



REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

BULGARIAN NATIONAL ANTI-TRAFFICKING COMMISSION

REPORT
ON THE ACTIVITY OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR COMBATING
TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS FOR 2007

The National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings was established by virtue of the Law on Combating the Illegal Trafficking in Human Beings (promulgated State Gazette, No. 46, 2003; amended SG, No. 86, 2005). The Regulation for the Organization and Activity of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings was approved by Government Decree No. 40 of the Council of Ministers of March 1, 2004 (State Gazette, No. 19, March 9, 2004).

By Decision No. 860 of the Council of Ministers of November 4, 2005 Mr. Daniel Vulchev, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education and Science, was nominated to act as Chairman of the Commission. By order of the Chairman of December 20, 2005, the operative membership of the commission was appointed.

Mrs. Antoaneta Vassileva has been acting as Secretary of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings since June 4, 2007.

At its meeting on July 18, 2007 the National Commission adopted a National Program for Prevention and Counteraction of Trafficking in Human Beings and Protection of the Victims of Trafficking for 2007. The Program was approved by the Council of Ministers on September 26, 2007.

The present report outlines the activities accomplished under the National Program for Prevention and Counteraction of Trafficking in Human Beings and Protection of the Victims of trafficking for 2007, as follows:

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

SECTION I - INSTITUTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL MEASURES

1. Setting up and structuring Local Commissions for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in Varna, Bourgas, Pazardzhik and Sliven.

In 2007 a number of meetings were held with the municipal administration of the towns of Pazardzhik, Sliven, Bourgas and Varna with the aim of establishing Local Commissions for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in these communities in accordance with the decision made by the National Commission members at their meeting. The towns were selected in view of the information provided by the Ministry of Interior and the Supreme Court of Cassation about the regions reporting the highest risk of involvement in human trafficking and regions with the greatest number of successfully disclosed cases of this crime.

As a result of the discussions held, the good will and understanding of the importance of this issue in the relevant communities, Local Commissions for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings were set up in Bourgas, Sliven, Varna and Pazardzhik. The Local Commissions will pursue activities for prevention and protection of the victims as well as for support of the development of local policies for combating trafficking in human beings.

6. Register for the physical and legal non-profit entities that provide shelter to victims of trafficking in human beings.

The National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings prepared a form which was sent to be filled by all nongovernmental organizations in the country. The aim of this form was both to collect information about the organizations providing shelter to victims of trafficking and to gather and summarize information about all the services and activities offered by NGOs in the field of combating trafficking in human beings.

The questionnaire is structured in five sections: General information about the organization and projects it has been implementing in combating trafficking in human beings; Activities related to the prevention of trafficking; Activities related to the support of victims of trafficking; Activities related to supporting children – victims of trafficking; Activities in the field of lobbying and legislative initiatives.

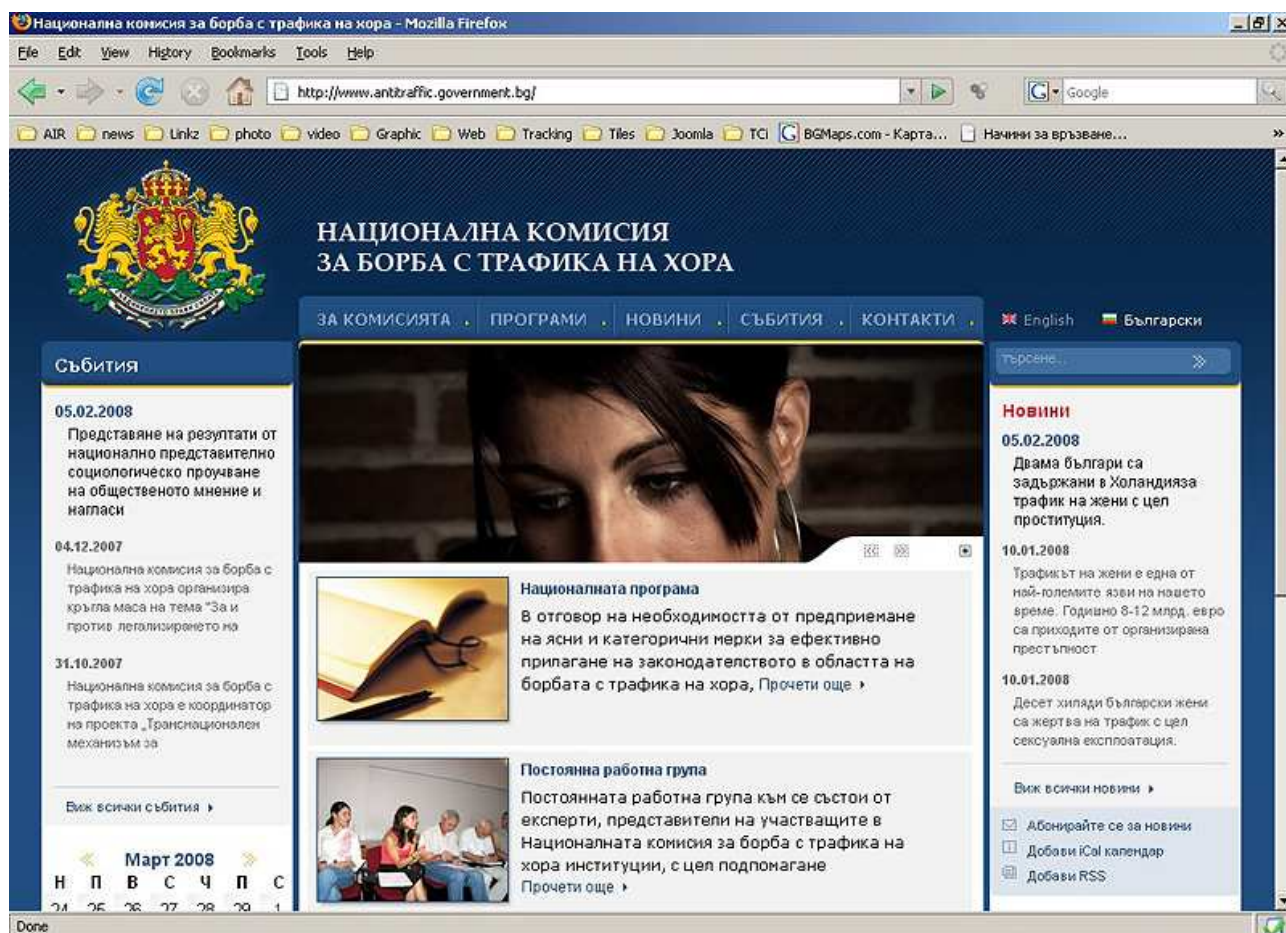
Information has been gathered from twenty-one nongovernmental organizations. The developed register is public and will be accessible on the Internet webpage of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. The register is updated on a regular basis and new organizations and services are being added.

7. Development of a website of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.

An internet website of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings was designed at the end of 2007 – www.antitraffic.government.bg

The information is structured in several major headings: **News** – a place to publish news related to trafficking and forthcoming events; **Information about the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings**; **Useful information about trafficking in human beings**; **Programmes** – featuring the National Programmes for 2006 and 2007; **Calendar**, highlighting forthcoming events organized by the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, intending to expand it into a comprehensive calendar of the activities in Bulgaria, listing all future events in the field of combating trafficking in human beings organized and hosted by various institutions and nongovernmental organizations in the country; **Contacts** for direct electronic communication with the National Commission.

It is also planned to create an electronic library presenting a wide scope of materials – books, articles, research, survey and analysis covering various topics of trafficking in human beings.



8. Logo of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.

The National Commission assigned the creation of an official logo of the institution and now a number of designs are being assessed and evaluated to be presented to the Chairman of the National Commission.

In February 2007 a **Permanent Working Group** was affiliated to the National Commission, consisting of experts representing the institutions within the membership of the National Commission, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and nongovernmental organizations. At present, members of the Permanent Working Group are: Mr. Dobri Dochev (Trafficking in Human Beings Sector at the General Directorate for Combating Organized Crime, Ministry of Interior), Mr. Evgeni Dikov (Prosecutor in Department 1 – Organized Crime and Corruption, Supreme Cassation Prosecution Office), Mrs. Mariana Bancheva (Ministry of Education and Science); Mrs. Silvia Tsanova (Deputy Executive Director, Agency for Social Assistance), Mr. Rumen Georgiev (Deputy Director, National Investigation Service), Mrs. Elena Perchinska (Ministry of Health), Mrs. Veronika Imova (Supreme Court of Cassation), Mrs. Ani Evgenieva (Ministry of Labour and Social Policy), Mrs. Nadezhda Todorova (Ministry of Justice), Mrs. Iliana Derilova (Head of IOM's Mission in Bulgaria).

The Permanent Working Group at the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings took part in two consecutive working visits dedicated to the topic “Building the capacity of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings”, May 8 – 17, 2007, Rome, Italy and Kiev, Ukraine. The aim of the visits was to provide support for the better functioning and further improvement of the Bulgarian National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings by making the expert members familiar with good working practices and models in other EU member-states.

In connection with the aims and work of the Permanent Working Group, three working meetings were held supported by the International Organization for Migration under the project of the US Agency for International Development entitled “Partnership for Counteracting Trafficking in Human Beings in Bulgaria”.

The objective of the meeting, held in Pamporovo from June 21 to 24, 2007, was to discuss and develop a draft of a National Programme for Prevention and Counteracting Trafficking in Human Beings and Protection of Victims of Trafficking for 2007.

At the working meeting in Bansko, held from July 26 to 29, 2007, seventeen nongovernmental organizations presented their projects funded by IOM and USAID to the secretariat of the Bulgarian National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and its expert group. The aim of

this meeting was to allow the National Commission and its expert group to get a realistic idea about the actual capacity of the nongovernmental sector in Bulgaria.

The objective of the last meeting, held from October 20 to 22, 2007, was to discuss the progress and implementation of the National Program for 2007 and to outline recommendations for the National Program 2008.

In view of the coordinating function of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, the further development of its activities and taking into account its increased capacity, the Commission was offered to host the current meetings of the international donor's coordination group for counteraction to trafficking. Up to present these meetings were organized and hosted by the US Embassy in Bulgaria.

The coordination group has been regularly holding meetings since 2005, getting together every three months representatives of donor's organizations and diplomatic missions of states whose governments support and implement donor's programs for counteracting trafficking in human beings, as well as representatives of international and nongovernmental organizations.

The donor's group focuses on the exchange of information about the activities carried out in relation to counteracting trafficking in human beings, the cooperation between the organizations and primarily on the efficient communication between the donor's organizations and the beneficiary organizations in view of satisfying better the needs of both parties.

A project of the International Organization for Migration and the US Agency for International Development called **“Partnership model for cooperation in counteraction to trafficking in human beings in Bulgaria”** provided valuable support to the National Commission during 2007. The major objective of the programme is to support the efforts of the Bulgarian government in strengthening the institutions for combating trafficking in human beings, as well as to improve their partnership with the civil society.

