Foreign national unaccompanied minors are being provided with support in building a positive image of self; learning social skills as well as with integration assistance. Professional staff of social welfare centres monitor the accommodation conditions and the provision of care to the child by keeping regular contacts and organizing field visits to the homes, ensuring funds for basic living needs of unaccompanied minors and monitoring the work of special guardians.*

*In order to improve the already existing system for the protection of unaccompanied minors, the Government of the Republic of Croatia has adopted the Protocol on Procedures for Separated Children – Foreign Nationals (adopted by the Government of Croatia's Conclusion as of 18 July 2013), the 2013-2016 National Human Rights Protection and Promotion Programme, as well as the 2013-2015 Migration Policy of the Republic of Croatia. All three documents envisaged the establishment of a list of special guardians, specifically trained to provide protection and care to unaccompanied minors. Against that backdrop, a training for unaccompanied minors' special guardians has been held in 2014. The Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy has at hand the List of Special Guardians covering the areas in which unaccompanied minors are being encountered and accommodated (Zagreb, Kutina, Osijek, Rijeka, Split). Given that the list of special guardians requires updating and there is a need to train new special guardians, the upcoming period will see the consideration of the best possible ways for regular updating and keeping the list and enabling its availability. Importantly, from the beginning of the migration crisis an intense cooperation has been established between all stakeholders involved in providing care to unaccompanied minors. Together with other state administration bodies, the Ombudswoman for Children, civil society organization and international organisations (UNHCR, UNICEF, the Red Cross), the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy takes part in the work of three coordinating committees: coordinating committee on international protection seekers; coordinating committee on persons granted international protection; and coordinating committee on unaccompanied minors. The stakeholders keep regular appointments and deal with problems spotted on the ground, as well as with individual cases.*

*Mol – Unaccompanied international protection seeking children represent a vulnerable group amongst the international protection seekers. Hence, it is in their best interest to be kept under 24-hour care of social welfare centre staff. This is the reason for accommodating unaccompanied minors solely into adequate homes for children and youth, whose founder is the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy of the Republic of Croatia. The appointed special guardians or staff of social welfare centres decide on their accommodation, with that the facilities are mainly open-type, i.e. children may freely come and leave. A child may exceptionally be accommodated in the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers when a judgment was made it would be in the best interest of the child to be accommodated together with his/her relative. Since the best interest of the child determination falls within the remit of the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy of the Republic of Croatia, police officers of*

*the General Police Directorate of this Ministry refrains from commencing any procedure with an unaccompanied minor as long as a representative of the social welfare centre in charge hasn't arrived on premises of the police as a person to make a decision on the appointment of a guardian and on the accommodation of an unaccompanied minor.*

*In respect of the above, we would like to point out that each unaccompanied minor who expresses the intent to apply for international protection is being examined by a physician before the actual accommodation. In case there would be a need for any additional medical treatment, the same has been provided for in keeping with Art. 57 of the Act on International and Temporary protection (Official Gazette, OG 70/15), which also goes for the provision of psychosocial assistance and support. Police officers are being urgently notified in case of suspicion of trafficking, as well as in the case of a child disappearance or his/her leaving the place of accommodation for no justified reason. Moreover, a doctor's office has been established in the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers, with a number of civil society organizations active around the issues of refugee rights protection. We would like to specifically highlight cooperation with UNICEF which is also conducting its activities in the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers.*

*In respect of regulating the status of the said category of foreigners in the Republic of Croatia, we are pointing out that the Foreigners Act prescribes an option to approve temporary residence on humanitarian grounds to a foreigner – if he/she has accepted a programme of assistance and protection as a victim of trafficking in human beings. In the procedure for the approval of temporary residence, this category of foreigners has been excluded from the requirement to provide evidence of possessing means to support self and health insurance.*

*A foreigner who is a victim of trafficking in human beings files his/her application for the approval of temporary residence on humanitarian grounds in the presence of a representative of a legal person rendering assistance and protection to such a foreigner, whereas the application on behalf of a minor victim of trafficking in human beings is being filed by a guardian in minor's presence. Amongst other things, a certificate on the status of a victim is being enclosed with the application.*

*If the victim possesses no identification document or if there is suspicion concerning his/her identity, personal data indicated by the victim will be considered his/her personal data, until proven otherwise. If the age of the victim may not be established with certainty, and the victim claims to be a minor, the procedure proceeds as if a minor is being involved.*

