



**NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR COMBATING
TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**

PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

National Report
on the Implementation of the Policy for Preventing and Combating
Trafficking in Human Beings in 2017

Chisinau, 2018

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ABBREVIATIONS

NEA – National Employment Agency
TEA - Territorial Employment Agencies
CPA - Central Public Authority
LPA - Local Public Authority
CAP – Center for Assistance and Protection of Victims and Potential Victims of THB
CCTHB - Center for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
IPCC - International Police Cooperation Center
CRIDC - Child Rights Information and Documentation Center
‘La Strada’ IC — Public Association International Center for Women Rights Protection and Promotion ‘La Strada’
NC CTHB – National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
NCCAP - National Center for Child Abuse Prevention
CC - Criminal Code
TC CTHB - Territorial Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
DPI - Department of Penitentiary Institutions
TMT - Territorial Multidisciplinary Team of the NRS
JIT - Joint Investigation Teams
EUBAM - European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine
GRETA - Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings of the Council of Europe
JRAG - Joint Risk Assessment Group
TCG - Technical Coordination Group of the Permanent Secretariat of the NC CTHB
GD - Government Decision
ICMPD – International Centre for Migration Policy Development
MFAEI – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration
MoF - Ministry of Finance
MoJ - Ministry of Justice
MSMPS - Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Protection
ODIMM - Organisation for Small and Medium Enterprises Sector Development
IO - International Organisation
ILO – Mission of the International Organisation for Migration to Moldova
NGO - Non-Government Organisation
OSCE – Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
GPO – General Prosecutor’s Office
NP - National Plan for Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
SNR - National Referral System for the protection and assistance to victims and potential victims of trafficking in human beings
PS - Permanent Secretariat of the National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
CT – Child trafficking
THB – Trafficking in Human Beings
TdH - ‘Terre des Hommes’ Swiss Foundation
NCU - National Coordination Unit of the NRS
UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund

METHODOLOGY

This Report was drafted on the basis of the direct duties of the Permanent Secretariat (SP) of the National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (NC CTHB) referred to in para 9¹(5) of the *Government Decision No 472 of 26.03.2008 approving the composition of the National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and the Regulation of the National Committee* and analyses the results obtained by the anti-trafficking community of the Republic of Moldova during 2017.

The following information and collected statistical data were used as sources to develop this Report:

- information provided by the Central Public Authorities (CPA), Local Public Authorities (LPAs), Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and International Organisations (IOs) on the implementation of the Set of Measures to Implement the Priority Actions in Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings until 31 December 2017 (August-December 2017) and the fulfillment of the recommendations stated in the resolutions of the NC CTHB meetings;
- the recommendations stated in the minutes of the meetings of the PS Technical Coordination Group;
- the statistical data collected by PS in accordance with PRETRIAL, TRIAL, AFTERTRIAL, RELATED CRIMES and VICTIMS Forms;
- the recommendations from the international evaluation reports (GRETA, the Trafficking in Persons Report of the US State Department, etc.)
- the recommendations of the UN Committee against Torture and Inhuman Treatment, made at the meeting of 7-8 November 2017 in Geneva following the presentation of the National Report in this field.

The report is structured in chapters according to the 4P paradigm (Prevention, Protection, Punishment, Partnership) and contains 3 annexes reflecting the progress of the implementation of the *Set of Measures to Implement the Priority Actions in Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings until 31 December 2017*; the activity of the Territorial Commissions for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and of the PS.

INTRODUCTION

For the anti-trafficking community 2017 was a year when the efforts to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings intensified considerably, especially following the publication of the 2017 edition of the Trafficking in Persons Report (TiP) by the US State Department, which relegated the Republic of Moldova to Tier 2 Watch List. In order to overcome the established situation and implement the recommendations of the TiP Report, the Government developed and approved the *Set of Measures to Implement the Priority Actions in Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings until 31 December 2017*. The set of measures was approved on 4 August 2017 by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova and sent for implementation at the central and local level. At the same time, the anti-trafficking community developed the draft National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for 2018-2023 and the Action Plan implementing the Strategy in 2018-2020. Considering the importance of each action included in the Set of Measures and the need to achieve an effective outcome, some of the actions were continued in the Action Plan implementing the Strategy in 2018-2020. At the same time, during 2017 there were 3 meetings of the NC CTHB and a series of meetings of the SP Technical Coordination Group of NC CTHB, attended by representatives of the relevant public institutions and development partners, who debated the most important challenges of the anti-trafficking community and identified solutions to remedy the situation. By its actions, the Government has reconfirmed its continued commitment and high interest in developing, strengthening and implementing anti-trafficking policies.