The activities under this programme include consultancy assistance, training, refurbishment and new equipment for the National Commission's office, as well as campaigns to raise public awareness of these problems. Within the framework of this project and the financial aid allocated for refurbishment and equipment, on October 23, 2007, the new office of the National Commission was opened at 52A G.M. Dimitrov Blvd.

The International Organization for Migration, with the support of USAID, provided support to set up an expert group affiliated to the National Commission, consisting of state administration officials holding key positions in combating trafficking in human beings. The expert group members consult the National Commission's Secretary and play a major role for the successful coordination of all the institutions involved in these issues.

SECTION II „PREVENTION”

2. Performing surveys and organizing information campaigns.

2.5. Information campaign for raising public awareness of the issues of trafficking in human beings including information about opportunities for legal work abroad.

In 2007 the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings organized and held a number of information campaigns with national coverage:

„16 days of activism to eliminate violence against women” (*November 25 – December 10, 2007*)

The National Campaign to raise public awareness of the problems of trafficking in human beings, including learning more about the opportunities for legal work abroad, was held under the auspices of the National Commission and was part of the international initiative “16 days against violence”. The campaign was organized in connection to the International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women, November 25, announced by the United Nations Organization (adopted by Resolution 54/134, 17 December, 1999) and the International Day for Protection of Human Rights, December 10. The aim of the initiative was to draw the public attention to the risks of trafficking in human beings as part of an international initiative that has been commemorated for years by the nongovernmental sector in Bulgaria. A central partner in this campaign was the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, “Nadya” Centre Foundation, Animus Association Foundation, and Gender Studies Foundation.

The following events were organized within the framework of this campaign:

November 25, 2007 Press conference on the occasion of the official opening of the 16-day initiative with the cooperation of a representative of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and “Nadya” Centre, Sofia Press Hall.

December 4, 2007 Round table on “For and against legalizing prostitution in the context of trafficking in human beings – viewpoints and good practices”, was held in the Sheraton Hotel.

The objectives of this round table discussion were to get acquainted with the experience of other countries and to discuss the pros and cons of a possible legalizing or criminalizing prostitution as well as to evaluate how the relevant legal framework has affected trafficking in human beings, which is an issue of primary interest. The round table was opened by Mr. Hristo Manchev, Deputy Prosecutor General of the Republic of Bulgaria. Experts from the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, the USA, Sweden and Greece shared their experience in legalizing or criminalizing prostitution.

December 10, 2007 Press conference on the occasion of the International Day for Protection of Human Rights and opening of the movie “CARGO – innocence lost”.

The press conference was attended by Mrs. Antoaneta Vassileva, Secretary of the National Commission, Mr. Michael Fritz, USAID Mission Director and by the director of the movie Mr. Michael Cory Davis, who talked about the reasons to make this film, about his past experience in combating trafficking and informed the participants about the current situation in the USA. The 15-min documentary “This is not my life” was presented especially for the journalists, a film created with the financial support of USAID-Romania featuring a trafficking situation in this neighbour country.

December 13, 2007 The Bulgarian premiere of the documentary about trafficking of people and sexual exploitation “CARGO – innocence lost” took place at the Odeon Cinema Theatre with the generous support of the US Embassy.

The event was opened by Mr. Daniel Vulchev, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the National Commission and His Excellency John Beyrle, US Ambassador to Bulgaria. Mr. Michael Cory Davis talked about how the film was made and about his personal commitment to combating trafficking of people. Ambassador John Beyrle awarded the Brave Woman Prize to the Prosecutor Nedialka Popova for her courage and dedication in solving many cases of trafficking in human beings. The event was attended by over 120 members of diplomatic missions, high-ranking state officials, representatives of nongovernmental organizations, law enforcement bodies and media.

„Trafficking in human beings: time for action” (*October 18– 27, 2007 г.*)

On October 18, 2007 at 09:30 am the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings with the support of the Ministry of Interior declared the European day for Combating Trafficking of People under the motto “Trafficking in Human Beings: time for action”, starting with a press conference and a round table. The event was attended by Mr. Rumen Petkov, Minister of Interior, Mrs. Shereen Mestan, President of the State Agency for Child Protection, Mrs. Colleen Graffy, Deputy Secretary of State for European Affairs and Public Diplomacy of the USA, Mrs. Antoaneta Vassileva, Secretary of the National Commission, and representatives of state administration, embassies, international and nongovernmental organizations.

The event marked the beginning of a 10-day initiative across the whole country on the occasion of the European Day for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. Within the framework of this initiative, various events and training sessions for children and parents belonging to groups at risk were organized in Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, Pazardzhik, Topolovgrad, Rousse, Bourgas and the region with the cooperation and partnership of the International Organization for Migration, “Nadya” Centre and the Foundation Caritas Bulgaria.

“Trafficking in human beings exists” (April – December 2007)

The national campaign under the motto “Every child can become a victim of trafficking, especially the child we see rarely” was organized by the Face to Face Association with the partnership of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, the Parliamentary Committee for Children, Youth and Sports Affairs, the Municipality of Sofia and the International Organization for Migration. The campaign was opened on April 19, 2007 with a press conference held at the Granite Hall of the Council of Ministers by Mr. Daniel Vulchev, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the National Commission. The event was also attended by Mr. Boiko Kotsev, Vice Minister of Interior, Mr. Svetoslav Spassov, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee for Children, Youth and Sports Affairs, Mrs. Magdalina Vulchanova, President of the Face to Face Association and Mrs. Iliana Derilova, Head of IOM Mission in Bulgaria. Within the framework of this campaign 5000 posters and 5000 brochures were published and circulated, and the information video-clip, created by the Face to Face Association, was broadcasted on Nova TV for three months.

2.6. Implementing a round table discussion on the topic of legalizing prostitution and its possible impacts on trafficking of human beings.

On December 4 a round table discussion was held at the Sheraton Hotel on the topic „For and against legalizing prostitution in the context of trafficking in human beings – viewpoints and good practices”. The objectives of this round table were to get acquainted with the experience of other countries and to discuss the pros and cons of a possible legalizing or criminalizing prostitution as well as to evaluate how the relevant legal framework has affected trafficking in human beings, which is an issue of primary interest. The round table was opened by Mr. Hristo Manchev, Deputy Prosecutor General of the Republic of Bulgaria. Experts from the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, the USA, Sweden and Greece shared their experience in legalizing or criminalizing prostitution.

The Secretary of the National Commission participated in the following events where he presented the Commission and the legal framework in the field of trafficking in human beings in Bulgaria:

- Working Meeting at the invitation of the Foundation for Care in the Community Diva, Plovdiv, on the topic „Trafficking in human beings – practical and joint action in Plovdiv”, June 28, 2007. The aim of the meeting was to present the experience of key institutions in Plovdiv and to outline future joint action possibilities and coordination with the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings;

- National training seminar within the framework of a project supported by the European Commission, Justice and Home Affairs Directorate under the AGIS 2003 Programme of the European Union, July 3, 2007, Sofia. Presentation on the topic: „Inter-institutional Cooperation at National Level. The Bulgarian Model”;
- Happening, organized by the Municipality of Pazardzhik under the Project „Attention: trafficking in human beings”, held on July 12, 2007 in Pazardzhik. The Secretary of the National Commission awarded a prize for best essay on the topic “Trafficking in Human Beings – the Slavery of the 21st Century”;
- Training module „Trafficking in human beings”, organized by the State Agency for Child Protection and the International Social Service for the teams of crisis centers for children, victims of trafficking and for experts working in this field. The training took place in the period July 18 – 20, 2007 in Sofia;
- Participation as a trainer in a training programme on trafficking issues at the Glow Camp, organized by the Association “Girls run our world”, July 16, 2007, Veliko Turnovo.
- Third Annual Meeting of the deputy heads of diplomatic missions in Bulgaria. The initiative was within the framework of the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union, October 26, 2007, Embassy of Portugal, Sofia;;
- Awarding certificates to seventy volunteers who completed a special course, organized by a mobile child care center under the project “Advocacy Network” of the Face to Face Association, December 16, 2007, Etropole;
- Participation in a Christmas Party at St. Ivan Rilski Home for children deprived of parental care, village of Razliv, December 12, 2007.

SECTION III "STAFF TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION"

1. Training of the administrative staff of the NCCTHB and LCCTHB as well as of the experts from the permanent working group at the NCCTHB.

A representative of the Ministry of Justice, in his position as a member of the permanent expert working group with the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, participated in a working visit on the topic: “Building the capacity of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings”, May 8 – 17, 2007, Rome, Italy and Kiev, Ukraine. The aim of the visit was to provide support for the better functioning and further improvement of the Bulgarian National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings by making its expert members familiar with good working practices and models in other EU member-states.

SECTION V: „INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION"

1. Establish bilateral contacts and exchange experience and best practices between the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and similar structures, as well as state institutions involved in combating and prevention of trafficking in EU member-states and in third countries.

In 2007 top-level state contacts were established with a number of EU member-states aiming at developing and implementing joint projects, exchanging experience and enhancing cooperation in the prevention and combating trafficking in human beings.

- **„Programme for the Enhancement of Anti-trafficking Responses in South Eastern Europe”**. This project is implemented in 10 European countries by the International Center for Migration Policy Development, Bulgaria being one of them. The Programme aims at strengthening the institutional capacity of each participating country, contributing to the harmonization and improved quality and reliability of data related to trafficking in human beings in SEE countries in the areas of prevention, protection and prosecution (victim-centered database and legal and judicial database). Outputs of the project: regional criteria for a uniform data system, handbook on regional criteria available in six languages; programming and technical implementation of the two databases and their institutionalization in each of the concerned countries. The National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings officially received the relevant software and the victim-centered database as well as guidelines on data collection. A representative of the National Commission received relevant training on working with the database. The Project will be completed by the end of April 2008 with a regional conference in Skopje, FYROM.
- Starting from the end of September 2007, the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, supported by a motion of the Ministry of Interior, became the major coordinator for Bulgaria under the project of the International Center for Migration Policy Development **„Programme to Support the Development of Transnational Referral Mechanisms for Victims of Trafficking in South-Eastern Europe ”**.

The immediate objective of the project is the development of mechanisms necessary for comprehensive transnational victim support and institutionalized cooperation on transnational cases between participating countries from South-Eastern Europe – Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and the UN-administered territory of Kosovo. Within the framework of the project Guidelines for the Transnational Referral Mechanism have been elaborated.

In the period January 2008 – May 2008 the third phase of the project will be implemented when the members of the Project National Working Group will conduct two-day training sessions with their colleagues from the Ministry of Interior, Prosecutor's Office, judicial system, social institutions, Local Anti-trafficking Commissions, local administrations and nongovernmental organizations to get acquainted with the mechanism and the guidelines for the transnational referral mechanisms for victims of trafficking. Training seminars will be held in Sofia, Varna, Bourgas and Pazardzhik.