*The Foreigners Act prescribed that a victim for whose benefit temporary residence has been approved is entitled to safe accommodation, health protection, financial assistance, education and work, while special care is being provided to pregnant women and persons with disabilities as especially vulnerable victim groups. Furthermore, the said Act prescribes that in instances when the victim is a minor, all bodies involved in the programme of assistance to and protection of the minor victim are obliged to take account of the best interest of the child, and that special measures aimed at establishing the identity, nationality and seeking for other members of his/her family will be conducted by this Ministry, while the body in charge of social welfare will appoint a guardian.*

*The Education and Teacher Training Agency indicates that, in keeping with the guidelines of the European Parliament whereby child refugees should be ensured an uninterrupted access to education and promotion of their integration into national education systems and learning the language of the host countries, amendments have been made to the Act on Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools as of 1 January 2017. This resulted in providing for legislation and giving the opportunity to schools to organise additional types of direct educational work with a view to a more successful integration and socialization of the arrived pupils.*

- ensuring that foster parents are adequately sensitised to human trafficking

*Concerning sensitisation of professional staff and foster families in respect of trafficking in human beings, we would like to report that the Ministry-developed Annual Programme of Professional Training of Social Welfare Institution Staff envisages for the year of 2017 the delivery of a training session titled "Working with Unaccompanied Children, International Protection Seeking Children and Child Asylees". HRK 25,000.00 has been allocated for this training with the plan to deliver training for approximately 100 professional staff in social welfare homes and centres for rendering community services. The training will also cover topics relative to vulnerabilities of unaccompanied children and children accommodated in institutions as well as to avoidance of their disappearance. Additionally, the upcoming period will also see the incorporation of this topic into training sessions aimed at foster families.*

- take additional steps to ensure that all victims of trafficking are identified as such and can benefit from the assistance and protection measures contained in the Convention, in particular by:
  - taking steps so that law enforcement officials, social workers, NGOs and other relevant actors adopt a more proactive approach and increase their outreach work to identify victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation;

*Within the established trafficking in human beings prevention system, a great deal of attention is being paid to training of all target groups.*

*Within the framework of the Specialist Course on Juvenile Delinquency and Crime against the Youth and the Family, training sessions are being delivered on an on-going basis by specifically trained police officers for youth on all new phenomena of violence against children, including sexual abuse and exploitation of children for prostitution and pornography, child begging and other forms of forced labour and child abuse, as well as recognizing the needs and mechanisms for protecting child victims of THB. "Prevention of trafficking in human beings" topic is also being delivered within the course.*

*In addition to professional training and specialization of police officers, the Police Academy of the Ministry of the Interior has also delivered courses for border and traffic police tackling the issues of trafficking in human beings. Moreover, THB issues have also been covered during specialist graduate studies on Criminology at the High Police School.*

*Moreover, the National Plan for the Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings 2017-2020 contains in its "Identification of Victims of trafficking in human beings" chapter a special measure aimed at applying a proactive approach following a model of police work guided by crime investigation and intelligence information aimed at improving the identification of victims of THB and the detection of perpetrators of THB and related crimes.*

*The Education and Teacher Training Agency highlights that, within the framework of its curriculum and the annual work plan and programme, each elementary and secondary school devises a preventive programme which also incorporates the health education programme and contents in relation with sexual, gender equality, humane values, tolerance and prevention of violence. Moreover, the implementation of the civic education programme also captures topics and outcomes relative to the prevention of trafficking in human beings. Further, the enhancement of cooperation between the schools and the representatives of the police and the Red Cross over the past years, the final grades of elementary and secondary schools have seen the delivery of lectures and screening of films covering the topic of trafficking in human beings. Students and education staff have thereby been familiarized with the global problem of trafficking in human beings, which gains broader and broader proportions of*

*organised crime and have been instructed in recognising potentially dangerous and risky situations and in critical thinking about the consequences of potentially wrong choices. Additional preventive campaign "Together", which has been carried out in counties in observance of 18 October as the Day against Trafficking in Human Beings, citizens have been informed of the topic in public places as well.*

- increasing efforts to proactively identify victims of trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation, including among irregular migrant workers, by reinforcing the role and training of labour inspectors, and providing the Labour Inspectorate (including construction and agriculture inspectorates) with the resources required to effectively prevent and combat trafficking in human beings;