At the same time, it is important to mention that during the year, the topic of preventing and combating THB was also discussed on the parliamentary platform, set up on 18.10.2017, which confirms additionally the importance of this phenomenon for the Republic of Moldova.

I. GENERAL MEASURES

1.1. Legal and Regulatory Framework

Strengthening the legal and regulatory framework is one of the key factors for an efficient work of public authorities in the area of reference. A number of legislative and regulatory acts were adopted/approved and amended in 2017 in order to improve the protection and assistance to THB victims:

- The Government Decision No 136 of 09.03.2017 approved the **Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Moldova and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden on the Law Enforcement Co-operation, signed in Chisinau on 6 February 2017**. Under the Agreement, the Parties will cooperate, *including in the field of human trafficking*, in accordance with their respective national laws and regulations, adhering to the principle of double criminality, the prevention, detection and investigation of which requires joint action by the competent authorities of both Parties.

- **Law No 48 of 30.03.2017 on the Criminal Assets Recovery Agency** and Law No 49 of 30.03.2017 on Addenda to Some Legislative Acts entered into force on 19.05.2017, which created the legal framework necessary for the recovery of criminal assets, including by introducing a new chapter on asset recovery in the Code of Criminal Procedure. In order to identify the goods and assets used to commit crimes or resulting from crimes, as well as to guide the courts in terms of applying the sentence of special and extended confiscation, the General Prosecutor's instruction No 11-3d/17-1854 of 18.04.2017 established guidelines for all divisions of the Prosecutor's Office regarding the mechanism of initiating and conducting parallel financial investigations.

- After the US State Department published the 2017 edition of the Trafficking in Persons Report (TiP), which relegated the Republic of Moldova to Tier 2 Watch List, the Government

developed and approved the **Set of Measures to Implement the Priority Actions in Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings until 31 December 2017**. The set of measures was approved on 4 August 2017 by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova and sent for implementation at the central and local level.

- **The Government Decision No 965 of 14 November 2017 approved the Regulation of the Interdepartmental Commission for the financial compensation by the State of the damages caused by crimes**, which will ensure the enforcement of Law No 137/2016 on the Rehabilitation of Crime Victims, in the part related to the financial compensation by the State, and the Minister of Justice Order No 140 of 21 February 2018 established an interdepartmental commission for the financial compensation of the damages caused by crimes;

- **The Regulation on Issuance of Identity Documents and Keeping Records of the Inhabitants of the Republic of Moldova**, approved by the Government Decision No 125 of 18.02.2013 was amended, so that starting with 3 November 2017:

- the administrative ways of identifying people for purposes of issuing identity papers were extended. The persons who have reached the age of majority and had not been identified before their addressing or no previous identification can be proved, will be identified on the basis of affidavits filed simultaneously by three third parties, citizens of the Republic of Moldova, who know the identity of the person concerned; (Liability according to the criminal or contravention law, Article 352¹ of the Criminal Code);

- the new amendments will increase the access of people in special situations to services of ID cards issuance; will extend possibilities to represent a person admitted to a medical institution and in a serious condition (unconscious, in a coma), a person under the judicial protection in the form of guardianship, a bedridden person, a person undergoing forced treatment, a person in pre-trial detention or in detention, a person with mental illness or physical impairments, a person maintained in the treatment institution or in the social institution.

The services ID card issuance and registration at the domicile were optimized by simplifying them. Thus, according to the new regulations:

- when requesting identity documents due to the change of personal data (name, surname) it is not necessary to submit the civil status documents confirming the change of the personal data and/or the civil status of the holder if the State Register of the population contains the information about the changes and the civil status documents issued;

- when registering people at their domicile and/or residence it is not necessary to submit documents confirming the ownership if the information on the registration of ownership of the dwelling is contained in the automated information system of the Register of Real Estate;

- when applying for authorisation of emigration, applicants are not required to submit a notary statement in which parents confirm that their descendants, who apply for emigration with the intention to settle abroad, do not have any maintenance obligations.