A national seminar under the Programme to support the development of the Transnational Referral Mechanism for victims of trafficking in South-Eastern Europe was held on October 10, 2007 at the Hilton Hotel in Sofia. The seminar was attended by representatives of concerned ministries, state agencies, municipal administrations and non-governmental organizations. The participants were divided into five working groups: „Identification”, „Crisis intervention”, „Assistance for rehabilitation and reintegration”, „Assisted return” and „Criminal jurisdiction and compensation claims”. Each group worked on its specific standard operational procedures from the Manual on the Transnational Referral Mechanism.

- In November 2007 a governmental delegation from the Netherlands offered its cooperation to Bulgaria in combating trafficking in human beings. More specifically, they offered support and cooperation to set up an expert center working on trafficking issues in Bulgaria. There is already a well-established expert center to counteract trafficking in the Netherlands and they are ready to share good practices. After a series of meetings and a working visit to the Netherlands, a decision was made for the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, to apply for funding on a project under the working title **„Trafficking in human beings in Bulgaria and the Netherlands – joint efforts for solving a joint problem”**, focused on the exchange of expertise between the two countries, strengthening the capacity of Bulgarian institutions, modernizing the equipment to conduct interrogations when investigating cases of trafficking in human beings, training for police officers and prosecutors, staging information campaigns and providing care to victims of trafficking.
- In December 2007 contacts were established with the government of Norway regarding the elaboration of a project for joint action in preventing trafficking in human beings between the two countries. The efforts will be focused on the exchange of experience and on enhancing bilateral relations in dealing with trafficking issues, carrying out prevention activities and facilitating the reintegration process of victims of trafficking.

- Project **„Reducing the number of victims of trafficking from Bulgaria and Romania, exploited in Italy and Spain”** under the program „Preventing and combating trafficking in human beings” of the European Commission. Bulgaria is Romania’s major partner in this project. The primary goal of the project is to reduce the number of victims from Bulgaria and Romania by establishing an expert working group including representatives of all partner countries participating in the project and organizing training visits in Romania, Bulgaria, Italy and Spain with the aim of identifying the specific original causes underlying the existing problems and outlining adequate measures for prevention and providing support to victims, as well as conducting a broad campaign targeting Bulgarian and Romanian citizens going to work in Italy and Spain. The project will be finalized by a conference reporting the results and outcomes.

2. Providing information on Bulgarian legislation and practice against trafficking in human beings within the framework of bilateral relations and multilateral cooperation.

In 2007 representatives of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings participated in a number of international forums and events where they presented the Bulgarian model of the state policy in combating trafficking in human beings – the structure and functions of the National Commission, the National Programme for preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and providing protection to victims, the Bulgarian legislation on these issues, etc.

Participation in international seminars and conferences:

- Regional meeting within the „Programme for the Enhancement of Anti-trafficking Responses in South-Eastern Europe” held by the International Center for Migration Policy Development in June 18 – 20, 2007 in Zagreb, Croatia. At the meeting the results and outcomes of the first phase of the programme were reported and the draft Handbook on Anti-trafficking Data Collection in South-Eastern Europe was presented.
- Seventh conference „International Alliance against Trafficking in Human Beings: We Can Do Better”, organized by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, September 10 – 11, 2007, Vienna, Austria;
- 46th Session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, September 23 – 27, 2007, Geneva, Switzerland. The participation of the Bulgarian delegation, led by Mrs. Vessela Banova, Vice-President of the State Agency for Child Protection, aimed at providing answers to issues raised and upholding the preliminary report of Bulgaria with regard to the Optional

Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child regarding Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography;

- Annual Meeting – review on the fulfillment of the commitments in the area of “Human Dimension” of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, September 24 – October 5, 2007, Warsaw, Poland;
- Seminar „Establishment of a Regional Network for cooperation and joint training of representatives of the law enforcement and justice administering systems, international organizations and nongovernmental organizations against human trafficking”, organized by the International Organization for Migration under a project of the European Commission, November 6 – 8, 2007, Antalya, Turkey;
- Second Regional Seminar under the Project „Transnational Referral Mechanism for Victims of Trafficking in South-Eastern Europe”, organized by the International Center for Migration Policy Development, November 13 – 17, 2007, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

3. Establishing a partnership network at an international level for cooperation and interaction in combating trafficking in human beings.

In 2007 the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings established contacts with a number of international organizations and structures working in the field of prevention of trafficking in human beings. The National Commission has been already recognized as a coordinator and key contact point in Bulgaria on the human trafficking issue. As a result of its beneficial cooperation with the diplomatic missions of other countries in Bulgaria and its participation in various international events, the Commission has been building a network of international partners. Contacts have been established with the governments of the USA, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Romania, Italy, Greece, Denmark; the US Agency for International Development, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; international organizations such as the International Organization for Migration, the International Center for Migration Policy Development, La Strada International, etc.

The ministries and institutions included in the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings accomplished the following activities related to the implementation of the National Program for Prevention and Counteraction to Trafficking in Human Beings and Protection of the Victims for 2007:

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SECTION II "PREVENTION"

1. Covering the groups of the population at risk (women, children and representatives of ethnic minorities).

1.3. Awareness raising activities with regard to the rights of victims of trafficking and the possibilities of extending any assistance and protection to representatives of groups at risk, especially among ethnic minorities.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through its diplomatic and consular missions, carries out informational and awareness raising activities with regard to the victims of human trafficking. The consular services take care of issuing temporary passports to return to Bulgaria for the people whose documents have been stolen or taken away by force. When needed, they provide adequate assistance to establish contacts with the International Organization for Migration and other organizations, which are ready to provide financial assistance, such as free flight tickets, temporary shelter or support with subsistence costs until their return to Bulgaria.

SECTION III "STAFF TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION"

5. Training for diplomats and consulate employees in working on cases of trafficking in human beings (as part of their instruction for work abroad)

The training programme for consulate employees preparing to work abroad, developed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, includes gaining knowledge on the relevant Bulgarian legislation and ensuing tasks to be performed in foreign countries with regard to providing support and assistance to Bulgarian citizens who have become victims of trafficking.

SECTION IV „PROTECTION, REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS"

1. Updating the coordination referral mechanism and care in cases of unaccompanied Bulgarian children repatriated from abroad.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has briefed the diplomatic and consular services of the Republic of Bulgaria abroad on the repatriation of children, victims of trafficking in view of fulfilling the activities under the Coordination Mechanism.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

SECTION IV "PROTECTION, REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS"

4. Developing a mechanism for providing medical and psychological help at the centres for protection of victims of trafficking at the Local Commissions for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.

Regulation № 26 of June 14, 2007 stipulates the rules and procedures for provision of medical services related to obstetrics professional help for women who do not have medical insurance, which is normally the case of women, victims of trafficking. These women and children are provided with the following examinations and medical tests:

- Medical examination and tests for pregnant women to assess the risk of genetically transmitted diseases (Down syndrome, Spina Bifida, anencephalia, heavy defect of the stomach wall);
- Tests for genetic diseases when there are relevant medical indications for children and pregnant women who do not have medical insurance; screening of all new-born babies for Phenylketonuria and Hypothyroidism. The medically insured women have the right to choose freely the hospitals where they can get obstetrics professional help free of charge.

A project with the International Organization for Migration is expected to be launched, which will allow specifying the costs for medical help per person who has become a victim of trafficking so that adequate managerial decisions could be made with regard to a mechanism for providing competent medical and psychological help.

NATIONAL INVESTIGATION SERVICE

The cross-border trafficking in human beings has remained to be among the priorities of the National Investigation Service throughout the year 2007. Among the most typical cases, solved in 2007, is Case No. 193/2006 against a group of three procurers and traffickers from Varna – N. St. St., Pl. V, N. and G. St. B. The pre-trial proceedings were completed on Sept. 24, 2007 and the case is now in court. Serious issues in counteracting this type of crime are raised when the information and data about crimes committed abroad, identified in the preliminary investigation, do not reach

the examining magistrates. Referral and investigation from abroad still remain the major source of information for the Supreme Prosecution Office of Cassation to institute these lawsuits.

The work of the National Investigation Service on investigation assignments is specific. Their number increased to 195 (181 for 2004, 156 in 2005 and 142 for 2006). 96 of these assignments were commissioned in the first six months, and 99 in the second half of the year. In 25 cases we had additional urgent requests for providing new evidence to particularize the previously established. Taking into account 33 cases pending from 2006, we have altogether worked on 228 assignments in 2007, having to complete 61 cases.

Requests for judicial cooperation were received by Turkey (38), Germany (23), the Netherlands (19), Poland (14), France (12), Belgium (8), Serbia and Romania (7 each), UK and Ukraine (6 each) Czech Republic (5), Italy, Greece, Austria and Moldova (4 each), FYROM, USA and Hungary (3 each). Most often the assignments concern cases of fraud - 39, then come drug-related crimes - 32, and in the third place is trafficking in human beings – 26.

In all these cases the response to the requests for judicial cooperation was twice as fast while the Bulgarian requests usually shelve for 2 years on average abroad. To advance the solution of this problem, an International Cooperation Department was established at the end of 2007 by order of the National Investigation Service. Headed by Mr. Rumen Kirov, the staff of this department, all having adequate language skills, will establish contacts with the corresponding peers assigned with the task through the contacts of EUROJUST. To speed up the collection of evidence, videoconferencing and sending examining magistrates on a mission will be used. The aim is to reduce the time for investigating, and the resulting cost-efficiency being quite obvious, not to mention the increased public benefits. Provided the indictment holds in court, costs will be borne by the defendants.

There were 50 human trafficking cases (Art.159a – 159c Penal Code) in 2007, 28 of them on “internal trafficking” and 22 on “external trafficking”. This division obstructs the efficient counteraction to this type of organized crime.

There was only one preliminary investigation in 2007 instituted by virtue of Art. 349a of the Penal Code and, according to the reports of European media, Bulgaria holds one of the first places in the export of human organs and tissues for transplantation.

SECTION III „STAFF TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION”

4. Training for investigators in the methodologies of investigation of crimes related to trafficking in human beings.

- The National Investigation Service was responsible for the elaboration and printing of the investigation methodology in the training of investigation staff. The cooperation with the Academy of the Ministry of Interior made it possible to print out additional copies of the methodology.

The practical training of investigation staff was delivered in two formats:

- Lecture for a class of students at the Academy of the Ministry of Interior;
- Participation of four lecturers in a 'training for trainers' seminar, held under a project of the International Organization for Migration. Along with the investigation staff, these training sessions were also attended by operative staff of the Border Police Directorate, Operational Search Sector at Criminal Police, etc.
- The National Investigation Service was the co-organizer and host of the international conference „Counteraction to Trafficking in Human Beings”, focused on the international cooperation in combating human trafficking. The conference was held on March 7, 2007 and was organized by the International Organization for Migration with the support of the embassies of Norway, Sweden and Denmark;
- The Chamber of Investigating Magistrates implemented a small project under a USAID program - "Magistrates against trafficking in human beings", assisting adolescents from institutions for disadvantaged children, a group considered at risk as regards possible involvement in human trafficking;
- The National Investigation Service participated in the events, initiated by the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, to commemorate the European Day against Trafficking in Human Beings on October 18;
- A representative of the National Investigation Service is a member of the permanent working group with the National Commission;
- In 2007 the National Investigation Service worked on 195 investigation assignments coming from abroad. Human trafficking comes third after fraud and drug-dealing. 26 investigation assignments on cases of trafficked persons from Bulgaria were completed;
- During the past year the National Investigation Service raised a motion for amendments in the Criminal Procedure Code envisaging all cases of trafficking in human beings to be investigated by investigating magistrates by all means. At present the National Investigation Service investigates only the cases of cross-border trafficking, while the cases of internal human trafficking are handled by police investigation;

- The National Investigation Service notifies the Prosecution about cases where signals on trafficking have not been dealt with or have not been sent to the Service within its competence, although they involve cross-border criminal activity;
- The National Investigation Service is planning to build a network of investigating bodies in the European countries to achieve improved operational status and prompt cooperation in the investigation.

