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G R E T A

Group of Experts on Action
against Trafficking in Human Beings

GRETA(2023)11_AZE_rep

Reply by Azerbaijan
to the Questionnaire
for the evaluation of the implementation
of the Council of Europe Convention on Action
against Trafficking in Human Beings

Fourth evaluation round

Thematic focus: Addressing vulnerabilities to trafficking in human beings

Reply submitted on 7 April 2026

Part 1 – Eliminating Vulnerabilities to Human Trafficking

I. PREVENTION (Articles 5, 6 and 7)

1. Are there specific data/research/analyses in your country regarding the factors that make people vulnerable to human trafficking (HT)? Have categories/groups at risk of becoming victims of human trafficking been identified, and how are they taken into account in the national anti-trafficking strategy and/or action plan? Have specific geographic regions or economic sectors that are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking been identified in your country, and how are they addressed in the strategy or policy?

Answer – In the Republic of Azerbaijan, the legislative framework and state policy aimed at reducing the causes of human trafficking are not limited only to measures of criminal liability, but also pursue the objective of identifying and protecting specific vulnerable groups and categories at risk of human trafficking. Thus, Article 144-1 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (human trafficking) recognizes various forms of exploitation (sexual exploitation, forced labor, etc.) as the purpose of human trafficking. This approach makes it possible to identify women, children, persons working in the private sector, and persons in socially and economically vulnerable situations as specific risk groups. Article 61 of the Criminal Code (aggravating circumstances) recognizes the commission of a crime against a minor, against a person in an obviously helpless condition, or against a person dependent on the offender financially or otherwise as an aggravating circumstance. This provision serves to reduce the demand for exploitation of persons in particularly vulnerable situations.

Article 4 of the Law “On Combating Human Trafficking” (basic principles of combating human trafficking) provides that the main principles of combating human trafficking include preventing discrimination against victims of human trafficking in society, ensuring the safety of victims of human trafficking and respectful treatment of them, inevitability of punishment for human trafficking, implementation of preventive measures of a legal, political, socio-economic and organizational nature, involvement of non-governmental organizations in combating human trafficking, and development of international cooperation in this field. This creates a legal framework aimed at reducing the demand for the exploitation of particularly vulnerable groups.

Section 2.1 of the “National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2020–2024” (“Purpose of the National Action Plan and main principles of its implementation”) defines among the objectives of the plan the prevention of exploitation of women, children and other vulnerable population groups that may be exposed to human trafficking, reduction of the risk of individuals becoming victims of human trafficking, identification of vulnerable population groups that may be exposed to human trafficking, and ensuring their social protection. These measures are aimed at preventing the economic and social demand that creates conditions for exploitation.

In our country, abuse of vulnerability constitutes part of the elements of the crime of human trafficking. Article 144-1 of the Criminal Code (human trafficking) lists the methods of committing human trafficking and explicitly includes among them “...through the use of force, threats, deception, or by abusing a person’s vulnerable situation...”.

In criminal procedural legislation, it is required to follow specific procedures regarding the participation of a legal representative, psychologist, and specialists during investigative actions involving vulnerable victims. At the same time, on 29.11.2016, a new Article 123-1 was added to the Criminal Procedure Code, which provides a mechanism for granting a recovery and reflection period to victims of human trafficking, and active work is being carried out in this direction.

In Azerbaijan, the concept of eliminating vulnerabilities to human trafficking is mainly understood as the protection of risk groups, strengthening of institutional mechanisms, and enhancement of preventive measures. This issue is also a priority at the level of state policy and is implemented in several directions, with the main objective being the establishment of a legal and institutional framework. Thus, the Law “On Combating Human Trafficking” has been adopted as a basic normative document, and the Main Department for Combating Human Trafficking of the Ministry of Internal Affairs operates as the leading force in this field, while coordination among state bodies is ensured through “National Action Plans”. These mechanisms are aimed at early identification, intervention, and prevention of impunity in order to reduce vulnerabilities.

In our country, the most common victims of human trafficking can be divided into the following vulnerable risk groups:

- Persons seeking to go abroad in search of employment.
- Women and young people from low-income families.
- Undocumented migrants and persons coming from regions to the capital.
- Children (especially those who are unsupervised or neglected).

As preventive measures for these groups, awareness-raising, employment programs, and social support mechanisms can be indicated. Thus, awareness-raising meetings are held in schools and higher educational institutions, information about risks is disseminated through mass media and social media, and measures are taken to expose deceptive advertisements under the guise of “easy jobs” and “high-paying jobs”. The purpose of these measures is to minimize the likelihood of people being deceived.

At the same time, a number of mechanisms are actively used for the early identification of human trafficking crimes. Trainings are regularly conducted for healthcare, education, and social workers, it is possible to apply to the “152 Hotline” of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and non-governmental organizations are engaged in referral activities. These components help to identify risks before they escalate.

Safe shelters are available for the protection of victims, where victims of human trafficking receive psychological, medical, and legal assistance, as well as support for reintegration, that is, assistance in finding employment, education, and documentation.

2. What specific measures are taken to reduce children’s vulnerability to human trafficking by creating a protective environment for them? Please provide information in the following areas:

a) protection of children from relationships, traditions, behaviors and practices that may negatively affect children’s rights (including early and forced marriage, as well as illegal adoption);

Answer – According to Article 16 of the Law “On Combating Human Trafficking”, when assistance is provided to a child who is a victim of human trafficking, his/her best interests must be given priority, and shelters and assistance centers must immediately inform the guardianship and trusteeship authority and the commission on the protection of children’s rights about the child who is a victim of human trafficking. The guardianship and trusteeship authority and the

commission on the protection of children's rights take measures to protect the rights and interests of the child in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

When children are placed in shelters and when the period of their stay is extended, the opinion of children over the age of 10 regarding the matter is ascertained and taken into account. In shelters, children are generally accommodated separately. Taking into account the best interests of the child, he/she may also be accommodated with his/her parents (except in cases where the parents are suspected of causing the child to become a victim of human trafficking) or with other persons who have a positive effect on the child's psychological condition.

Children placed in shelters are provided with the opportunity to continue their education and to maintain contact and communication with their parents (except in cases where the parents are suspected of causing the child to become a victim of human trafficking). If a child who is a victim of human trafficking does not know the whereabouts of his/her parents or is deprived of parental care, the state authorities combating human trafficking take measures to search for the parents or to establish guardianship or trusteeship over the child.

At the same time, a new draft Law "On Children's Rights" has been prepared by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs, and the said draft is currently under consideration in the Milli Majlis. The draft reflects improved new provisions related to the protection of children's rights in all areas, taking into account the principle of the best interests of the child.

By the Law No. 1198-VIQD dated 28 June 2024, amendments were made to the Family Code, removing the provision that allowed local executive authorities to permit the reduction of the marriage age by no more than one year, and the marriage age was unequivocally established at 18 years. At the same time, a provision was added to the Code prohibiting marriages between children who share a common biological grandfather and/or grandmother, as well as between biologically related uncle (maternal or paternal) and niece, and aunt (maternal or paternal) and nephew, and the said Law entered into force on 1 July 2025. Amendments were also made to Article 176-1 of the Criminal Code, criminalizing not only the coercion of a woman but, in general, the act of forcing a person into marriage and early marriage. In addition, Article 176-2 was added to the Criminal

Code, establishing criminal liability for organizing the early marriage of a person under the age of sixteen.

Furthermore, Articles 189-1 (Entering into a transaction related to marriage concerning a person under the age of sixteen), 189-2 (Conducting ceremonies related to early marriages of minors), and 189-3 (Religious marriage ceremony concerning minors) were added to the Code of Administrative Offenses. Through the registration departments of the Ministry of Justice, young persons below the marriage age applying for marriage are informed about the negative impact of early marriage and marriage between relatives on life and health, quality of life, and moral-psychological development. Thus, in 2022, 263; in 2023, 187; in 2024, 185; and in 2025, 117 young persons of early marriage age (under 18 years old) were informed about the negative effects of early marriage and marriage between relatives.

In addition, in order to prevent early marriages and increase awareness in this area, registration departments conducted 96 awareness-raising events in 2022, 96 in 2023, 65 in 2024, and 19 in 2025; and on children's rights, 19 in 2022, 27 in 2023, 16 in 2024, and 11 in 2025.

According to the document "State Standards of General Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan", approved by Resolution No. 361 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 29 September 2020, learners acquire knowledge about their rights starting from the primary level of education, and in particular, gain knowledge about children's rights in the subject "Life Skills".

Every year, social pedagogues operating in general education institutions, together with psychologists, have conducted relevant awareness-raising activities aimed at preventing early marriages and marriages between relatives.

Additionally, in order to carry out awareness-raising activities among students at the general education level on a healthy lifestyle and reproductive health, as well as on the prevention of early and consanguineous marriages, as a result of joint efforts of relevant bodies, a "Methodological Guide on Classes on Reproductive Health for Grades VIII–IX of General Education Institutions" has been prepared, and its digital version has been placed in the "Recommended Educational Resources" section of the website www.trim.edu.az. In previous academic years, awareness-

raising activities based on this methodological guide were organized in general education institutions located in all regions of the country.

In the 2025–2026 academic year, in nearly 1200 general education institutions under the Baku City Education Department and Regional Education Departments, particularly in grades VIII–XI, various presentations, awareness-raising seminars and events were carried out on topics such as “Prevention of Early Marriage and Marriages between Relatives”, “Cases of Girls Dropping Out of Education”, “Girls’ Education and Proper Planning of the Future”, “Consequences of Early Marriage and Consanguineous Marriage”, “Let’s Say No to Early Marriage!”, and “Early Marriages Are One of the Main Factors of Domestic Violence!”. The main purpose of the events was to inform students and parents about the medical, psychological, and legal consequences of these situations and to contribute to the formation of a healthy youth.

At the same time, within the framework of cooperation between the Child Protection Department of the Ministry of Science and Education and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, events were held on the topics of “Prevention of Early Marriage Cases”.

Within the framework of the human rights protection activities of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan, consistent and systematic activities are carried out in the direction of protecting children from human trafficking and preventing their involvement in early marriage, as well as protecting children from relationships, traditions, behaviors and practices that may negatively affect children’s rights (including early and forced marriage, as well as illegal adoption). For this purpose, awareness-raising events are organized in the capital and regions by the Office of the Commissioner and Regional Centers, ensuring the participation of children. In addition to children, parents and specialists working with children are also involved in these events.

Every year, on the eve of the anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Ombudsman declares the period from 20 October to 20 November as the “Children’s Rights Month” in the country. At the same time, the Ombudsman addresses an open appeal to the public, calling on all state and local self-government bodies, civil society institutions, and other relevant entities operating in the field of children’s rights to contribute to ensuring more effective

protection of children's rights within the framework of the month. Within the framework of the month, a series of events are organized by relevant bodies, the Office of the Commissioner, and Regional Centers aimed at protecting children's rights, including protection of children from violence and prevention of early marriage.

The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs has prepared various printed materials in the relevant direction (stickers and booklets such as "Say No to Early Marriage", "Say No to Child Labor, Yes to Happy Childhood", "Early Marriage Makes a Parent a Criminal", "Call 116-111", "Protect Your Children from Harmful Information").

It should be particularly emphasized that by Resolution No. 213 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 23 June 2020, the "Rules on Awareness-Raising about the Negative Consequences of Early Marriage and Marriages between Relatives among Youth for the Purpose of Promoting the Importance of Family and Marriage, Their Protection and Strengthening" were approved. According to these rules, all state bodies ensure that young people are informed in various ways about the negative impact of early marriage and marriages between relatives on life and health, quality of life, and moral-psychological development.

Particular attention is paid to relationships, traditions, behaviors and practices that may negatively affect children's rights – especially early and forced marriage, as well as illegal adoption cases. In order to prevent such situations that may negatively affect children's rights, the public legal entity "Assistance Center for Victims of Human Trafficking" under the Social Services Agency subordinate to the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan (hereinafter – the Ministry) carries out various awareness-raising activities against early and forced marriage.

It should be noted regarding the illegal adoption of children that, within the framework of the National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, jointly with other state bodies, conducts monitoring in the families of children who have been adopted or placed under guardianship or trusteeship, and through these monitoring activities the situation of those children, namely whether they are exposed to any

violations of the law, is examined. The illegal adoption of a child is prohibited by Article 174 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (Illegal adoption).

b. development of children’s life skills (including media literacy and online safety skills), knowledge and participation;

Answer – By Order No. 530 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 19 March 2025, the “Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Artificial Intelligence for 2025–2028” was approved with the aim of accelerating the development of artificial intelligence in the Republic of Azerbaijan, encouraging research in this field, improving information technologies related to artificial intelligence and their management mechanisms, ensuring accessibility of its infrastructure, as well as strengthening qualified human resources. According to the Strategy, raising awareness in the field of artificial intelligence, ensuring the ethical and responsible use of artificial intelligence, informing the public about artificial intelligence, including organizing promotional activities on its potential and risks, as well as ensuring the observance of ethical principles related to artificial intelligence, strengthening the regulatory legal framework for data confidentiality and protection of personal data are identified as key priorities, and measures to be implemented in these directions are specified.

By Decree No. 287 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 16 January 2025, in connection with the implementation of Decree No. 1325 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 27 April 2021 “On improving governance in the field of digital development”, the “Digital Development Concept in the Republic of Azerbaijan” was approved. The development of programs and implementation of measures to increase the digital literacy of society in the field of information technologies are defined as priority directions in the Concept, and measures to be implemented in these directions are specified.

It should be particularly emphasized that within the framework of the grant project “Cyber Care for Children”, organized by the Ministry of Digital Development and Transport with the support of the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the KOICA Azerbaijan Alumni Association (KOAZ), an awareness-raising training was held on 15.07.2025 in the SOS Children’s Village. During the training, children were provided with information on digital skills,

cybersecurity concepts and protection of personal data when using the internet; they were also explained the rules for effective use of computer and internet resources, threats existing in the online environment and methods of protection against them, as well as basic principles of cyber hygiene. The said project aims to ensure the safety of children with disabilities and children who have lost their parents or are deprived of parental care in the digital environment, to raise their awareness on cybersecurity and digital skills, and on the protection of personal data when using the internet.

With the initiative of the Ministry of Digital Development and Transport, with the support of the Innovation and Digital Development Agency and the Association for the Development of Women's Entrepreneurship in Azerbaijan, on 24.04.2025, an event titled "Digital Girls" was held on the occasion of the International Girls in ICT Day. The main purpose of the initiative was to support girls aged 10–15 in discovering their interests and potential in the field of information and communication technologies (ICT), and to encourage them to pursue education and build a career in this direction. The 60 schoolgirls participating in the event had the opportunity to enhance their knowledge and skills in the ICT field, as well as to become acquainted with useful information regarding their future career choices.

On 4 June 2025, a round table on the topic "Protection of Children in the Cyber Environment and Joint Action against Digital Threats" was held with the organization of the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs.

In order to develop children's life skills and knowledge, regular meetings are held in schools, colleges, boarding schools and orphanages with persons belonging to vulnerable categories. During these meetings, extensive awareness-raising activities are carried out, particularly on the prevention of early marriage, as well as on online safety and risks.

In the updated or improved curricula of general education subjects, the issue of increasing information/media literacy is specifically emphasized. Within this framework, students are also taught effective ways to combat negative aspects of the media, such as media manipulation, disinformation, and cyberbullying.

In the newly developed curriculum for the “Life Skills” subject, issues are included related to explaining the importance of electronic devices in human life to younger students, analyzing obtained information and developing the ability to distinguish useful information.

In the curriculum for the subject of Informatics, it is also envisaged to develop relevant competencies in students related to information/media literacy — awareness of various types of cybercrime, including the possibility that publicly available information, especially personal or sensitive data, may be obtained by malicious persons and used for negative purposes, as well as the importance of evaluating the reliability of the websites we use, the positive and negative aspects of artificial intelligence, and other related issues.

During 2025, in nearly 500 general education institutions across the country, meetings, round tables, seminars, sessions, awareness lessons and drawing competitions titled “Safe Information Search”, “Me and My Environment”, “Safe Behavior on the Internet”, “Cyberbullying and Its Prevention”, “Our Safety Is in Our Hands”, “Where to Obtain Safe Information” were held, and within the framework of joint cooperation between the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs and the Ministry of Science and Education, awareness-raising meetings were conducted to increase the digital literacy of schoolchildren in the field of protection of children’s rights. Participation of local law enforcement bodies, cybersecurity specialists, psychologists, as well as parents was also ensured at the events.

The main purpose of the events was to inform students and parents about the dangers that children and adolescents may face when using the internet in modern times, social media risks, cybercrimes, and the protection of personal data.

The Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) regularly conducts a series of awareness-raising activities related to children’s rights, children’s digital safety, and increasing their knowledge and skills in various fields. In 2024, within the framework of the project “Protection of Children from Harmful and Dangerous Information in the Digital Society”, implemented with the support of “Nar”, organized by the “Regional Development” Public Union, in partnership with the Ombudsman Office, the Ministry of Science and Education, the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs, the Azerbaijan Cybersecurity Organizations

Association and ADA University, an online meeting of the Ombudsman with schoolchildren was held and discussions were conducted. At the same time, within the framework of the project, trainings were conducted by the institution's staff for children and parents in the cities and regions of Baku, Ganja, Lankaran and Gabala on children's digital safety and improvement of their digital skills.

At the same time, according to the studies conducted by the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the risks posed by online games and interactive platforms widely распространены among children in recent years, particularly the "Roblox" platform, have caused serious concern. At present, the dangers faced by children in the digital environment are no longer only a technological issue, but have become a serious problem that must be assessed within the framework of human rights. Observations carried out, materials published in the media, and expert opinions indicate that on the said platform children are exposed not only to technical risks, but also directly to cases of psychological manipulation. In particular, bullying (pressure, insults and social isolation), grooming (gradual gaining of children's trust in order to manipulate them), emotional exploitation, and behaviors aimed at creating fear and dependency are among the widespread dangerous trends. Such forms of psychological manipulation can lead to weakening of self-confidence in children, stress, anxiety, fear, behavioral disorders and long-term psychological trauma, which results in a gross violation of children's rights. It should be noted that this issue has been assessed as a serious problem not only at the national level, but also at the international level. Thus, the formal nature of age restrictions on digital platforms intended for children, the lack of effective moderation mechanisms, gaps in the protection of personal data, and risks of financial manipulation create grounds for violations of children's rights.

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the family as the fundamental unit of society is under special protection of the state, and the state exercises control over the realization of children's rights. According to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On the Rights of the Child", every child has the right to live and to develop physically, mentally and morally in normal conditions, and the state undertakes to take economic, socio-legal and other measures that ensure these conditions and to create a healthy and safe environment. According to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On the Protection of Children from Harmful Information", the

prioritization of children's interests, ensuring their rights and freedoms, preventing the circulation of harmful information products, including preventing offenses committed against children through the use of information technologies, and other stated principles are established as the main principles for protecting children from harmful information.

c. establishment of a system for monitoring and reporting cases of violence;

Answer – Since 2016, the activities of the “School Friend” project, which is aimed at providing social and psychological support to students in schools and creating a safe and healthy school environment, have been transferred by the relevant order of the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Child Protection Department of the Ministry of Science and Education (hereinafter – the Department). By specialists of the Department, incidents related to the specific cases indicated below have been identified, reported to the Department, or measures have been taken on-site within their competence to resolve problems:

In 2025, 138 cases of physical violence among students were prevented, cold weapons (knives, cutting tools) were identified and confiscated from 35 students, and appropriate measures were taken. 321 persons applied to psychologists, and 296 psychological consultations were conducted. There were 25 cases where parents refused psychological consultation. In 61 cases, students were referred to a psychiatrist. With 41 students for whom behavioral disorders were recorded, conversations were held by an inspector for juvenile affairs invited to the school, and psychological consultations were conducted with them.

Specialists perform their duties in 114 educational institutions to which they are assigned, and daily and monthly reports are submitted to the Department. All negative incidents occurring at school are entered into the “soft” database at <https://mdx.edu.az/>, and after initial review by the analytical staff of the department, are forwarded to the relevant local education management bodies. In addition, in cases of special incidents, cooperation is carried out with relevant state bodies (Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, Social Services Agency, Management Union of Medical Territorial Units, State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs, and courts) in order to resolve the problem.

The powers of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the field of more effective protection of human rights and freedoms have been expanded, and a mandate has been established for the implementation of the functions of an independent monitoring mechanism for monitoring and promoting the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ensuring the right to equality and preventing discrimination.

In order to implement the functions of the independent monitoring mechanism, monitoring groups were established in 2024 within the Office of the Commissioner, including the Monitoring Group on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Within the framework of the Ombudsman's national preventive and independent monitoring mechanism activities, regular monitoring is carried out in state child institutions by the Commissioner, the national preventive group and members of the relevant monitoring group; confidential conversations are held with residents and staff of institutions, existing conditions, the ensuring of their rights, especially issues of treatment are examined, recommendations are provided to relevant state bodies regarding identified deficiencies and shortcomings, and during repeated visits the status of implementation of those recommendations is examined. Applications received by the Ombudsman's Office and the conducted investigations have been analyzed, proposals have been prepared in the direction of preventing violence against children and included in the Ombudsman's annual reports, and sent to the relevant competent bodies.

d. organization of training for child care specialists, legal representatives and persons working in the field of education;

Answer – Round tables are organized by the Assistance Center for specialists on child-related issues, legal representatives and persons working in the field of education, with the participation of various state bodies, including commissions on the protection of children's rights under local executive authorities. Issues related to the protection of children are discussed on these platforms. At the same time, school psychologists, teachers, representatives of law enforcement bodies and other relevant persons are involved in this process.