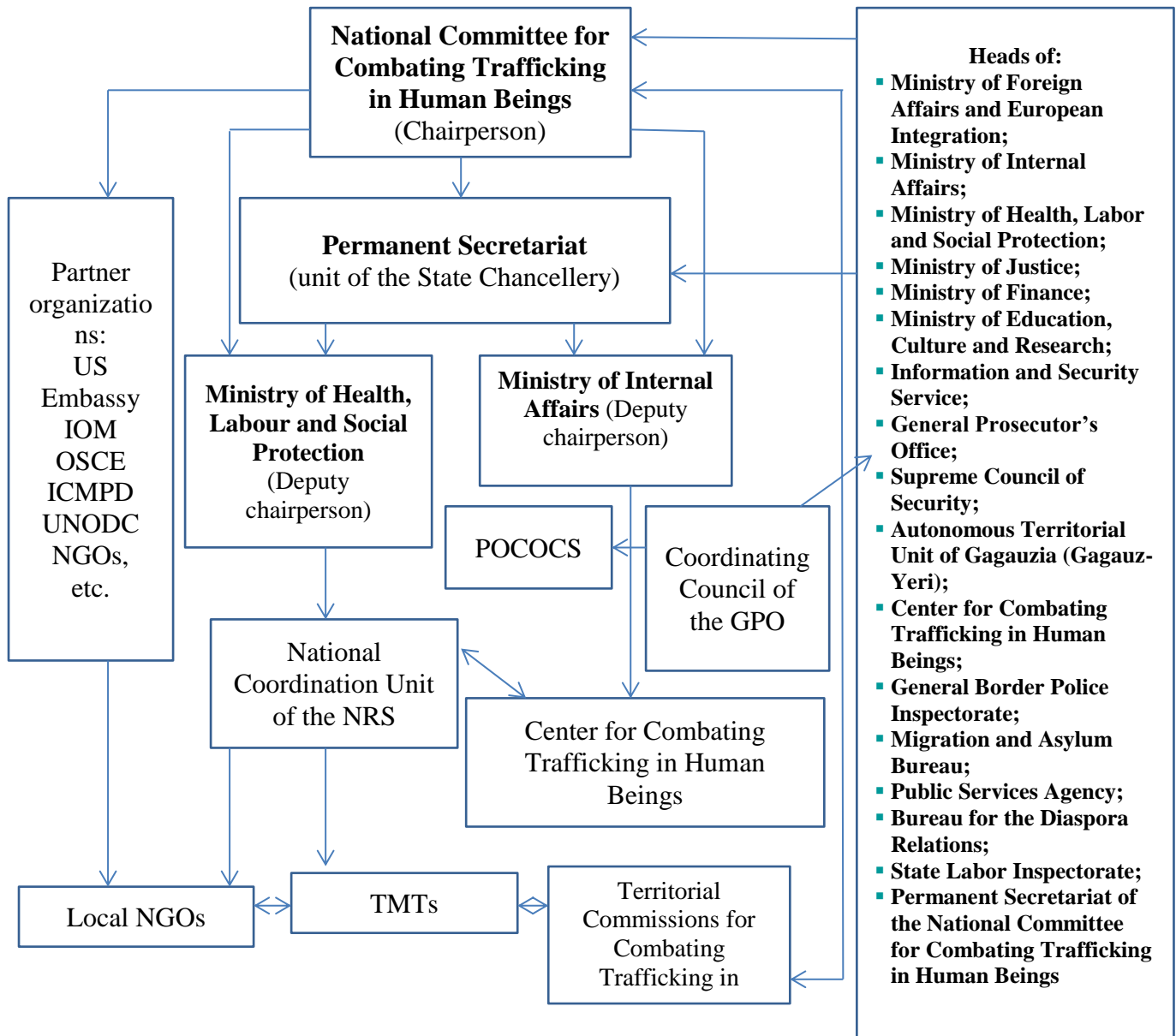
- The Government Decision No 255 of 27 April 2017 amended and complemented the Regulations on Repatriation (Government Decision No 948 of 7 August 2008), which stipulates now a new profile of beneficiaries in the repatriation procedure — ‘person in difficulty’. Provisions were also included to regulate the refunding of the actual costs for foodstuff, clothes, footwear, and medicines for adult beneficiaries, if necessary; by an order of the director, the institution will request the amount needed for the actual expenses for the procedure of accompanying repatriated adults. In the case of a person in difficulty, the expenses for the repatriation procedure will be borne in accordance with the international treaties to which the Republic of Moldova is a party. In the absence of such treaties, these costs will be covered by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Protection.

- To strengthen the relevant institutional mechanism and in the context of the CPA reform, but also as a response to the recent trends of the phenomenon, the PS developed the draft GD approving the amendments to the Government Decision No 472 of 26 March 2008 approving the composition of NC CTHB and the Activity Report. The proposed amendments and addenda

were approved by GD No 164 of 23.02.2018. The new composition of the National Committee is shown in the scheme below.