*Towards a proactive identification of victims of trafficking in human beings for labour exploitation, prevention and countering trafficking in human beings for the said purpose and the identification of victims of THB in relation to their labour exploitation and the conducting further criminalist investigations, we point out that the General Police Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior has established excellent cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Pension System of the Republic of Croatia. In addition to exchanging knowledge on possible breaches of the Labour Act and other, the General Police Directorate and the staff of the Ministry of Labour and Pension System jointly take part in the conducting of operative actions (also of international nature) aiming at preventing and detecting the said criminal offences associated with labour exploitation.*

*In addition, we emphasise that each police administration has a number of police officers trained for the detection and prevention of trafficking in human beings who directly partake in the identification of victims of THB in each individual case, as well as in the detection of perpetrators of the said crimes. In each case of identification of victims of THB representatives of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia, as members of the Operative Team of the National Committee for Combating trafficking in human beings of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, together with police officers nominated across police administrations for monitoring and combating trafficking in human beings, take a continuous and active part in initiating the provision of individualized programmes of assistance and protection. With a view to rendering adequate and urgent assistance and protection, police officers in charge of juvenile delinquency and criminal law protection of children and minors are being notified of each case in which determination has been made that a victim of THB is a child or a minor.*

*At an initiative of the representatives from the United Kingdom and the representatives of the Inspectorates of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Labour Inspectorate of the Ministry of Labour and Pension System has developed an address book with contacts of labour inspectorates in member-states with an overview of legislation supervised by labour inspectors in the respective member-states with a view to a more efficient exchange of data on possible cases of trafficking in human beings, as well as explanation of jurisdiction of the labour inspectorate. In line with this agreement, the Labour Inspectorate has drafted an overview of the provisions contained in the Labour Act, the Pension Insurance Act, the Compulsory Health Insurance Act and the Foreigners Act. These are being applied by labour inspectors in case of their establishment of illegal work, i.e. unregistered employment of both Croatian and foreign nationals, which may be one of the circumstantial evidence of trafficking in human beings for labour exploitation.*

*Moreover, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, the Labour Inspectorate has taken part in a Joint Action Day on combating trafficking in human beings for labour exploitation, organized in June 2016 at the initiative of the Inspectorate of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Gangmasters Licensing Authority and with the support of Europol. The Joint Action Day has seen the participation of 23 labour inspectors from all Regional Labour Inspectorate Offices of the Ministry of Labour and Pension*

*System. Altogether, they have carried out 26 onsite inspections in meat processing industry, catering, assistance and care service provision, bakeries and construction industry:*

*The onsite inspections established that one employer from the construction industry has hired 10 citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina without residence and work permits, i.e. without a certificate of registered work, which is contrary to the provision of the Foreigners Act; a total of 12 Croatian nationals without registered compulsory pension insurance with one employer from the meat processing industry; 3 Croatian nationals hired with 3 employers from catering and service provision industries; 1 Croatian national with an employer from the bakeries sector; 4 Croatian nationals with 2 employers in the assistance and caregiving sector. Based on the established factual status, the inspectors have issued one employer with an administrative sanction prohibiting him to continue performing business based on the Foreigners Act, whereas seven employers have been issued with administrative sanctions prohibiting them to perform their business in adherence with the Pension Insurance Act. Moreover, motions to start proceedings have been supplied to the competent misdemeanour courts based on the established breaches of laws from the remit of the Labour Inspectorate.*

*We would highlight that the inspection exercise with one employer from the service provision industry (massage) led to establishing work of two citizens of the Kingdom of Thailand against the provisions contained in the Labour Act. These breaches and the accommodation conditions of the labourers ensured by the employers have indicated possible trafficking in human beings for labour exploitation. Based on the established facts, and taking a course of action from its remit, the labour inspectorate has issued a misdemeanour order to the employer for the established breaches of the employment regulations, whereas police officers have pressed criminal charges against the employer with the competent state attorney's office due to a reasonable suspicion of the commitment of the trafficking in human beings criminal offence.*