In the 2023–2024, 2024–2025 and 2025–2026 academic years, trainings on the topic “Organization of social-pedagogical work in general education institutions” were conducted by the Deputy Head of the Child Protection Department (Department) for 1,342 social pedagogues assigned to general education institutions across the country and for directors of 1,020 general education institutions.

Social pedagogues were provided with information on the essence of social-pedagogical work at school, labor functions, ethical principles, rules of conduct; theoretical knowledge and practical skills were imparted regarding the social-pedagogical study of emerging problems, assessment of family situations, referral of problems to relevant bodies, activation of families, functions of social-pedagogical work, identification of students belonging to risk groups and situations that may create social risk, and ways of eliminating them, as well as the implementation of preventive measures. During the trainings, the “Social Pedagogue’s Folder” prepared by the Department was presented to social pedagogues. Social pedagogues were also informed about methods of applying effective cooperation with school administration and teaching staff.

At the same time, trainings were conducted with psychologists of general education institutions to which social pedagogues operating under the Regional Education Departments are assigned on the topic “Organization of psychological service at school and the role of the psychologist in conducting social-pedagogical work”. During the training, 410 psychologists were provided with information on the organization of social-pedagogical work in general education institutions, labor functions of social pedagogues assigned to schools, ways of applying a comprehensive approach to problem-solving by social pedagogues and psychologists taking into account social-pedagogical and psychological aspects, and the methods used; questions were answered. In addition, initial analysis of the socio-psychological environment and preparation of an action plan based on the results, conducting psychodiagnostic tests, and theoretical and practical methods of studying and resolving identified problems were taught.

At the same time, training sessions in the field of protection of children from violence and human trafficking have been regularly organized in the capital and regions by the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan and its Regional Centers for parents (persons replacing them), specialists working with children, including

educators. Taking into account the special importance of conducting awareness-raising activities, upon the initiative of the Commissioner, in connection with 18 June – National Human Rights Day, the “Human Rights Month” is held annually in our republic from 18 May to 18 June, and in connection with the day of adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the “Children’s Rights Month” is held from 20 October to 20 November. Each year, within the framework of these months, various awareness-raising activities on children’s rights are conducted by the Ombudsman’s Office, central and local executive authorities, civil society institutions and other relevant bodies, with the participation of children, parents and persons working with children ensured at these events.

The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs has conducted trainings aimed at increasing the knowledge and skills of school psychologists, social workers, employees of the penitentiary service (psychologist staff units), and psychologists working in certain private sectors regarding techniques of working with children subjected to bullying.

A training titled “Let’s Say No to Human Trafficking and Forced Labor” was conducted in the “SOS” Children’s Village. During the training, a presentation titled “Human Trafficking and Forced Labor: How You Can Protect Yourself” was demonstrated, and participants were provided with detailed information on how young people can protect themselves from this problem.

e. ensuring access to education and healthcare services for vulnerable children, including children belonging to minority groups, unaccompanied migrant children and children of migrant workers;

Answer – In accordance with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On the Rights of the Child” and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, relevant measures are implemented to protect the rights and interests of foreign and stateless children. Foreign, stateless, refugee and unaccompanied children are treated equally to children who are citizens of Azerbaijan, their social protection is ensured by the state, and their rights and interests are protected in accordance with the legislation.

In our country, proposals and recommendations in the field of protection of the rights and freedoms of various population groups, including the protection of children’s rights to education and health, are reflected in the Ombudsman’s annual reports. Ensuring the right to equality and preventing

discrimination is one of the main directions of the activities of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In order to strengthen institutional mechanisms in this direction, in 2023 a “Sector for Ensuring the Right to Equality” was established within the Ombudsman’s Office. In order to further improve activities in the field of ensuring equality and preventing discrimination, in 2025 a “Department for Monitoring Equality and Discrimination” was established within the Ombudsman’s Office. Within the framework of the activities of the relevant structural unit, systematic and consistent measures are implemented to ensure the right to equality of various population groups, including children.

According to the “Rules on the Repatriation and Rehabilitation of Minor Citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Difficult Living Conditions Abroad”, approved by Decree No. 2336 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 28 October 2023, relevant measures are regularly implemented in the direction of social protection of children in difficult living conditions repatriated to the Republic of Azerbaijan from foreign countries.

The State Migration Service has created a subsystem “Information on Unaccompanied Foreigners and Stateless Persons under the age of 18” within the Unified Migration Information System.

Until integration is ensured through the Electronic Government Information System, it is предусмотрено that relevant state bodies enter the necessary information into the said subsystem through the portal www.muas.gov.az developed by the State Migration Service.

When information is identified about foreigners and stateless persons under the age of 18 who arrive unaccompanied to the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan or become unaccompanied after arrival, the entry of such information into the subsystem is ensured within 1 (one) working day from the date of identification.

In addition, unaccompanied children are equated to children who have lost their parents or are deprived of parental care within the territory of the country, and their social protection is ensured by the state, their rights and interests are protected in accordance with the legislation. Until the issue of granting refugee status to an unaccompanied child is resolved, guardianship and trusteeship authorities place the child in social service institutions. At the same time, in order to regulate issues related to the social protection of children in accordance with relevant rules, ensure

an effective and efficient national referral mechanism in the field of child protection, as well as improve the regulatory legal framework and institutional structure in the field of child protection, in 2021 a Working Group consisting of authorized representatives of relevant state bodies was established under the leadership of the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs, one of the main areas of activity of which is to take appropriate measures to ensure the education, health and social rights of refugees and asylum seekers, unaccompanied, as well as other vulnerable foreign and stateless persons under the age of 18 present in the country.

f. registration of the birth of all children born in the country.

Answer – The list of documents required for birth registration in the Republic of Azerbaijan was approved by Resolution No. 145 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 31 October 2003.

According to Article 166.1 of the Family Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, birth registration is carried out at the place of birth of the child or at the place of residence of the parents or one of them by the registration office, consular office, or representative of the executive authority.

During birth registration, no restriction of rights is permitted in any form on the grounds of the person's or the parents' race, ethnicity, religion, language, sex, origin, property status, official position, beliefs, affiliation with political parties, trade unions or other public associations.

Thus, in accordance with the requirements of paragraphs 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7 of the “Rules for State Registration of Civil Status Acts” approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 31 October 2003, in all cases, when the relevant documents established by legislation are submitted, the birth of children is registered by the state. If the necessary documents are not submitted, the fact of birth is established through court proceedings.

It is noted that parents who are unable to submit the documents required for birth registration are provided with legal assistance to obtain them, and if this is not possible, to apply to the courts to establish the fact of birth (taking the necessary measures to provide legal assistance to citizens falls within the official duties of the heads of registration bodies).

In addition, in order to improve birth registration issues and increase awareness of the importance of birth registration throughout the territory, registration offices regularly organize events in medical institutions, in the press, in schools, in executive representations and other places. Various types of guides reflecting the requirements of legislation in the field of state registration of birth, as well as other civil status acts, are also distributed to the population in simple and understandable language.

Furthermore, in order to ensure citizen satisfaction, upon the initiative of the Ministry of Justice, the organization of mobile state registration of births directly in maternity hospitals has been implemented.

It should be noted that, in accordance with the Decree No. 1160 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 23 September 2020 “On expanding the application of electronic services in the field of state registration of civil status acts”, it has been decided to expand the use of modern information and communication technologies in the field of state registration of civil status acts, as well as to improve activities in the field of registration of births and deaths, and to ensure efficiency and accessibility.

Thus, after the occurrence of the birth, information about it is transmitted by healthcare authorities through the information system to the information system of the Ministry of Justice, and when the information is entered into the “State Register of Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan”, the child is assigned, in an automated manner, a unique (non-repeating) personal identification number that does not change throughout his/her lifetime.

Following from the Decree, the registration of births and deaths based on electronic applications and the issuance of electronic certificates have ensured increased accessibility to services in this field.

After the occurrence of the birth, information about it (the child’s date of birth and sex, the mother’s surname, name, patronymic, place of residence, identity document number and date of issuance) is transmitted by healthcare authorities through the information system to the information system of the Ministry of Justice, and from there, in an automated manner, to the registration office at the place of residence of the mother. Registration offices carry out state

registration of births in accordance with the data obtained from birth information resources. In the absence of a relevant medical document, the fact of birth is established through court proceedings. In this case, an extract from the court decision is sent to registration bodies through the “Electronic Court” information system, and following the amendment made to the Family Code on 2 December 2022, without the need for parents to apply, registration offices ensure execution of the decision and carry out state registration of the birth, while birth certificates are issued upon the application of the parents.

It is noted that every year, legal assistance is provided to citizens in obtaining medical documents for children born at home and not registered in the state birth registration, as well as in establishing the fact of birth through court proceedings. At the same time, in order to prevent delays in birth registration, immediately after data is received from the information system of the Ministry of Health into the information system of the Ministry of Justice, registration offices contact the parents and invite them to the office, where the birth of their child is registered.

In 2022, based on 115,592 entries received from the Ministry of Health into the information system of the Ministry of Justice, registration offices sent 69,019 notifications reflecting the obligation of birth registration to the addresses of mothers whose children’s births had not been registered. In 2023, based on 111,206 entries received from the Ministry of Health, 78,881 notifications were sent; in 2024, based on 106,185 entries, 73,291 notifications were sent; and in 2025, based on 93,344 entries received from the Ministry of Health into the information system of the Ministry of Justice, 61,409 notifications were sent.

In order to prevent delays in the registration of births and to ensure citizen satisfaction, within the framework of activities on mobile registration of births before the mother leaves the hospital, registration offices ensured state registration and issuance of relevant certificates for 5,381 births in maternity hospitals in 2022, 4,746 in 2023, 4,198 in 2024, and 1,844 in 2025.

During 2025, in order to timely identify children in rural areas whose births had not been registered and to promptly obtain information from executive authority representations and carry out necessary measures, the district registration office continued activities through a special information group created on the WhatsApp social network, involving relevant representations.

In 2022, through joint initiatives of registration offices and executive authority representations, 892 children born in previous years whose births had not been registered were identified, in 2023 – 485, in 2024 – 560, and in 2025 – 370; in 2022, 926 such children were registered, in 2023 – 427, in 2024 – 377, and in 2025 – 295 (including those provided with legal assistance to apply to the court in previous years); in 2022, legal assistance was provided to the parents of 113 children, in 2023 – 65, in 2024 – 97, and in 2025 – 90 in applying to the court to establish the fact of birth.

3. What measures are taken in your country to address vulnerabilities related to the gender dimension of human trafficking?

Answer – Article 25 of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan establishes the “Right to Equality”. Thus, according to the provisions of this article, everyone is equal before the law and the courts. Men and women have equal rights and freedoms.

According to Article 2 of the Law “On Guarantees of Gender (Equality of Men and Women)”, gender equality means equality of rights of women and men and equal opportunities for the realization of these rights, as well as their equal social status in society. In addition, the Law reflects provisions such as the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex, the main directions of state policy on ensuring gender equality, the duties of the state in ensuring gender equality, the duties of employers in labor activity, the duties of employers in eliminating discrimination on the basis of sex, equality in remuneration of labor, inadmissibility of any pressure against employees subjected to sexual harassment, equal opportunities in the realization of the right to education, prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex in the activities of educational institutions, guarantees of gender equality in economic and social relations, and guarantees of gender equality in the activities of political parties, non-governmental organizations and trade unions.

In the Republic of Azerbaijan, in order to address vulnerabilities related to the gender dimension of human trafficking, the following real and concrete measures are implemented:

- Within the framework of the “National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2020–2024”, women and girls are identified as a high-risk group for human trafficking, and preventive measures are directed at these groups;

- Legal control mechanisms and community-level awareness programs are implemented to prevent early and forced marriages;
- Shelters, psychological, social and legal rehabilitation services are provided for women who are victims of human trafficking;
- In higher education institutions, scientific discussions and teaching on gender aspects of human trafficking are carried out through the international conferences “Gender Problems and Modern Azerbaijan” and “Social Work & Social Research”, as well as through the scientific journal “Social Issues”.

Social-Psychological Research and Counseling Centers operating in higher education institutions provide psychosocial support to women in risk groups based on a gender-sensitive approach.

Economic dependence of a person is one of the forms of abuse of a “vulnerable” situation underlying the risk of becoming a victim of human trafficking. Taking this into account, one of the measures aimed at preventing women’s economic dependence is the provision of support to women entrepreneurs.

The Small and Medium Business Development Agency (KOBIA), operating under the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, has taken significant steps towards integrating women entrepreneurs into the business environment, engaging them in innovation activities and strengthening their potential.

Thus, in accordance with the “Rules for Financing Education, Science, Research and Support Projects Related to the Development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises”, approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers dated 30 September 2020, KOBIA regularly organizes grant competitions. Within the framework of the 7th grant competition organized by KOBIA in 2025, grants were allocated to 30 projects submitted by small and medium enterprise (SME) entities, 10 of which belong to women entrepreneurs.

To date, KOBIA has supported the exhibition of services and products of nearly 2,000 entrepreneurs, about 50% of whom are women entrepreneurs.

At the same time, during 2025, nearly 2,000 women entrepreneurs and women wishing to start entrepreneurial activity benefited from training and advisory services provided by SME Development Centers operating within the structure of KOBIA.

Additionally, in order to reward entrepreneurs who have achieved success in various categories, the “Dayaq” award was established by KOBIA in 2022, one of the nominations of which is the “Successful Woman Entrepreneur” nomination.

Furthermore, in recent years, together with partner organizations, KOBIA has implemented projects such as “The Power of Women in Business”, “Women Entrepreneurs in Successful Partnerships” and others aimed at encouraging women’s entrepreneurship and providing them with support.

4. What specific measures are implemented to reduce the vulnerability of persons belonging to socially disadvantaged minorities to human trafficking? Please provide information in the following areas:

a. research;

Answer – In previous years, the National Observatory on Labour Market and Social Protection Issues under the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population conducted research on the topic “Characteristics of the problem of human trafficking in the Republic of Azerbaijan, work carried out in combating human trafficking and forced labor, risks of children being exposed to human trafficking and other related areas, and ensuring state support for activities in this field”.

The Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences carried out a scientific research work on the topic “Criminal-legal characteristics of human trafficking”.

The Public Health and Reforms Center of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Azerbaijan prepared a “Methodological guide on the problem of human trafficking and its prevention”. The said methodological guide was approved by the relevant decision of the Scientific Medical Council of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

b. information, awareness-raising and education campaigns;

Answer – In order to strengthen information and awareness-raising activities in the field of combating human trafficking, large-scale measures have been implemented in general education institutions. These measures covered students of general education institutions subordinate to more than 8 Regional Education Departments, as well as the Baku City Education Department.

Awareness-raising meetings were mainly organized for students of grades VII–X, and the main purpose of the events was to increase students' level of awareness about the concept of human trafficking, its causes, forms, legal, social and psychological consequences, as well as ways of protection from this threat, and in particular to ensure that persons belonging to socially vulnerable groups understand risk factors.

Within the framework of the events, awareness sessions were consistently organized on the topics “Human Trafficking – a Global Evil”, “Combating Human Trafficking”, “Human Trafficking and Its Consequences”, “Human Trafficking is a Human Tragedy and Moral Terror”, “Say No to Human Trafficking”, “Stop Human Trafficking and Child Labor Exploitation!”, and practical information activities were also carried out.

During the events, students were provided with detailed explanations of the legal, social and psychological consequences of human trafficking. At the same time, students' questions were answered and open discussions were held on the topic.

In accordance with the direction of activity, awareness of medical workers employed in medical institutions subordinate to TƏBİB is ensured, and at the same time, medical workers indirectly inform relevant groups. In addition, sectoral trainings were conducted for medical and non-medical personnel involved in the process of transplantation of human organs and tissues in one form or another, aimed at recognizing and preventing risks of human trafficking. These measures served to increase awareness within the healthcare system in order to prevent risks of illegal trafficking of human organs and tissues.

c. socio-economic initiatives aimed at underlying and structural causes;

Answer – In order to determine the mechanism for implementing appropriate measures aimed at eliminating social problems that create conditions for human trafficking, the “Program on Elimination of Social Problems Creating Conditions for Human Trafficking” was approved by Resolution No. 81 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 20 May 2011. The purpose of the Program is to eliminate social problems that create conditions for human trafficking, to create the necessary conditions for improving the living standards of victims and potential victims of human trafficking, and its objectives include ensuring social protection of vulnerable population groups that may be exposed to human trafficking, including children and adolescents deprived of parental care and left without supervision, as well as citizens who are forced to leave boarding schools and other alternative care institutions due to age limits.

Within the framework of the implementation of the Program, joint inspection measures are regularly carried out in order to prevent illegal migration, joint monitoring is conducted to prevent forced labor and to identify its victims and potential victims, advanced international experience is studied in identifying and eliminating social problems that create conditions for human trafficking, trainings are conducted by migration, border and customs authorities for their employees on combating human trafficking and the rights of victims in order to improve the process of identifying victims of human trafficking among illegal migrants, appropriate measures are envisaged to prevent neglect of minors (placement in biological and foster families, involvement in day care centers or other alternative services), and measures are taken to ensure social protection and employment of persons deprived of parental care and those who are forced to leave boarding schools and other alternative care institutions due to age limits, including providing them with free education in vocational education institutions and employment. Awareness-raising on safe use of the internet by children, as well as other age groups of citizens, is also regularly continued.

d. education, vocational training and employment referral programs.

Answer – In order to expand the coverage of active employment programs implemented to increase employment opportunities for persons who are in special need of social protection and have difficulty in finding employment, amendments were made by the Ministry of Labor and

Social Protection of the Population to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Employment” (hereinafter – the Law) and to the relevant Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the implementation of this Law. According to the amendment, it is envisaged to cover, at the expense of unemployment insurance funds, part of the wages of employees hired by employers who create jobs beyond the quota, as well as costs related to jobs created by employers under targeted programs. The amendment entered into force by Decree No. 132 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 8 July 2024.

Within the framework of the implementation of the Decree, draft resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers “On approval of the Rules for Creation of Jobs Beyond the Quota” and “On approval of the Rules for Implementation of Targeted Programs” were prepared by the Ministry and approved respectively by Resolutions No. 551 and 552 of the Cabinet of Ministers dated 29 December 2024.

At the same time, in the draft “Action Plan for 2026–2030 on the implementation of the Employment Strategy”, which will ensure the implementation of the second phase of the “Employment Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2019–2030” approved by Order No. 602 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 30 October 2018, “expanding the coverage and increasing the effectiveness of active employment measures, strengthening the integration into the labor market of citizens who are in special need of social protection and have difficulty in finding employment” has been identified as a key priority.

Also, in the draft decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Azerbaijan Trade Unions Confederation and the National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (Employers) Organizations of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On concluding the General Collective Agreement for 2026–2028”, measures are envisaged to continue efforts to expand access to the labor market for socially vulnerable population groups, including persons released from penitentiary institutions, persons who have lost their parents, and graduates of special boarding schools deprived of parental care.

In order to ensure employment of socially vulnerable population groups, as well as to stimulate employers’ participation in hiring employees, the State Employment Agency (hereinafter – the Agency) under the Ministry implements a co-financing program of wages in social workplaces

jointly with employers. According to this program, 50 (fifty) percent of the wages of employees hired under employment contracts concluded for a period of not less than 6 months in social workplaces, as well as deductions from wages (mandatory state social insurance contributions calculated from the wage fund, unemployment insurance contributions, compulsory health insurance contributions and compulsory insurance contributions against occupational accidents and diseases resulting in loss of professional working capacity), are financed by the Agency for a period from 3 (three) months up to 1 (one) year.

At the same time, in order to organize vocational training of socially vulnerable population groups and increase their competitiveness in the labor market, amendments and additions were made to the “Rules for Organization of Vocational Training of Jobseekers and Unemployed Persons” approved by Resolution No. 261 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 7 June 2019, aimed at improving the vocational training system, increasing its efficiency, ensuring flexibility in this field, as well as expanding public-private cooperation.

In order to expand public-private partnership, prepare qualified personnel in accordance with the requirements of the labor market, and ensure integration of trainees who have completed vocational training into the labor market, awareness-raising activities have been regularly organized with institutions providing vocational training, employers and interested parties, as a result of which the number of private training institutions providing vocational training has been increased to 182.

Self-employment, from the perspective of labor market development, is one of the most important active employment measures aimed at enabling able-bodied individuals to provide themselves with employment independently. The organization of self-employment of socially vulnerable population groups is one of the main priorities of the Agency.