Scheme 1

Institutional mechanism of policy implementation



- The draft National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for 2018-2023 and the Action Plan implementing the Strategy in 2018-2020 (AP) were finalized. The National Strategy aims at the sustainable development of the national system for preventing and combating THB through the 4P paradigm (prevention, protection, punishment, partnership). The Strategy was developed in order to incorporate the Government's strategic objectives in fighting THB, to harmonise and strengthen the efforts of the competent institutions/organisations. The draft will be submitted to the Government for review and approval.

- The central public administration reform took place in 2017. Thus, on 26.07.2017 the Government adopted Decision No 594 on the Restructuring of the Central Specialized Public

Administration. According to this decision, a number of ministries, members of the NC CTHB, were reorganized, which resulted in a change in their competences and in the institutional composition of NC CTHB. Given the above-mentioned and the most recent trends of the phenomenon, the PS developed the draft GD approving the amendments to the Government Decision No 472 of 26 March 2008 approving the composition of NC CTHB and the Activity Report. The draft was submitted to the Government for review and approval. The institutional component of the National Committee will be hence updated.

- At the same time, Law No 80 of 05.05.2017 on Amendments and Addenda to Some Legislative Acts and the Government Decision No 314 of 22.05.2017 establishing the Public Services Agency reorganized two other important institutions in the anti-trafficking community: 'Registru' SOE State Information Resources Center and the Licensing Chamber - the administrative authority subordinated to the Ministry of Economy, by means of transformation and, respectively, merger (absorption) with the newly established public institution 'Public Services Agency'.

1.2. Institutional Framework

Institutionalisation of the **National Unit Coordinating the Assistance and Protection of Victims and Potential Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings** (NCU) has been a constant recommendation and need over the last few years. In this respect, as a result of the institutional reform, the responsibilities of the NCU previously fulfilled through a function co-financed by the partners have been assigned to a consultant in the Gender Equality Policy Division of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection (MoHLSP).

In order to implement the international treaties on investigation and prosecution of cases of THB and related crimes and to ensure the specialisation of prosecutors, the Anti-Trafficking Bureau was set up in the Prosecutor's Office on 28.12.2017, which has the power to exercise and conduct criminal prosecution on the cases investigated by the Police Inspectorates within the district of Chisinau regarding THB and related crimes. The Anti-Trafficking Bureau started its activity on 01.01.2018 with 5 specialized prosecutors.

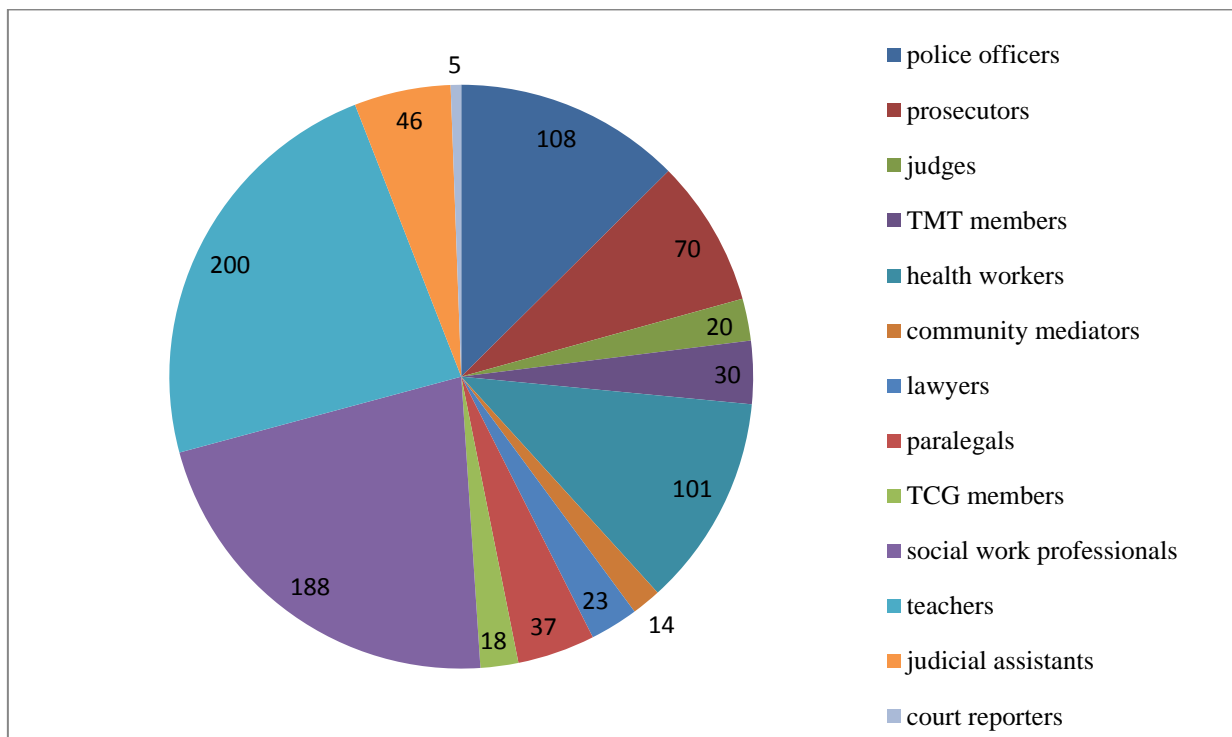
To make sure that the criminal investigations of THB and related crimes is carried out by specialised prosecutors only, the General Prosecutor's Order No 68/15 of 20.12.2017 amended and supplemented the General Prosecutor's Order No 44/15 of 24.11.2016 on the interaction between the units of the General Prosecutor's Office, the specialized and territorial prosecutor's offices in combating THB and illegal migration, introducing the obligation of the chief prosecutors of the specialized and territorial prosecutor's offices to order the exercise or conduct of the criminal prosecution of such cases by the responsible prosecutors.