*Furthermore, the Ministry of the Interior and the Labour Inspectorate partook in an expert meeting in The Hague organized by Europol Analytical Work File, Serious and Organised Crime/Focal Point Phoenix aimed at promoting cooperation between police officers and labour inspectors at national and international levels with a view to preparing a Joint Action Plan in May 2017, which will again see the participation of both police officers of the Ministry of the Interior and the labour inspectors from the Republic of Croatia. To effectuate more detailed agreements, the next expert meeting organized by the National Crime Agency of Great Britain and the Dutch Labour Inspectorate with the support of Europol, will be held in March 2017 in The Hague. The meeting aims at cooperation between police officers and labour inspectors from member-states in joint priorities and identified objectives aimed at combating trafficking in human beings for labour exploitation.*

- *paying increased attention to detecting victims of trafficking among asylum seekers and persons placed in the Reception Shelter for Foreigners. In this context, training on the identification of victims of trafficking should be provided to staff, including medical staff of centres for asylum seekers and irregular migrants;*

*During September and December 2013, police officers from the Reception Centre for Foreigners of the General Police Directorate have taken part in a two-day training aimed at the identification of potential victims of trafficking in human beings amongst illegal migrants and their sensitization to special needs of such persons. The project "Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings Amongst Illegal Migrants" has been funded by the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia.*

*Furthermore, in September 2016 a police officer from the Karlovac Police Administration has taken part in a train-the-trainers course for border police on combating trafficking in human beings organized by*

*FRONTEX (European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union).*

*With a view to a better detection of potential cases of trafficking in human beings amongst migrants, the National Plan on the Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings 2017-2020 also envisages the development of indicators, guidelines and tools for identification of victims of trafficking in human beings amongst migrants and international protection seekers.*

- securing adequate funding for specialised NGOs to enable them to effectively take part in identification performed by mobile teams and to undertake outreach work in order to proactively identify victims of trafficking;

*Within its budget line item, the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities has retained activities relative to funding civil society organisations and has planned financial resources towards meeting this activity. Concerning the funding of mobile teams, in adherence to the Protocol on Identification, Assistance and Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings, it has been envisaged that the mobile team members who use their own means of transportation for the deployment to the spot of victim identification are entitled to claim travel expenses to be reimbursed for each mobile team member by a body on whose behalf he/she has been nominated. Moreover, the Office for Human Rights has envisaged an option in its budget to reimburse expenses for the deployment of civil society organisations.*

- providing regular training on the identification of victims of trafficking in human beings to all frontline staff who may come into contact with possible victims, including operational indicators, guidance and toolkits for the identification of victims of human trafficking;

*As indicated above, the National Plan for the Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings 2017-2020 envisages the activities relative to the development of guidelines and indicators towards a facilitated identification of victims of trafficking in human beings. It also envisages the development of indicators, guidelines and tools for identification of victims of trafficking in human beings amongst migrants and international protection seekers, as well as the development of indicators, guidelines and tools for identification of child victims of trafficking in human beings.*

*Regular training of professionals in identification of victims of trafficking in human beings is a part of regular activities of all competent institutions. The topic has been devoted a separate chapter in the National Plan for the Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings 2017-2020 under section "Training". The envisaged measures concern training of police staff, judges, lawyers, staff of the State Attorney's Office of the Republic of Croatia and the representatives of the civil society organisations working on cases of trafficking in human beings, members of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia, staff of family centres, institutes and social welfare centres, as well as health coordinators and representatives of civil society organisations, staff of the Office for the Support to Witnesses and Victims and civil society organisations with a view to providing assistance to and protection of victims of trafficking in human beings, judges, state attorneys and police officers in Judicial and Police Academies, diplomatic and consular staffs and students of the Diplomatic Academy, the staff of the Croatian Employment Service, staff in tourism and other catering industries as well as staff in the education sector and students, employees, children and young adults in homes for children without adequate parental care and homes for children with behavioural disorders.*

*The Education and Teacher Training Agency has been delivering professional improvement sessions for expert associates and other educational staff via county expert assemblies covering the topics of Inclusion of Refugee Children and Pupils; Rendering Adequate Psychosocial Assistance, which*

*contributed to the recognition, understanding and better strategic planning for the purpose of reception and dealing with specific cases in practice. Integration of children in the regular system of education saw the application of a comprehensive approach which links together all key actors in an institution but also in the local community, whose support and assistance stands as a relevant element.*

- improve the identification and assistance to child victims of trafficking, in particular by:
  - ensuring that relevant actors take a proactive approach and increase their outreach work to identify child victims of trafficking by paying particular attention to children in institutions, Roma children and unaccompanied minors;