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

The Ministry of Justice accomplished the following towards the accomplishment of the specific activities planned in the National Program for 2007:

SECTION II "PREVENTION"

2. Performing surveys and organizing information campaigns.

2.2. Studies and analysis of the risk factors with a view of identifying the prerequisites and conditions for the occurrence of crimes related to trafficking in human beings.

The Council for Criminological Research conducted a study on general criminal lawsuits closed with effective sentence by virtue of Art. 159a – 159c of the Penal Code since their criminalization in the Penal Code in 2002, as well as lawsuits by virtue of Art 279 – 280 of the Penal Code closed with effective sentence for 2006. In the course of the research it was decided to modify and revise the research method and methodology in order to be able to arrive at the ‘prerequisites and conditions for the occurrence of crimes’ along two lines, as follows:

1. Conduct a national representative survey on the topic with questions overlapping a previous similar survey performed in 2002 by the Consultant Analytical Group ACG, commissioned by the International Organization for Migration. The aim is to allow a comparison of the risk factors established previously with the ones available today and to evaluate the dynamics of the events.
2. Perform an expert assessment of the risk factors, as well as of the prerequisites and conditions for human trafficking taking into account the recommendations of the working sub-group “Human Trafficking” at the European Commission (Report of the Sub-group on the Policy Needs of Data on Trafficking in Human Beings – by the DELPHI method with representatives of the nongovernmental organizations in the

field, stakeholder institutions, media and academic circles). In view of the recommendations, the expert assessment must be conducted on an annual basis.

At present, the two sub-surveys are on the immediate agenda and the methodical part has been already elaborated.

SECTION III "STAFF TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION"

2. Continue the training of magistrates in the area of prevention and counteraction to trafficking in human beings.

- In 2007 the National Institute of Justice conducted a training session on the topic “Trans-border crimes” focusing mainly on preventing trafficking in human beings. A total of 30 judges from courts in the border towns in Bulgaria were trained.
- The National Institute of Justice, in cooperation with Center “Nadya” Foundation and within the framework of the project “Present issues in trafficking in human beings as a form of organized crime”, funded by the Initiative for Strengthening the Judicial System of the Academy of the Ministry of Interior, conducted 5 regional seminars on the above topic across appellation regions (Sofia, Plovdiv, Veliko Turnovo, Varna and Bourgas), addressed to judges and prosecutors. The total number of trained magistrates was 50.
- In 2007, within the framework of the programme for funding regional training, based on the activity of the Initiative for Strengthening the Judicial System of the Academy of the Ministry of Interior, a total of 7 training sessions were held in different courts in Bulgaria on the issues of counteracting human trafficking. Each training session involved 20 magistrates who were representatives of the corresponding court, the total number of trained magistrates was 140.

SECTION IV "PROTECTION, REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS"

3. Develop measures to limit and prevent the use of Internet for attracting potential victims of trafficking in human beings.

- In May 2007 the Parliament adopted amendments in the Penal Code introducing a new article 155a. By virtue of para 1 of the above-mentioned article, anyone, who for the purpose of establishing a contact with a person who is under 18 years of age, in order to perform fornication, copulation, sexual intercourse or prostitution, provides in Internet or in another

way information about him/her, shall be punished by law. In view of Article 155a, para 2, the same punishment shall be imposed also on that person, who for the purpose of a fornication, copulation or sexual intercourse, establishes a contact with a person who is under 14 years of age, by using information provided in Internet or in another manner. The introduction of this new provision in the Penal Code can be considered a prevention measure in the misuse of Internet not only for committing the above-mentioned offense, but could in a broader sense be also be interpreted as preventive with regard to the recruitment of victims of trafficking, although this is not been explicitly specified.

- A representative of the Ministry of Justice took part in a seminar on the topic “Internet misuse for recruiting victims of human trafficking”, held in Strasbourg, France, June 7 – 8, 2007. The seminar was organized by the Council of Europe as part of the anti-trafficking campaign for 2007. Representatives of the member-countries that had ratified the Convention for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings were invited to participate, as well as people from the Principality of Monaco, Interpol, Europol, National Police Service and the nongovernmental sector. The seminar was focused on giving the participants the opportunity to discuss the various methods for recruiting victims of trafficking in human beings via the Internet, as well as the feasible legislative, administrative and technical measures to counteract against this form of misuse. The discussions contributed to the finalization of a study on Internet misuse aiming the recruitment of victims of human trafficking, conducted within the framework of the Council of Europe. As a result, at the end of December 2007 the participants were sent a copy of the completed study on the topic “Trafficking in Human Beings: Recruitment via the Internet”. The author of the study is Anastasia Sikiotu, lecturer in criminology at the Faculty of Law of the Democritus University of Thrace, Greece. The book was published by the Directorate General on Human Rights and Legal Issues (Council of Europe) and will be available to the members of the Expert Group for combating trafficking in human beings.

SECTION V “INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION”

2. Introducing the Bulgarian legislation and practice in combating trafficking in human beings with regard to bilateral relations and multilateral cooperation.

- Representatives of the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as the “Nadya” Center Foundation took part in a Regional Seminar. It was organized with the support of the Council of Europe and Conrad Adenauer Foundation and the topic was “Combating Trafficking in Human Beings: Measures for protection and Recognition of

Victims' Rights" (Berlin, Germany, 19-20 April 2007). The aim of the seminar was to raise the awareness of the problems related to human trafficking, looking for a solution of that problem and exchange of good practices between countries. The seminar was part of the European Council's Action against Trafficking in Human Beings for 2007 and was an effort for popularizing its Convention on the topic. The participants were representatives of Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. The Bulgarian delegation delivered a presentation entitled "Stipulations in the Bulgarian legislation related to the period of rehabilitation and reflection, residence permit and repatriation of victims of human trafficking" with special focus on the Law on Combating the Illegal Trafficking in Human Beings, the Regulation for the Shelters for Temporary Placement and Centres for Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking, as well as the relevant provisions in the Law for the Foreigners in Bulgaria.

- A representative of the Ministry of Justice attended a Summit Conference on November 8-9 2007 in Strasbourg on the monitoring mechanism of the Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking in Human Beings. The purpose of the Conference was to allow the member-countries of the Council of Europe, the observer-countries, the international governmental and nongovernmental organizations to get familiar with the monitoring mechanism, foreseen in the above mentioned Convention, which will be in force from 1st of February 2008.
- A representative of the Ministry of Justice attended a regional seminar on the topic „Action against Trafficking in Human Beings: Prevention, Protection and Prosecution" (15-16 February 2007, Nicosia). The seminar was organized by Directorate General of Human Rights – DG II in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior of Cyprus as part of the campaign of the Council of Europe against the trafficking in human beings. The objective of the seminar was to familiarize the participants with the issues of human trafficking and to facilitate the broad signing and ratification of the Council of Europe's Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. Bulgaria provided information on the legislation measures and actions taken at national level to prevent human trafficking, for protection of its victims and prosecution of the traffickers and their associates. It was noted that the Republic of Bulgaria signed the Convention on November 22, 2006 and currently is in the process of its ratification. The chairperson of the seminar asked if the Republic of Bulgaria has introduced the necessary legal or other measures in order to enforce responsibility of the legal persons in case of crimes in the sense of the Convention of the Council of Europe. In response, the provision of art. 83, chapter IV of the Law on Administrative Offence and

Sanctions, was cited, which foresees administrative and penal liability of a legal person that has profited from a crime in the sense of art. 159a-159c of the Penal Code.

- A representative of the Ministry of Justice, in his capacity of a member of the permanent expert group at the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings took part in a working visit on the topic “Building the capacity of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings” (8-17 May 2007, Rome, Italy and Kiev, Ukraine). The purpose of the visit was to support the functioning and further development of the Bulgarian National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings by introducing good practices and models from the EU member states to its expert-level members.
- A representative of the Ministry of Justice attended the conference “European Day: Trafficking in Human Beings – Time for Action”, October 18, 2007, Brussels. The conference was organized by the European Commission with the objective to promote the day for combating traffic in human beings and raising public awareness about this problem.
- A representative of the Ministry of Justice took part in the regional seminar “Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings– penal and procedural measures (27-28 September 2007, Paris). The Bulgarian participant presented information about the legal measures adopted and action taken at national level for preventing human trafficking, protection of its victims and prosecution of traffickers and their associates. It was noted, that Bulgaria ratified the Convention of the Council of Europe for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings on March 7, 2007 and is currently in the process of ratification of the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of the Council of Europe. As a good practice of the Republic of Bulgaria, merit was given to the Coordination Referral Mechanism and care in cases of unaccompanied Bulgarian children and children – victims of trafficking, returning from abroad, signed on November 9, 2005. It is based on the national legislation for child protection and on the regulations for combating trafficking in human beings. It is also in compliance with the international agreements, ratified by the Republic of Bulgaria.

SECTION VI “LEGISLATIVE MEASURES”

1. Drafting an amendment and supplement to the Penal Code for execution of the obligations taken by Bulgaria according to art. 19 of the Convention of the Council of Europe for combating trafficking in human beings, for criminalization of the conscious use of services of trafficked victims.

With regard to developing the penal policy in Bulgaria, by Order № JIC-04-695/25.09.2007 of the Minister of Justice, a Penal Policy Consulting Board was established as a special consultative body, which will outline the directions and principles of the penal policy in the Republic of Bulgaria. An Interdepartmental Working Group on criminal legislative issues will also be set up, including representatives of the legal doctrine and practice. It is planned to introduce the above mentioned issue for review first in the Interdepartmental working group, and after that - in the Penal Policy Consulting Board.

SUPREME COURT OF CASSATION

Cases initiated and closed at the Supreme Court of Cassation of the Republic of Bulgaria, Penal College, by virtue of Art. 155 and Art. 159a – 159 c of the Penal Code in 2007 through the regular cassation control.