To strengthen and coordinate the efforts of the law enforcement bodies, a meeting of the Coordinating Council of the law enforcement bodies with duties in fighting THB was held under the Prosecutor General. In order to ensure the efficient work of this Council, its composition and regulation of activity were changed.

1.3. Development of Specialists' Professional Skills

The International Reports (GRETA, US State Department) also recommend that the Government pays special attention to the training of subject-matter specialists with a victim-centered approach. Thus, a total of about 860 law enforcement, social, medical, and other specialists were trained, as shown in the Diagram:

Diagram 1
Number of trained specialists (approximate)



The trainings were conducted in groups of professionals, but also in mixed groups of specialists from different levels of public administration. For example: members of TMT, JIT, TC CTHB, the group of specialists for conducting interviews with minors and vulnerable victims. Note that most of the training was done with the support of the development partners.

1.4. Effective Financial Management

Assistance and protection of THB victims involve a wide range of services and allowances aimed at preventing, mitigating or eliminating the consequences of THB. Assistance is provided by and/or via specialists from multidisciplinary territorial teams, specialized centers and non-governmental organisations. Assistance, protection and rehabilitation services for THB victims include: repatriation assistance, first aid and social benefits, health care, psychological counseling, assistance in restoring and issuing documents, legal support, integration the primary and general education system, professional information and counseling, vocational training, placement in the Assistance and Protection Centers, etc.

In order to ensure qualitative and quantitative provision of the said assistance and protection, the Government approves annually funds, redirecting financial resources to the relevant central and local public authorities.

In the Republic of Moldova, 7 assistance and protection centers for victims and potential victims of THB were created in order to provide assistance through accommodation, provision of food, social, psychological, legal and emergency health care, guarding and protection. They are as follows: Centers for assistance and protection of victims and potential victims of THB (CAP) from Chisinau municipality and Causeni town (2); 'Sotis' Family Crisis Center from Balti; maternity centers from the towns of Drochia, Hincesti, Causeni and Cahul (4).

The 2017 state budget envisaged funds of MDL 8009.3 thousand for the operation of the above centers. MDL 7177.3 thousand of the planned amount were spent. The approved financial resources and the spending made in 2017 are presented in the table below for each center:

Table 1
Approved Financial Resources and Spending

No	Name of the Center	No of places	Approved funds (thousand MDL)	Funds execution (thousand MDL)
1	CAP Chisinau	34	3371.6	2894.9
2	CAP Causeni	14	505.6	505.6
3	'Sotis' Family Crisis Center (Balti)	19	860.8	743.3
4	Maternal Center 'Pro Familia' (Causeni)	19	801.6	801.1
5	Maternal Center 'Trust' (Cahul)	20	662.7	604.3
6	Maternal Center 'Ariadna' (Drochia)	32	1120.6	1102.2
7	Maternal Center 'Pro-Femina' (Hincesti)	18	686.4	525.9
Total		146	8009.3	7177.3

The approved funds were transferred from the state budget to level-two local budgets through earmarked transfers. The funds for CAP of Chisinau are an exception, as they were transferred from the MoHLSP budget.