*In respect of all of the above, in the identification of child victims of crimes, police officers apply the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. Actions in the cases of criminal law protection of children are being taken by specifically trained police officers for youth, who ensure conditions for the identification of various forms of threats to the rights of the child and the provision of support to child victims; starting from the priority of safeguarding, ensuring specially equipped rooms adapted for interviewing children, an option to question a child in a home, ensuring per child's wish to be interviewed in the presence of a person of trust in addition to the guardian, the presence of social welfare centre staff member in case of parent's/guardian's unavailability or when such are suspects, protection of child's privacy, all the way to covert investigative examinations. All proceeding in which there is suspicion of child abuse and exploitation are being considered urgent and are run based on the principles of the best interest of the child which implies especially considerate treatment and the provision of additional support to the child through the social welfare and health protection as well as by civil society organisations for the victim assistance and support. In cooperation with partners from the systems of education, health, social policy and youth and the civil society organisations, knowledge of possible threats to the child is being exchanged. Special attention is being paid to cases of threats to vulnerable children, e.g. unaccompanied minors, Roma children or institutionalised children. We would point out children who escape institutions, i.e. disappear from their parental homes as an especially vulnerable group. For this reason, the General Police Directorate's officers for juveniles pay a special attention upon the discovery of such children to the identification of the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of the child as well as the possibility that the child might have fallen a victim of a criminal offence during the escape. Aware of the fact that early marriage also carries a risk of bondage or similar relationship with the person in question, his/her forced labour or servitude, sexual exploitation, prostitution or other sanctionable actions, due attention is being paid to these circumstances during the conducting of criminalist examinations of the grounds for suspicion of the commitment of a criminal offence.*

*Further, in terms of prevention and a proactive approach, we highlight that the General Police Directorate of this Ministry conducts a series of preventive activities, projects and training sessions aimed at preventing trafficking in human beings, child trafficking more specifically.*

*Against such a backdrop, the General Police Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia has been carrying out a preventive campaign for the fourth consecutive year titled "Together" in cooperation with numerous partners, competent institutions and organisations, the private sector (exposed professions), local community, civil society organisations and the citizens.*

*The campaign aims at raising awareness of the prevention of trafficking in human beings, i.e. encouraging the society to react responsibly in order to contribute to diminishing and suppressing trafficking in human beings. It also aims at having each individual contribute from his/her own*



*perspective to the recognition and removal of dangerous and risky situations, as well as to a proactive detection of potential threats associated with this or related types of crime.*

*Hence, the General Police Directorate of this Ministry has initiated a series of preventive activities across the Republic of Croatia, including those of educational character and those aimed at sensitisation. Depending on the police administration on whose territory such preventive activities are being organised (police administrations along the coastline, police administrations with border crossings, etc.), target groups differ and are being selected in accordance with the police administration's assessment of vulnerable groups in need of training, information and sensitisation.*

*The effort to date included training of the following: staffs of marinas, ferry ports and marine carriers, staff at border crossings and staff in businesses at border, airport auxiliary service staff, staff in accommodation facilities (hotels, bed and breakfast facilities, hostels, etc.), staff of the Croatian Employment Service and various inspection services (for tourism, labour, tax and customs), citizens through info points at public spots in the vicinity of universities, student dormitories and restaurants, pupils of final grades of elementary and secondary vocational schools, freight truck and bus drivers, staff at petrol stations and rest areas at motorways and state roads, owners and staff of catering facilities, the unemployed who seek jobs abroad, taxi drivers, staff at bus stations, staff of the Croatian Railway company and other services performing international railroad transport, etc.*

*In 2016 alone, the "Together" campaign resulted in training of nearly 700 pupils of final grades of elementary schools, more than 6,000 pupils of final grades of secondary schools, approximately 120 students and 36 kindergarten children.*

*In addition, the following has been organised and performed in 2016: focused theatrical show for approximately 600 in attendance, training of staff and beneficiaries of the **Bedekovčina** Correctional Home – 15 persons, training for 158 police officers and 60 staff of the Customs Administration of the Ministry of Finance, info points at public sports, Roma settlements, border crossings, as well as numerous other preventive activities. Citizens have been informed in the Prevention Info Centres and through the use of a mobile prevention info centre and through thematic TV and radio shows, articles in printed magazines and websites.*

*This campaign also saw cooperation with a civil society organisation "CESI – Centre for Education, Counselling and Research" in conducting an international preventive campaign "Two little girls".*