Cases initiated in 2006 by virtue of Art. 155 of the Penal Code whose judgments were issued in 2007:

| NUMBER | DEPARTMENT | JUDGMENT | RESULT |
|----------|------------|-----------|--|
| 707/2006 | III | 145/2007 | The judgment on the civil case appeal, changing the sentence, was repealed and the case was brought back to the second instance for applying Art. 78A of the Penal Code. |
| 298/2006 | II | 1057/2007 | The judgment on the civil case appeal, confirming the sentence, was changed; the committed crimes have been qualified as lighter offense, the punishment has been reduced. |

Cases initiated in 2006 by virtue of Art. 159a – 159c of the Penal Code whose judgments were issued in 2007.

| NUMBER | DEPARTMENT | JUDGMENT | RESULT |
|-----------|------------|----------|--|
| 618/2006 | II | 143/2007 | The civil case appeal judgment, confirming the sentence, has been substantiated. |
| 1000/2006 | II | 268/2007 | The civil case appeal judgment, confirming the sentence, has been substantiated. |

Total number of cases initiated by virtue of the above texts in 2006 and judgments issued in 2007: **4**

Cases initiated in 2007 by virtue of Art. 155 of the Penal Code:

| NUMBER | DEPARTMENT | JUDGMENT | RESULT |
|----------|------------|----------|--|
| 84/2007 | II | 400/2007 | The civil case appeal judgment, confirming the sentence, has been substantiated. |
| 105/2007 | I | 55/2007 | The case has been dismissed due to withdrawal of the cassation appeal against the civil case appeal judgment, confirming the sentence. |
| 177/2007 | I | 618/2007 | The second instance judgment, confirming the sentence, has been canceled. The case has been brought back to the civil case appeal instance due to material and procedure infringement and for evaluation on the application of Art. 78A of the Penal Code. |
| 203/2007 | III | 455/2007 | The new judgment of the civil case appeal court (second instance court) has been changed, the committed crimes have been qualified as lighter offense, and the punishment has been reduced. |
| 258/2006 | I | 599/2007 | The civil case appeal sentence has been confirmed. |
| 351/2006 | I | 754/2007 | The civil case appeal judgment, confirming the acquittal sentence, has been substantiated. |

Cases initiated in 2007 by virtue of Art. 159a – 159 c of the Penal Code:

| NUMBER | DEPARTMENT | JUDGMENT | RESULT |
|----------|------------|----------|--|
| 668/2007 | III | 13/2008 | The civil case appeal sentence has been confirmed. |

Total number of cases by virtue of the above texts for 2007: **7**

Cases closed, initiated by virtue of the above texts in 2007, solved within the same year: **6**

Total number of cases initiated and closed in 2007 by virtue of the above texts: **11**

Judges from the three penal departments of the Supreme Court of Cassation of the Republic of Bulgaria are lecturing in material and procedure criminal law at the National Institute of Justice. In 2007 they also delivered lectures regarding crimes related to human trafficking.

Judges from the Supreme Court of Cassation of the Republic of Bulgaria worked on draft laws related to the right of compensation for victims of serious crimes, such as trafficking in human beings.

Judges from the Supreme Court of Cassation of the Republic of Bulgaria participated in elaborating a draft law for amending the Law for Protection of Individuals Threatened in Connection with Criminal Procedure.

SECTION II “PREVENTION”

1. Covering groups of the population at risk (women, children and representatives of ethnic minorities)

1.1. Extending the scope of education on human rights and the rights of the child in secondary education and in the school preparatory course using the general education tools and extracurricular activities.

Issues related to democracy and human rights have central place in the educational content structure of the civil education in the Bulgarian school. The training in civil education takes place through the overall 12-year cycle of the secondary education in Bulgaria in accordance with the characteristics of the students' age. In article 8, par 2 of the Law on the Level of Education, the General Education Minimum and the Curriculum is stipulated that general education shall be based on: the fundamental human rights, the rights of the child, the values of civil society, the religious freedom and freedom of mind. In Ordinance No. 2 on the educational content, section “Civil Education”, the following cores of educational content are confirmed: “I am a national of my country”, “Human rights and responsibilities”, “The citizen and the world”, “Global problems of the present day”, “Citizens, rights and responsibilities”.

Several training aids were developed containing modules on violence, which are used for education:

- “Alphabet for you and me”, designed for working with children from 5th to 8th grade, with main topics – “Inviolability of person – right and responsibility”, “Violence at school” and „Sexual abuse, violence and exploitation”;
- “Aid for prevention against violence in the school network”, designed the work of pedagogical advisors, social workers and tutors. It is a methodology for assessment of behavioral and physical characteristics of children suspected to be exposed to various forms of violence at home;
- „Aid for development of social and personal skills for children placed in Institutions for Raising Children Deprived of Parental Care”;
- Newsletter 6 of a series of pedagogical publications of MES in 2007 from the cycle “Organisation and Management of Education” is fully dedicated to the issue of violence among and against children, and in there are articles introducing basic concepts, definitions, approaches and examples of practical steps that could be implemented at school level and at kindergarten level;

Currently, work is in progress on a project “Prevention of violence among children in educational institutions”, funded by UNICEF and implemented in cooperation of the State Agency for Child Protection, with the objective to elaborate and propose a comprehensive programme for prevention of violence in school at system and organizational levels.

Within the framework of the National Programme “The School – a Territory for Students” 1 360 projects have been approved for the development of extra-curricular and out-of-school activities with a total value of BGN 9 751 000. These projects cover a minimum number of 67 800 children. A minimum of 60 000 children are included in either permanent or temporary groups in the area of out-of-school activities. All 666 project proposals submitted for funding in the framework of the programme “Let us make the school attractive to the young people” within the Operational Programme “Human Resources Development” were evaluated, and 256 of them were approved with a total value of about BGN 9,5 million.

1.2. Elaboration, dissemination and promotion of training modules and models of local school policies, information materials and aids for teachers, secretaries and members of Local Commissions for Fighting Anti-social Behaviour of Juveniles and Minors, students and parents in connection to the topics on sexual exploitation and trafficking in human beings.

In the “Handbook for the Headmaster and Teacher for the academic 2005/2006” are published guidelines for the activities of the school commissions for prevention and work with all children who fall into the category “children in risk”. The school commissions survey and propose solutions for:

- Reasons for anti-social behaviour of the students in the respective school;
- Factors threatening the students’ security;
- Problems faced by students living in disadvantaged environment – families with parent/s/ serving a term of imprisonment; families with parents with criminal records; families with parents abusing with alcohol or drugs; families with mentally ill parents; families exercising various types of violence; families, in which children are not raised by the parents;
- Reasons for regular absence from school and dropping-out, reasons for running away from home/the institution;
- Cases of various types of violence against children;
- Options for integrating certain children in activities of preventive nature.

Regional seminars are held on an annual basis for pedagogical advisors for discussion on the issues of violence and implementation of measures at school level, and are attended by social workers, representatives of the Local Commissions for Fighting Anti-social Behaviour of Juveniles and Minors, representatives of preventive and information centres and police representatives.

Trainings for the various categories of pedagogical staff are included in the Thematic Plan for pedagogical staff qualification implemented by the National Pedagogical Centre. Main topics are: “Prevention of dropping out of school”, “Career guidance and advice”, „Distinguishing and prevention of precarious behaviour among children – addiction to psychotropic substances, smoking, alcohol, computers, etc.”, “Prevention of aggression in school (internal and external)”, “Prevention of children and students from involvement in prostitution and trafficking abroad”, “Work in multiethnic environment”, “Developing a positive attitude to the school environment among parents”.

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

SECTION II “PREVENTION”

1. Covering groups of the population at risk (women, children and representatives of ethnic minorities)

1.2. Development, dissemination and promotion of training modules and models of local and school policies, information materials and aids related to the topics of sexual exploitation and trafficking in human beings for teachers, secretaries and members of Local Commissions for Fighting Anti-social Behaviour of Juveniles and Minors, students and parents.

Information materials about trafficking in people from Bulgaria to the United Kingdom for the purpose of labour exploitation are being disseminated at Sofia Airport within a project of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

1.3. Awareness raising activities related to victims’ rights in case of trafficking in people, and assistance and protection possibilities among representatives of groups at risk and especially among ethnic minorities.

Information materials about victims of trafficking in people developed by IOM and “Association Animus” Foundation are disseminated at all border crossing check-points.

A practice was established in the process of work on specific cases, when discussing with victims and with potential victims of trafficking, the police officers to explain their rights pursuant to the valid Bulgarian legislation, the assistance and protection possibilities and the risks they are exposed to.

2. Performing surveys and organization of information campaigns.

2.3. Promotion of the specialized web site of the State Agency for Child Protection <http://www.stopech.sacp.government.bg/> and of the specialized web site of the Central Commission for Fighting Anti-social Behaviour of Juveniles and Minors in all types of schools, kindergartens, institutions for children, educative boarding-schools, social-pedagogical boarding schools and in the reformatories affiliated to the Ministry of Justice.

The MoI employees promote the specialized web site of the State Agency for Child Protection also among foreign partners – the cooperation of MoI in the area of combating trafficking in human beings with partners at national level is presented.

2.6. Organization of Round Table Discussion dedicated to the issue of legalizing prostitution and its eventual impact on trafficking in human beings.

MoI representatives took part in the round table organized by the Bulgarian National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings on the topic “For and against legalizing prostitution in Bulgaria in the context of trafficking in human beings”.

2.7. Organization of joint initiatives with the media for covering issues related to trafficking in human beings.

MoI employees participated in TV broadcasts dedicated to the issue of trafficking in human beings on Bulgarian National TV and Balkan Bulgaria TV.

SECTION III "STAFF TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION"

3. Upgrading the qualification of MoI staff, working in the area of trafficking in people, in the Academy of the Ministry of Interior and in the centres for specialization and professional training.

- The Academy of the Ministry of Interior provides annually specialized training in combating trafficking in human beings with the following thematic scope: international and national legal acts regulating counteraction to trafficking in human beings; components of trafficking in human beings; trafficking in human beings as a form of organized crime; MoI structures that have competences in the area of counteraction to trafficking in human beings; activities of the non-governmental organizations to support the reintegration of victims of trafficking in human beings; regional initiatives and criteria for combating trafficking in human beings. The indicated training content is organized in various courses for initial training for police officers, for professional specialization and for upgrading the qualification of the employees of Directorate General “Combating Organized Crime” and Directorate General “Border

Police” and of the criminal police structures. In the framework of this programme in 2007 in the Academy of the Ministry of Interior were trained 162 police officers from various services and involved in counteraction to trafficking in human beings.

- Employees of General Directorate for Combating Organized Crime and General Directorate Border Police participate in a CEPOL programme for exchange of senior police officers and trainers for upgrading qualification in the area of counteraction to trafficking in human beings.
- Employees of General Directorate Combating Organized Crime and of the units for combating organized crime at the District Police Directorates take part in various trainings organized by police services of other countries (USA, The Netherlands, Austria and France).

4. Training for investigators in investigation methodologies for investigating crimes related to trafficking in human beings.

In 2007, in the framework of a PHARE Project – BG 2004/IB/JH/09 “Modernization of the Bulgarian Police and Enhancing Efficiency of Operation through Improving the Specialized Structures of Police Investigation within the MoI”, the Academy of the Ministry of Interior held four five-day seminars for police investigators (a total of 80 employees). These included also the subject matter of investigating crimes related to trafficking in human beings.