The specific measures implemented in the country to reduce the vulnerability of persons living in socially disadvantaged conditions and belonging to other vulnerable groups to human trafficking have been carried out as part of overall state policy within the framework of the “National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2020–2024” and relevant legislation. In accordance with scientific research directions, it is envisaged to involve students of

master's and doctoral programs in research on relevant topics, to carry out initial measures related to analysis of the situation and prevention by scientific and higher education institutions, to conduct research on the analysis of the human trafficking problem and ways of its solution, and to develop methodologies and approaches. Work is continuously carried out in cooperation with non-governmental organizations to conduct statistical and factual analysis at the national level, to prepare recommendations for organizing and forecasting activities in relevant areas of social policy based on such analysis, and to raise public awareness regarding the results of scientific research.

Issues of criminal-legal combat against human trafficking are taught at the Faculty of Law of Baku State University (BSU) at both bachelor's and master's levels (within the specialization "Transnational Criminal Law"). At the bachelor's level, special attention is paid to the elements of crimes related to human trafficking, issues of liability and punishment. Along with theoretical knowledge, teaching based on judicial practice and statistical data ensures a high level of mastery of the subject by students.

Since 2015, the subject "International and National Combating of Human Trafficking" (45 hours, in Azerbaijani and English) has been taught within the master's level specialization "Transnational Criminal Law" at the Faculty of Law of BSU.

It is also planned to increase the opportunities for social adaptation of potential victims through their involvement in education and employment opportunities, including through awareness-raising activities in the regions. Increasing the number of women involved in vocational education is set as a target each year. In the 2025–2026 academic year, the proportion of women involved in vocational education reached 39%. Within the framework of programs implemented to expand employment opportunities for women in vocational education, cooperation mechanisms with employers have been strengthened and women students' access to real working environments has been increased. As a result of more active involvement of companies in the educational process, women's practical skills have been aligned with employer requirements, and their level of professional training has been enhanced.

The work carried out is directly part of the comprehensive framework implemented by the Government of Azerbaijan to combat human trafficking and to protect socially vulnerable groups, including persons living in unfavorable conditions and with weak economic status. The programs cover risk reduction measures across various dimensions such as identifying risks, raising awareness, eliminating social problems and integrating into the labor market.

5. What specific measures are taken to reduce the vulnerability of persons with disabilities to human trafficking? Please provide information in the following areas:

a. deinstitutionalization, including community- and family-based services for children and support for independent living;

Answer – Community- and family-based services for children and support for independent living are social services that ensure children (especially those deprived of parental care, belonging to risk groups or having disabilities) grow up in a family environment, integrate into society and live independently in the future. These services aim to prevent the placement of children in boarding schools or institutions and to keep them within a family environment.

In recent years, state policy in our country has given preference to children growing up in family and community environments rather than in boarding schools and children's homes. Various social services are implemented in this direction. The main implementers of these activities are the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs, local executive authorities and social service centers.

By Resolution No. 64 of the Cabinet of Ministers dated 28 February 2018, the “Rules for Organization of Preschool Education in Family-Type, Community-Based, Short-Term Training Groups” were approved.

These Rules were prepared in accordance with Article 8.8 of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Preschool Education” and regulate the organization of preschool education in family-type, community-based and short-term training groups.

In areas where preschool education institutions do not operate, family-type, community-based or short-term training groups may be created at the request of parents (other legal representatives).

Family-type training groups may be established at the request of parents in areas where preschool education institutions do not operate.

Family-type training groups are organized as structural units of a state preschool education institution operating in the nearest administrative-territorial unit to the area where they are established and operate in accordance with the charter of that institution.

Family-type training groups are organized in families with three or more children aged from 1.5 to 6 years. In cases where a large family has 1 or 2 preschool-age children, the establishment of a family-type training group is permitted by admitting preschool-age children from other families.

These groups are organized with the aim of increasing the coverage of children with preschool education.

The content of education in family-type training groups is determined in accordance with educational programs based on the age characteristics of children.

Supervision over the performance of duties of the educator-teacher and methodological support in family-type training groups is ensured by the preschool education institution.

The organization of the educational process in family-type training groups предусматривает the creation of conditions for instilling knowledge, skills and abilities serving the intellectual, physical and moral development of children.

Family-type training groups may have a general developmental orientation or may provide care and supervision of children without applying a preschool education program.

In addition, the community-based preschool education project started in 2017 as community-based preschool education groups operating within 50 general education schools in 10 cities and regions of the country, financed by the European Union Delegation to Azerbaijan and UNICEF Azerbaijan. The project, which demonstrated successful results, was further expanded with the

financial support of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation at the initiative of the First Vice-President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mehriban Aliyeva, and currently has reached 850 community-based preschool education groups operating in 55 cities and regions.

The project is implemented taking into account that early education has a positive impact on the improvement of children's socio-emotional, fine and gross motor and intellectual skills, and creates a basis for their academic performance at school and future success in the labor market.

The project is implemented by the Institute of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan with the support of the Ministry of Science and Education.

b. monitoring of institutions and foster families accommodating persons with disabilities;

Answer – The rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan and other current legislative acts apply to everyone under its jurisdiction, including persons with disabilities as full and equal members of society. In this regard, ensuring the implementation of legal guarantees, protection of the rights and freedoms of persons with disabilities within the framework of cooperation with state bodies, civil society institutions and international organizations constitutes one of the priority areas of the Ombudsman's activities. The Ombudsman is entrusted with the authority to implement the functions of an independent mechanism for monitoring and promoting the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ensuring the right to equality and preventing discrimination.

Despite the activities carried out since the first years of its establishment in areas such as examining applications related to persons with disabilities belonging to vulnerable population groups, making calls related to the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities, providing recommendations to relevant bodies, and conducting visits to institutions where persons with disabilities are held within the framework of the national preventive mechanism mandate, the explicit definition of the scope of these powers in legislation and recognition as an independent monitoring mechanism allows for broader and more detailed monitoring and analysis.

Entrusting the Ombudsman with the authority to monitor cases of discrimination alongside the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities is of particular importance in terms of protecting the rights and interests of persons subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability. Within the framework of the national preventive mechanism and independent monitoring mechanism mandates, members of the groups operating under the Ombudsman have paid special attention to organizing preventive measures related to persons with disabilities, as well as conducting awareness-raising activities, and monitoring and visits have been carried out to institutions where persons with disabilities are accommodated. Civil society institutions have also been involved in monitoring conducted at the initiative of the Ombudsman.

According to paragraph 5.1 of the “Criteria for Monitoring the Situation of Ensuring the Implementation of Children’s Rights in All Areas”, approved by Resolution No. 94 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 01.04.2025, criteria have been determined for monitoring the situation of ensuring the implementation of children’s rights in the field of alternative care, including monitoring of foster families.

Public hearings dedicated to raising awareness about the “Foster Family” care model are organized by the Social Services Agency under the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, and within this model, 78 children have already been placed in foster families.

According to Article 143-1 of the Family Code, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population conducts monitoring of the condition of children placed in foster families and compliance by foster families with contractual obligations at least once a month, in order to study the child’s situation in the family, as well as their mental, physical, psychological and psychiatric health condition. The Ministry conducts monitoring on a planned basis (with prior notification) or on an unplanned basis (without prior notification). During monitoring, the living conditions of the family, financial situation, health condition of the child placed in the foster family and the foster parents, as well as the level of care and supervision provided to the child in the family are taken into account. If, during monitoring, the Ministry identifies one of the grounds specified in Articles 143.2.1–143.2.3 of this Code, it immediately unilaterally terminates the contract on placement of the child in the foster family.

According to paragraph 4.2 of the “Rules for State Control over the Implementation of Children’s Rights”, approved by Decree No. 626 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 8 May 2012, general state control over the implementation of children’s rights is carried out in the forms of evaluation of the activities of state bodies (institutions) supervising the implementation of children’s rights and conducting monitoring. According to Section 6 of the said Rules, monitoring in social service institutions is carried out on the basis of a decision of the commission on the protection of children’s rights. During monitoring, the requirements for the quality of services provided in state and non-state child institutions determined by the Cabinet of Ministers are taken into account. If violations of children’s rights are identified as a result of monitoring, the Commission adopts a decision to provide recommendations to relevant state bodies (institutions) on taking appropriate measures to eliminate the identified deficiencies and/or to submit information on the identified cases to law enforcement agencies.

c. procedures for selection and appointment of legal representatives and supervision of their activities;

Answer – Legal representatives protect the rights of minors or incapacitated persons in courts and other bodies. They are appointed in accordance with legislation (Civil and Family Codes) and are responsible for ensuring the interests of the child.

Parents are the natural legal representatives of children. For children deprived of parental care, guardians and trustees are appointed by the relevant commissions of local executive authorities. When minors commit crimes, their parents, adoptive parents or guardians participate in the process as legal representatives.

According to Article 137 of the Family Code, only persons who have reached the age of majority and have full legal capacity may be appointed as guardians (trustees).

When appointing a guardian (trustee) for children, the moral qualities and other characteristics of the guardian (trustee), their ability to fulfill guardianship duties, their relationship and interaction with the child and their family, as well as, if possible, the wishes of the child, must be taken into account.

Alcoholics and drug addicts, persons removed from guardianship (trusteeship) duties, persons with restricted parental rights, former adoptive parents if the adoption was annulled due to their fault, and persons who are unable to perform child upbringing duties due to their health condition cannot be appointed as guardians (trustees).

Guardians (trustees) are not appointed for children placed in social service institutions under full state care. This function is assigned to the administration of such institutions.

Temporary placement of children in such institutions does not limit the rights and duties of guardians (trustees).

Guardianship and trusteeship authorities exercise constant supervision over the maintenance, upbringing and education of the child in social service institutions.

The functions of the guardianship and trusteeship authority over children placed in foster families are carried out by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population.

d. access to adequate housing, education and employment opportunities;

Answer – Ensuring accessibility for a dignified life of a citizen regardless of the type of disability and the degree of limitation of life activity, as well as creating conditions for full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in the life of society on an equal basis with others, constitutes one of the main directions of social policy. Taking into account the needs of persons with disabilities in the design and construction of infrastructure facilities and residential buildings, as well as adapting existing infrastructure facilities and residential buildings, as well as public transport, especially metro stations, for use by persons with disabilities, is of particular importance. In this regard, it is appropriate to update design standards, strengthen control over compliance with accessibility requirements during construction processes, monitor existing facilities in terms of compliance, identify deficiencies and take necessary measures to eliminate them, as well as develop specific implementation mechanisms to ensure accessibility in metro and other transport means.

Taking into account the importance of ensuring the right of persons with disabilities to receive education on an equal basis with their peers regardless of their physical, mental, intellectual and other characteristics, ongoing work is carried out to eliminate existing gaps in the practical implementation of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Education of Persons with Disabilities (Special Education)” as well as the “Rules for Organization of Inclusive Education” approved by Resolution No. 43 of the Cabinet of Ministers dated 11 February 2023, and to strengthen control mechanisms in this field.

At the same time, as a result of the examination of applications addressed to the Ombudsman, it has been determined that there is a need to expand the network of rehabilitation and day-care services funded from the state budget throughout all regions of the country, as well as to increase opportunities for inclusive or special education for persons with disabilities.

Children with disabilities are involved in special education based on the general education program. The main reason for this is to ensure that they receive inclusive and accessible education on an equal basis with other children. This approach contributes to the socialization of children, development of their skills and better integration into society. The difference in the duration of education for these children is related to taking into account their developmental characteristics, health condition and learning pace. Currently, 3,678 persons across the country are involved in home-based education.

e. access to accessible information and complaint mechanisms for persons with disabilities.

Answer – In order to expand citizens’ opportunities to submit applications and to increase the efficiency of handling applications, the Ombudsman’s unified Call Center “916” operates 24/7.

In order to ensure accessibility of information on the Ombudsman’s official website, an “Accessibility menu” has been added, facilitating access to information, especially for persons with visual impairments. At the initiative of the Ombudsman, a special awareness-raising guide titled “National Preventive Mechanism against Torture” has been prepared in Braille for persons with complete visual impairment. The guide, intended for residents of specialized institutions and other persons belonging to this category operating within the country, contains information about

the Ombudsman's mandate, powers, activities of the national preventive mechanism, as well as methods of applying to the Ombudsman.

In medical institutions, an "Adverse Event Reporting System" has been implemented, and trainings on this topic have been organized. The purpose of the training is to increase awareness of adverse events, timely identify safety risks and contribute to improving the quality of healthcare services.

In order to reduce the vulnerability of persons belonging to socially disadvantaged minorities to human trafficking, information and awareness-raising activities have been carried out through media, and news, research and analytical articles have been published on websites regarding the activities of law enforcement agencies in combating human trafficking, measures implemented by various state bodies, international documents signed within the framework of cooperation with individual countries, and statistical indicators on victims of human trafficking in the country and worldwide. It has also been recommended to all media entities operating in the country, in accordance with the "Editorial Policy and Professional Ethics Rules", to ensure the confidentiality of the identity of minors subjected to sexual exploitation, including victims of human trafficking.

At the same time, in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities", in order to ensure the realization of the rights of persons with hearing impairments to full access to information and communication, the use of sign language has been предусмотрено on nationwide television channels financed from the state budget, as well as those having the status of public broadcasters.

In accordance with the "Concept of State Support for the Development of Mass Media in the Republic of Azerbaijan", during 2025, 184 project materials aimed at protecting human rights, including the topic of combating human trafficking, and increasing the legal and political culture of citizens were published in 39 online and 17 print media entities that received financial support from the Media Development Agency.

6. How is the early identification in practice of vulnerabilities and special needs of asylum seekers ensured? What procedures are applied when vulnerability to human trafficking is identified? Please provide information on policies and measures in the following areas:

- a. provision of comprehensive and accessible information in various relevant languages on the rights of asylum seekers, indicators of human trafficking, rights of victims of human trafficking, and contact details of relevant organizations;**
- b. access to legal assistance and representation;**
- c. access to adequate living conditions, healthcare (including psychological services), work and education.**

Answer (general) – The “Rules (Indicators) for Identification of Victims of Human Trafficking”, which determine mechanisms enabling the identification of a person as a victim of human trafficking, were approved by Resolution No. 131 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 3 September 2009. These Rules reflect issues such as legal aspects of victim identification, characteristics of victims, methods of identifying victims, identification methodology and questionnaire, assessment questionnaire, and additional supporting materials.

During the identification of victims, indicators characterizing their features are taken into account.

In accordance with the recommendations specified in Resolution No. 131 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 3 September 2009 “On approval of the Rules (Indicators) for Identification of Victims of Human Trafficking”, when receiving, registering and examining applications for granting refugee status, the State Migration Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan ensures that during initial conversations and interviews with persons applying for refugee status, as well as during decision-making processes, if there are suspicions that a person may be a victim of human trafficking or if the applicant provides such information, the relevant body of internal affairs is informed within 24 hours in accordance with the “Rules of the National Referral Mechanism for Victims of Human Trafficking”. If it is confirmed that the person is a victim of human trafficking, the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the United Nations guidelines on human trafficking are taken into account when determining refugee status.

In general, during the process, special attention is paid to protecting the interests of vulnerable groups, including children, taking into account their psychological condition during interviews, and ensuring their interests in the decision-making process. During the process of receiving applications from all persons applying for refugee status, separate interviews are conducted with

each parent, and children aged 15 and above are also interviewed separately on a mandatory basis. During interviews, particular attention is paid to gender issues, and female applicants are interviewed individually by female staff members of the Service. More experienced and specially trained staff are involved in interviews with children, taking into account the child's age, psychological condition, health, needs and wishes.

Taking into account the possibility that there may be victims of human trafficking among persons applying for refugee status, information boards in Azerbaijani, Russian, English, Urdu, Arabic and Persian languages have been placed in the relevant reception areas of the Service, and relevant brochures have been made available to applicants.

The Republic of Azerbaijan has taken all necessary measures to ensure that individuals at risk of torture in their countries of origin are not returned, extradited or deported to those countries. Currently, applications of persons who have newly arrived in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan and intend to obtain refugee status are directly examined by the State Migration Service, and such persons are provided with relevant documents while awaiting the expiration of the period for lodging administrative or judicial appeals against decisions taken in respect of them. Information on persons provided with a Temporary Certificate of a special form confirming identity is transmitted to the Unified Migration Information System. Conditions are created to enable asylum seekers to file appeals with suspensive effect preventing their departure from the territory of the country.

Refugees registered with the State Migration Service, persons who have applied for refugee status and their children are ensured access to free education in general education schools of the republic and education in higher education institutions in accordance with the current legislation. Foreigners and stateless persons granted refugee status and international protection in the Republic of Azerbaijan are considered insured persons together with citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Article 64 of the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan states that persons who have applied for refugee status, have been granted refugee status or have been granted political asylum are not required to obtain a work permit. In this regard, the right of such persons to work within the territory of the country is ensured and employment issues are resolved.

When assessing the health condition of asylum seekers and other vulnerable categories of persons applying to medical institutions subordinate to TƏBİB (Management Union of Medical Territorial Units), attention is paid not only to clinical needs but also to possible signs of exploitation and violence. When physical trauma, psychological tension, signs of chronic stress and other risk indicators are identified, along with providing medical assistance, coordination with relevant institutions is carried out in accordance with existing procedures.

In addition, the State Migration Service regularly organizes trainings for its employees who are in direct contact with foreigners and stateless persons (at document reception points) on methods of identifying potential victims of human trafficking, specifics of communication with them, and immediate notification of the Main Department for Combating Human Trafficking of the Ministry of Internal Affairs when necessary, and other related topics.

Shelters for temporary accommodation of victims of human trafficking operating under the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan have been established to ensure decent living conditions, safety and provision of legal assistance to victims of human trafficking, while assistance centers for victims of human trafficking have been established to provide explanations on existing administrative and legal procedures for the protection of rights and interests of victims, provide other necessary assistance and support their social rehabilitation.

In shelters, victims of human trafficking are provided with the opportunity to communicate by telephone and to use the services of an interpreter. Special areas are allocated for confidential conversations. In assistance centers, assistance is provided upon request to any person presenting themselves as a victim of human trafficking, regardless of their behavior, cooperation with criminal prosecution authorities or willingness to testify against traffickers.

According to Section 2 of the “Rules of the National Referral Mechanism for Victims of Human Trafficking” approved by Resolution No. 123 of the Cabinet of Ministers dated 11 August 2009, an interagency commission is established for the implementation of the National Referral Mechanism for victims of human trafficking. The main task of the interagency commission is to create an effective system ensuring the protection of the rights of victims of human trafficking, their referral to relevant bodies, their safety, repatriation and rehabilitation, and to establish rules

in this field. According to Section 3 of these Rules, provision of free medical assistance to victims is organized by the Ministry of Health. Any medical examination of victims is carried out only with their consent, except in cases предусмотренные by legislation. When providing medical assistance, all necessary medical needs of victims must be fully met, each of them must be treated with respect, and their need for psychological assistance must be ensured. When providing medical and psychological assistance to victims, it is unacceptable to collect and disseminate confidential information about them, and such actions are considered a criminal offense.

According to Section 6 of the said Rules, social rehabilitation of victims is carried out at their request by specialized institutions предусмотренные by the Law “On Combating Human Trafficking” (shelters for temporary accommodation of victims, assistance centers for victims) in cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, the Ministry of Science and Education and other relevant bodies, as well as non-governmental organizations specialized in this field. Assistance centers operating in accordance with legislation develop individual plans for rehabilitation and reintegration of victims into society. Social rehabilitation of victims is carried out with the aim of reintegrating them into society and returning them to a normal lifestyle and includes provision of legal assistance, continuation of their education, psychological rehabilitation and correction, measures for medical and vocational rehabilitation, as well as use of opportunities for employment and housing. During the implementation of social rehabilitation of victims, any restriction of human and civil rights established by the Constitution, laws and international treaties to which the Republic of Azerbaijan is a party, or application of rehabilitation measures against their will, is not permitted. During social rehabilitation, particular attention is paid to the age, gender and needs of victims, especially children, including their need for safe shelter, education and care.

It should also be noted that non-governmental organizations operating in the field of combating human trafficking are involved in organizing the activities of specialized institutions for victims, providing legal assistance to victims and their social rehabilitation. According to Section 2 of the “Rules for Placement and Maintenance of Child Victims of Human Trafficking in Shelters” approved by Resolution No. 180 of the Cabinet of Ministers dated 19 November 2009, placement and maintenance of children in shelters is carried out based on the principles of voluntariness, confidentiality, individual approach, protection of victims’ interests, ensuring safety, equality,

respect for victims, provision of urgent assistance and free provision of services. All services and measures provided within shelters are initially adapted to the interests and needs of children. No discrimination is allowed against any child placed in a shelter regardless of their identity. Taking into account the age and maturity level of the child placed in a shelter, information about their situation, rights and services to be provided must be delivered in a form understandable to them. When placing a child in a shelter, the participation of a person protecting the child's rights and interests must be ensured. According to Section 6 of these Rules, children placed in shelters are provided with necessary medical, psychological, legal and social assistance, and conditions are created for them to continue their education. Such children are also provided with the opportunity to maintain contact and communication with persons protecting their rights and interests (except in cases where such person is suspected of involvement in the child becoming a victim of human trafficking). Children in shelters are provided with the opportunity to communicate by telephone and to use the services of an interpreter.

