

Report on the Work of the Interdepartmental Working Group on Combating Trafficking in Persons

According to decision No. 240-05/2003-1 of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia of 18 December 2003, the Interdepartmental Working Group on Combating Trafficking in Persons (hereinafter referred to as: "the IWG") is under obligation to report annually to the Government of the Republic of Slovenia on the activities completed.

In 2004, the IWG continued its mission and held seven meetings. In the first half of the year, it focused particularly on the preparation and harmonisation of the action plan for the period 2004 to 2006. The action plan is divided into five thematic clusters. Funds are earmarked for each project, and the responsible ministry designated. The Action Plan was confirmed at the 84th session of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia on 22 July 2004 (decision No. 240-05/2003-3).

Activities of the IWG have also been adapted to the actual needs and practical work of both governmental and non-governmental organisations in the fields of preventing and combating trafficking in persons.

The report presents the activities of the IWG by thematic clusters as defined in the Action Plan.

I Legislation

In 2004, certain amendments to the Criminal Code relating to prostitution and trafficking in persons came into effect; they were drafted by the Ministry of Justice in cooperation with the IWG and relate particularly to the new criminal offence of trafficking in persons referred to in Article 387a of the Criminal Code (hereinafter referred to as: "the CC"). Articles 185 – "Pimping" and 186 – "Brokering prostitution" were replaced by a new Article 185 – "Abuse through prostitution". Despite that, some criminal pre-trial processes and criminal procedures in 2004 were still conducted on the grounds of a criminal offence of brokering prostitution under Article 186 of the CC. In the meantime, a new Article 387a – "Trafficking in persons" came into effect. In the period covered by this report, however, criminal pre-trial processes and criminal procedures were already initiated in which perpetrators' acts were still legally defined as the criminal offence of "Enslavement" under Article 387 of the CC.

The National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime on 9 April 2004, and the relevant Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children on 21 April 2004. The Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated in drafting the acts ratifying the Convention and the Protocol.

The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs drew up, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of the Interior, a draft law ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography supplementing Articles 1, 11, 21, 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Slovenia succeeded through The Basic Constitutional Charter on Independence and Sovereignty of the Republic of Slovenia (Uradni list RS, No. 1/1991, and the Act notifying succession to the UN conventions and conventions adopted by the International Atomic Energy Agency (Uradni list RS, No. 35/1992); this law provides for a higher level of protection of the rights of the child in the areas of sale of

children, child prostitution and child pornography, and was considered and adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia on 15 July 2004 (Uradni list RS, No. 85/2004 - MP, No. 23/2004).

II Prosecution of criminal offences relating to trafficking in persons

Amended criminal legislation also impacted the detection and investigation of criminal offences, particularly those in the field of prostitution and relating to trafficking in persons. New standards have been set, which reduced the number of police interventions planned in advance and applying covert investigation methods. This has resulted in a decrease in the number of detected and investigated criminal offences. On the initiative of the official authorised for combating trafficking in persons at the Supreme State Prosecutor's Office, all heads of the District State Prosecutor's Offices in the Republic of Slovenia designated within their respective offices a state prosecutor to deal with criminal offences in this field. The designated State Prosecutor is at the same time the contact person bound to report on activities in this field to the Supreme State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia every six months.

In 2004, the Police dealt with 14 cases related to trafficking in persons.