In the last year, within the framework of the above-indicated project, a team of authors (composed of lecturers at the Academy and field trainers participating in the seminars) published a methodological guideline on disclosure and investigation of sexual-related crimes, which includes also the topic of crimes involving trafficking in human beings.

SECTION IV “PROTECTION, REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS”

1. Updating the coordination mechanism for reporting and assisting cases of unaccompanied Bulgarian children and children - victims of trafficking repatriated from abroad.

Employees of the various competent services within the MoI participate actively in the Inter-institutional Working Group for updating the mechanism of coordination.

3. Developing measures to limit and prevent the use of Internet for attracting potential victims of trafficking in human beings.

- A web site was developed – www.cybercrime.bg where signals can be published about cases of sexual exploitation of children and trafficking in children. The page was jointly

developed by employees of General Directorate Combating Organized Crime and students at the vocational secondary school of electronics “John Atanassov” in Sofia and the information is both in Bulgarian and in English. The communicated signals, warnings and alerts are checked by employees of MoI together with the State Agency for Child Protection and Internet providers.

- Training in investigation of crimes in the Internet and collecting on-line evidence is provided for MoI employees.
- Public awareness raising campaigns are organized in partnership with NGOs (“Children – safely in the Internet” campaign and the “Hotline” project, where partners are the State Agency for Child Protection, General Directorate Combating Organized Crime and Foundation “Applied Research and Communications”.
- In the General Directorate Combating Organized Crime is functioning a contact point with foreign police services, which operates 24 hours a day 7 days a week and through it can be provided information and requested cooperation in relation to various crimes perpetrated via the Internet.

SECTION V "INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION"

1. Establishment of bi-lateral contacts, exchange of experience and best practices between the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and similar structures, as well as with state institutions involved in combating and prevention of trafficking in people in EU member states and in third countries.

In 2007 continued the collaboration between the structures of the Bulgarian police and the respective foreign partners in the area of counteraction to trafficking in people. Especially active was the cooperation with the police services of France, Belgium, Spain, Germany, UK, the Netherlands and Norway. MoI employees are participating in many projects, conferences and workshops during which they establish contacts, exchange experience and good practices. The most important projects are:

- “Network for combating trafficking in human beings in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe” in the framework of “Hera” Project;
- “Establishing an effective response against trafficking in children through survey of trafficking mechanism and the actual needs of the groups at risk”;
- “Organization of regional network for cooperation and joint training of representatives of the law enforcement and justice administering systems, international and non-governmental organizations for counteraction to trafficking in human beings”;

- “Development of transnational referral mechanism for victims of trafficking in South-Eastern Europe”, ICMPD;
- Project for improving the interaction between the law enforcement bodies of Bulgaria and the UK in the area of counteraction to trafficking in human beings (moreover, upon a request by the British side, a MoI employee was sent on a long-term mission to the UK for collaboration in the area of combating trafficking in people);
- “Eleyra” project of the Greek Ministry of Interior – cross-border action plan for combating trafficking in people;
- Project “Strengthening the police capacity for reduction of trafficking in people, smuggling of people across the borders and illegal migration”;
- In the bi-lateral cooperation programme with the Ministry of Interior of France there is an activity planned and implemented “Improving the fight against pandering.”;
- Trafficking in people is also one of the components in the bi-lateral programme for police cooperation 2006 – 2008 in execution of the Memorandum of Understanding for police cooperation between MoI of Bulgaria and MoI of the Netherlands;

MoI employees participated in the following important international events:

- Eighth meeting of the Interpol working group on trafficking in women;
- International Conference on the topic “Counteraction to trafficking in people”, organized by IOM, the embassies of the Kingdoms of Norway and Sweden and the National Investigation Service;
- Regional conference on counteraction to trafficking in people, organized by the Council of Europe with the cooperation of Conrad Adenauer Foundation;
- Annual meeting of Europol at expert level on trafficking in people;
- Session for discussion of the reports of the Republic of Bulgaria on the Optional Protocols to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child regarding the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, as well as involving children in armed conflicts, held in the framework of the 46th Session of the UN Committee for the Rights of the Child;
- Conference “Trafficking in People in the Black Sea Region”, organized by ICMPD, the UN Office on Drugs and Crimes and Black Sea Economic Cooperation;
- International Forum dedicated to the European Day for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings under the title “Time for Action”, organized by EC;
- Working meeting of police officers involved in the area of combating trafficking in people, organized by SECI-Centre and the General Directorate Combating Organized Crime of Romania;

- Annual meeting of Europol at expert level on child abuse issues;

Series of seminars organized through the border police on the topic “Actions against trafficking in people – penal and procedural measures”, held in Erevan, Paris and Vienna.

2. Introducing the Bulgarian legislation and practice in combating trafficking in human beings with regard to bilateral relations and multilateral cooperation.

The employees and competent authorities of MoI have provided copies of the Bulgarian legal acts in this field to their foreign partners through their participation in projects, conferences, seminars and bi-lateral meetings. Multiple presentations were made providing information on the Bulgarian legislation, on the cooperation at national level between state institutions and NGOs, as well as on international cooperation. Examples were given for efficient international cooperation when working on specific cases.

SUPREME CASSATION PROSECUTION OFFICE

2. Develop a system of criteria and indicators for nominating the municipalities, in which to establish Local Anti-trafficking Commissions.

In order to facilitate the establishment of local Anti-trafficking Commissions, in 2006 was made an analysis of the prosecution offices’ activities in the area of combating trafficking in people and was submitted to the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. The following trends were outlined:

The trend of unequal distribution of criminal proceedings for trafficking in people by regions is preserved. In some of the regions – Smolyan, Lovech, Montana, Pernik and Vratsa – for a year there are single or no registered cases of trafficking in people. At the same time, the majority of the proceedings for years have been concentrated in several regions – Bourgas, Sliven, Pazardzhik, Plovdiv, Rousse and Blagoevgrad.

For international traffic – art. 1596 of the Penal Code – is observed a trend of sustainability in trafficking of the victims from certain regions in the country to specific countries of final destination: from Sliven to the Netherlands and Belgium; from Plovdiv and Pazardzhik to France, Italy and Spain; from Varna, Dobrich and Razgrad to Germany, the Czech Republic and the Scandinavian countries.

The relevant statistical data is attached in support of the above-made conclusions.

5. Setting up an organization for survey, analysis and reporting of statistical data on trafficking in human beings at the Bulgarian National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.

The Supreme Cassation Prosecution Office made a commitment with regard to the initiated by the ICMPD project to become a national depository for statistical data on traffickers. There is an order issued by the executive body of the Prosecution office of the Republic of Bulgaria, a member of the staff was trained in Vienna to work with the software. The ICMPD provided the computer configuration and now is expected the translation of the software into Bulgarian for the start of the project.

SECTION II “PREVENTION”

2. Organization of Round Table Discussion dedicated to the issue of legalizing prostitution and its eventual impact on trafficking in human beings.

In the round table discussion on the issue of legalizing prostitution, held in December 2007 at the Sheraton Hotel, took part Mr. Hristo Manchev, Deputy Prosecutor General, Mr. Evgeni Dikov, prosecutor with the Supreme Cassation Prosecution Office and Mr. Roumen Boev, prosecutor with the Appellate Prosecution Office in Plovdiv.

SECTION III “STAFF TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION”

2. Training of magistrates in the field of prevention and counteraction to trafficking in human beings.

In May 2007, together with “Centre Nadya” Foundation were held five two-day seminars in the appellate regions and keynote speakers were the prosecutor Evgeni Dikov and the prosecutor of the District Prosecution Office in Pazardzhik, Mrs. Nelly Popova. Prosecutors, investigators, as well as (for the first time in such events) judges from the respective regional courts took part in the seminars.

A Memorandum of Understanding between the prosecution of the Republic of Bulgaria, the National Institute of Justice and the US Federal Department of Justice (Service for international development, support and training of prosecutors) was signed on December 20, 2007. Pursuant to this memorandum is envisaged implementation of sustainable training programmes for prosecutors on several topics, one of which is “Counteraction to trafficking in human beings”.

4. Training for investigators in investigation methodologies for investigating crimes related to trafficking in human beings.

An updated “Handbook for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings” was submitted for printing in September 2007. The handbook contains methodology for investigation of the crime “trafficking in human beings”.

SECTION V ‘INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION’

2. Introducing the Bulgarian legislation and practice in combating trafficking in human beings with regard to bilateral relations and multilateral cooperation.

The Bulgarian legislation and best practices in combating trafficking in human beings were presented by representatives of the Supreme Cassation Prosecution Office, the District Prosecution Office – Sofia and the District Prosecution Office – Pazardzhik at the international conference held at the National Investigation Service on March 8, 2007 with the participation of representatives from Sweden, Norway, the UK, etc., as well as at the bi-lateral working meetings with representatives from Italy, the Netherlands and Norway, held in February, October and November 2007.

STATE AGENCY FOR CHILD PROTECTION

SACP activities related to the implementation of the National Programme for Prevention and Counteraction to Trafficking in Human Beings and Protection of Victims of Trafficking for 2007.

SECTION I ‘INSTITUTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL MEASURES’

4. Setting up a crisis centre in Sofia for temporary placement of children, victims of trafficking.

SACP has provided expert assistance and participation in discussion meetings for the establishment of a crisis centre in Pasarel and stated its support.

5. Setting up an organization for survey, analysis and reporting of statistical data on trafficking in human beings at the Bulgarian National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.

SACP representatives took part in the seminar within the project “Programme for the Development of Transnational Referral Mechanisms for Victims of Trafficking in South-Eastern

Europe”, held in November 2007. This project is implemented by the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, MoI, and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). The content of the “Guidelines for data collection in combating trafficking in human beings in South-Eastern Europe: Development of regional criteria” was discussed.

SECTION II “PREVENTION”

1. Covering groups of the population at risk (women, children and representatives of ethnic minorities)

1.2. Development, dissemination and promotion of training modules and models of local and school policies, information materials and aids related to the topics of sexual exploitation and trafficking in human beings for teachers, secretaries and members of Local Commissions for Fighting Anti-social Behaviour of Juveniles and Minors, students and parents.

SACP developed a “Practical Guide for Social Work with Children, Victims of Violence” and “Methodology for Home Violence Risk Assessment” designated for social workers in “Child Protection” and “Social Assistance” departments of the “Social Assistance” directorates for working on signals and cases of children, victims of violence and violence prevention. For promotion of good practices of violence prevention, on the SACP web site was opened a new heading “Good Practices”, which provides information on the experience of the municipalities in maximum inclusion of children within the educational system – getting them back and retaining them in school. A second edition of the booklets: “All children are different but have equal rights”, “UN Convention on the Rights of the Child”, “Violence – How to Protect Ourselves”, “Security and Safety on the Road”, “Home Alone” (advice for parents), “Child Protection System” and “All Children Have Equal Rights” was published. Leaflets were published covering “Security and Safety in the Internet” and “Risks and Consequences of Using Psychotropic Substances”.