7. What specific measures are taken to reduce the vulnerability of migrant workers (including seasonal workers, posted/assigned workers, domestic workers, diplomatic household workers) to human trafficking? Please provide information on policies and measures in the following areas:

- a. provision of comprehensive and accessible information in various relevant languages on migration and labor legislation, protection of workers and contact details of relevant organizations;**
- b. provision of clear and transparent employment contracts;**
- c. access to decent working and living conditions, healthcare, social services and education;**
- d. possibility to change employer;**
- e. access to confidential complaint mechanisms;**
- f. the right to join trade unions and participate in collective bargaining;**
- g. legal mechanisms for legalization of stay in the country.**

Answer (general) – The migration policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, along with protecting the socio-economic interests of the country, is aimed at creating favorable conditions for the life and activities of migrants, including labor migrants, and protecting their rights. Issues related to the regulation of migrants’ labor activities are governed by the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, while other issues related to labor relations are regulated by the Labor Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (hereinafter – the Code).

Every able-bodied foreigner who has reached the age of 18 may work in the Republic of Azerbaijan after obtaining a work permit through legal entities employing them, individuals engaged in entrepreneurial activity without forming a legal entity, or branches and representative offices of foreign legal entities. A work permit is issued on the basis of an application by the employer solely for employment with that employer in a specific position. Employers must provide employment to foreigners and stateless persons only at their own workplaces and must conclude an employment contract with them for the period of validity of the work permit. It is not permitted to conclude an employment contract with foreigners without obtaining a work permit.

When the validity of a work permit of a foreigner or stateless person expires or the employment contract is terminated prematurely, they may engage in labor activity with another employer upon obtaining a new work permit by that employer. Except for cases предусмотренные by law, restriction of labor rights of foreigners and stateless persons provided for in the Code and other normative legal acts is prohibited. Compliance with this requirement of legislation is monitored by various state bodies.

Necessary normative legal acts regulating migration of migrants, including labor migrants, and issues related to the protection of their rights have been adopted. The process of improving legislation in this field (Migration Code and Labor Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan) is continuous. In improving legislation, the requirements of international conventions to which the Republic of Azerbaijan is a party, especially the “International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families”, are taken into account, and normative legal acts are aligned with these conventions. Azerbaijan attaches particular importance to the implementation of obligations under this convention and regularly submits periodic reports

to the United Nations Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

According to national legislation, any form of discrimination against labor migrants is strictly prohibited. All labor migrants in the Republic of Azerbaijan have the same social, labor, educational, healthcare and other rights as citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Regardless of their status, all migrants have the right to freely apply to state bodies and courts in the Republic of Azerbaijan, and no restrictions are предусмотрены in this regard.

The same conditions established by legislation for citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan apply to labor migrants in relation to working conditions, and remuneration of their labor is carried out in accordance with the procedures established for citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The legislation also provides for insurance payments to foreigners and stateless persons engaged in labor activity in cases of loss of professional working capacity or death resulting from occupational accidents and occupational diseases.

According to Article 16 of the Code, any discrimination among employees on the basis of citizenship, gender, race, religion, nationality, language, place of residence, property status, social origin, age, family status, beliefs, political views, membership in trade unions or other public associations, official position, as well as other factors not related to the employee's professional qualities, competence and results of work, including the establishment of privileges and preferences or restriction of rights directly or indirectly on these grounds, is strictly prohibited. An employer or other individual who allows discrimination specified in this article in labor relations bears responsibility in accordance with the procedure established by legislation. An employee subjected to discrimination may apply to the court for restoration of their violated rights.

The national legislation does not establish a regulatory mechanism regarding migrant domestic workers.

Every able-bodied foreigner who has reached the age of 18 may work in the Republic of Azerbaijan after obtaining a work permit through legal entities employing them, individuals engaged in entrepreneurial activity without forming a legal entity, or branches and representative offices of foreign legal entities. Employers must provide employment to foreigners and stateless persons

only at their own workplaces and must conclude an employment contract with them for the period of validity of the work permit. It is not permitted to conclude an employment contract with foreigners without obtaining a work permit.

The State Migration Service ensures preparation and distribution of brochures in Azerbaijani, Russian, English, Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages in order to inform foreigners and stateless persons residing in the country about their rights and obligations, risks of human trafficking, places to apply for assistance and contact numbers.

The Service's Call Center (919), operating 24 hours a day without interruption in three languages – Azerbaijani, English and Russian – plays an important role in informing foreigners and stateless persons about their rights and obligations and ensuring their right to obtain necessary information. The Call Center is open to calls from outside the country and also responds to various requests received from individuals and legal entities through the “Online Guide” service (online information service on the official website of the Service) and via WhatsApp.

In addition, since 2016, free courses have been organized by the Training Center of the State Migration Service for foreigners and stateless persons living in the Republic of Azerbaijan in order to teach the Azerbaijani language, history, culture, as well as legislation related to the rights and obligations of foreigners and stateless persons.

The State Migration Service regularly conducts awareness-raising activities and meetings in the capital and regions with the close participation of various stakeholders – local executive authorities, local self-government bodies, higher education institutions, employers, media representatives, representatives of the tourism sector and relevant community representatives – in order to inform the public, including foreigners and stateless persons. It is possible to communicate via the “MigAz” mobile application of the Service. Currently, effective communication with applicants is ensured through the Service's accounts on “Facebook”, “X”, “Instagram”, “YouTube” and “Telegram”.

In addition, taking into account the special importance of public oversight in public administration, a Public Council has been established under the State Migration Service to study issues related to migration, prepare proposals, improve draft laws, ensure public oversight over the Service's

activities and study public opinion. During meetings held by members of the Public Council with migrants, issues of concern and proposals are identified, and applications received from foreigners are resolved in cooperation with the Service.

At the same time, in order to more actively involve migrants living in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the activities of the State Migration Service, increase the effectiveness of protection of their human rights and freedoms, improve the quality and transparency of services provided to foreigners and stateless persons, and assess the impact of decisions adopted in the field of migration on the daily lives of foreigners, a Migrant Council consisting of citizens of different states has been established under the State Migration Service. The Public Council and the Migrant Council support the activities of the State Migration Service in raising awareness among foreigners about the requirements of migration legislation, combating human trafficking and forced labor, and procedures for submitting complaints in this regard.

According to Article 5 of the Law “On Education”, the state ensures the right of every citizen to receive compulsory general secondary education, and every learner in state educational institutions has the right to receive free general education. At the same time, in accordance with this article, the Republic of Azerbaijan guarantees the creation of appropriate conditions for every citizen to receive education and does not allow deprivation of education at any level, stage or form, and guarantees the creation of opportunities for education without discrimination regardless of gender, race, language, religion, political views, nationality, social status, origin or health condition. According to the said Law, supervision over compulsory general secondary education is among the duties of the state.

According to Article 44.1 of the Law “On Education”, education or advanced training of foreigners and stateless persons at any level of education in the Republic of Azerbaijan is carried out in accordance with international treaties to which the Republic of Azerbaijan is a party, based on quotas determined by the state, educational grant programs, and contracts concluded directly by educational institutions, legal and natural persons.

According to Article 10 of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Courts and Judges”, along with citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan, foreign citizens and stateless persons residing in the

territory of the country are guaranteed the right to judicial protection at any stage of proceedings against any encroachments and violations of the rights and freedoms предусмотренные by the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan and other laws, as well as the lawful interests of legal entities. No one may be deprived of the right to judicial protection.

According to Articles 292 and 294 of the Labor Code, labor migrants have the right to apply to court instances on the same grounds and conditions as предусмотренные for citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In accordance with the requirements of the Migration Code and the Law “On Administrative Proceedings”, foreigners and stateless persons may lodge complaints against decisions adopted in respect of them by administrative bodies in administrative and (or) judicial порядке. Decisions on refusal to extend the period of temporary stay in the Republic of Azerbaijan, refusal to issue (extend) a work permit for paid labor activity, temporary or permanent residence permits, as well as decisions on cancellation of extension of temporary stay, work permits, temporary and permanent residence permits may be appealed in administrative and (or) judicial порядке in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

When providing medical assistance to migrant workers applying to healthcare institutions, access to their right to health is ensured. Where a language barrier exists, explanations are provided in an understandable form where possible. If there is suspicion of violence or exploitation, referral is carried out in the appropriate direction while ensuring the patient’s safety and confidentiality.

The legal status of foreigners and stateless persons who are in an irregular situation (without legal stay and residence status) in the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as the norms and procedures applied regarding legalization of their stay in the territory of the country, are determined by the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Code of Administrative Offences. During the formalization of their status, an individual approach is applied to each migrant, taking into account their personal and family situation, while also guided by generally recognized principles of international law such as “family reunification” and other norms.

According to Article 45 of the Migration Code, foreigners and stateless persons recognized as victims of human trafficking are granted temporary residence permits in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In accordance with Article 64 of the same Code, foreigners and stateless

persons recognized as victims of human trafficking are not required to obtain a work permit. According to Article 79.4 of the said Code, no decision on expulsion is adopted with respect to foreigners and stateless persons recognized as victims of human trafficking for a period of 1 year. No decision on expulsion is adopted with respect to children who are victims of human trafficking.

8. Do labor inspectorates and other bodies inspecting workplace conditions have sufficiently broad powers, as well as adequate human, financial and technical resources to conduct regular and proactive inspections in all economic sectors, especially in high-risk sectors prone to exploitation? How do labor inspectors cooperate with other bodies and trade unions? Is there a separation between labor inspection and migration control functions?

Answer – According to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 20 October 2015 No. 1410-IVQ “On Suspension of Inspections in the Field of Entrepreneurship”, inspections carried out at business entities in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan were suspended until 1 January 2026. In accordance with the requirements of this Law, the State Labor Inspection Service under the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population (hereinafter – the Service) did not conduct on-site inspections during 2025.

However, inspections conducted by the Labor Relations Monitoring Center of the State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, established in accordance with the Decree No. 1349 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 17 April 2017 “On measures to strengthen control over prevention of informal labor relations in the construction sector”, as well as information from law enforcement bodies regarding engagement of individuals by employers in performing work without the employment contract (agreement) entering into legal force, and citizen appeals received by the Service in accordance with the requirements of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Citizens’ Appeals”, are examined in accordance with legislation and relevant measures are taken.

During 2025, the Service examined and responded to 21,897 complaint applications received from citizens in the field of labor legislation in accordance with the Law “On Citizens’ Appeals”. During the examination of materials received from various bodies and citizen appeals, violations of labor legislation requirements by employers were identified in 6,897 cases. For committed

administrative offenses, administrative sanctions were imposed on officials, individuals and legal entities by officials of the Service and judicial bodies.

During 2025, 18 letters covering 22 facts related to engagement of individuals by employers in performing work without the employment contract (agreement) entering into legal force were received by the Service from the Labor Relations Monitoring Center. Proceedings on administrative offenses under Article 192.1 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Republic of Azerbaijan were initiated against 8 legal entities, and in accordance with Article 18.5 of the said Code, supporting documents were sent to judicial bodies for application of administrative sanctions.

Administrative decisions were adopted against 16 officials by the Service, and administrative fines in the amount of 51,700 manats were imposed. During the reporting period, in 732 cases violations of labor legislation requirements by employers were identified related to engagement of individuals without the employment contract (agreement) entering into legal force, and administrative fines in the total amount of 3,005,850 manats were imposed on officials, individuals and legal entities by the Service and judicial bodies.

Through the “Labor and Employment” subsystem (ƏMAS), electronic control measures were implemented to identify and eliminate cases of failure to conclude mandatory insurance contracts and employment contracts with wages below the minimum wage established in the country, in order to ensure implementation of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On compulsory insurance against loss of professional working capacity as a result of occupational accidents and occupational diseases” and the Order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On additional measures to improve social welfare of the population”, and administrative fines were imposed in accordance with the Code of Administrative Offences. At the same time, measures such as placing warnings in ƏMAS, sending SMS notifications and letters, and holding meetings with employers were carried out by the Service.

The purpose of the “DOST Inspector” project implemented jointly by the public legal entity “Labor Protection Center” under the Service and the National Observatory on Labor Market and Social Protection Issues under the Ministry is to provide methodological support to employers in

the fields of human resource management, application of labor legislation, labor protection and use of electronic subsystems. By applying the “self-inspection” model widely used in developed countries, the project creates conditions for improving internal processes of enterprises, timely identification and elimination of risks. Diagnostic assessments conducted by experts on a voluntary basis identify existing gaps and provide recommendations for their elimination. Within the framework of the project, confidentiality of information is ensured and no administrative fines are imposed for identified violations. To date, the project has been successfully implemented in 28 enterprises.

Taking into account international practice and conventions and recommendations of the International Labour Organization, a draft risk model was simulated for organizing and conducting risk-based inspections in the field of compliance with labor legislation. Based on the obtained results, risk criteria were re-analyzed to improve the model, and new criteria were added in the area of informal employment. Information obtained through data exchange between ЭМАС and similar control systems of other state bodies has been regularly analyzed.

The State Migration Service, when identifying violations of migration legislation, including violations of the rules for employment of foreigners and stateless persons предусмотренные by Article 578 of the Code of Administrative Offences (including employment without obtaining a work permit in violation of the requirements of the Migration Code, providing employment to foreigners outside the workplace, and other cases), adopts administrative decisions against each employer within its полномочия in accordance with legislation (imposition of substantial administrative fines).

In order to strengthen control over migration processes, migration authorities regularly implement comprehensive measures in the field of combating irregular migration, and within these measures, issues related to identifying and preventing cases of human trafficking, discrimination and exploitation of foreigners and stateless persons by employers, as well as combating abuse and exploitation of labor migrants, are kept in focus. In recent years, efforts to prevent irregular migration, including all forms of human trafficking, have been further strengthened, and coordination between state bodies operating in this field has been ensured.

Thus, during the period from 01.01.2019 to 31.12.2025, the State Migration Service adopted 1,595 administrative decisions against employers who engaged foreigners and stateless persons in illegal labor activity, in accordance with Articles 578.1 and 578.2 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

According to Article 75.4 of the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, supervision over the ensuring of labor migrants' rights by employers (taking into account the requirements of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Regulation of Inspections in the Field of Entrepreneurship and Protection of the Interests of Entrepreneurs" in relation to entrepreneurs) is carried out by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

9. How are employment and recruitment agencies regulated and supervised? Are all stages of the recruitment process, including announcements, selection, transportation and placement, subject to regulation? Is the charging of recruitment fees and related costs to workers or jobseekers prohibited?

Answer – The activities of private employment agencies in the country are regulated in accordance with the Law "On Employment". According to Article 14 of the Law, mediation activities in employment of jobseekers and unemployed persons in the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as employment of citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan in foreign countries (hereinafter – mediation in employment), are carried out only by legal entities in compliance with the requirements of this Law. The Agency maintains an electronic register of legal entities engaged in mediation in employment.

According to the Law, the procedure for maintaining the register of legal entities engaged in mediation in employment and the requirements for such legal entities are determined by the "Rules for Maintaining the Register of Legal Entities Engaged in Mediation in Employment and Requirements for Them", approved by Resolution No. 349 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 8 August 2019. In this regard, it should be noted that legal entities engaged in mediation in employment bear administrative liability under Article 576 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Republic of Azerbaijan if they fail to comply with the requirements established by law or fail to ensure electronic exchange of information.

The legislation of the country does not provide for charging foreigners and stateless persons any fees related to issuance of work permits.

According to Article 63 of the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, legal entities, individuals engaged in entrepreneurial activity without forming a legal entity, and branches and representative offices of foreign legal entities must obtain a work permit for every able-bodied foreigner or stateless person who has reached the age of 18 whom they wish to employ (whether within the Republic of Azerbaijan or outside the country), except for cases предусмотренные in Article 64 of this Code (cases where a work permit is not required). Only after obtaining a work permit may they engage in paid labor activity in the Republic of Azerbaijan. The parties must conclude an employment contract for the period of validity of the work permit.

Article 18.58 of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On State Duty” establishes state fees for issuance and extension of work permits to foreigners and stateless persons for engagement in paid labor activity in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and such fees are paid by employers.

10. How is abuse of legal constructs such as self-employment, letterbox companies, subcontracting and posting of workers prevented and punished, taking into account that these mechanisms may be used to commit human trafficking?

Answer – As stated in Article 1.1.15 of the Law “On Employment”, self-employment is the provision of employment by a person independently or with the support of the state. Within social policy, special importance is given to self-employment measures in order to improve the social welfare of low-income families. In accordance with the Decree No. 1941 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 7 April 2016 “On additional measures in the field of ensuring self-employment of the population”, the self-employment program is being implemented.

Within the framework of this program, support is provided to low-income families through provision, at the expense of state funds, of goods, materials and other property in kind (without cash payments) directly to families in order to establish or develop their individual хозяйства. Families are provided with property in the fields of agriculture, production or services in accordance with their submitted business plans. This distinguishes the self-employment program from practices in other countries. The self-employment program is also characterized by

significant advantages compared to alternative social protection measures, as it allows achieving parallel results in several macro-level objectives simultaneously.

The advantages of the self-employment program can be grouped as follows:

- formation of a family budget based on sustainable sources of income;
- development of micro and small entrepreneurship;
- creation of new jobs and reduction of unemployment;
- increasing efficiency in the use of public (state) funds;
- reduction of poverty levels;
- strengthening inclusiveness in the economy.

The organization of self-employment is carried out in the following stages:

1. Provision of consultations and information on organization of self-employment;
2. Assistance in selecting and organizing the direction of self-employment;
3. Assistance in preparation of a business plan for organization of self-employment, including conducting trainings and evaluation of their results;
4. Provision of materials, equipment and other property in kind for a period of 1 (one) year under a contract for organization of the selected self-employment activity;
5. Periodic monitoring of the activities of the person involved in self-employment for a period of 1 (one) year.

During implementation of the program, priority is given to the following categories of unemployed persons:

- recipients of targeted state social assistance;
- persons with disabilities;
- members of families of martyrs;
- persons registered as unemployed for more than one year;
- persons with less than two years remaining until retirement age;
- unemployed persons released from places of detention.

Materials, equipment and other property are provided in kind to persons involved in self-employment for a period of 1 (one) year under a contract. Monitoring of the activities of the person

involved in self-employment is carried out during the term of the contract, and if at the end of the contract period the person's activity complies with the submitted business plan, the property provided for organization of self-employment is transferred into their ownership. If the person involved in self-employment does not use the property provided under the contract within 1 (one) year without valid reason, they return such property or its value to the State Employment Agency in accordance with the market price determined by the State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan at the time of return.

11. How do your country's migration legislation and policies contribute to preventing human trafficking through creating opportunities for legal migration and legal employment accompanied by decent working conditions?

Answer – According to Article 13 of the Labor Code, unless otherwise предусмотрено by law or international treaties to which the Republic of Azerbaijan is a party, foreigners and stateless persons, while in the Republic of Azerbaijan, enjoy all labor rights on an equal basis with citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan and bear corresponding obligations. Except for cases предусмотренные by law, restriction of labor rights of foreigners and stateless persons предусмотренные in the Code and other normative legal acts is prohibited.

Consideration of applications received from foreigners and stateless persons regarding violation of labor rights is carried out by the Service in accordance with the requirements of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Citizens’ Appeals”. During 2025, the Service received 34 applications related to violations of labor migrants’ rights, and relevant measures were taken to restore their rights.

The mechanism for realization of political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights of foreigners residing in the country is based on the principles set out in the United Nations “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” and international conventions to which the state is a party in the field of protection of human rights and freedoms. Improvement of national legislation in the field of combating human trafficking in accordance with international requirements and successful implementation of obligations arising from international instruments to which the country is a party in this field are ongoing.

In general, by strengthening the legal framework related to the participation of the State Migration Service in preventing human trafficking, continuous work is carried out to ensure sustainability of the Service's activities in this direction and, as a result, to improve activities related to identification of information on whether a person is a victim or a potential victim within the framework of combating irregular migration, identification of victims and potential victims of human trafficking, and prevention of the risk of a person becoming a victim of human trafficking again, through regular amendments to legislative acts.

Within its полномочия, the State Migration Service, together with relevant state bodies, carries out appropriate measures in the field of combating and eliminating human trafficking, and regularly undertakes activities to implement measures предусмотренные under the National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking in the Republic of Azerbaijan within its competence. At the same time, the State Migration Service participates closely in the work of the interagency commission established for the implementation of the National Referral Mechanism in accordance with the “Rules of the National Referral Mechanism for Victims of Human Trafficking”.

In addition, comprehensive, consistent and systematic awareness-raising activities are carried out in the country aimed at legalization of the status of persons in an irregular situation belonging to vulnerable categories and increasing awareness in this regard. Regular legal awareness events are organized with the participation of relevant state bodies, civil society institutions, foreigners and stateless persons on measures taken to legalize migrants residing in an irregular situation in the country and existing procedures in this field. Furthermore, informational video materials, as well as methodological manuals and brochures, are prepared and disseminated on the official website of the Service, social media accounts and television channels regarding irregular migration and its consequences, risks arising therefrom, and the importance of legalizing the stay of undocumented persons for the exercise of their rights and obligations.

12. How do legislation and policies aimed at reducing the demand that fosters human trafficking take into account specific vulnerable groups and categories at risk of human trafficking?