At the same time, the MoHLSP budget envisaged MDL 426.0 thousand for other measures of protection and assistance to THB victims (repatriation). MDL 227.8 thousand were executed of these funds. The MoHLSP budget envisages MDL 980.0 thousand for the Free Child Telephone Service (*Child Telephone* - 116 111).

In 2017, the National Employment Agency granted to victims of THB allowances for integration or reintegration in a total amount of MDL 2725.25.

A significant financial contribution to providing assistance to THB victims was also provided by representatives of the civil society. In this context, we mention the support of the National Center for Training, Assistance, Counseling and Education in Moldova, as part of the 'Decreasing the negative impact of violence and child abuse and improving their access to psychosocial and legal services' Project, implemented in partnership with UNICEF Moldova (MDL 1,157,860.0), and 'Recognizing the identity of victims and potential victims of trafficking in human beings in the Republic of Moldova' Project (MDL 200,626.91), implemented in partnership with the International Organisation for Migration in Ukraine.

With the financial support of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Moldova, about MDL 4.56 million (USD 267457) were spent in 2017 for the assistance and protection of victims and potential victims of THB. The funds were used to offer support to CAP Chisinau, direct assistance in the rehabilitation and reintegration of beneficiaries (health care, legal, repatriation, food, hygiene, etc.) and vocational training programs.

II. PREVENTION

2.1. Informing the General Public

In 2017 many **activities aimed at raising the awareness and informing the public** about the risks and consequences of THB were carried out, as follows:

PS developed and implemented the **Population Information Program** for the prevention of THB in 2017, aimed at informing young people about THB (risks, prevention instruments, the profile of the trafficker, specialized institutions with competence in the field, distribution of useful information materials, etc.). The program was implemented in partnership with the Municipal Library 'B.P. Hasdeu'. The trainers were the representatives of PS, CCTHB and the NGO 'National Center for Prevention of Child Abuse' (CNPAC). During 2017, 10 information activities were held. Overall, more than 200 secondary and high school students and students of

the Centers of Excellence and the Agrarian University of Moldova participated in public lessons and the '12+' discussion club. Similar activities are planned to be carried out in 2018 in the vocational schools of Chisinau Municipality.

Information and awareness raising campaigns

In March-May and October 2017 the **Information Campaign 'Invisible Among Us'** (*in the districts of Causeni, Cantemir, Leova, Cimislia, Ungheni, Orhei, Soroca, Soldanesti and in the Chisinau Municipality*) was carried out, supported financially by the IOM Mission in Moldova and held by PS in partnership with the Territorial Commissions for Combating THB from 9 administrative territorial units of the country. The partners were representatives of public institutions and NGOs. The event was attended by heads of district councils, local specialists (including mayors of communes), teachers, students and local people, press and media agencies (radio and TV), etc. The purpose of this Campaign was to inform the public about the risks and consequences of THB, focusing on certain risk groups, such as children (especially orphans and left without parental care, including due to migration), young people (especially graduates of residential institutions), victims of domestic violence, persons with disabilities, elderly people (especially left alone as a result of migration), people not employed, etc., being also distributed information materials. After the official launch of the Campaign, the invited specialists, including the mayors of communes, actively interacted in workshops. These workshops have strengthened the Campaign's mission. In the Campaign have been used 10 figurines (human silhouettes), on which were written in Romanian, Russian, Gagauz, Ukrainian and Romani real stories of victims of THB, and information panels with detailed information about the event, the institutions involved, contact telephone numbers, hotlines, etc., displayed in public places to ensure the access to information by the inhabitants. Between June and October 2017, the figurines were hosted by the Municipal Library 'B.P. Hasdeu', being accessible to all visitors, and in November they were exhibited in the Chisinau International Airport.

During 16-22 October 2017 it was held the **National Campaign 'The Week for Combating THB'** for the sixth consecutive year. The activities were coordinated and monitored by PS, according to the Activity Matrix, and were carried out throughout the country, in collaboration with the CPA and other public institutions, the development partners, and at local level through the Territorial Committees for Combating THB. Among the partners that have supported many activities in this context are the OSCE and ILO Missions to Moldova, IC La Strada, CNPAC, the Child Rights Information and Documentation Center, the National Youth Resources Center and other local NGOs. The thematic information materials were prepared on the expense of public institutions and with the support of OSCE and ILO Missions to Moldova and other NGOs. These were distributed to the secretaries of the Territorial Committees at the meeting of 12.10.2017 and later throughout the country, including at the border crossing points. Then, PS has requested the relevant information and has developed the National Information Note, which can be found at http://www.antitrafic.gov.md/public/files/Nota_info_SaptaminaAntitrafic_final.pdf.