The “Aid for Prevention of Violence in the School Network” is disseminated in schools and is also published on the SACP web site. The documentary “Children against Violence”, made by students from the town of Kyustendil is also disseminated in the school network.

SACP experts took part in an inter-institutional working group for the development of “Reference Guide with Advice for Victims – How to get fast and efficient protection in cases of home violence”, which is going to be published in circulation of 15 000 copies and will be disseminated in the state institutions in charge of child protection, in schools, among NGOs working with children, among victims of violence, etc. For the first school day of the academic year 2007/2008, SACP initiated elaboration of information materials about the activities of Club “Teenager” and Club “Parent” in circulation of 5000 copies of each leaflet.

2. Performing surveys and organizing information campaigns

a. Promotion of the specialized web site of the State Agency for Child Protection <http://www.stopech.sacp.government.bg/> and of the specialized web site of the Central Commission for Fighting Anti-social Behaviour of Juveniles and Minors in all types of schools, kindergartens, institutions for children, educative boarding-schools, social-pedagogical boarding schools and in the reformatories affiliated to the Ministry of Justice.

Specialised SACP Internet sites:

SACP maintains the specialized Internet sites “Counteraction to Commercial Sexual Exploitation” and “Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child”.

The main objective of the site www.stopech.sacp.government.bg , which was launched in 2004, is to provide comprehensive information on the issues of sexual and commercial exploitation of children in terms of national legislation, international standards, national documents, practices and other useful information. An important emphasis is the form for conveying signals and so far 483 signals are received for violated children’s rights, and a major part of them concern illegal and harmful content on the Internet – child pornography, sale of materials, for which timely measures were undertaken jointly with the MoI (General Directorate Combating Organized Crime) and the Prosecution for removing the content. For 2007 the total number of the received signals relating to violence – physical, psychological, sexual, negligence, illegal and harmful content on the Internet is 219.

The web site “Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child” /www.crc.sacp.government.bg/ aims at promoting the rights of the child, provision of information on the progress in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the monitoring system for observance of the rights of the child.

On the SACP web site is also published information about missing Bulgarian and foreign minor and juvenile nationals.

On-line Consulting:

Since May 2003 the State Agency for Child Protection has been providing the service “anonymous Internet consulting – “Teens” Club: <http://www.sacp.government.bg/teensclub.htm> From the start of the heading until December 2007 the “Teens” Club has provided consulting services to a total of 816 customers – children, parents, teachers and citizens. The customers consulted in 2007 are 115. This is a unique service provided by SACP for free to the customers and the people answering the questions asked under the heading do not get any additional remuneration. This site has lots of visitors and the questions asked could be classified into several categories:

psychological assistance, sexual topics, relationships in the family and at school, changes taking place in the body in teenage, the meaning of life, drug addicted behaviour.

Since June 2007 SACP has been providing consulting services for parents who are free to ask any questions related to the development and the rights of their children. A team of professionals in the areas of psychology, law, social work and pedagogy takes care for the “Parents” Club. So far 23 parents have made inquiries to the “Parents” Club.

2.4. Implementation of a pilot project for national child hotline providing information, consulting and assistance to children at risk (including children, victims of trafficking in human beings).

The national child hotline is included in many political documents as an important component of child protection against violence, abuse and exploitation. The National Programme for Child Protection for 2007 and the National Integrated Plan for Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 2006 – 2009 envisage establishment of a national child hotline. A pilot project “National Child Hotline – 0800 19 100” is being implemented and is a joint initiative of SACP and UNICEF-Bulgaria. Contractor for this project is “Centre Nadya” Foundation. 7 consultants and 14 operators are working for the hotline operation.

The national child hotline provides crisis intervention, specialized information on the rights of the child and guidance for choosing appropriate service providers and Child Protection/ Social Assistance departments.

The hotline’s objectives are to provide the children with a partner with whom they could discuss issues and problems, which concern and excite them; to identify cases of children at risk and to undertake the necessary measures; to provide information and to promote the child protection system; to expand the opportunities for sending signals for breaches of the rights of the child.

The hotline characteristics are the easy to remember telephone number - 0800 19 100, national coverage, free of charge round-the-clock operation, adherence to the principles of confidentiality and relative anonymity.

The communication campaign is based on the verses of Laura Graims, a fourteen-year old girl who has committed suicide as a result of ill-treatment at school. The communication campaign is elaborated by MAG Advertising and includes celebrities such as Dimitar Berbatov, Rumanetsa and Enchev, Lora Krumova, Dimitar Rachkov, Vladimir Karamazov, Dicho from D2, Konstantin and Raina, Teodor and Kremena. The media involved in this campaign are: Bulgarian National Television, bTV, Nova Television, Manager Magazine, the newspapers Monitor, Standard, 7 days sports, Meridian Match, Media5100, Ustrem, Printing establishment DEDRAKS Ltd., Publishing House Prosveta, Bulgarian National Radio, many web sites, etc.

From the aspect of the child protection system, the information and data gathered through the telephone line will allow outlining, analyzing and monitoring the tendencies and problems regarding child protection and childcare, and in the long term will facilitate the development of adequate policies and practices in this area. The launching of a National Child Hotline underpins the national child protection system and harmonizes the national practice with the international standards for child protection and childcare.

2.5. Holding a public awareness campaign on the issues of trafficking in human beings, including also information about the opportunities of legal work abroad.

SACP initiated and participated actively in events included in the decade against trafficking in human beings in October and organized by the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in commemoration of 18th of October – the day for combating trafficking in people. Within the framework of this decade SACP was co-organizer together with the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings of a round table discussion on issues of trafficking in children with the participation of representatives of state institutions, international organizations and NGOs.

2.6. Organization of Round Table Discussion dedicated to the issue of legalizing prostitution and its eventual impact on trafficking in human beings.

SACP representative took part in the round table discussions “For and against legalizing prostitution in Bulgaria in the Context of Trafficking in Human Beings – Viewpoints and Good Practices”.

SECTION III “STAFF TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION”

1. Training for the employees of the administration of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and the Local Commissions for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and for the experts of the permanent working group at the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.

The expert, appointed to represent SACP in the permanent working group at the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, took part in the training on the topic “Building the Capacity of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings”, 8 – 17 May, 2007 in Italy and Ukraine. The objective of the training was to make the participants familiar with the current practices in combating trafficking in human beings in a country of “destination” and in a country of “origin” in order to establish prerequisites for building capacity for

interaction in the Bulgarian context; training seminar within a project under the AGIS 2006 programme “Operational Work in Networks, Cooperation and Joint Multidisciplinary Training for experts in justice administering and law enforcement bodies, NGOs and international organizations in combating trafficking in human beings”, organized by the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, the National Investigation Service and IOM-Bulgaria.

5. Training for diplomats and consulate employees in working on cases of trafficking in human beings (as part of their instruction for work abroad).

The SACP representative in the standing working group at the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings delivered a lecture at the Diplomatic Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on a topic “Issues of children involved in various forms of exploitation abroad. Abandoned children. Interaction between SACP and the Bulgarian embassies and consulates. A uniform coordination mechanism.”

SECTION IV “PROTECTION, REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS”

1. Updating the coordination referral mechanism and care in cases of unaccompanied Bulgarian children repatriated from abroad.

The implementation of the coordination referral mechanism and care in cases unaccompanied Bulgarian children and children, victims of trafficking, coming back from abroad is one on the leading activities under the priority “Protection, rehabilitation and reintegration of children, victims of violence, sexual and labour exploitation” of the National Programme for Child Protection – 2007. The effective application of this mechanism, which is a good practice of inter-institutional and interdisciplinary approach, led to an abrupt increase of referred cases. The number of referred cases in 2007 is 102. The reported decrease compared to the previous year (the referred cases for 2006 were 170) is explained with the possibility of free movement of people evolving from the integration of Bulgaria into the EU.

In order to undertake measures against repeated trafficking in children repatriated in Bulgaria, after a detailed survey of the circumstances in cooperation with the competent authorities, and in presence of data from Bulgarian or a foreign competent authority that during their stay abroad the children have been involved or used for activities pursuant to article 11 of the Child Protection Act, 39 proposals were sent to the Minister of Interior for application of the measures pursuant to article 76a, par 1 of the Bulgarian Identity Documents Act.

The following activities were undertaken for updating the coordination referral mechanism and care in cases unaccompanied Bulgarian children and children, victims of trafficking, repatriated from abroad: SACP initiated the set-up of an inter-institutional working group for updating the mechanism with representatives of state institutions and NGOs that have participated in its development – MoI, MFA, MLSP, ASA, the Central Commission for Fighting Anti-social Behaviour of Juveniles and Minors, the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, MoH, MES, State Agency of Tourism, State Agency of Youth and Sport, IOM, ILO, Association “Neglected Children”- ECPAT Bulgaria, Centre “Nadya”, Foundation “Gender Education, Research and Technology”, Foundation “Partners – Bulgaria”, Foundation “Animus Association”, “CARE – Bulgaria” and Pro-media; SACP organized a meeting of the working group and summarised the submitted proposals for updating the mechanism.

3. Developing measures to limit and prevent the use of Internet for attracting potential victims of trafficking in human beings.

Executing the II priority of National Programme for Child Protection “Improving the efficiency of child protection measures against violence, abuse and other forms of exploitation”, in 2007 SACP continued working on the topic “Internet and the Rights of the Child”. The successful cooperation with other state institutions, the non-governmental sector and with the business continued for the support of a safe Internet space for children. A second edition of the Rules for safe work in the Internet was published and disseminated both among children and parents.

SACP representatives took part in the organizational committee of the First Summer Youth Festival of Digital Culture, which took place in the beginning of July 2007. SACP initiated and organized competitions in three age groups in the games based on children’s ideas in the framework of the competition “Come with your idea”. The games were disseminated in all institutions for children and uploaded on the SACP’s web site.

SACP participates in the Public Council for combating illicit and harmful content in the Internet as part of the international association of hotlines INHOPE under the “Safer Internet” programme of the EC. The hotline for combating illicit and harmful content in the Internet in the Bulgarian cyber-space has the objective to focus the attention of the Bulgarian Internet users on the issue and to maintain an automated on-line mechanism for signaling, signals processing, summarizing and tracing.

In 2007 continued the partnership with “Partners-Bulgaria” Foundation and with the British Embassy on the project “The Child in the Net”, within which in 2006 a campaign was organized under the heading “You never know who is on the other side”. The project general objective is counteraction to involving children in sexual and labour exploitation. The implementation of this

project united the efforts of the state institutions (State Agency for Child Protection and the Ministry of Interior), NGOs and the business (“Microsoft-Bulgaria” and Computel). In 2007 continued the dissemination of the Rules for safe work in the Internet for children and parents. The development of and aid for pedagogical staff in relation to the safe use of Internet started.