Answer – In order to reduce the demand that leads to human trafficking, the existing legal framework in the country comprehensively takes into account vulnerable population groups. Within the framework of implementation of the National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking, more than 30 state bodies carry out comprehensive measures in the following areas: improvement of the normative legal framework and institutional mechanisms in the field of combating human trafficking, prevention (prophylaxis) of human trafficking, social rehabilitation and protection of victims of human trafficking, improvement of assistance and protection provided to children who have suffered from human trafficking, are likely to suffer from it, or are potential victims, development of cooperation in the field of combating human trafficking, organization of trainings (specialized professional training) for persons operating in this field, awareness-raising activities on combating human trafficking, and coordination of support and resources in this area.

13. How do your country’s legislation and practice ensure individual assessment of protection needs before decisions on refusal of entry at the border or removal are taken?

Answer – In accordance with the “Rules on Repatriation of Victims of Human Trafficking” approved by Resolution No. 252 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 10 September 2013, a recovery and reflection period of 30 (thirty) days is granted to a victim of human trafficking in order to restore their condition, avoid the influence of offenders and make an informed decision regarding cooperation with criminal prosecution authorities. During the recovery and reflection period, administrative removal of the victim of human trafficking from the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan is not applied.

After the expiration of the recovery and reflection period, or during the period of temporary residence, if victims express a desire to leave the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan, their repatriation is carried out.

At the same time, no decision on removal is adopted for a period of 1 year with respect to foreigners and stateless persons recognized as victims of human trafficking, and for foreigners and stateless persons assisting criminal prosecution authorities – until completion of criminal proceedings. No decision on removal is adopted with respect to children who are victims of human trafficking.

According to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 21 May 1999 “On the Status of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (Persons Displaced within the Country)”, foreigners and stateless persons who have applied for refugee status are in no case sent or forcibly returned to a country where their life or freedom is threatened. In addition, according to this Law, a person who has unlawfully arrived in the Republic of Azerbaijan from another state and has applied to the competent authority as soon as possible may be exempted from liability предусмотренные by the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan by a reasoned decision of that authority. According to Article 15 of the said Law, a person who has submitted an application for refugee status cannot be sent, extradited or forcibly returned to another country until their case is resolved by the State Migration Service.

14. What measures are taken to prevent human trafficking in sports? Which sectors and categories/groups have been identified as being at risk?

Answer – In accordance with the National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking, the Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Azerbaijan, together with other state bodies, implements measures aimed at strengthening advocacy and awareness-raising in combating human trafficking, including preparation and dissemination of various social advertisements, videos, short films, development and broadcasting of programs, preparation of various awareness materials, their placement in internet information resources and promotion of their use, as well as implementation of the practice of evaluation by organizers and participants of all awareness-raising events and trainings conducted on human trafficking.

According to the Law “On Combating Human Trafficking”, persons engaged in vagrancy or begging, homeless persons, individuals leading an immoral lifestyle, children who are deprived of care, neglected or deliberately avoiding education, and persons dependent on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances are potential victims of human trafficking. In addition to those предусмотренные by law, other vulnerable population groups (victims of domestic violence, irregular migrants, etc.) are also considered potential victims of human trafficking. These are also classified as risk groups.

15. Have online practices that may increase the risk of becoming a victim of human trafficking in various forms of exploitation been identified? What mechanisms have been developed to prevent misuse of information and communication technologies for the purposes of human trafficking and what is the practical impact of their implementation?

Answer – In 2025, based on 34 facts committed using information technologies, 4 criminal cases were initiated and investigated under Article 144-1 (human trafficking – sexual exploitation) of the Criminal Code.

Traffickers used technology to deceive and manipulate individuals, recruiting them for exploitation through messaging applications (WhatsApp, Telegram, etc.).

In order to prevent such cases, law enforcement agencies monitor social media and conduct investigations of suspicious advertisements, messages and activities.

Conducting intensive awareness-raising activities among risk groups contributes to minimizing cases of human trafficking committed through the use of technology in the future.

In addition, in order to ensure national security, including information security, prevent information manipulation and disinformation attacks, and ensure protection of artificial intelligence systems, the “Artificial Intelligence Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2025–2028” was approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, aimed at strengthening reliability levels of digital tools in the field of artificial intelligence and expanding its application.

Furthermore, measures such as continuous improvement of information security and cybersecurity in media, including in the national digital broadcasting space, detection of crimes in this field, expansion of technical capabilities for collection of evidence and conduct of criminal investigations are reflected in the “Information Security and Cybersecurity Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2023–2027”.

According to Article 13-2.3 of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Information, Informatization and Protection of Information”, the owner of an internet information resource and

its domain name or the user of an information-telecommunication network must not allow placement of information related to pornography, including child pornography, in that information resource. According to Article 13-3 of the same Law, if the Ministry of Digital Development and Transport directly identifies cases of placement of information prohibited for dissemination in an internet information resource, or determines such cases based on substantiated information received from individuals, legal entities or state bodies, it issues a written warning to the owner of the internet information resource and its domain name and to the host provider. If within 8 hours from the time of warning the prohibited information is not removed from the internet information resource or access to the information resource or its relevant part is not restricted, the Ministry of Digital Development and Transport applies to the district (city) court with a claim for removal of the information from the internet information resource or restriction of access to the information resource or its relevant part. According to Article 305 of the Civil Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, cases related to removal of information prohibited for dissemination from internet information resources or restriction of access thereto are considered by general courts under special proceedings.

16. What measures are taken to raise awareness about risks of human trafficking carried out through technology, including among children, parents, teachers, childcare specialists and social workers? What technology-based initiatives exist in your country to deliver information to groups/communities at risk of human trafficking?

Answer – In recent years, the issue of increasing information/media literacy has been specifically emphasized in updated or improved curricula for general education subjects. Within this framework, students are also taught effective ways to combat negative aspects of media such as media manipulation, disinformation and cyberbullying.

In the newly developed curriculum for the subject “Life Skills”, issues such as explaining the importance of electronic devices in human life, analyzing obtained information and developing skills to distinguish useful information are included for younger students.

The updated curriculum for the subject of Informatics also предусматривает the formation of relevant competencies related to information/media literacy among students – awareness of

various types of cybercrime, including the possibility that publicly available information, especially personal or sensitive data, may be obtained and used for malicious purposes, as well as the importance of evaluating the reliability of websites used, and both positive and negative aspects of artificial intelligence, among other issues.

During 2025, in approximately 500 general education institutions across the country, meetings, round tables, seminars, training sessions, awareness-raising lessons and drawing competitions titled “Safe Information Search”, “Me and My Environment”, “Safe Behavior on the Internet”, “Cyberbullying and Its Prevention”, “Our Safety Is in Our Hands”, and “Where to Obtain Safe Information” were organized. At the same time, within the framework of cooperation between the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs and the Ministry of Science and Education, awareness-raising meetings were held to increase digital literacy of schoolchildren in the field of protection of children’s rights. Representatives of local law enforcement agencies, cybersecurity specialists, psychologists and parents also participated in these events.

The main purpose of the events was to inform students and parents about risks that children and adolescents may face when using the internet in modern times, including social media risks, cybercrimes and protection of personal data.

In 2026, the Ombudsman issued a public appeal regarding children’s safety in the digital environment, which reflected existing risks in this field, as well as recommendations addressed to state bodies, media representatives, parents and civil society institutions.

The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs also conducted awareness-raising meetings for parents of schoolchildren on the topic “Children’s Safety in the Digital Environment”. During these meetings, issues such as phishing attacks, malicious software, cyberstalking, human trafficking and social engineering methods were discussed, and parents were provided with detailed information about real threats occurring on the internet.

17. How is cooperation carried out with ICT companies and internet service providers, including content providers and social media platforms, for the purpose of preventing human trafficking?

Answer – This cooperation is mainly carried out between state bodies (Ministry of Internal Affairs, State Security Service, Prosecutor General’s Office, State Service for Special Communication and Information Security, etc.) and internet providers, technology companies, content providers and social media platforms. Law enforcement bodies of the Republic of Azerbaijan, in certain cases, may request information from providers and platforms on the basis of the laws “On Information, Informatization and Protection of Information”, “On Telecommunications”, “On Personal Data”, the Criminal Code (especially provisions related to cybercrimes), the Criminal Procedure Code (rules on obtaining electronic evidence), as well as decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers and relevant authorities.

Cooperation with internet providers is carried out in areas such as identification of IP addresses in criminal cases, provision of technical information related to suspicious traffic or attacks, blocking of certain websites based on court decisions, and restriction of content related to terrorism, drugs, child exploitation and similar issues.

Cooperation with social media platforms – Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube and others – is carried out through official requests for obtaining user data, closure of fake accounts and fraudulent pages, removal of extremist and violent calls, and blocking of content related to child pornography and human trafficking.

Cooperation with media entities and website owners is carried out in areas such as removal of illegal content, prevention of disinformation, prevention of dissemination of criminal calls, and, in certain cases, removal of materials based on court decisions.

18. How are policies and practices aimed at preventing human trafficking shaped based on the experiences of victims and persons at risk?

Answer – For policies and practices aimed at preventing human trafficking to be effective, it is essential that they are shaped based on the real experiences of victims and persons at risk. This approach is known as a “victim-centered” and “human rights-based” model.

The main principles of the victim-centered approach are the safety of the victim, protection of confidentiality, prevention of re-traumatization, voluntariness and consent.

When developing policies, the experiences of victims are analyzed – how they were deceived, which vulnerabilities were exploited (unemployment, poverty, domestic violence, etc.), their initial contact experiences with state bodies, and difficulties encountered during shelter and rehabilitation processes.

In shaping policies, information obtained through interviews, reports of shelters and rehabilitation centers, field studies of NGOs, analysis of court cases and individual case analyses is examined, and this information reveals real gaps and systemic problems.

Effective policies against human trafficking must be based on real-life experiences, prioritize the needs of victims, and combine legal, social and psychological mechanisms.

That is, policy should be formed not only “top-down”, but also “bottom-up” – based on the voices of victims.

In Azerbaijan, policies against human trafficking are based on legislation, rely on analysis of real experiences of victims, and combine preventive, intervention and reintegration measures. Policies and practices aimed at preventing human trafficking in Azerbaijan are formed in a phased and institutional manner based on the experiences of victims and persons at risk. This process is implemented within the framework of both national legislation and international obligations.

In Azerbaijan, sources such as investigative and judicial practice, shelters and rehabilitation centers, identification of risk groups, victim-centered and trauma-informed approaches are used in shaping policies.

Difficulties encountered by victims of human trafficking during social reintegration (problems in finding employment, family pressure, etc.) influence the development of new social programs. Persons with high unemployment levels, victims of domestic violence, citizens going abroad for work, women in need of social protection and persons deprived of parental care are identified as risk groups, and targeted awareness-raising activities are conducted for them. Monitoring and evaluation reports are prepared, and these reports influence the updating of state programs.

II. IDENTIFICATION OF VICTIMS AND PROTECTION OF THEIR RIGHTS (Articles 10, 11, 12, 14 and 16)

19. Among identified victims of human trafficking, have there been persons subjected to exploitation based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity (LGBTI+: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex), particularly adolescents and young adults? If yes, have any of them reported unlawful conduct by police officers?

Answer – Among identified victims of human trafficking, there have been no cases of persons subjected to exploitation based on sexual orientation or gender identity. In the context of LGBTI+ persons, the legal framework is formally based on the constitutional principle ensuring equal rights for all citizens. Criminal elements related to human trafficking and violence are applied regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity.

As a result of conducted analyses, it has been determined that although many forms of exploitation are prohibited by legislation in the country, the main forms of exploitation in the country are sexual exploitation and labor exploitation. Persons subjected to sexual exploitation mainly belong to women leading an immoral lifestyle considered potential victims of human trafficking, while persons subjected to labor exploitation are mostly men who have been subjected to forced labor in agricultural sectors.

20. What specific measures are taken to ensure identification of trafficked persons among migrant workers, including those in an irregular situation, and to ensure their access to rights предусмотренные by the Convention? Is there cooperation with specialized NGOs, trade unions and employers to strengthen identification and protection of potential victims within these risk groups?

Answer – In the Republic of Azerbaijan, continuous work is carried out to implement state policy in the field of migration, improve legislation in accordance with international standards and modern requirements, eliminate negative consequences of irregular migration, and prevent irregular migration, including human trafficking. Since migrants in an irregular situation are at high risk of being subjected to human trafficking, combating such negative phenomena is kept under constant attention.

The “Rules (Indicators) for Identification of Victims of Human Trafficking”, which determine mechanisms enabling identification of a person as a victim of human trafficking, were approved by Resolution No. 131 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 3 September 2009. These Rules reflect issues such as legal aspects of victim identification, characteristics of victims, methods of identification, identification methodology and questionnaire, assessment questionnaire and additional supporting materials.

During identification of victims, indicators characterizing their features are taken into account.

The State Migration Service conducts investigations regarding applicants, as well as foreigners and stateless persons detained by the Service as irregular migrants who are suspected of being victims of human trafficking.

During 2025, foreigners detained in the Detention Center for Irregular Migrants were checked against indicators; however, no victims of human trafficking were identified among them.

The “Rules for Transfer of Victims of Human Trafficking Crimes to a Specialized Police Authority for Combating Human Trafficking”, approved by Resolution No. 21 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 1 February 2008, regulate mechanisms for transferring persons who have become victims of human trafficking crimes and presumed victims by state and non-state bodies to the specialized police authority for combating human trafficking (hereinafter – the specialized police authority).

According to the Rules:

- Authorities identifying victims of human trafficking must, first and foremost, ensure their safety, anonymity and confidentiality of the information obtained about them.
- In authorities identifying victims of human trafficking, registration of applications and appeals of such persons is carried out in a special register in compliance with the confidentiality regime.
- Authorities that have identified victims and presumed victims of human trafficking must explain to them their rights предусмотренные by legislation, inform them about the

authority to which they will be transferred, the powers of that authority, as well as possible subsequent procedural actions.

- After victims and presumed victims of human trafficking are identified, their applications are formalized in accordance with the procedure предусмотренные by legislation, and no later than within 24 hours, urgent measures are taken to transfer the person to the specialized police authority, with relevant documents submitted to that authority and necessary assistance provided.
- During the process of identification and transfer of victims and presumed victims of human trafficking to the specialized police authority, their rights and freedoms must not be violated, actions infringing upon their honor and dignity must not be allowed, and each person must be treated with respect.
- Transfer of victims or presumed victims of human trafficking to another police authority or law enforcement body is prohibited.
- The specialized police authority for combating human trafficking informs the relevant authority that transferred the victims and presumed victims about the results of the investigation carried out.

At the same time, the main purpose of the “National Referral Mechanism for Victims of Human Trafficking”, approved by Resolution No. 123 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 11 August 2009, which is guided in activities on combating human trafficking, is to create an effective system ensuring protection of victims’ rights, their transfer to relevant authorities, their safety, repatriation and social rehabilitation, and to establish rules in this field.

For implementation of the National Referral Mechanism, a commission consisting of representatives of the Ministries of Internal Affairs, Science and Education, Health, Justice, Foreign Affairs, Labor and Social Protection of the Population, Youth and Sports, Culture, the Prosecutor General’s Office, the State Customs Committee, the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs, the State Security Service, the State Border Service, the State Migration Service and the State Tourism Agency has been established and operates purposefully. Representatives of civil society institutions are also invited to the meetings of the interagency commission. Trainings and capacity-building activities are regularly organized to improve

professionalism and knowledge of representatives of state bodies and non-governmental organizations implementing the National Referral Mechanism.

It should be particularly emphasized that a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the NGO Coalition on Combating Human Trafficking, which объединяет 45 non-governmental organizations, and on the basis of this document, broad cooperation is carried out between NGOs and the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the field of combating human trafficking.

21. What measures exist to encourage victims of human trafficking to report their situation to competent authorities and/or civil society organizations?

Answer – Encouraging victims of human trafficking to report their situation to competent authorities or civil society organizations in the Republic of Azerbaijan is carried out through awareness-raising activities within the framework of the National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking.

Thus, with the involvement of relevant non-governmental organizations, various social advertisements, videos, short films have been produced, programs have been prepared and broadcast, and various awareness-raising materials have been developed and размещены on internet information resources by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, the Ministry of Science and Education, the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs, the State Customs Committee, the State Border Service, the State Migration Service, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Digital Development and Transport, the State Tourism Agency, the State Advertising Agency, the Audiovisual Council, “Azerbaijan Television and Radio Broadcasting” Closed Joint-Stock Company, “Azerbaijan Airlines” Closed Joint-Stock Company, “Azerbaijan Railways” Closed Joint-Stock Company, and “Azerbaijan Caspian Shipping Company” Closed Joint-Stock Company. Awareness materials prepared in various languages have also been distributed on international transport routes and at state border crossing points.

The State Migration Service regularly provides information during a series of events organized jointly and with close participation of various stakeholders – district and city executive authorities, local self-government bodies, higher education institutions, employers, media representatives, tourism sector representatives – on human trafficking, risks of forced labor, rights of labor migrants and their family members, and the importance of combating discrimination against them. During meetings held with employers, as well as regular events with members of the Advisory Council under the Service, which includes non-governmental organizations and representatives of individuals and legal entities engaged in entrepreneurial activity involving foreign labor force, awareness-raising discussions are conducted to prevent the risk of labor migrants becoming victims of human trafficking, as well as to prevent risks of forced labor and informal employment.

It should be noted that the activities of the Public Council under the State Migration Service and the Migrant Council under the State Migration Service are particularly important in terms of regularly informing entrepreneurs, non-governmental organizations, migrants, communities and diaspora organizations operating in the territory of the country, and other interested entities about the nature of the human trafficking problem, protection of victims of human trafficking and effective solutions to problems arising in this field.

It should be noted that the Service’s continuously operating Call Center (number 919), functioning in three languages – Azerbaijani, English and Russian – as well as the Service’s official website, WhatsApp communication channel, “MigAz” mobile application and social media accounts play an important role in informing citizens, as well as foreigners and stateless persons, in the field of migration and ensuring their right to obtain necessary information, including encouraging victims of human trafficking to report their situation to the Service.

22. What specific measures are taken in your country to detect/identify possible victims of human trafficking at borders and refer them for assistance? What measures are taken to identify victims of human trafficking during the examination of asylum applications and before the return of persons whose applications have been rejected?

Answer – According to the Law “On Combating Human Trafficking”, the State Border Service and the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan combat human trafficking by

detecting and eliminating the crossing of the state and customs borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan by traffickers, as well as the transfer of victims of human trafficking across those borders, and by preventing such acts.

In order to identify various forms of human trafficking, perpetrators and victims, and to strengthen preventive preparedness through effective border control measures, the Assistance Center has conducted awareness-raising activities for customs officers at the Main Customs Department for Air Transport and the Nakhchivan Main Customs Department of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Taking into account that, in accordance with Article 8.0.14 of the Customs Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, preventing the crossing of the customs border by traffickers and victims of human trafficking in accordance with the procedure предусмотренные by legislation is among the duties of customs authorities, relevant measures have been taken to ensure that customs officers more thoroughly master the existing legislation in this field.

According to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On the Status of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (Persons Displaced within the Country)” and the “Rules on Consideration of Applications for Granting Refugee Status”, the State Migration Service ensures acceptance and examination of applications for refugee status, and it is предусмотрено that the application acceptance process and interviews are conducted as soon as possible in accordance with relevant normative legal acts concerning victims of human trafficking and recommendations of relevant authorities. During the process, special attention is paid to protecting the interests of vulnerable groups, including persons who may be victims of human trafficking, taking into account their psychological condition during interviews and ensuring their interests in the decision-making process. Specially trained, specialized and appropriately qualified male or female staff members are involved in the identification of victims of human trafficking.

If, during registration, interviews or decision-making processes with asylum seekers, there are suspicions that a person may be a victim of human trafficking, the relevant authority of the internal affairs body is informed within 24 hours.

According to Article 5 of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On the Status of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (Persons Displaced within the Country)”, a person who has unlawfully arrived in the Republic of Azerbaijan from another state and has applied to the competent authority as soon as possible is exempted from liability предусмотренные by the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan by a reasoned decision of that authority, is in no case sent to a country where their life and freedom are under threat, and is not forcibly returned. Persons who have applied for refugee status or have been granted refugee status are not subject to return.

The Republic of Azerbaijan has taken all necessary measures to ensure that individuals who are at risk of being subjected to torture in their countries of origin are not returned, extradited or deported to those countries. Currently, applications of persons who have newly arrived in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan and intend to obtain refugee status are directly examined by the State Migration Service, and such persons are provided with relevant documents, taking into account the period for lodging administrative or judicial appeals against decisions adopted in respect of them. Information on persons provided with a Temporary Certificate prepared in a special form confirming their identity is transmitted to the Unified Migration Information System. Conditions have been created to allow persons who have applied for asylum to submit appeals that have suspensive effect on their departure from the territory of the country.

23. What measures are taken in your country to identify victims of human trafficking in migration detention centers and prisons?

Answer – In migration detention centers and prisons, interviews and surveys are conducted with persons admitted to the centers and prisons in order to identify victims of human trafficking, and efforts are made to determine whether they are victims of human trafficking. Such surveys are conducted by specialist staff who have received training in this field.