- One criminal complaint was filed with the competent state prosecutor's office to the prejudice of five adult females (victims) for a criminal offence of "Enslavement" under Article 387 of the CC. The District State Prosecutor ordered an investigation against the defendant on the grounds of the criminal offence he allegedly committed, which the court also initiated. One report was also submitted to the District State Prosecutor's Office.
- Two criminal complaints were filed with the District State Prosecutor's Office for the criminal offence of "Brokering prostitution" under Article 186 of the CC.
- One criminal complaint and two reports were filed for the criminal offence of "Pimping" under Article 185 of the CC.
- Five criminal complaints and two reports were filed with the competent district state prosecutor's offices which related to "Abuse through prostitution" under the newly defined Article 185 of the amended CC. In one instance the state prosecutor modified, within his competences, the legal definition of the criminal offence allegedly committed by the defendant into a criminal offence of "Trafficking in persons" under Article 387a of the amended CC (hereinafter referred to as CC-B). The act was committed to the prejudice of a female (one victim). He ordered an investigation to be carried out on the grounds of a criminal offence of "Trafficking in persons" under Article 387a of the CC-B; the court also initiated the investigation on the basis of the order.
- In 2004, a criminal charge was filed against a defendant on the grounds of a criminal offence of "Bringing another person into slavery" under Article 387 of the CC, following a completed investigation into the offence committed in 2001.

Criminal complaints have been filed against 12 persons in total, 10 men and 2 women. There have been a total of 25 injured parties; only 19 of these have been recognised as victims of trafficking in persons. Out of 25 injured parties of all criminal offences, there are six citizens of the Republic of Slovenia who figure as injured parties under "Abuse through prostitution" with no elements of trafficking. Among aliens there are five injured parties under Article 185 and the same five under Article 387, which means that there are actually only five such persons. Detailed statistics are shown in Table 1, stating the age, sex and nationality of both persons against whom the criminal complaint was filed, and of victims of criminal offences. The Table also briefly presents further procedures involving victims of criminal offences, whose care was in most cases provided by a non-governmental organisation the Association *Ključ*. It has to be mentioned that the Association *Ključ* dealt with an additional 14 persons, in respect of which elements of trafficking in persons have been found. These included 5 underage females.

Table 1: Statistics in the fields of investigating and prosecuting criminal offences relating to trafficking in persons for 2004

Criminal offence (Article of CC)	Enslavement Article 387 CC	Brokering prostitution Article 186 CC	Pimping Article 185 CC	Abuse through prostitution Article 185 CC - 04	Trafficking in persons Article 387a CC - 04	TOTAL
Criminal complaints filed with District State Prosecutor's Offices	1	2	1	5 (-1)		8
Redefinition of a criminal offence by District State Prosecutor					1	1
Reports to District State Prosecutor's Offices	1	0	2	2		5
Number of perpetrators against whom criminal complaints have been filed	1	3	1	7 (-1)	1	12
Nationality of perpetrators of criminal offences against whom criminal complaints have been filed	1/SLO	3/SLO	1/SLO	7/SLO	1/BUL	
Sex and age of perpetrators of criminal offences against whom criminal complaints have been filed	M/54	M/28, 52 F/25	M/54	M/54, 37, 31, 39, 35, 54 F/26	M/34	
Investigation initiated against (no. of persons)	1(1)				1(1)	
Criminal charge filed	1(1) from 2001					
Issuing of final judgements						
Number of injured parties - victims of criminal offences	5	6	5 (-5)	13 (-6)	1	25 (19) + 14
Nationality of victims	UKR	SVK	UKR	6 SLO, 5 UKR, 2 SVK	1 BUL	
Sex and age of victims	F/21, 22, 23, 24	F/19, 22, 25, 23, 24	F/21,22, 22, 23, 24	F/ 19, 19, 34, 21, 24, 19, 19, 21, 24, 33, 19, 26, 23	F/20	

Further procedures involving victim	Victims reported maltreatment, exploitation and restriction of liberty to the Police. NGO <i>Ključ</i> provided for crisis placement and repatriation.	NGO <i>Ključ</i> provided for crisis placement of two victims. On repatriation, escort was organised together with the Police.	Victims reported maltreatment, exploitation and restriction of liberty to the Police. NGO <i>Ključ</i> provided for crisis placement and repatriation.	Exploitation by pimps reported to the Police.		
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The reasons for a decrease in the number of detected criminal offences in the field of trafficking in persons, compared to previous years, is to be attributed to the amendments to criminal legislation. Moreover, the methods of transit through Slovenia of victims – injured parties in the trafficking in persons – have been changed. In past years, the transit of victims of trafficking in persons through Slovenia was organised by members of criminal gangs engaged in smuggling people, and victims were found when investigating such criminal offences. The decrease in the number of detected and investigated criminal offences has also been the result of concealing exploitation, i.e., the perpetration of such criminal offences, thus making it more difficult for police officers and criminal investigators to gather and protect evidence.