*In addition to the "Together" campaign, the General Police Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia has been coordinating for the fifth consecutive year the implementation of a preventative project titled "I have a choice", which is being carried out in an educational institution in the **Međimurje** County in cooperation with the **Međimurje** Police Administration and partners.*

*The project thematically focuses on strengthening social inclusion of minority groups, especially of Roma national minority in the **Međimurje** area into the community, where emphasis is being put on dialogue and respect for cultural similarities and differences by building cultural tolerance, non-violence and anti-discrimination, as well as the prevention of all forms of hate speech. Prevention of trafficking in human beings is one of the project components, specifically emphasizing male and female Roma pupils.*

*Project target group are the children aged 10 and 11, and the project covered 70 pupils during 2015/2016 school year. The evaluation of the project indicates children's and project partner's acceptance of the project.*

- addressing the problem of disappearance of unaccompanied minors from reception centres for asylum seekers, by providing suitable safe accommodation and adequately trained staff;
- training all professionals working with child victims of trafficking to recognise and respond appropriately to their needs;

*The "Education" chapter of the new National Plan for the Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings 2017-2020 envisages measures and activities of further training of professionals and target groups on the trafficking in human being phenomenon, working with victims and their potential detection. Target groups include: police officers, members of armed forces of the Republic of Croatia deployed to peace missions, social welfare system staff, health workers, judges, lawyers, state attorneys, diplomatic and consular staff, journalists, students and members of civil society organisations.*

*Special attention is being paid to training of the police in line with the commitments defined in the National Plan for the Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings within the framework of additional professional training of trainers, i.e. lecturers from the Border Police of the General Police Directorate covering the topics of fundamental rights and the suppression of trafficking in human beings. The first joint video conference has been held in September 2016 for a total of 60 participants, covering the topic of exchanging experiences and good practices based on the activities during the migration crisis.*

*The curriculum of the Border Police Course of the General Police Directorate of this Ministry envisages 3-hour training in trafficking in human beings. During 2016, one General Police Directorate's Border Police Course has been delivered for a total of 49 police officers.*

*During September and December 2013, police officers from the Reception Centre for Foreigners of the General Police Directorate have taken part in a two-day training aimed at the identification of potential victims of trafficking in human beings amongst illegal migrants and their sensitization to special needs of such persons. The project "Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings Amongst Illegal Migrants" has been funded by the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia.*

*Furthermore, in September 2016 a police officer from the Karlovac Police Administration has taken part in a train-the-trainers course for border police on combating trafficking in human beings organised by FRONTEX (European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union).*

*Within the framework of the Specialist Course on Juvenile Delinquency and Crime against the Youth and the Family, training sessions are being delivered on an on-going basis by specifically trained police officers for youth on all new phenomena of violence against children, including sexual abuse and exploitation of children for prostitution and pornography, child begging and other forms of forced labour and child abuse, as well as recognizing the needs and mechanisms for protecting child victims of THB. "Prevention of trafficking in human beings" topic is also being delivered within the course.*

*In addition to professional training and specialization of police officers, the Police Academy of the Ministry of the Interior has also delivered courses for border and traffic policy tackling the issues of trafficking in human beings. Moreover, THB issues have also been covered during specialist graduate studies on Criminology at the High Police School.*

*During April 2016, the General Police Directorate has responded twice to an invitation from the Croatian Red Cross and with the support of the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, and has organised within the EU project PROTECT– People at Risk of Trafficking in Human Beings in Europe two regional training sessions for relevant institutions*

*included in the National Referral Mechanism for the suppression of trafficking in human beings for a total of 44 police officers of crime investigation and border police.*

*Further in 2016, police officers of police administration of the General Police Directorate have delivered several training sessions at local level, under which we would specifically emphasize training sessions for border and uniform police officers, secondary school pupils, students, an on-the-job meeting with the customs officers of the Customs Administration of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Croatia, etc.*

*The above is being carried out through regular training programmes of institutions and civil society organisations, but also through European projects.*

*Within the framework of IPA FFRAC 2012 project "Support to the Implementation of the Foreigners Integration Policy", there is a plan to deliver training courses aimed at methods of work with unaccompanied minors with an emphasis on the recognition of potential victims of trafficking amongst unaccompanied minors and rendering assistance and protection. The training course will encompass professional staff of social welfare centres, professional staff of accommodation service providers to unaccompanied minors and unaccompanied minors' special guardians. The activity will be carried out in Q4 2017.*