The Republic of Azerbaijan continuously strengthens legislative and institutional measures aimed at protecting the rights of labor migrants and their family members. Within the framework of existing legislation, including the Labor Code and the Migration Code, as well as other normative acts, ensuring the life and physical integrity of migrants is considered a priority. The country has defined its obligations with partner countries in a number of bilateral and multilateral agreements

regarding protection of labor migrants' rights, social protection, and guarantees of health and safety. During implementation of these agreements, full compliance is ensured with the requirements of the Convention, taking into account national conditions, as well as with General Comments No. 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, and Joint General Comments No. 22 and 23 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Within the framework of improving legislation and practical measures, the Republic of Azerbaijan cooperates with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and benefits from technical assistance opportunities for the implementation of the Convention. This cooperation ensures alignment of the protection of migrants' rights and their family members with international standards. In addition, awareness-raising activities are regularly carried out on official and civil society platforms in order to increase access to information, legal support and social services for labor migrants in the country.

In the country, there are temporary accommodation centers for foreigners and stateless persons, which are part of the structure of the State Migration Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan and meet international standards.

In accordance with Article 82.2 of the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, foreigners or stateless persons are placed in temporary accommodation centers only on the basis of a court decision or an administrative decision on detention issued by the State Migration Service, as well as in cases where they evade leaving the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan or there are sufficient grounds to assume such evasion, or where, in accordance with international treaties to which the Republic of Azerbaijan is a party on readmission of persons residing without authorization, they must be removed from the country, and in such cases they are placed compulsorily in temporary accommodation centers in accordance with the procedure and time limits established by this Code based on a court decision upon application of the State Migration Service.

It should be noted that the Service has created necessary conditions for monitoring of temporary accommodation centers by civil society institutions, international organizations and other

stakeholders. The National Preventive Group of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan, international organizations, civil society institutions, as well as representatives from various countries regularly conduct monitoring and inspections related to ensuring protection of human rights of persons placed in the centers and the conditions created therein. Members of the Public Council under the State Migration Service also regularly visit temporary accommodation centers and conduct relevant monitoring. Proposals and recommendations provided as a result of monitoring are taken into account by the Service. At the same time, steps are being taken to involve other organizations that are not members of the Public Council in these activities. During monitoring, the work carried out to protect the rights of foreigners and stateless persons in the centers, prevent human trafficking and other negative phenomena, as well as the conditions created in the centers are reviewed, and individual and preventive conversations are conducted with persons placed there.

The Ombudsman and members of the National Preventive Group have the right at any time, without hindrance and without prior notice, to enter the centers, to meet and speak in private or, if deemed necessary, with the participation of a specialist or interpreter with foreigners placed voluntarily or compulsorily in the centers, as well as with any other person who can provide relevant information, to familiarize themselves with all documents confirming the legality of placement and detention of foreigners in such places, as well as documents related to their treatment and conditions of detention, to obtain copies thereof, to draw up acts, to record the course and results of the measures carried out, to be received without delay by the head of the center, and the Ombudsman also has the right to provide recommendations to the center and receive responses to those recommendations within the установленный timeframe. Persons placed in the centers have the right to directly apply to the Ombudsman via designated telephone numbers regarding issues that concern them.

In addition, employees of temporary accommodation centers are regularly involved in trainings organized by the Training Center of the Service, as well as by international and local partners and a number of relevant state bodies, dedicated to combating human trafficking, children's rights and other similar topics.

24. What services are available in your country to provide special assistance to particularly vulnerable victims, such as:

- a. persons with disabilities;
- b. LGBTI+ persons;
- c. victims with children;
- d. victims with severe psychological and physical trauma;
- e. homeless persons;
- f. others.

Answer (general) – According to Article 15 of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Combating Human Trafficking”, social rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking is carried out for the purpose of their reintegration into society and return to a normal lifestyle, and предусматривает provision of legal assistance to victims of human trafficking, continuation of their education, implementation of measures for psychological, medical and vocational rehabilitation, as well as use of opportunities for ensuring their employment and provision of housing.

When carrying out social rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking, the age, gender and needs of victims, especially children, including the need for shelter, education and care, as well as the needs indicated in other subparagraphs of the question, are taken into account.

The “Rules for Implementation of Social Rehabilitation of Victims of Human Trafficking” were approved by Resolution No. 62 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 06 March 2006.

Social rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking is carried out for the purpose of their reintegration into society and return to a normal lifestyle and предусматривает provision of legal assistance, continuation of education, psychological rehabilitation and correction, medical and vocational rehabilitation, as well as use of opportunities for employment and provision of housing, depending on their age, gender and needs.

Social rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking is carried out upon request of any person who presents themselves as a victim of human trafficking by specialized institutions предусмотренные

by the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Combating Human Trafficking” (shelters for victims of human trafficking, assistance centers for victims of human trafficking), in cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, the Ministry of Science and Education and other relevant bodies предусмотренные by the National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking.

For the purpose of implementing social rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking, assistance centers develop an individual social rehabilitation plan for each victim.

Individual social rehabilitation plans for children who are victims of human trafficking are developed taking into account the provisions of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Prevention of Neglect and Offences among Minors”.

The main directions of social rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking are as follows:

- provision of legal assistance to restore the rights of victims of human trafficking;
- provision of psychological assistance to victims of human trafficking and their family members in order to eliminate psychological trauma;
- medical rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking – implementation of treatment measures aimed at restoration of impaired or lost functions, elimination of consequences of diseases and injuries, and full or partial restoration of psychological, physiological and anatomical disorders;
- implementation of vocational rehabilitation aimed at restoring professional skills of victims of human trafficking;
- ensuring vocational training, retraining and employment of victims of human trafficking;
- providing assistance in continuation of education of victims of human trafficking;
- ensuring provision of housing for victims of human trafficking.

Implementation of the individual social rehabilitation plan for victims of human trafficking is carried out as follows:

- legal assistance to victims of human trafficking is provided by shelters and assistance centers for victims of human trafficking;

- psychological assistance to victims of human trafficking is provided free of charge in accordance with Article 6.5 of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Psychological Assistance”;
- medical rehabilitation measures are carried out by relevant medical institutions based on referrals from shelters and assistance centers for victims of human trafficking;
- vocational training, retraining and employment are carried out in accordance with the procedure предусмотренные by legislation by local bodies of the State Employment Agency under the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population and “DOST” centers, based on referrals from assistance centers for victims of human trafficking;
- education of victims of human trafficking is carried out by educational institutions in accordance with the procedure предусмотренные by legislation based on referrals from assistance centers for victims of human trafficking;
- provision of housing for victims of human trafficking is carried out based on submissions from assistance centers for victims of human trafficking, depending on their age, family and health status, by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, the Ministry of Science and Education, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Health and local executive authorities of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
- Inclusion in the individual social rehabilitation plan of measures that in any way restrict human and civil rights established by legislation or that are contrary to the will of victims of human trafficking is inadmissible.
- Relevant international organizations and non-governmental organizations may be involved in the implementation of social rehabilitation measures for victims of human trafficking.
- Social rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking, including financing of assistance centers for victims of human trafficking, is carried out at the expense of the state budget of the Republic of Azerbaijan and other sources предусмотренные by the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
- **25. How do you support the (re)integration of victims of human trafficking? What processes exist in your country to provide assistance to victims of human trafficking who have been exploited abroad after their return to the country?**
- **Answer** – See the answer to Question 24.

- **26. If your country's legislation provides for the possibility of granting a residence permit based on the victim's personal situation, how is this provision interpreted in practice? Provide examples.**
- **Answer** – The Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan contains necessary provisions regarding provision of legal assistance to foreigners and stateless persons who are considered victims of human trafficking and who assist criminal prosecution authorities, as well as ensuring their reliable social protection. Thus, in accordance with Article 45.1.10-1 of the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, when foreigners and stateless persons are considered victims of human trafficking, they are granted (or their permit is extended for) temporary residence in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In accordance with Article 46.6 of the Code, during application, certain documents are not required from them (grounds for granting a residence permit at the time of application, a document granting the right of temporary stay or temporary residence in the country, documents related to registration at the place of residence).
- At the same time, in accordance with Article 50.2 of the Code, certain grounds for refusal to grant a temporary residence permit (when less than 3 months remain until expiration of a passport or other border-crossing document, when the person is a carrier of a disease included in the list of dangerous infectious diseases approved by the relevant executive authority, when the person has previously been expelled from the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan with a restriction on re-entry, when the person violated the declared purpose of arrival in the Republic of Azerbaijan during temporary residence) do not apply to foreigners and stateless persons considered victims of human trafficking or assisting criminal prosecution authorities.
- Article 64.0.15-1 of the Code provides that persons considered victims of human trafficking or assisting criminal prosecution authorities are not required to obtain a work permit to engage in paid labor activity in the territory of the country.
- Improvement of national legislation in the field of combating human trafficking in accordance with international requirements and successful implementation of obligations arising from international instruments to which the country is a party, including the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, is ongoing.

- **27. What measures exist to ensure that the identity of child victims of human trafficking or information enabling their identification is not disclosed to the public?**
- **Answer** – Article 222 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (hereinafter – CPC) provides for the inadmissibility of disclosure of preliminary investigation data (with certain exceptions). Thus, information of the preliminary investigation may be disseminated by participants in criminal proceedings and journalists only with the permission of the investigator, inquirer, prosecutor exercising procedural supervision over the preliminary investigation or the court, to the extent that it does not contradict the interests of the preliminary investigation and does not violate the rights and legitimate interests of other participants in criminal proceedings.
- In order to ensure non-disclosure of information related to the identity of minors participating in criminal proceedings, restrictions are предусмотрены in the CPC. Thus, in accordance with Article 222.7 of the Code, disclosure of information about the identity of minor suspects, accused or victims is allowed only with the consent of those persons and their legal representatives.
- Article 17.3 of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Combating Human Trafficking” states that, by decision of the court or another criminal prosecution authority, access to information about the identity of a person who has suffered from human trafficking contained in inquiry services and information databases is suspended.
- According to Article 17.4 of the same Law, dissemination of information constituting personal and family secrets of victims of human trafficking entails liability in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Information that may pose a threat to the life and health of a person who has suffered from human trafficking, their close relatives, as well as persons assisting in combating human trafficking, is considered confidential and its dissemination is prohibited.
- Illegal collection or intentional dissemination of confidential information about a person who has suffered from human trafficking or about security measures applied to them entails liability established by the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Article 316-1 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan provides for criminal liability for dissemination of confidential information about a person who has suffered from human trafficking.

- **28. What measures exist to encourage the media to respect the private life and identity of victims?**
- **Answer** – See the answer to Question 27.
- At the same time, it should be noted that the Law “On Combating Human Trafficking” and the Law “On Media” restrict dissemination of personal data of victims. It is prohibited for the media to disclose the name, address, photograph and other personal data of a victim without permission. Professional ethical rules exist for journalists, which require maintaining confidentiality of victims’ identity and ensuring their safety.
- For this purpose, trainings and seminars on the topic of human trafficking are conducted for journalists and media representatives. These trainings explain protection of victims’ rights and proper presentation of information. In accordance with subparagraph 4.8.1 of the National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2020–2024, employees of the Main Department for Combating Human Trafficking of the Ministry of Internal Affairs have conducted trainings for media representatives in various years on the topics “Activities on Combating Human Trafficking in the Republic of Azerbaijan and Government Coordination in This Direction” and “The Role of the Media in Combating Human Trafficking”.
- **29. Have there been cases of domestic workers in diplomatic households (households of your country’s diplomats abroad and households of foreign diplomats in your country) working under conditions that could be considered forced labor or human trafficking? If yes, how has the issue of diplomatic immunity been addressed? How were victims identified, assisted and protected?**
- **Answer** – No information has been received by the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding cases of domestic workers working under conditions that could be considered forced labor or human trafficking in diplomatic missions of the Republic of Azerbaijan operating abroad. Employment contracts are concluded between the diplomatic mission and the relevant persons, and all their rights and freedoms are protected.
- At the same time, registration (accreditation) of local or third-country nationals working in diplomatic missions of foreign states operating in the country, as well as issuance of visas where required, is carried out by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Within the framework of

relevant procedures, copies of contracts concluded with such persons and other necessary documents are requested, and implementation of preventive measures aimed at protecting their rights and freedoms is ensured.

- **30. What concrete steps are taken in your country to identify victims of human trafficking among persons recruited and exploited by terrorist/armed groups?**
- **Answer** – By Decree No. 2336 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 28 October 2023, the “Rules on Repatriation and Rehabilitation of Minor Citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan Found in Difficult Life Situations in Foreign Countries without the Accompaniment of a Parent or Other Legal Representative” were approved in order to coordinate the activities of relevant state bodies (institutions) and to protect the rights of persons in neglect and socially dangerous situations.
- Repatriation of such persons is carried out on the basis of a relevant instruction of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, following an application by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through dispatch of a group consisting of relevant members of the working group to a foreign country. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs organizes issuance of the repatriant’s travel document, their transportation to the border checkpoint of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and coordination of organizational matters with competent authorities of the respective foreign state in cooperation with relevant state bodies.
- Financing of organizational, transport, healthcare (including DNA analysis) and other expenses related to repatriation, including expenses required for establishing the fact of birth of the repatriant, is provided from the state budget of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
- The main tasks of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in this process include identification of minors in difficult situations and activation of protection mechanisms: identification of such persons, coordination with relevant state bodies (including determination of citizenship), organization of identification measures where necessary, coordination of documentation and repatriation procedures with competent authorities of the host state, determination of repatriation dates and coordination of escort arrangements up to the border.
- During investigations of persons associated with terrorist groups, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Security Service examine whether such persons were recruited by

force. If it is determined that a person was recruited through coercion or deception, the issue of recognizing them as a victim of human trafficking may be considered.

31. Does your country’s legal framework contain requirements regarding detection and removal of internet content related to human trafficking, and what sanctions are applied in case of non-compliance? Is there a code of conduct for providers? If, during the process, any person is identified as a presumed victim of human trafficking, how is that person referred for assistance?

Answer – According to the Law “On Information, Informatization and Protection of Information”, the owner of an internet information resource is independent in determining the content of the information размещенные in that resource and the procedure for its размещение. The owner of an internet information resource and its domain name must ensure lawful operation of that resource, including compliance with norms of the state language, and bears personal responsibility for this.

If the owner of an internet information resource and its domain name is a legal entity, its name, organizational-legal form and email address, and if it is a natural person, their name, surname, patronymic and email address must be displayed on the website in a clearly visible place and form.

The owner of an internet information resource and its domain name or the user of an information-telecommunication network must not allow placement in that resource (information-telecommunication network) of the following information prohibited for dissemination:

- information promoting and financing terrorism, methods and means of carrying out terrorism, information on organizing or conducting training for terrorist purposes, as well as open calls for terrorism;
- information promoting violence and religious extremism, inciting national, racial or religious hatred and hostility, calling for violent change of the constitutional order of the state, violation of territorial integrity, violent seizure or retention of power, or organization of mass unrest;

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- information constituting state secrets;
 - information on movement or deployment of personnel, military weapons, ammunition or military equipment of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan (except information disclosed to the public by state bodies);
 - information on methods or means of manufacturing firearms, their components, ammunition, explosives and devices;
 - information on methods and procedures for preparation or use of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors, places of their illegal acquisition, as well as places or methods of cultivation of plants containing narcotic substances;
 - information related to pornography, including child pornography;
 - information containing actions that, if publicly displayed, insult public morality, express open disrespect for society, including the use of obscene language or gestures, or depiction of parts of the human body in a manner contrary to moral norms and national-spiritual values;
 - information promoting suicide as a method of solving problems, justifying or encouraging suicide, explaining methods of committing suicide, or disseminated for the purpose of organizing suicide by a group of persons;
 - films, television and video products, including animated films, computer and other electronic games not labeled according to the relevant age category in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Protection of Children from Harmful Information” (except those belonging to the “Universal” age category);
 - information of defamatory or insulting nature, as well as information violating the inviolability of private life;
 - information violating intellectual property rights;
 - false information creating a threat of harm to life and health of people, causing significant property damage, mass disruption of public safety, disruption of functioning of life-support facilities, financial, transport, communication, industrial, energy and social infrastructure facilities, or other socially dangerous consequences;
 - other information prohibited for dissemination by the laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

If the owner of an internet information resource and its domain name detects the presence of prohibited information in that resource or receives a request in this regard, they must ensure removal of such information from the resource or restriction of access to that resource or its relevant part.

If a host provider detects prohibited information размещенные in internet information resources located in its information systems or receives information about such cases, it must immediately take measures to ensure that the owner removes such information or restricts access to that resource or its relevant part.

Internet information resources must display a warning text restricting dissemination of information products among children.

If the Ministry of Digital Development and Transport directly identifies cases of placement of prohibited information in an internet information resource, or determines such cases based on substantiated information received from individuals, legal entities or state bodies, it issues a written warning to the owner of the internet information resource and its domain name and to the host provider. The warning must include information about the prohibited content, a requirement to remove the relevant information or restrict access to the resource or its relevant part, legal grounds for such requirement, and measures to be taken in case of non-compliance within the установленный timeframe.

If, within 8 hours from the moment of the warning, the prohibited information is not removed or access is not restricted, the Ministry of Digital Development and Transport applies to the district (city) court with a claim for removal of the information or restriction of access.

In urgent cases where a threat arises to legally protected interests of the state and society or there is a real danger to life and health of people, access to the internet information resource or its relevant part is temporarily restricted on the basis of a decision of the Ministry of Digital Development and Transport.

When adopting such a decision, the Ministry simultaneously applies to the court regarding restriction of access. The temporary restriction remains in force until the court considers the application or until the decision is revoked.

The court considers the application within up to 5 days and adopts a decision, which enters into force immediately and is not suspended by filing an appeal.

If the court adopts a decision to restrict access to the internet information resource or its relevant part, the Ministry of Digital Development and Transport includes that resource or its relevant part in the “List of Information Resources Containing Prohibited Information”.

Immediately after inclusion of the internet information resource in this List, host providers and internet providers must restrict access to the resource or its relevant part and inform the owner accordingly.

If the owner fails to ensure removal of the information and there is a court decision prohibiting dissemination of such information, the Ministry includes the resource or its relevant part in the List upon request of a person.

For violation of the provisions of this Law, the owner of the internet information resource, the domain name owner, host and internet providers, as well as users of information-telecommunication networks bear liability установленный by law.

In addition, according to the Law “On Telecommunications”, a telecommunications provider (hereinafter – provider) is a legal entity or an individual engaged in entrepreneurial activity providing telecommunications services using the network of a telecommunications operator.

The Law establishes the rights, duties and responsibilities of providers, which includes their code of conduct. Thus, Article 33 of the Law reflects the duties of operators and providers.

Operators and providers are obliged to create conditions for conducting operational-search, intelligence and counter-intelligence measures in accordance with the procedure установленный by law, to equip telecommunications networks with additional technical means in accordance with

requirements determined by the relevant executive authority, to resolve organizational issues, and to maintain confidentiality of methods used in such measures.

In case of violation of these requirements, operators and providers bear liability установленный by law.

If, during the process, any person is identified as a victim of human trafficking, such persons are referred to the specialized police authority in accordance with the “Rules for Transfer of Victims of Human Trafficking to a Specialized Police Authority” and are provided with medical, legal, psychological, social and other types of assistance granted to victims of human trafficking.

III. INVESTIGATION, CRIMINAL PROSECUTION, SANCTIONS AND MEASURES (Articles 4, 18, 19, 23, 24, 27, 28 and 30)

32. Is abuse of a position of vulnerability part of the constituent elements of the offence of human trafficking in your country’s legislation? How are the concepts of “vulnerability” and “abuse of a position of vulnerability” defined in law? Have these concepts been subject to judicial interpretation? If yes, provide relevant case-law.

Answer – The concepts of “vulnerability” and “abuse of a position of vulnerability” are reflected in criminal legislation by the expression “abuse of a position of weakness”.

Thus, according to Article 144-1.1 of the Criminal Code, human trafficking is the recruitment, acquisition, harboring, concealment, transportation, transfer or receipt of a person for the purpose of exploitation, carried out by means of threat or use of force, intimidation or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of influence or of a position of weakness, or by giving or receiving material or other benefits, privileges or concessions to obtain the consent of a person exercising control over another person. Articles 144-1.2.3 and 144-1.2.4 of the same Code establish that committing human trafficking against a minor or against a woman who is obviously pregnant for the offender constitutes part of the elements of the offence of human trafficking. With regard to the concepts of “vulnerability” and “abuse of a position of vulnerability”, it is noted that

Article 1.0.1 of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Combating Human Trafficking” includes commission of human trafficking through abuse of a position of weakness as a component of the definition of human trafficking.

As can be seen, abuse of a position of weakness is reflected in the disposition of the relevant article of the legislation as one of the methods of committing the offence and as a necessary element of the objective aspect of the crime of human trafficking, and is expressed in taking advantage of the victim’s material needs, weakness of mind and will, minority, or instability of mental health.