In 2004, the District State Prosecutor's Offices in the Republic of Slovenia received 2 criminal complaints on the grounds of acts incorporating elements of conduct which, following the amendments to Slovenian criminal legislation of 5 May 2004, fall within the scope of the criminal offence of "Trafficking in persons" under Article 387a of the amended CC (hereinafter referred to as CC-B).

- The District State Prosecutor ordered an investigation against the defendant on the grounds of alleged criminal offence of "Bringing another person into slavery" under Article 387 of the CC to the prejudice of five adult females (victims), which the court also initiated.
- The Police filed a criminal charge against a defendant on the grounds of a criminal offence. The State Prosecutor modified, within his competences, the legal definition of the criminal offence of "Abuse through prostitution" under Article 185 of the CC-B, allegedly committed by the defendant, into a criminal offence of "Trafficking in persons" under Article 387a of the CC-B. The offence was committed to the prejudice of a female (one victim). He ordered an investigation to be carried out on the grounds of a criminal offence of "Trafficking in persons" under Article 387a of the CC-B; the court initiated the investigation on the basis of the order.
- In 2004, a criminal charge was filed against a defendant on the grounds of a criminal offence of "Bringing another person into slavery" under Article 387 of the CC, following a completed investigation into the offence committed in 2001.

III Assistance to and protection of the victims of trafficking in persons

In 2004, the NGO Association *Ključ* provided assistance to 23 victims of trafficking in persons. Nine (9) persons were provided accommodation after the preliminary police procedure. Fourteen persons (14) were offered psychosocial help outside the NGO's premises. Among the latter, there were 5 minors, namely one from Bulgaria, 2 from Serbia and Montenegro and 2 from Albania. The Association *Ključ* has also registered 22 persons requiring assistance by telephone. A majority of female callers contacted the NGO more than once.

In 2004 the funding of the Association *Ključ*, safe accommodation for the victims of trafficking in persons and 24 hour telephone counselling were provided by both the Ministry of the Interior (SIT 13 million) and the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs (SIT 1,371,141).

Within the IWG Action Plan for 2004-06, a project is underway, entitled "Introducing Mechanisms to Identify, Assist and Protect Victims of Trafficking in Persons and Sex and Gender-based Violence in Asylum Procedures in Slovenia (PATS)", for which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs allocated SIT 5 million.

The Association *Ključ*, the *Slovene Philanthropy*, the Asylum Centre of the Slovenian Ministry of the Interior and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) participate in the project in addition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Within the PATS project, The Association *Ključ* has provided one-month of training for a *Slovene Philanthropy* associate who will conduct informative interviews within vulnerable categories. In 2004, the expert officer held 77 individual interviews; on two occasions the Association *Ključ* was directly involved, since a well-founded suspicion existed that the persons were victims of trafficking in persons.

In 2004, the Association *Ključ* won a tender within the EQUAL Community Initiative to carry out a three-year partner project entitled "Development Partnership - (Re)integration of the Victims of Trafficking in Persons"; in this context the NGO is bound to be allocated SIT 55,788,167. The funds are provided by the European Social Fund.

As regards assistance to victims of trafficking in persons, an agreement was signed between the Association *Ključ* and the Slovenian General Police Directorate on 23 April 2004.

In December 2004, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia adopted an initiative to conclude a memorandum on cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) with the aim of voluntary return of certain migrant categories, namely the following:

- Persons whose asylum request has been finally rejected by the competent authority;
- Persons whose residence in the Republic of Slovenia is illegal;
- Asylum seekers who wish to join the programme voluntarily before the conclusion of the asylum procedure;
- Holders of temporary refuge status;
- Victims of trafficking in persons and unaccompanied minors.