- In December 2017 NEA held an **information campaign** to raise awareness of the risks of illegal migration and inform about legal employment opportunities, including abroad, as well as employment opportunities in the country, in the context of the International Migrant Day. This campaign aimed to change the perception of the public regarding NEA and to strengthen the visibility of NEA as an institution that provides free services on the labor market. During this period, workshops, round tables, public debates, recruitment activities, meetings of the Labor Club were held, and job fairs were opened in various localities of the country, jointly with the development partners.

- During 21.09.2017- 28.09.2017, the OSCE Mission to Moldova, in partnership with the COLISEUM Center of Arts, presented the **documentary show 'Child Body'** in 5 districts of the country (Cahul, Orhei, Balti, Soroca and Cimislia). In Chisinau this show was played on 07.07.2017. The show was based on real cases of THB and was carried out with the participation

of representatives of law enforcement agencies, being intended for teachers, psychologists in educational institutions, parents, adolescents and other categories of people in direct contact with children (*a total of 2650 viewers*). The presentations have been followed by debates on the subject, in order to increase the society's awareness on the abuse against children, including online, to enhance the accountability of specialists involved in the protection of children at risk, to strengthen the intersectoral collaboration mechanism, etc.

- **The ‘Safe Adolescent’ Campaign**, launched on 25 May 2017 by CNPAC, was a campaign aimed at young people aged over 12. During the campaign, young people, parents and specialists were offered a range of tools to help them take the necessary steps to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation against children.

The educational institutions have carried out activities to prevent THB during the whole study year. Thus, pupils in the primary and secondary education system (about 150,000) took part in curricular and extra-curricular activities on the prevention of THB and related problems. This topic was addressed both in compulsory subjects (Civic Education, Class Master’s Hours, etc.) and in the optional ones (Education for Community Development, Human Rights Education etc.). More than 1000 various extra-curricular activities on anti-trafficking have been also carried out, involving about 30,000 students.

A significant contribution to parents’ involvement in various activities is the parental associations, who have organized thematic meetings with them. During the reporting period, 400 extra-curricular activities on the prevention of THB were held with the active involvement of about 10,000 parents from educational institutions of the country.

In the higher education institutions were held meetings, workshops, round tables, educational classes, conferences, etc. with the involvement of more than 4,500 students (Moldova State University, Free International University of Moldova, ‘Alecu Russo’ State University of Balti, Comrat State University, Institute of International Relations of Moldova, ‘Ion Creanga’ State Pedagogical University, etc.).

At the same time, 11 informative films on trafficking in human beings were screened for 340 viewers, 69 artistic and cultural events (shows, exhibitions, music recitals, summer schools) and 75 education and information actions were held.

In order to ensure access to information about THB, **media resources** accessible to the general public were used both during the campaigns and outside them: TV, local radio stations, local newspapers, as well as social media, web pages, etc. In this context, we note the active participation of CCTHB in broadcasts and various interviews, as follows:

- the show *Dogaru's Country* with the topic ‘Traps of trafficking in human beings’ and the interview with the theme ‘The slaves of Cyprus and Dubai. The ordeal of Moldovan women who wanted a better life’ (Publika TV - 24.01.2017);
- the show *Theme of the day* with the topic ‘More and more Moldovan women get sex slaves’ (Canal 2 - 24.01.2017 and 16.02.2017);
- the press conferences with the topic ‘Results in the field of TIP prevention’ (www.realitatealive.md - 17.03.2017);
- the show *Day by day* with the topic ‘The phenomenon of trafficking in persons exploited especially for labor’ (Publika TV - 31.05.2017);
- the show *Moldova Speaks* (PRIME TV - 13.11.2017).

Equally important are the press releases placed on the social media and web pages of the PS, the General Prosecutor's Office (GPO), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (MFAEI), the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), the CCTHB, the Migration and Asylum Bureau (BMA), the General Police Inspectorate (GPI), MoHLSP, CAP, NEA, international organisations and national NGOs. The website www.antitrafic.gov.md was visited in 2017 by approximately 250,000 people.

2.2. Vulnerability Reduction

THB prevention activities should also focus on reducing the vulnerability of risk groups. For this purpose in 2017 the NEA:

- provided consultations and information on legal employment abroad with individual employment contracts via the on-line forms submitted by citizens to the institution, by telephone and at the office, including by the free Call Center - Labor Market;

- 5019 calls were received, of which 41% focused on the emigration process.