33. Is the particular vulnerability of the victim taken into account as an aggravating circumstance for the offender?

Answer – With regard to taking into account the particular vulnerability of the victim as an aggravating circumstance for the offender, it is noted that aggravating circumstances are those that increase the danger of the offence or of the offender’s personality but remain outside the elements of the offence and relate to the objective and subjective elements of the crime or to the personality of the offender.

Article 61.1.7 of the Criminal Code provides that committing a crime against a woman who is obviously pregnant for the offender, as well as against a minor, an elderly or helpless person, or a person dependent on the offender, constitutes an aggravating circumstance.

The particular vulnerability of the victim, that is, the limited or complete inability to resist the offender, is expressed in committing a crime against a woman who is obviously pregnant for the offender, a minor, an elderly person, a helpless person (a person deprived of the ability to resist or prevent the criminal act due to physical or mental disability, illness or other circumstances), or a person dependent on the offender (materially, by service, family relations or otherwise).

In addition, Articles 144-1.2.3 and 144-1.2.4 of the Criminal Code establish that committing the offence against a minor or a woman who is obviously pregnant for the offender constitutes an aggravating circumstance of the crime of human trafficking.

According to analytical data, in cases resolved on the merits under Article 144-1 of the Criminal Code in the period 2019–2025, in 2 cases involving 3 persons, in accordance with Article 61.1.7 of the Criminal Code, committing the crime against a minor, a helpless person and a person dependent on the offender was taken into account as an aggravating circumstance.

34. Based on national judicial practice, which forms of vulnerability are most frequently abused by perpetrators in human trafficking cases? Provide specific examples illustrating how the concept of “abuse of a position of vulnerability” is applied in practice. What difficulties exist in its application? Is it sufficient to prove that the victim was in a vulnerable situation, or is it also required to prove that the accused knew or should have known about the victim’s vulnerability and deliberately manipulated the victim on that basis?

Answer – According to Article 144-1.1 of the Criminal Code, abuse of a position of weakness is one of the methods of committing the crime of human trafficking, and where charges are brought on this basis, it constitutes one of the necessary conditions of the disposition of the article; therefore, in order to find a person guilty of committing human trafficking on this ground, it is necessary to establish and prove that the victim was in a vulnerable situation, that the accused knew of the victim’s vulnerable situation and abused that situation.

According to analytical data, human trafficking is most often committed (in 41 cases involving 120 persons) through abuse of a position of weakness related to financial hardship; additionally, in 2 cases involving 3 persons, it was committed through abuse of a position of weakness related to the victim being a minor, dependent on the offender and in a helpless condition.

For example, from the judgment of the Baku Court for Serious Crimes dated 20 November 2023 in case No. 1(101)-121/2023, by which [AA] was found guilty and convicted under Articles 144-1.2.1, 144-1.2.2, 144-1.2.4-1 and 144-3.4 of the Criminal Code, it appears that, along with other episodes, at the end of January 2014, in Baku city, at an address unknown to the investigation, she contacted an acquaintance – the victim – by telephone via the “WhatsApp” instant messaging system from the city of Yalova of the Republic of Türkiye, proposed engaging in prostitution in that city in order to meet financial needs, and, by abusing the victim’s position of weakness due to financial hardship, recruited the victim for the purpose of sexual exploitation for transportation

across the state border of the Republic of Azerbaijan; after obtaining consent, she presented the victim to male clients at various addresses in that city for sexual relations for payment and, by sexually exploiting the victim, committed the crime of human trafficking with mercenary intent.

Or, from the judgment of the Lankaran Court for Serious Crimes dated 6 December 2023 in case No. 1(099)-21/2023, by which [AA] was found guilty and convicted under Articles 144-1.2.2, 144-1.2.3, 145.2.3, 32.3, 149.3.3, 32.4, 149.3.3, 32.3, 150.3.3 and 32.4, 150.3.3 of the Criminal Code, it appears that she, as a mother, abusing her influence and the position of weakness of her minor daughter, recruited her for sexual exploitation in exchange for 500 manats and transferred her to another accused person, that is, committed the crime of human trafficking.

35. Is the concept of “abuse of a position of vulnerability” covered in training in the field of criminal justice? Are there any specific methodological guidelines regarding its application? Provide copies of methodological guidelines and/or training materials clarifying how this concept should be applied in practice.

Answer – Judges, along with law enforcement officers, are involved in national and international seminars, conferences, trainings and courses conducted on preliminary and judicial investigation of human trafficking cases, application of international treaties and national legislation, and study of international experience in combating such crimes.

The following topics have been included and taught in the programs of mandatory training conducted for candidates admitted to service in justice bodies, the Forensic Expertise Center of the Ministry of Justice, local execution and probation bodies of the Ministry of Justice of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, the Penitentiary Service of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Azerbaijan, candidates who successfully passed qualification examinations for admission to membership in the Bar Association of the Republic of Azerbaijan, initial training courses for candidates for judgeship, and training courses for newly recruited employees of the Medical Service of the Ministry of Justice aimed at acquiring legal knowledge: the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Combating Human Trafficking”, international legislation in the field of combating human trafficking (European legislation), combating human trafficking, the social danger of human trafficking crimes, domestic violence and combating it, specific features of court

consideration of human trafficking and related criminal cases, combating cybercrime related to online sexual exploitation of children. A total of 636 persons participated in these mandatory trainings and advanced training courses.

In addition, the Justice Academy conducted distance advanced training courses for members of the Bar Association of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 12 April and 20 October 2023 on the topic “Combating Cybercrime Related to Online Sexual Exploitation of Children”, with participation of 67 lawyers. At the same time, the Justice Academy conducted advanced training courses for members of the Bar Association of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 28 February, 13 June and 23 November 2023 on the topic “Professional Approach to Protection of the Rights of Victims of Human Trafficking”, with participation of 71 lawyers. In 2025, the topic “Procedure for Execution of Enforcement Documents on Transfer of a Child and Requirement for Communication with a Child” was included in the program of mandatory training courses conducted for admission to professional activity in justice bodies of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic and was taught; a total of 74 persons participated in these trainings.

Advanced training courses for judges were held on 21 February 2020, 22 February 2021, 31 January 2022, 19 May 2023 and 24 May 2024 on the topic “Judicial Examination of Human Trafficking and Related Criminal Cases”, on 29 November 2021 on the topic “Payment of Compensation and Benefits to Victims of Human Trafficking”, and on 6 November 2023 on the topic “Specific Features of Judicial Examination of Criminal Cases Related to Human Trafficking”. During the advanced training course held on 24 October 2025 on the topic “Specific Features of Examination of Certain Categories of Crimes”, the topic “Specific Features of Judicial Examination of Cases Related to Human Trafficking and Related Crimes” was taught, and lectures covering various aspects of judicial examination of human trafficking and related crimes were delivered by judges.

On 21 July 2022, the 6th regional meeting was held in a дистанционный format by the Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings of the OSCE on the topic “Measures Related to the Application of Gender-Sensitive Approaches in Combating Human Trafficking”.

36. What procedures and measures exist in your country to ensure that the special needs of vulnerable victims are taken into account at different stages of the criminal process?

Answer – Law enforcement bodies and social services assess the vulnerability of the victim. In cases of human trafficking and violence, a formal identification procedure for victims is carried out. The victim’s age, psychological condition, health status and security risk are taken into account. In Azerbaijan, comprehensive mechanisms covering legal, psychological, social and security measures are applied to protect the rights of vulnerable victims during criminal proceedings.

According to Article 123-1 of the Criminal Procedure Code, when examining information about a committed or planned crime, the officer of the inquiry body, the investigator or the prosecutor exercising procedural supervision over the preliminary investigation adopts a decision to grant a recovery and reflection period of 30 days to the victim of human trafficking in order to restore their condition, avoid the influence of offenders and make an informed decision regarding cooperation with criminal prosecution authorities. According to Part 2 of the “Rules on Repatriation of Victims of Human Trafficking” approved by Resolution No. 252 of the Cabinet of Ministers dated 10 September 2013, during the recovery and reflection period, the victim of human trafficking may use the services of shelters and assistance centers for temporary accommodation in order to ensure their security and protection needs and to restore their physical, psychological and social condition. During the recovery and reflection period, administrative expulsion of the victim of human trafficking from the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan is not applied.

After expiration of the recovery and reflection period, foreign citizens and stateless persons who are victims of human trafficking are granted, upon their request, a temporary residence permit for a period of 1 (one) year. After expiration of this period, or if during the period of temporary residence the victims express a desire to leave the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan, their repatriation is carried out. If victims to be repatriated do not have the relevant documents (identity document, travel documents, etc.), appropriate measures are taken to obtain such documents in accordance with the procedure установленный by law. Assistance is provided in covering transport and other necessary expenses related to repatriation. When victims are repatriated, it is

verified whether they are citizens of the receiving country or have the right to reside there, and appropriate measures are taken to prevent future difficulties in this regard.

37. If the use of services of a victim of human trafficking is criminalized in your country, how is this provision applied in practice? Provide relevant case-law.

Answer – Subparagraph 4.1.1 of the National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking for 2020–2024 предусматривает preparation of proposals for improving legislation in the field of combating human trafficking, taking into account requirements of international treaties to which the Republic of Azerbaijan is a party, including the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. For the purpose of implementing this subparagraph, the following draft laws were prepared by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and agreed with the Ministry of Justice, the Prosecutor General’s Office and the Supreme Court: draft laws on supplementing the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan with Article 144-4 (use of services of a victim of human trafficking), and the Law “On Combating Human Trafficking” with Articles 21.1-1 (use by a person, who is not a trafficker, of services arising from exploitation of a victim of human trafficking while knowingly aware that the person is a victim of human trafficking entails criminal liability предусмотренный by the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan) and 21.1-2 (illegal acts with documents for the purpose of human trafficking entail criminal liability предусмотренный by the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan), as well as a draft decree on amending Presidential Decree No. 387 dated 25 August 2000 in order to determine the body conducting investigation under Article 144-4 of the Criminal Code; these drafts were submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers by letter No. 3 dated 02.05.2023, forwarded by the Cabinet of Ministers to the Administration of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan by letter dated 31 July 2023, and were not approved by the Administration.

Article 145 of the Criminal Code (forced labor) establishes criminal liability for coercing a person to perform work (provide services) by means of threats, use of force or threat of use of force, as well as by unlawfully restricting a person’s freedom except in cases provided by law; Article 149 (rape) – for sexual intercourse with the victim by use of force or threat of use of force against the victim or other persons, or by exploiting the helpless condition of the victim; Article 150 (violent acts of a sexual nature) – for committing sodomy or other acts of a sexual nature by use of force

or threat of use of force against the victim or other persons, or by exploiting the helpless condition of the victim; Article 243 (involvement in prostitution) – for involving the victim in prostitution for the purpose of obtaining income or other benefit; and other similar provisions establishing criminal liability exist.

Criminal legislation provides that where, in the actions of a person who committed human trafficking, as well as in the actions of a person using (acquiring) services of a victim of human trafficking, elements of the above-mentioned and other related crimes are identified, they are brought to criminal liability on general grounds.

For example, from the judgment of the Ganja Court for Serious Crimes dated 26 December 2019 in case No. 1(100)-112/2019, by which [AA] and others were found guilty and convicted under Articles 144-1.2.5 (as in force until 9 May 2013), 125, 144-2.2.6, 144-3.4 and 150.2.5 of the Criminal Code, it appears that [AA], acting with mercenary intent, in order to exploit a person, agreed in advance and entered into a criminal conspiracy with his mother and father, and in September 2006, while temporarily residing in the Russian Federation, by abusing the victim's low material and social status, deceived the victim (a citizen of the Russian Federation known to them) with false promises of employment and normal living conditions in the Republic of Azerbaijan, obtained consent and recruited the victim for the purpose of exploitation for transportation across the state border of the Republic of Azerbaijan; for this purpose, they brought the victim at their own expense to their place of residence, kept the victim under their control in a small wooden structure without any conditions for human habitation in the yard of their house with the door locked and also in other houses by threats, use of force and threat of use of force, forced the victim to perform daily care of livestock in their household and other work, and in addition, [AA], by beating the victim and threatening further violence, applied or threatened to apply force, and at the same time, taking advantage of the victim's helpless condition under psychological and physical pressure, repeatedly engaged in sexual acts in an unnatural manner with the victim and committed other acts of a sexual nature.

Or, from the judgment of the Baku Court for Serious Crimes dated 27 February 2023 in case No. 1(101)-146/2023, by which [AA] and others were found guilty and convicted under Articles 144-1.2.3, 144-1.2.5, 149.3.3 and 150.3.3 of the Criminal Code, it appears that [BB], working

informally as a waitress in a café and living in an auxiliary room located in the yard of the café together with her daughter, in early July 2018, when she met the café manager [AA], agreed, acting in a group by prior conspiracy, to his proposal to allow him to have sexual intercourse with her 8-year-old daughter, both in natural and unnatural ways, in exchange for 100 manats, as well as to grant her concessions in continuing her work and to increase her salary in the future; both of them, using as a means of coercion the position of weakness of the 8-year-old victim, who was a minor, helpless and dependent on the offenders, acted according to a plan, whereby [BB] handed over her 8-year-old daughter to [AA] for the purpose of sexual exploitation, removing obstacles, and the latter committed rape and other acts of a sexual nature against the minor victim.

Or, from the judgment of the Lankaran Court for Serious Crimes dated 6 December 2023 in case No. 1(099)-21/2023, by which [AA] and others were found guilty and convicted under Articles 149.3.3, 150.3.3 and other articles of the Criminal Code, it appears that in November 2020, for 500 manats, [AA] accepted the proposal of another accused person [BB] and, under her instigation and organization, by taking advantage of the helpless condition of the victim, who was obviously under fourteen years of age, committed rape and other violent acts of a sexual nature against the victim against her will, with particular cruelty.

38. What technology-based tools and initiatives exist in your country to support investigations and strengthen criminal prosecution in human trafficking cases? What training is provided to law enforcement officers, prosecutors and judges regarding human trafficking carried out through information and communication technologies?

Answer – Specialists of the Ministry of Internal Affairs use biometric identification programs to determine the identity of persons suspected of being traffickers or victims of human trafficking based on video and photographic materials размещенные on internet resources and social networks.

According to the Law “On Operational-Search Activity”, subjects of operational-search activity, for the purpose of preventing planned and committed crimes, detecting and solving committed crimes, identifying persons preparing, committing or having committed crimes, as well as

searching for persons hiding from courts, investigation and inquiry bodies, evading punishment or missing persons, may, using technical means, listen to telephone conversations, extract information from communication channels and other technical means, including by installing audio recording, video, photo, film and other recording devices to monitor places of residence; in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Code, investigative bodies may also obtain information constituting personal, family, state, commercial or professional secrets, including data on financial operations, status of bank accounts and payment of taxes (on the basis of a court decision).

Training on various topics related to combating human trafficking, including the use of information and communication technologies, has been conducted for all participating institutions under the National Action Plan (see answer to Question 35):

- in 2025, virtual training was conducted with participation of more than 1,750 employees of 84 police bodies, including heads of criminal investigation, investigation, inquiry and duty units, on the topics “Human Trafficking and Forced Labor Crimes as a Form of Transnational Organized Crime”, “Distinction between Human Trafficking and Crimes against Public Morality”, and “Prevention and Prophylaxis of Human Trafficking and Forced Labor Crimes”;
- at the Police Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, a 14-day advanced training course was organized for more than 19 deputy heads for operational work and heads of criminal investigation departments of city and district police bodies on the topic “Main Directions and Regulatory Legal Framework of Combating Human Trafficking in the Republic of Azerbaijan”;
- at the Police Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, training was conducted on the topic “Prevention and Detection of Human Trafficking Crimes” with participation of more than 100 cadets.

In addition, employees of the Main Department for Combating Human Trafficking participated as trainers in the following trainings organized for employees of other state bodies:

- training conducted with participation of 19 representatives of the NGO Coalition on Combating Human Trafficking;

- trainings conducted within the framework of the “Migration School-6” project with participation of more than 20 students and young people engaged in various fields with financial support of the State Migration Service on the topic “Combating Human Trafficking (Child Trafficking)”, as well as training on the topic “Gender Aspects in Human Trafficking” organized for 18 employees of the State Migration Service at its Training Center;
- trainings conducted with participation of specialized medical personnel and non-medical staff involved in transplantation of human organs and tissues at the “Yeni Klinika” medical institution, the Central Oil Workers Hospital, and the Republican Clinical Urology Hospital named after Javadzade, organized and financed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and TƏBİB.

In 2024, the Justice Academy conducted trainings for 37 judges on the topics “Issues of Qualification of Human Trafficking Crimes”, “Human Trafficking and Case-Law of the European Court of Human Rights”, “Human Trafficking Aspects within the Framework of the European Convention on Human Rights, Case-Law and State Obligations”, “Preparation for Trial of Human Trafficking Cases and Specific Features of Judicial Examination”, “Measures to Ensure Protection of Victims and Witnesses during Prosecution of Human Trafficking Crimes”, and for 31 lawyers on the topic “Professional Approach to Protection of the Rights of Victims of Human Trafficking”.

In addition, the topic “Specific Features of Judicial Examination of Criminal Cases Related to Human Trafficking” was taught in initial training courses for 87 candidates for judgeship.

Training on the topic “Special Approaches to Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking” was conducted for 14 employees of prosecution authorities.

39. If applicable, how does your country use the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention) to combat human trafficking? If not, what are the reasons?

Answer – Approval of the Convention on Cybercrime, signed in Budapest on 23 November 2001, by the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 30 September 2009, with relevant declarations and reservations, is one of the important steps taken in the field of combating cybercrime.

Based on the provisions of that Convention, relevant amendments have been made to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Thus, the acts предусмотренные in Article 9 of the said Convention have been criminalized and prohibited under various articles of the Criminal Code.

Subparagraph 1.2.4 of the National Action Program for Increasing the Effectiveness of Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms in the Republic of Azerbaijan предусматривает preparation of proposals for revising the chapter “Crimes against Computer Information” of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan and aligning it with the requirements of the Convention on Cybercrime of 23 November 2001, which has been implemented.

Part II – Country-specific additional questions

40. Provide information on measures taken in your country regarding the following recommendations made in previous GRETA reports:

- revision of legislation and ensuring access to a lawyer from the moment there are reasonable grounds to believe that a person is a victim of human trafficking, as well as throughout all proceedings;

According to Part 3 of the “Rules on the National Referral Mechanism for Victims of Human Trafficking”, victims have the right to receive free legal assistance. Victims obtain information on free legal assistance and organizations providing such assistance from the specialized police authority and non-governmental organizations.

According to Resolution No. 244 of the Cabinet of Ministers dated 25 June 2015 “On Amendments to the Rules on Creation, Financing, Operation and Supervision of Special Institutions for Victims of Human Trafficking”, engagement of external specialists on a contractual basis to provide professional legal assistance to victims of human trafficking has been continued.

According to Article 19.3-1 of the Criminal Procedure Code, upon request of a child who is a victim of sexual exploitation or sexual violence or their legal representative, the authority conducting the criminal process must ensure participation of a lawyer in the criminal proceedings to provide free legal assistance to such child. According to Article 123-2 of the Criminal Procedure

Code, authorities conducting criminal proceedings must inform legal representatives of children who are victims of sexual exploitation or sexual violence about release of a person detained, arrested or convicted for a crime related to sexual exploitation or sexual violence against children, and must take measures to ensure safety of such children, their families and witnesses, as well as ensure participation of a more experienced lawyer in working with children when free legal assistance is requested by the child or their legal representative. According to Part I of Article 20 of the Law “On Lawyers and Legal Practice”, remuneration of a lawyer providing services to children who are victims of sexual exploitation or sexual violence and who independently exercise their rights in criminal proceedings and request free legal assistance is paid from the state budget, except where such costs are imposed on the convicted person by a court decision.

- ensuring effective access of victims of human trafficking to compensation and increasing the amount of the one-time allowance provided from the State Fund for Assistance to Victims of Human Trafficking, including through legislative measures;

Resolution No. 152 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 2006 approved determination of the amount of allowance paid to persons who suffered from human trafficking during the reintegration period. Amendments were made to this Resolution by Resolution No. 99 dated 7 May 2010 replacing the words “30 times the conditional financial unit” with “200 manats”, by Resolution No. 172 dated 3 August 2012 replacing “200” with “400”, and by Resolution No. 256 dated 4 June 2019 replacing “400” with “700”.

Thus, the amount of the one-time allowance paid to victims of human trafficking has been increased over the years.

- increasing efforts to detect, investigate and prosecute cases of trafficking for the purpose of labor exploitation, including strengthening cooperation between labor inspectors and the police and reinstating workplace inspections by labor inspectors;

Draft laws and decrees prepared by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (on amendments to the Law “On Combating Human Trafficking”, on implementation of the Law “On Combating Human Trafficking”, on approval of the “Regulation on the Form and Maintenance of the Unified Information Register of Inspections Conducted in the Field of Entrepreneurship”, and on

amendments to decrees on suspension of inspections in the field of entrepreneurship and additional measures for state regulation of inspections in the field of entrepreneurship) предусматривают conducting monitoring in construction, agriculture and service sectors for the purpose of identifying and preventing conditions facilitating human trafficking and forced labor crimes, as well as identifying victims, including presumed victims.