The programme devotes special attention to vulnerable migrant groups, above all to persons with special needs, victims of trafficking in persons, unaccompanied minors, the disabled, elderly, pregnant women, single parents with underage children, victims of sexual abuse and victims of torture or organized crime.

IV Prevention

As far as prevention is concerned, in accordance with the IWG Action Plan the relevant ministries and NGO's in 2004 co-financed and engaged in numerous activities, such as raising awareness of the expert and broader public, carrying out research activities and taking regular action to control and prevent illegal work.

Raising target population awareness

In 2004, the Association *Ključ* continued carrying out its elementary and secondary school programme "*A Violet – How to Avoid the Traps of Trafficking in Persons*". Lectures were given at secondary schools for a total of 400 users. The audience were acquainted with basic characteristics of trafficking in persons and shown a short documentary on a true story of a

Slovenian girl who became a victim of trafficking in persons. The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs co-financed the programme in the amount of SIT 554,853. The same Ministry also co-financed the CAP Project (child abuse prevention) in the amount of SIT 827,040.

The CAP Programme for child abuse prevention is a new project of the Association *Ključ*, taken over from the Centre for Prevention Activities (*Center za preventivne dejavnosti*). The project has been underway in Slovenian elementary schools since 1994. In 2004, 84 workshops were realised for some 2,100 users.

Raising expert public awareness

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs supported the expert/cultural event entitled “*Are We Aware?*” organised by the Association *Ključ* on 1 June 2004 at Cankarjev Dom, Ljubljana. The event was aimed at raising awareness of the Slovenian political, expert and, further, the broader public. Among others, the movie *Lilja 4-ever* was shown. The event represented an introduction to a two-month action of awareness-raising aimed at the broader public. During the summer of 2004, *Lilja 4-ever* was presented in all major cinemas in Slovenia, accompanied by the distribution of over 50,000 leaflets addressing the issue of trafficking in persons in Slovenia. The action was organised by the Association *Ključ* in cooperation with the distributor, Creativa, and the financial support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the amount of SIT 3 million.

In cooperation with the Delegation of the European Commission in Slovenia, IOM Ljubljana carried out a project entitled “*Raising Awareness on Migrant and Refugee Integration into Slovenian Society*”. The aim of the project is to encourage Slovenian government officials to develop and implement a comprehensive national integration policy, and thus speed up the integration of migrants, including the victims of trafficking in persons, and refugees into Slovenian society. The main project activities were a three-day international conference held in March 2004 and two follow-up training courses for government officials, local authorities and NGOs in May 2004. As part of the project, a booklet containing basic information on integration programmes, statistical data and examples of best practices abroad was prepared.

Research activities

In 2003, in cooperation with the Peace Institute, IOM Ljubljana carried out an “*Assessment Study on Human Trafficking from, to and through Slovenia*”. Since the study was published in English and due to the great interest of the expert and lay public, as well as the fact that this was the first study of the kind in Slovenia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs allocated SIT 1,970,000 for the Slovenian translation of the study.

Employment of foreign citizens

Slovenia keeps a statistical register of foreign citizens who are employed or work in Slovenia. Because of the possibility of abuse, special attention is paid to issuing work permits to the so-called “risk professions” related to potential trafficking in persons. Professions considered as “risky” are dancers, entertainers and construction workers; the same status applies to all work permits for citizens of the People’s Republic of China. In Slovenia, citizens of third countries may be employed in accordance with the Employment and Work of Aliens Act, pursuant to which a work permit is required. The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs issued a Decree on work permits quota for 2004 (Uradni list RS, 33/2004), by which it limited the number of third country citizens in Slovenian labour market.

In accordance with the agreement between the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and the Employment Service of Slovenia, apart from the requirements of the Employment and Work of Aliens Act and the Rules on procedures and supporting documents required for the issuing of work permits, certain additional conditions apply in the case of work permits for

third country citizens employed as dancers, such as the existence of premises where their work is to be carried out and a preliminary opinion of the Labour Inspection regarding the possibility of employment with the applicant; the Employment Service of Slovenia also regularly informs the Criminal Police about the permits issued.