SACP organized a round table “Children in Information Society – Opportunities and Risks”, which took place on December 7, 2007 in Sofia. The objective was to exchange information on good practices for prevention, raising awareness of the risks in the “global network”, as well as of the opportunities that the modern information technologies provide for the development of children and youths. This initiative expressed SACP’s commitment to the implementation of the three-year programme of the Council of Europe “Building a Europe for and with Children” and is in confirmation of the consistency of SACP’s work for winning recognition of the rights of the child in the Internet. In the discussions took part representatives of Directorate General “Combating Organized Crime”, the State Agency of Information Technologies and Communications, MES, MLSP, Microsoft, Computel, “Parents” Association, “Applied Research and Communications” Foundation, Hotline for combating illicit and harmful content in the Internet – web 119, students from the secondary vocational school of electronics, research scientists from the Institute of Philosophical Research at BAS, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, etc. Presentations were made in the framework of four thematic modules: Children in Internet – risks and safety, Safe-Internet-related projects; Children in Internet – opportunities for entertainment and education; Information Society Ethics. The proceedings of the meeting will be published in a common brochure.

SACP representatives took part in series of national and international events dedicated to the topic, the most important were: European expert meeting on the topic “Ethical Aspects of Information Society” and the conference “To Protect Children and Young People Online”.

In 2007 SACP experts had multiple media appearances related to support of safe Internet space for children and functioning of the headings “Teens” Club and “Parent” Club, TV “Diema”, newspaper “Telegraph”, Radio Stara Zagora, TV “Zdrave” [*Health*], Radio “Horizont” [*Horizon*], Radio Blagoevgrad, etc.. An article was written for magazine “Students’ World”, heading “Alone with the Psychologist”, topic “Aggression in Internet”.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL POLICY

SECTION II “PREVENTION”

2. Performing surveys and organizing information campaigns.

2.5. Information campaign for raising public awareness of the issues of trafficking in human beings, including also information about opportunities of legal work abroad.

In February 2007 posters and information leaflets about the trafficking in human beings phenomenon were sent to all territorial subsidiaries of the Employment Agency (EA). The posters are displayed in the information areas of Directorates “Labour Office” (DLO) all over the country. The information leaflets are at the disposal of people visiting the Labour Offices.

During the interviews for work in Spain and Germany pursuant to the agreements signed for labour force exchange, the AE informs the applicants about their basic rights and obligations in accordance with the labour legislation of the respective country, emphasizes the need of labour contract and work permit for the legality of residence, as well as the obligation always to have an ID document. The applicants for work in Spain are also provided with information leaflet with the telephone numbers of the local labour offices and of the labour inspectorate, as well as the number of the labour attaché at the Bulgarian Embassy in Madrid.

SECTION IV "PROTECTION, REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS"

1. Promoting and updating the coordination referral mechanism and care in cases of unaccompanied Bulgarian children repatriated abroad.

The Social Assistance Agency (SAA) has made proposals for updating the coordination mechanism and has given a statement of opinion on the proposals made by other institutions for updating the coordination mechanism.

5. Inclusion of victims of trafficking in human beings in suitable forms of training and qualification.

The Employment Agency provides employment-related services to people looking for jobs and registered at the DLO and does not allow any direct or indirect discrimination, privilege or restriction based on nationality, origin, gender, sexual orientation, race, colour, age, political or religious convictions, membership in trade unions or in other public organizations and movements,

family, social and material status and presence of mental or physical disabilities. The Employment Agency organizes and funds trainings for registered unemployed individuals in vocations necessary for filling vacant jobs and positions announced by employers. In order to improve the motivation of discouraged individuals for more pro-active behaviour on the labour market and acquisition of skills for independent job searching, the EA organizes motivation training and training in basic skills – communication skills, team work skills, etc.

The existing “Work” Centres at some of the DLO provide career guidance for people without qualification and for those who would like to change their vocation. The psychological assistance provided to individuals with established problems of various nature, is an important part of helping them to find employment.

6. Support for the participation of victims of trafficking in projects, programmes and measures in accordance with the Employment Promotion Act.

The Employment Promotion Act regulates various employment and training encouragement procedures designated for all registered unemployed individuals and does not obligate them to provide additional personal data except the data required for registration at the DLO.

Inclusion of registered unemployed in projects, programmes and employment measures depends on the extent to which the individuals meet the requirements for level of education, qualification, health condition and other project- and measure-specific conditions stipulated by the law.

Projects, programmes and measures implemented in 2007.

One of the employment policy lines includes activities for improving employability through participation in literacy courses, vocational training, practice training, etc. For these projects and programmes are eligible registered unemployed, unemployed individuals entitled to monthly social benefits, unemployed with low level of education and without any vocation, inclusive of individuals of Roma origin, unemployed youths without vocation and/or experience, elderly individuals, etc.

In 2007 appropriate training was provided for acquisition of knowledge and skills in-line with the new requirements of the economy and of the employers. The integration of unemployed on the labour market was encouraged through provision of individual and group career guidance and advice. In execution of the National Employment Action Plan, 48 837 individuals were included in training courses in 2007.

In 2007 continued the implementation of the largest scale labour market programme “**From social benefits to employment**” directed to the unemployed individuals on social benefits. During the period January – December, 2007, under this programme, 36 066 individuals found employment.

National Programme for Literacy and Qualification of Roma improves competitiveness of the unemployed enrolling them in literacy courses and vocational training. This also aims at motivating individuals for active behaviour on the labour market and stimulating individual efforts for upgrading their knowledge and skills. In 2007, 2 066 individuals were enrolled in training under this programme.

“Beautiful Bulgaria” Project is directed to solving problems related to unemployment as a result of the structural reforms in the country. The originally created model for employment in the area of improving the urban environment was further developed and included tools for support of tourism development, development of small, medium and craft business in the towns and villages. During the period January – December, 2007, under this project 2 693 individuals found employment and 1 782 individuals were enrolled in training..

“Career Start” Programme improves the employability of youths with higher education but with no work experience assisting them to start working after graduation. Employers under this programme are public administrations – central institutions (including secondary bodies administering budget loans and their territorial subsidiaries), district and municipal administrations. In 2007 this programme provided employment for 550 unemployed young people.

In 2007 the Programme for improving the employability of young people was launched. It provides opportunities for enrollment in vocational training of unemployed youths, inclusive of school drop-outs and is implemented on the territory of the districts of Sofia-city, Rousse and Targovishte. For the period January – December, 2007, 250 unemployed individuals were enrolled in training under this programme.

In 2007 the project **“Training in demanded professions for the needs of the tourism sector”** was launched. Its objective is to meet the needs of the tourism sector for qualified professionals through training in demanded vocations and to provide employment in companies – members of the Confederation of Employers and Industrialists in Bulgaria (CEIB). The project covers unemployed individuals registered at the Labour Office Directorates. Priority is given to young people with higher or secondary education and without experience in the field of tourism. The project is implemented on the territory of Sofia and Sofia District. For the period January – December, 2007, 86 were enrolled in training and 20 people found employment.

Programmes and projects designed to entrepreneurship development and opening of new jobs include provision of targeted support to the employers and to the unemployed. In 2007 continued the implementation of the project **“Employment in Support of Business – JOBS”**, which provides technical and financial support to 43 business centres, as well as to business incubators and their detached offices, established for implementation of project activities. As a

result of the work of the local teams, in 2007 5 897 individuals found employment and 8743 customers of the business centres were enrolled in training. During the last year were opened two detached offices (affiliated to the business centres of Peshtera and Elhovo) for work with Roma ethnic minority.

The possibilities of the private sector to generate jobs are supported also by specialized programmes and measures. The unemployed who are subject to social benefits have incentives if they find a job without the intervention of the labour office. Funds are provided for employment in the private sector of disadvantaged on the labour market groups of the population, who face the most difficulties in finding jobs, and employers are encouraged to create jobs and to sustain employment after the period of state aid.

The measures of the Employment Promotion Act encourage employers to open jobs for unemployed individuals in disadvantaged position on the labour market (youths up to 29 years of age, continuously unemployed individuals, single parents and/or mothers with children younger than 3 years, etc.) For the period January – December, 2007, 2 941 people found employment under the measure encouraging employers to hire unemployed young people. 584 individuals were included under the provisions and the procedures of the measure encouraging for long-term hiring of unemployed individuals, and the monthly average number of people who worked was 1 174. The implementation of the encouraging measure in support of single parents and/or mothers with children younger than 3 years ensured employment for 762 individuals. The monthly average number of people who worked was 1 073.

The implementation of labour market-related projects, programmes and measures improve the chances of the participants in the primary labour market for employment and for adequate social inclusion.

Three crisis centres for children, victims of violence and trafficking have been functioning since the beginning of 2007 – in the village of Balvan, Veliko Tarnovo District and in the towns of Pazardzhik and Dragoman. Children between 6 and 18 years of age, victims of trafficking and/or violation are eligible for accommodation. The crisis centres main activities include shelter provision, food and round-the-clock care for the children, healthcare and educational services, psychological support, as well as work for preparing the child reintegration in his/her biological family. The duration of stay is up to 6 months depending on the individual needs and the level of readiness of the child and the family for reintegration. In cases of unsuccessful reintegration process, the child is directed for placement in an institution. The centers have an overall capacity to accommodate 30 children. As of the end of 2007, the total number of children using the service was 26.

In 2007, the “Child Protection” departments at the “Social Assistance” directorates had monitored 37 cases of unaccompanied Bulgarian children repatriated from abroad.

Attachment: List of Abbreviations

| | |
|----------------|---|
| NCCTHB | National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings |
| LCCTHB | Local Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings |
| IOM | International Organization for Migration |
| NGO | Nongovernmental organizations |
| SACP | State Agency for Child Protection |
| CCFABJM | Central Commission for Fighting Anti-social Behaviour of Juveniles and Minors |
| CCDPC | Centre for Children Deprived of Parental Care |
| NIS | National Investigation Service |
| EMC | Electronic Media Council |
| ASA | Agency for Social Assistance |
| MLSP | Ministry of Labour and Social Policy |
| MoI | Ministry of Interior |
| MFA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| MC | Ministry of Culture |
| MoH | Ministry of Health |
| MES | Ministry of Education and Science |
| MoJ | Ministry of Justice |
| MoF | Ministry of Finance |
| EBS | Educative Boarding-schools |
| SPBS | Social-pedagogical Boarding-schools |
| NIJ | National Institute of Justice |
| SCPO | Supreme Cassation Prosecution Office |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| MCMPD | International Centre for Migration Policy Development |
| EA | Employment Agency |
| AMoI | Academy and the Ministry of Interior |
| USAID | US Agency for International Development |
| GDCOC | General Directorate “Combating Organised Crime” |
| EC | European Commission |
| BSEC | Black Sea Economic Cooperation |
| BAS | Bulgarian Academy of Science |

| | |
|--------------|---|
| PRB | Prosecution of the Republic of Bulgaria |
| CPD | “Child Protection” Department |
| SAYS | State Agency for Youth and Sport |
| SAT | State Agency for Tourism |
| SAITC | State Agency for Information Technologies and Communications |
| SU | Sofia University |
| DLO | Directorate “Labour Office” |