The drafts also предусматривают that such monitoring would be carried out not only by the Ministry of Internal Affairs but also by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, and that the capacity of labor inspectors to identify and refer victims of forced labor would be strengthened.

Although the prepared draft legislation was deemed acceptable by relevant state bodies, it was not approved by the Ministry of Economy, and therefore its adoption was not possible.

- full use of existing measures to protect victims and witnesses of human trafficking during investigation, court proceedings and after their completion, as well as prevention of their intimidation;

Ensuring the safety of persons who have suffered from human trafficking is carried out in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On State Protection of Participants in Criminal Proceedings”. The employee of the body conducting the criminal process informs the victim of human trafficking about the possibilities of ensuring safety and the applied protection measures.

Security measures applied to victims of human trafficking are maintained throughout the preliminary investigation, court examination and after the final court decision until the threat is completely eliminated.

- intensifying efforts to identify child victims of human trafficking and provide them with appropriate assistance;

According to paragraph 3.1.2 of the “Rules (Indicators) for Identification of Victims of Human Trafficking”, approved by Resolution No. 131 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of

Azerbaijan dated 3 September 2009, indicators for identification of child victims of human trafficking have been specified.

The National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking in the Republic of Azerbaijan provides for continuation of efforts by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population and other state bodies to identify victims of human trafficking and forced labor, including children, within the country.

In providing any type of assistance to child victims of human trafficking, appropriate measures are taken to protect their rights and legitimate interests in accordance with the Laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On the Rights of the Child” and “On Prevention of Neglect and Offences among Minors”, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as other laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan and international treaties to which it is a party.

- establishing strategic partnerships with civil society actors and ensuring effective access of NGOs engaged in combating human trafficking to adequate funding.

In accordance with Article 10 of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Combating Human Trafficking” and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the NGO Coalition on Combating Human Trafficking, cooperation with non-governmental organizations has been continued. Thus, NGOs operating in the field of prevention of human trafficking have been involved in awareness-raising activities, organization of the activities of special institutions for victims of human trafficking, provision of legal assistance to victims and their social rehabilitation. Representatives of NGOs have been awarded by the Ministry of Internal Affairs with various monetary rewards and diplomas for their active participation in combating human trafficking in respective years.

For the purpose of implementing measures предусмотренные by the National Action Plan, such as “increasing financial support for specialized NGOs participating in combating human trafficking” and “assessing capacities of state and non-state shelters and assistance centers providing services to victims of human trafficking and strengthening their potential”, in previous years the Ministry of Internal Affairs provided assistance for renovation works of the shelter operated under the Public Union “Clean World Women’s Support”, and for equipping the shelter

operated under the Public Union “Azerbaijan Children” with bedding sets and beds according to its needs. In addition, 30,000 manats were allocated for purchase of land for the shelter operated under the Public Union “Azerbaijan Children”, and 20,000 manats were allocated to the Public Union “Organization for Combating Human Trafficking” for production of the series “IFSA” dedicated to police activities and combating human trafficking, drug addiction, cybercrime and other crimes.

Approximately 2 million manats were allocated to civil society representatives during 2022–2025 for implementation of around 130 projects in areas covering combating human trafficking.

41. Provide information on developments in your country since the third evaluation report of GRETA regarding the following:

- new and emerging trends in human trafficking;

No changes have been observed in human trafficking trends, methods, citizenship of victims, origin/destination dynamics, sectors, affected demographics, etc.

- legislation and regulatory framework related to activities on combating human trafficking;

In 2022, in cooperation with relevant state bodies, amendments were made to two Laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan, one Order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and four Decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers:

- the legal status of the Working Group under the National Coordinator was established in the Law “On Combating Human Trafficking”;
- amendments were made to the “Rules on the National Referral Mechanism for Victims of Human Trafficking”, including selection of deputy heads of state bodies that are members of the inter-agency commission and NGOs to be included in the commission through a competitive process, involvement of representations of international organizations in Azerbaijan in the work of the commission, implementation of the commission’s activities based on an annual work plan and other issues;

- analysis of the domestic situation related to activities of foreigners and stateless persons in the service sector in order to prevent risks of becoming victims of human trafficking was defined as one of the functions of the inter-agency commission.

At the same time, the list of bodies responsible for implementation of the “National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2020–2024” and the “Program for Elimination of Social Problems Contributing to Human Trafficking”, the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Combating Human Trafficking” and the “Rules on Repatriation of Victims of Human Trafficking” were aligned with relevant нормативные legal acts. Methodological guidelines on “Communication of employees of state bodies with children who have suffered or are presumed to have suffered from human trafficking and referral of relevant cases and affected children” and “Organization of operational-search activities in the field of combating human trafficking” were prepared and submitted to relevant bodies.

In 2023, in cooperation with relevant state bodies, amendments were made to one Order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and one Decision of the Cabinet of Ministers:

- the list of implementing bodies of the “National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2020–2024” was clarified, and certain subparagraphs were aligned with normative legal acts;
- in accordance with the “Rules on Creation, Financing, Operation and Supervision of Special Institutions for Victims of Human Trafficking”, functions such as establishment of an Assistance Center for victims of human trafficking, provision of victims in special institutions with medicines, and provision of emergency medical and psychological assistance were assigned to the Management Union of Medical Territorial Units (TƏBİB);
- by Decision No. 158 of the Cabinet of Ministers dated 16 May 2023, the “Composition, Organization and Rules of Operation of the Working Group under the National Coordinator on Combating Human Trafficking” were approved. The Republic of Azerbaijan signed the Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs, and regulations on the “Hotline” serving victims, presumed victims and potential victims of human trafficking, as well as on shelters for temporary accommodation of victims, were improved.

In addition, last year amendments were made to the Labor, Family, Criminal Procedure and Criminal Codes, as well as to the Laws “On the Rights of the Child”, “On Lawyers and Legal Practice”, “On Education”, “On State Dactyloscopic and Genomic Registration in the Republic of Azerbaijan” and others in connection with implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. Thus, commission of certain crimes against sexual inviolability and sexual freedom (rape, violent acts of a sexual nature) against minors was established as an aggravating circumstance, penalties for a number of crimes related to sexual exploitation of children were strengthened, involvement of minors in acts contrary to public morality was defined as a constituent element of a crime (Article 171), and provisions establishing criminal liability for stalking children for sexual purposes were added to the legislation (Article 171-2). At the same time, persons suspected, accused or convicted of crimes related to sexual exploitation or sexual violence against children were included among persons subject to mandatory state genomic registration. A decree determining rules for repatriation and rehabilitation of minor citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan found in difficult life situations abroad without parental or legal representative accompaniment was adopted, as well as a decision of the Cabinet of Ministers defining responsibilities of relevant state bodies in ensuring access of children to education, social, medical and psychological services in emergency situations, pandemics and similar special conditions.

Improvement of the normative legal framework and institutional mechanisms in combating human trafficking continued in 2024, including preparation of a draft law on approval of the Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs, as well as preparation of a draft “National Action Plan for 2025–2030” aimed at increasing effectiveness of interaction between state bodies and ensuring fulfillment of international obligations, which was submitted to relevant state bodies for comments and proposals.

In 2025, the following normative legal acts related to combating human trafficking were adopted (in chronological order):

- by Decree No. 350 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 12 March 2025, the list of services provided at “DOST” centers was supplemented by adding admission of victims of human trafficking to Assistance Centers within the scope of social services;

- by Decree No. 529 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 17 November 2025, the “Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation of the United Arab Emirates on cooperation in the field of organized temporary employment of workforce” was approved;
- by Decree No. 538 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 28 November 2025, paragraph 2.11 was added to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 4 August 2005 No. 272 “On implementation of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan ‘On Combating Human Trafficking’”, thereby expanding the powers of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population in the field of social rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking and provision of assistance to child victims;
- by Decision No. 377 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 4 December 2025, amendments were made to the “Guaranteed volume of social services provided at the expense of the state budget to persons (families) in difficult life situations” by adding subparagraph 2.5.4.1 (ensuring effective organization of leisure time of victims of human trafficking, involving them in activities organized in accordance with their potential and interests, and ensuring their participation in other cultural and mass events);
- by Decision No. 385 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 10 December 2025, amendments were made to the “Rules (Indicators) for Identification of Victims of Human Trafficking”, thereby increasing the effectiveness of consular authorities in the field of combating human trafficking.

Institutional and policy framework for combating human trafficking (coordinating bodies, specialized institutions, national rapporteur or equivalent mechanism, participation of civil society, public-private partnerships);

In order to create a unified system of cooperation among participants of the National Action Plan and to ensure exchange of information among these bodies, coordination of their activities is carried out by the National Coordinator.

Coordination of the activities of the participants of the National Action Plan is implemented through a Working Group operating on a voluntary basis under the National Coordinator. The

composition, organization and rules of operation of the Working Group are determined by the relevant executive authority of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The National Coordinator establishes necessary cooperation with security bodies, border service, police, prosecution authorities, courts, other state bodies and non-governmental organizations in order to ensure more effective implementation of operational-search activities and criminal prosecution related to human trafficking crimes.

The functions of the National Coordinator are determined by the National Action Plan.

- existing national strategy and/or action plan on combating human trafficking (objectives, main activities, budget, responsible bodies for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of results);

By relevant orders of the Head of State, the “National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking in the Republic of Azerbaijan” for respective years is approved. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan coordinates implementation of the measures предусмотренные in that National Action Plan jointly with relevant state bodies.

- new case-law related to human trafficking concerning different forms of exploitation.

The national legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan has been fully harmonized with international instruments, and all forms of exploitation of human trafficking are reflected in national legislation. Although various forms of exploitation are provided for in legislation, in practice only 2 types of exploitation characteristic for Azerbaijan have been observed – sexual exploitation and labor exploitation. For this reason, there has been no new case-law related to different forms of exploitation.

Part III – Statistics on Human Trafficking

42. Starting from 2019, please provide the following statistics for each year, where possible disaggregated as indicated below:

- the number of presumed victims and identified victims of human trafficking, understood as persons recognized by a state body or an authorized NGO as entitled to the services provided for in the Convention (disaggregated by sex, age, citizenship, form of exploitation, internal or transnational trafficking, as well as by the body that identified them).

According to the “Rules (Indicators) for Identification of Victims of Human Trafficking”, proactive and reactive methods (measures) are used in identification of victims of human trafficking. During 2019–2025, all identified victims were identified by the Main Department for Combating Human Trafficking of the Ministry of Internal Affairs through proactive methods. The table below presents information on victims identified by the Main Department during 2019–2025.

Table 1.

Years	Gender		Age range	Sexual exploitation	Forced labor	Citizenship	Place of exploitation
	male	female					
2019	6	85	1 persons – child	85	6	89 persons – Azerbaijan	88 persons – abroad
91 persons			12 persons 18-25			1 persons – Tajikistan	3 persons – domestic

			46 persons 25-35 32 persons 35-55			1 persons – Uzbekistan	
2020 94 persons	4	90	2 persons - child 8 persons 18-25 42 persons 25-35 42 persons 35-55	85	9	93 persons – Azerbaijan 1 persons - Russia	85 persons – abroad 9 persons – domestic
2021 95 persons	1	94	5 persons 18-25 59 persons 25-35 31 persons 35-55	94	1	95 persons – Azerbaijan	94 persons – abroad 1 persons – domestic
2022 94 persons	1	93	6 persons – child 16 persons 18-25 41 persons 25-35 31 persons 35-55	92	2	93 persons – Azerbaijan 1 persons - Nigeria	83 persons – abroad 11 - domestic
2023 91 persons	1	90	6 persons 18-25 50 persons 25-35	59	2	91 persons – Azerbaijan	89 – abroad 2 - domestic

			35 persons 35-55				
2024 91 persons	1	90	1 persons – child 12 persons 18-25 49 persons 25-35 29 persons 35-55	90	1	91 persons – Azerbaijan	90 – abroad 1 – domestic
2025 46 persons	-	46	4 persons 18-25 28 persons 25-35 14 persons 35-55	46	-	46 persons – Azerbaijan	46 - abroad

- the number of victims of human trafficking identified within the asylum procedure (disaggregated by gender, age, citizenship, and form of exploitation).

Table 2

Years	Gender		Age range	Sexual exploitation	Forced labor	Citizenship
	male	femal e				
2019	6	72	1 persons – child 10 persons 18-25	72	6	77 persons – Azerbaijan 1 persons – Tajik

			38 persons 25-35 29 persons 35-55			
2020	3	77	7 persons 18-25 38 persons 25-35 35 persons 35-55	73	7	79 persons – Azerbaijan 1 persons - Russia
2021	1	72	2 persons 18-25 49 persons 25-35 22 persons 35-55	72	1	73 persons – Azerbaijan
2022	1	72	6 persons – child 12 persons 18-25 32 persons 25-35 23 persons 35-55	71	2	72 persons – Azerbaijan 1 persons – Nigeria
2023	1	60	4 persons 18-25 37 persons 25-35 20 persons 35-55	59	2	61 persons – Azerbaijan

2024	1	51	1 persons – 7 year 10 persons 18-25 27 persons 25-35 14 persons 35-55	51	1	52 persons – Azerbaijan
2025	-	46	4 persons 18-25 26 persons 25-35 16 persons 35-55	46	-	46 persons – Azerbaijan

- **the number of victims of human trafficking who received assistance (disaggregated by gender, age, citizenship, form of exploitation, and domestic or transnational trafficking).**

All victims of human trafficking identified each year are provided with psychological, medical, social and legal assistance предусмотренные within the rehabilitation process (for other categories – see Table 1).

- **the number of child victims of human trafficking for whom a legal representative was appointed.**

Table 3

Years	Number of children
2019	0
2020	1
2021	0
2022	1

2023	0
2024	4
2025	3

- **the number of victims of human trafficking granted a recovery and reflection period (disaggregated by gender, age, citizenship, and form of exploitation).**

Table 4

Years	Gender		Age range	Exploitation	Gender	Forced labor	Citizenship
	male	female					
2019	-	77	11 persons 18-25 40 persons 25-35 26 persons 35-55	77	-	-	77 persons – Azerbaijan
2020	-	28	5 persons 18-25 17 persons 25-35 6 persons 35-55	28	-	-	28 persons – Azerbaijan
2021	-	6	6 persons 25-35	6	-	-	6 persons – Azerbaijan

2022	-	8	5 persons 18-25 3 persons 25-35	8	-	8 persons – Azerbaijan
2023	-	10	3 persons 18-25 7 persons 25-35	10	-	10 persons – Azerbaijan
2024	-	7	7 persons 25-35	7	-	7 persons – Azerbaijan
2025	-	7	2 persons 18-25 5 persons 25-35	7	-	7 persons – Azerbaijan

- the number of victims of human trafficking granted a residence permit, indicating the type of permit (for the purpose of cooperation with investigation/proceedings, on personal grounds, other) and its duration (disaggregated by gender, age, citizenship, and form of exploitation).

During the period covering 2019–2025, the State Migration Service, on the basis of Article 45.1.10-1 of the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (when a foreigner or stateless person is considered a victim of human trafficking), granted temporary residence permits to the following persons recognized as victims of human trafficking: 1 individual, a citizen of the Russian Federation (forced labor), born in 1973, female, from 20.01.2021 to 20.01.2022 and from 21.01.2022 to 21.01.2023; 1 individual, a citizen of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (sexual exploitation), born in 2005, female, from 25.07.2022 to 25.07.2023 and from 09.10.2023 to 09.10.2024.

- the number of persons granted refugee status or subsidiary/additional protection on the grounds of being victims of human trafficking (disaggregated by gender, age, citizenship, and form of exploitation).

No persons have been identified as having been granted refugee status or subsidiary/additional protection on the grounds of being victims of human trafficking.

- the number of victims of human trafficking who submitted compensation claims, were awarded compensation, and actually received compensation (disaggregated by gender, age, citizenship, and form of exploitation; indicating whether compensation was paid by the offender or by the State, and the amount awarded).

Table 5

Years	Submitted	Received
2019	1	0
2020	0	0
2021	2	0
2022	0	0
2023	2	0
2024	2	0
2025	8	0

- **the number of victims of human trafficking who received other forms of financial support from the State, indicating the amount received.**

Table 6

Years	In accordance with the relevant decision of the Cabinet of Ministers, a one-time allowance – 700 manats	From the Assistance Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking – 50 manats
2019	91 persons	87 persons
2020	91 persons	81 persons
2021	95 persons	95 persons
2022	94 persons	93 persons
2023	90 persons	90 persons
2024	80 persons	81 persons
2025	46 persons	40 persons

- the number of victims of human trafficking who received free legal assistance.

Table 7

2019	69
2020	139
2021	91
2022	99
2023	106
2024	102
2025	93

- the number of victims of human trafficking returned to or from your country or repatriated (disaggregated by gender, age, country of destination, and form of exploitation).

Table 8 **Victims repatriated from our country**

Years	Gender		Age range	Exploitation Gender	Forced labor	Citizenship	Country of destination
	male	female					
2019		2	2 persons 25-35	2		Tajikistan – 1 Uzbekistan – 1	Azerbaijan
2020		1	1 persons 35-55		1	Russia - 1 persons	Azerbaijan
2021							
2022		1	1 persons 18-25	1		Nigeria - 1 persons	Azerbaijan
2023							
2024							
2025							

During the period 2019–2025, among persons readmitted to the country, 1 female individual was identified as a victim of human trafficking. Information was provided that the person, born in 1976, was a victim of human trafficking in the Hellenic Republic. That person was readmitted to our country from the Hellenic Republic on 29.06.2024.

- the number of investigations conducted in human trafficking cases (disaggregated by form of exploitation, indicating the number of relevant victims).

- the number of prosecutions in human trafficking cases (disaggregated by form of exploitation, indicating the number of relevant victims and accused persons).

Table 9

Years	Human trafficking	Forced labor
2019	23 (85 victim) (23 accused person)	2 (6 victim) (4 accused person)
2020	16 (85 victim) (17 accused person)	2 (9 victim) (1 accused person)
2021	13 (94 victim) (13 accused person)	1 (1 victim) (1 accused person)
2022	13 (92 victim) (12 accused person)	1 (2 victim) (2 accused person)
2023	13 (89 victim) (11 accused person)	1 (1 victim) (2 accused person)
2024	14 (90 victim) (13 accused person)	1 (1 victim) (3 accused person)
2025	9 (46 victim) (10 accused person)	1 (-)

- the number of persons convicted of human trafficking offences (disaggregated by gender, age, citizenship, and form of exploitation).

- the number of judgments in human trafficking cases, indicating the form of exploitation, whether the victim is an adult or a child, the type and duration of the sentence, as well as whether the sentence was actually enforced or conditionally applied.

Table 10

Years	Judgment / persons	Form of exploitation	Child victim	Type of sentence	Duration	Citizenship	Age	Gender
2019	36 judgments in respect of 42 persons	37 Sexual exploitation, 4 Forced labor, 1 for the purpose of organ transplantation	2	14 custodial, 28 suspended	1 to 7 years – 12, 7 to 12 years – 30	2 foreign nationals, 40 Azerbaijan	25–35: 9 persons, 35–55: 33 persons	7 male, 35 female
2020	14 judgments in respect of 15 persons	12 Sexual exploitation, 3 Forced labor	2	12 custodial, 3 suspended	1 to 7 years – 6, 7 to 12 years – 9	15 Azerbaijan	25–35: 2 persons, 35–55: 13 persons	3 male, 12 female
2021	13 judgments in respect of 13 persons	12 Sexual exploitation, 1 Forced labor	2	12 custodial, 1 suspended	1 to 7 years – 1, 7 to 12 years – 12	13 Azerbaijan	35–55: 13 persons	1 male, 12 female
2022	9 judgments in respect of 12 persons	11 Sexual exploitation, 1 Forced labor	–	10 custodial, 2 suspended	1 to 7 years – 2, 7 to 12 years – 10	12 Azerbaijan	25–35: 1 person, 35–55: 11 persons	3 male, 9 female
2023	9 judgments in respect	10 Sexual exploitation	–	10 custodial	7 to 12 years – 10	1 foreign national, 9 Azerbaijan	18–25: 1 person,	1 male, 9 female

Years	Judgment / persons	Form of exploitation	Child victim	Type of sentence	Duration	Citizenship	Age	Gender
	of 10 persons						25–35: 3 persons, 35–55: 6 persons	
2024	9 judgments in respect of 11 persons	9 Sexual exploitation, 2 Forced labor	–	6 custodial, 5 suspended	1 to 7 years – 3, 7 to 12 years – 8	11 Azerbaijan	25–35: 2 persons, 35–55: 9 persons	1 male, 10 female
2025	12 judgments in respect of 14 persons	12 Sexual exploitation, 2 Forced labor	2	11 custodial, 3 suspended	1 to 7 years – 2, 7 to 12 years – 12	14 Azerbaijan	18–25: 1 person, 25–35: 7 persons, 35–55: 6 persons	4 male, 10 female

- the number of court decisions in human trafficking cases resulting in confiscation of property.

There have been no court judgments resulting in confiscation of property.

- **the number of court decisions in human trafficking cases resulting in liability of legal persons.**

There have been no court judgments resulting in liability of legal persons.