Table 2: Work permits for dancers issued between 2001 and 2004

Country	2001	2002	2003	2004
Bulgaria	9	9	8	3
Belarus	4	15	8	3
Dominican Republic	10	14	43	50
Moldova	45	40	67	57
Romania	41	38	54	30
Russian Federation	73	64	51	33
Thailand	9	9	8	4
Ukraine	457	421	616	507
Other	31	20	25	20
TOTAL	679	630	880	707

Source: Employment Service of Slovenia

In 2004, 707 work permits were thus issued for third country dancers. Among those, 275 work permits were issued for the first time in 2004. In comparison with 2003, the total number of work permits decreased by 19%.

Since 1 May 2004, the Employment Service of Slovenia registered 55 applications for the job of dancer, 30 by Czech and 25 by Slovak citizens. However, despite the possibility of free movement of workers between the new EU member states, there was no increase in the number of Czech and Slovak applicants for said job. In the years 2001 to 2003, 41, 25 and 26 work permits were issued to applicants from the two countries, respectively.

After the introduction of the Decree on work permits quota for 2004 and additional limitations, primarily in the construction sector, the inflow of third country workers decreased by 55% (most evidently in the construction sector), i.e., from 8,148 in 2003 to 3,665 in 2004. In this sector 3,430 (94%) work permits were issued to citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, Croatia and Macedonia, which is the consequence of years of worker migration between the republics of the former Yugoslavia; in Slovenia, these workers are considered as "a traditional foreign work force". These are followed by citizens of Ukraine (159 work permits) and Bulgaria (31 permits). In the construction sector, work permits for seasonal employment are limited to 9 months in any 12-month period. The compulsory interruption before the reissuing of a work permit to the same alien is thus determined by the validity of the former permit, regardless of whether the application was filed by the same or by another employer.

There was a minor increase in the number of work permits issued to citizens of the People's Republic of China, most probably due to an increased number of Chinese restaurants in Slovenia. Chinese citizens were issued 209 and 245 work permits in 2003 and 2004, respectively. Apart from the conditions set in the Employment and Work of Aliens Act and the Rules on procedures and supporting documents required for the issuing of work permits, Slovenia has introduced an additional condition for the issuing of work permits to Chinese cooks, namely checking the existence of the premises where the work is supposed to be carried out.

We are of the opinion that Slovenia has made important steps towards reducing potential abuse of work permits in cases of the employment of aliens, in which circumstances might

point to the possibility of trafficking in persons. The statistics presented in the supplement “*Collecting Statistical Data – Work Permits*” are proof of this achievement.

V Training

The issue of trafficking in persons was addressed at the annual training programme for prosecutors in the Republic of Slovenia in December 2004, upon the introduction of new provisions to the Criminal Code. The issue was raised within the topic entitled “Amendments to Criminal Offences in the Area of Protecting Human Freedom and Dignity”. In accordance with the plan, further training programmes will be organised for Slovenian state prosecutors, particularly for those who concern themselves with trafficking in persons. They are namely the ones who provide contact between individual state prosecutor's offices and the official authorised for combating trafficking in persons at the Supreme State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia, who is also a representative of said institution to the IWG.

At consular consultations in Ljubljana, from 14 to 16 April 2004, the members of the Interdepartmental Working Group on Combating Trafficking in Persons met with Slovenia's consuls at the Slovenian diplomatic and consular missions abroad. The members of the group outlined to the consuls the current situation in Slovenia, the concrete examples of addressing trafficking in persons and possible abuses of visa procedures in trafficking in persons.

NATO adopted special guidelines (code) for the conduct of military and civilian personnel participating in NATO-led operations in the fight against trafficking in persons. Training soldiers to participate in NATO-led operations is also part of the programme of the Interdepartmental Working Group on Combating Trafficking in Persons for the period 2004-2006.