*Concerning special training sessions for judicial staff, the trafficking in human beings phenomenon takes an important place in expert assemblies of the State Attorney's Office of the Republic of Croatia for criminal law departments towards a more efficient criminal prosecution of perpetrators of the trafficking in human beings criminal offence.*

- facilitate and guarantee access to compensation to victims of THB, in particular by:
  - ensuring that all victims of human trafficking, regardless of nationality and residence status are eligible for state compensation;

*Ministry in charge has been notified of the recommendation.*

- enabling victims of trafficking to exercise their right to compensation, by building the capacity of legal practitioners to support victims to claim compensation;

*For the purpose of facilitating the process for the benefit of victims of trafficking in human beings during the proceedings, the measures contained in the new National Plan for the Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings are aimed at building a network of lawyers that would provide free legal assistance to the victims. Specialised lawyers will be specially trained by the Croatian Bar Association. The introduction of a list of specialised lawyers would enable victims of trafficking in human beings a facilitated exercising of their rights in the procedure.*

- including victim compensation into training programmes for law enforcement officials, prosecutors and judges;
- reviewing the eligibility criterion of serious injury for state compensation which is too restrictive.

*Ministry in charge has been notified of the recommendation.*

- take additional legislative and practical measures to ensure that:

- human trafficking cases are investigated proactively, prosecuted successfully, and lead to effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions;

*This has been implemented through further development of the Standard Operating Procedure of the Ministry of the Interior in proceedings aimed at the suppression of trafficking in human beings, strengthening a proactive work of police officers in the detection of recruitment of victims via the Internet and other open sources and the strengthening of a proactive work of police officers in detecting potential cases of trafficking in human beings during tourist season. With a view to achieving a more successful criminal prosecution, activities have also been envisaged towards strengthening cooperation between police officers and state attorneys in order to detect and adequately sanction the perpetrators and aides of the trafficking in human beings criminal offence, as well as the development of progressive methods for the detection of the trafficking in human beings offence through strengthening investigative techniques, including the financial investigations.*

- the offence of trafficking in human beings is excluded from the plea bargaining procedure.

*Regardless of the fact that the legislative groundwork, i.e. the Criminal Procedure Act, does not restrict the powers of a state attorney to bargain the terms of confession and sanctions with the suspect/defendant versus the type of a criminal offence, i.e. bargaining is not being excluded in advance for a criminal offence or offences, at a practical level there are certain restrictions concerning the exclusion of bargaining for such criminal offences and such circumstances of their commitment, as is the case with trafficking in human beings offence. Namely, the Act on State Attorney's vests the authority and obligation in the State Attorney to, amongst other, issue instructions for reaching an understanding with the defendant on the sanction. The instructions prescribe the manner of running such bargaining, the written form and contents of the agreement whose integral part is a statement for passing the verdict based on the agreement between the parties, as well as the manner for calculating the reduced legally prescribed sentence that should be applied in the specific case. The instructions may prescribe cases in which state attorneys cannot reach an agreement on a sentence based on the understanding between the parties. In 2010, the State Attorney has issued the instruction on proceedings during plea bargaining with suspects/defendants on the terms of confession and sanctions. The instruction has been issued for the purpose of having all state attorney's offices apply the same courses of action when running bargaining on confession and sanctions, and in order to pass a sanction upon the perpetrator of a criminal offence or apply a different measure within the confines of the legally prescribed for the committed offence based on the degree of guilt, detriment of the offence and purpose of sanction. In all the cases in which a state attorney judges that the understanding might be unacceptable for the victim and that it could have adverse consequences in the public, he/she shall notify the victim of his/her decision. This course of action should be applied always in case a victim has been gravely traumatised or in case of death of a person. State Attorney will refuse reaching an understanding in cases of especially grave crimes, especially those in which victims have been gravely traumatised or have lost their lives, or in cases involving children or minors or in cases in which one may in advance arrive at a conclusion that any sanction on which understanding might have been reached would not be accepted by both victims and the public alike.*

*In the criminal legislation of the Republic of Croatia, i.e. its Criminal Code, the trafficking in human beings criminal offence has been included in the chapter on and ranked together with the gravest criminal offences against humanity and human dignity, on the basis of which and all of the above we maintain that this recommendation may be deemed accepted, i.e. fulfilled by the Republic of Croatia.*