A joint training of members of the NGO Association *Ključ* and employees of the Criminal Police took place in the Gotenica police training centre in April 2004. The purpose of the training was to strengthen cooperation between the Association *Ključ* and the Criminal Police. The training was organised by the Criminal Police Directorate, General Police Directorate (hereinafter referred to as CPD GPD) and was held in the form of lectures and simulations.

In August and September 2004, the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs organised a two-day training programme for practitioners at social work centres to work in the area of family violence. The purpose of this training programme, in which the NGO Association *Ključ* also participated, was to raise the social workers' awareness of the issue of trafficking in persons and establish concrete contacts for urgent cases that would require cooperation.

The NGO Association *Ključ* organised an expert meeting in Ljubljana in September 2004 that addressed the possibilities of integrating and re-integrating the victims of trafficking in persons in Slovenia as well as non-discriminatory practices in the integration of victims. Active participants in this meeting included representatives of governmental, non-governmental and inter-governmental organisations as well as a representative of the Institute for Ethnic Studies, an independent institution.

In September 2004, the SOS society and the NGO *Ključ* organised a discussion on good practices in shelters and safe houses.

Representatives of the CPD GPD participated in the training of assistant commanders which dealt with detecting and preventing illegal migrations, an area that also covers trafficking in

persons. Training programmes for police officers and criminal investigators will continue in 2005.

VI International cooperation

In the context of international cooperation, the representatives of the IWG on combating trafficking in persons participated in several international events organised by international organisations, such as the Council of Europe, the Stability Pact and the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI), the OSCE, the UN, and others.

Within the Council of Europe, regular meetings took place in 2004 of the Ad Hoc Committee on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CAHTEH) to draft a European Convention against Trafficking in Human Beings. The National Coordinator for Trafficking in Persons participated in the Committee as the representative of Slovenia. The Convention is entering its final stage and is expected to be signed by the participating states in May 2005.

In 2004, the Slovenian Police and the SECI Centre in Bucharest jointly participated in MIRAGE 2004, an international operation on combating trafficking in persons, which included training on the topic titled "Tactics and Methods of Holding Interviews". Representatives of the Police and the State Prosecutor's Office took part.

The Slovenian Police participates actively within the Interpol Working Group on Trafficking in Women and Children for Sexual Exploitation. It also has its representative in the Steering Committee of the said Working Group. Cooperation with the Europol involves providing information and data into various data files concerning the areas of trafficking in persons and forced prostitution. The Slovenian Police also cooperated with the United Nations Development Programme and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development in amending and harmonising the content of textbooks on trafficking in persons for police officers and criminal investigators.

The Supreme State Prosecutor, as representative of the Interdepartmental Working Group in charge of the sub-group on preventing trafficking in children, took part, together with the Head of the IOM Office in Ljubljana, in a conference on trafficking in children in Europe, organised by the Council of Europe, the Stability Pact, and the relevant ministries of the Republic of Albania. The conference took place in Tirana from 19 to 20 January 2004. A representative of the Supreme State Prosecutor's Office took part in an international symposium titled "Analysis of Criminal Procedures in Criminal Matters of Trafficking in Persons and Illegal Migration in the Republic of Italy", organised by the Italian Ministry of Justice. From 28 to 29 September 2004, the same representative participated, this time as a representative for combating trafficking in persons, in a Eurojust strategic meeting in the Hague, where she outlined the current situation in Slovenia concerning substantive and procedural law covering that area and a study of a particular criminal case.

The 6th meeting of the Working Group on Trafficking in Persons of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe took place in Belgrade from 23 to 24 March 2004. The Slovenian National Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Persons (Ministry of the Interior), his deputy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and the President of the NGO Association *Ključ* participated in a meeting entitled "Preventing Trafficking in Children", organised by the Stability Pact and the OSCE Mission of Serbia and Montenegro.

The National Coordinator, a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a representative of the NGO *Ključ* participated in a conference called "Ensuring Human Rights

Protection in Countries of Destination: Breaking the Cycle of Trafficking", held in Helsinki, from 23 to 24 September 2004. The conference was co-organised by the ODIHR (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights) and the Finnish Foreign Ministry. It was a follow-up to the Berlin Conference, "Europe Against Trafficking in Persons", in 2001. Upon the conclusion of the Berlin Conference, the ODIHR drafted a comprehensive list of recommendations to the OSCE participating states regarding the protection of human rights of the victims of trafficking in persons. The list provided the basis for an assessment of the situation after the subsequent three years. The conference was an opportunity to make a presentation of the organisation and the situation concerning trafficking in persons in Slovenia.

A regional conference, entitled "Introducing Mechanisms to Identify, Assist and Protect Victims of Trafficking in Persons and Sex and Gender-based Violence in Asylum Procedures in Slovenia (PATS)", took place in Ljubljana from 6 to 8 December 2004. Its purpose was to outline the PATS project to guests from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as to seek possibilities for implementing the project in the above-mentioned countries.

In November 2004, the General Police Directorate and the UNHCR organised a seminar in Gotenica, "The International Protection of Foreigners at Border Control - Lessons Learnt from the Project of Joint Border Monitoring 2004 in the Republic of Slovenia". The seminar's target group were the Slovenian and Croatian border police officers. *Ključ* also participated in organising the seminar by presenting its role within the PATS project and outlining the issue of trafficking in persons in Slovenia.

The NGO *Ključ* and the SOS societies organised an international symposium of shelters and safe houses, where good practices in shelters and safe houses both in Slovenia and elsewhere in Europe were discussed. In June 2004, the Association *Ključ* participated, as a founding member, in the founding session of ACTA - "Anti-Corruption and Anti-Trafficking Action" – the international NGO. 10 NGOs attended the founding session. A representative of the Association *Ključ* also participated in a three-week International visitors' program in the USA where she contacted representatives of governmental, non-governmental and intergovernmental US organisations concerned with the fight against trafficking in persons.

In November 2004, a seminar titled "TAMPEP - New Measures against Trafficking in Persons" took place in Gorizia, Italy. It was organised by the Tampep international foundation, the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region, the Gorizia municipality and other partners. The National Coordinator and the representative of the NGO *Ključ* presented a professional contribution at the seminar.

Slovenia will organise the "Conference on Violence and Sexual Abuse of Children", to be held in Ljubljana from 5 to 9 July 2005. It will comprise two events: the UN Regional Consultations on violence against children "Stop Violence against Children - Act Now, Europe and Central Asia", and the Council of Europe Conference for Europe and Central Asia on the implementation of commitments adopted at the Yokohama World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. The Conference will be organised by UNICEF, the Council of Europe, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the World Health Organisation, the NGO Advisory Panel and the Republic of Slovenia. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in charge of preparations for the event; the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Education and Sport, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Public Administration, the Public Relations and Media Office and the Human Rights Ombudsman are also participating in the preparations.

Conclusion

By adopting the Action Plan for the Period 2004-2006, the Slovenian Government committed itself to an organised fight against trafficking in persons at all levels. The active work of the IWG and proper financial means guarantee the realisation of the set goals.

2004 saw progress in the area of legislation. The UN Convention on Transnational Organised Crime and the relevant Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, were ratified. Also, the Act Amending the Criminal Code was adopted which re-regulated trafficking in persons.

Last year, the IWG achieved significant progress in collecting statistical data. This is also reflected in the table of criminal offences, the perpetrators and the victims of trafficking in persons. The data provided by the Employment Service of Slovenia show that Slovenia has made important steps towards reducing potential abuses of work permits in cases of employing aliens, particularly where circumstances might point to the possibility of trafficking in persons. Statistics presented in the supplement entitled "The Collecting of Statistical Data - Work Permits" are proof of this achievement.

In addition, 2004 saw the continuation of the existing projects of assisting victims of trafficking in persons and raising the awareness of professional public. The progress in the training of professional workers who are confronted with victims of trafficking in persons, particularly prosecutors, must also be underlined.

Slovenia shares its experience in the prevention of trafficking in persons with the countries of South-Eastern Europe.