Citizens were informed about legal employment abroad on the basis of the Law 180/2008 on Labor Migration, which provides for 3 legal ways of employment: on the basis of bilateral agreements; through licensed private employment agencies; and individually on the basis of an individual employment contract concluded with the employer prior to leaving the country;

- consulted the economic operators who are interested in obtaining the license for activity of employing Moldovan citizens abroad. Similarly, economic operators coordinate the collaboration agreements and draft individual employment contracts with NEA in order to comply with Law 180/2008 on Labor Migration and record the individual employment contracts of the citizens to be employed abroad. Thus, 95 collaboration agreements and draft individual employment contracts were examined in 2017, of which 67 were endorsed positively;

- registered 1007 individual employment contracts of citizens employed abroad through private agencies. Note that there is a continuous increase in the number of individual employment contracts recorded with NEA.

- On 16-22 October 2017, in the context of 'Combating Trafficking in Human Beings' National Campaign, NEA, TEA and development partners organized jointly several activities to inform and raise public awareness of the THB risks and consequences: 42 thematic information seminars focusing on preventing THB and the risks of illegal migration, promoting legal employment in the country; 9 sessions of the Labor Club and 4 trainings on techniques and methods of finding a job with the participation of the unemployed, in order to increase their capacities to search for a job, contact a potential employer and perform at the employment interview. A total of 1848 people participated in the organized activities, including 1085 unemployed. We emphasize that young people, including students of secondary and high schools, participated in the information seminars.

At the same time, during 2017 the professionals of 'La Strada' IC:

- a) offered counselling during the **25850** calls at the **Hotline 0800777777**, aimed at preventing THB;

- b) continued the management of the information portal www.migratiesigura.md, which was accessed **20832** times during the reporting period and through which **27** online consultations on migration issues were offered.

In partnership with the Center for International Migration and Integration of Israel, 'La Strada' IC and NEA facilitated the safe employment of **1900** Moldovan citizens in Israel. This activity was carried out under the *Bilateral Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Moldova and the Government of the State of Israel on Temporary Employment of Moldovan Workers in the State of Israel*.

The activities undertaken by the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Development Organisation (ODIMM) by developing and implementing programs to increase the professional and entrepreneurial skills, especially among young people and women, have an important impact on vulnerability reduction. In this context, ODIMM has made the following:

- Under the Ongoing Training Program 'Effective Business Management' (GEA), entrepreneurial advice has been provided to 3274 people. During the year 2017, 2156 people were trained, including 1292 women (60%) and 703 young people (33%). The GEA training courses have been held in the following cities: Balti, Chisinau, Soroca, Ungheni, Riscani, Straseni, Singerei, Telenesti, Glodeni, Falesti, Criuleni, Cimislia, Cahul, Stefan Voda, Comrat, Anenii Noi, Leova, including Tighina and Tiraspol.

- In the reference period, ODIMM held 11 entrepreneurship training sessions under the PARE 1+1 Program, with 311 participants, of which 40% were migrants, including 22% returned home, and 60% first-degree relatives. The share of women participating in training was 43%.

- Under Component III 'Business Financing' 232 grant applications were registered. During 2017, 209 grant applications were approved in the amount of MDL 43.69 million. The investment projects approved for financing involve attracting investments in the economy amounting to MDL 118.53 million. Of the total of businesses accepted for funding: 43% are newly created enterprises; 43% - businesses run by young people aged up to 35; 32% - businesses founded and / or managed by women; and 46% - businesses created by migrant workers.

- Under the National Program of Economic Empowerment of Youth, advice has been provided to 262 young people - potential entrepreneurs or persons who have recently created their own business, 29 training courses have been held for 718 young people, including 342 women (47.6%), in 17 localities, including Transnistria (Ribnita), and 168 investment projects have been financed, totaling MDL 28.45 million, of which MDL 19.61 million are grants.

It is also worth mentioning the work of the Joint Risk Assessment Group (JRAG) at national level, established by the Joint Order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Intelligence and Security Service, the General Prosecutor's Office and the Customs Service No 220/71/41/327-0 of 28 July 2014. JRAG annually develops the Joint Risk Assessment Report on Combating Cross-Border Crime, THB and Illegal Migration. As regards the field of THB, the Report highlights the risks identified at the state border, the operational methods applied, the vulnerability to the phenomenon, the effect of the actions taken, the profile of the trafficker, etc. In 2017, 6 meetings of JRAG were held (18.01.2017, 19.05.2017, 27.06.2017, 21.07.2017, 26.10.2017, 17.11.2017).

III. PROTECTION

3.1. Identification of THB victims

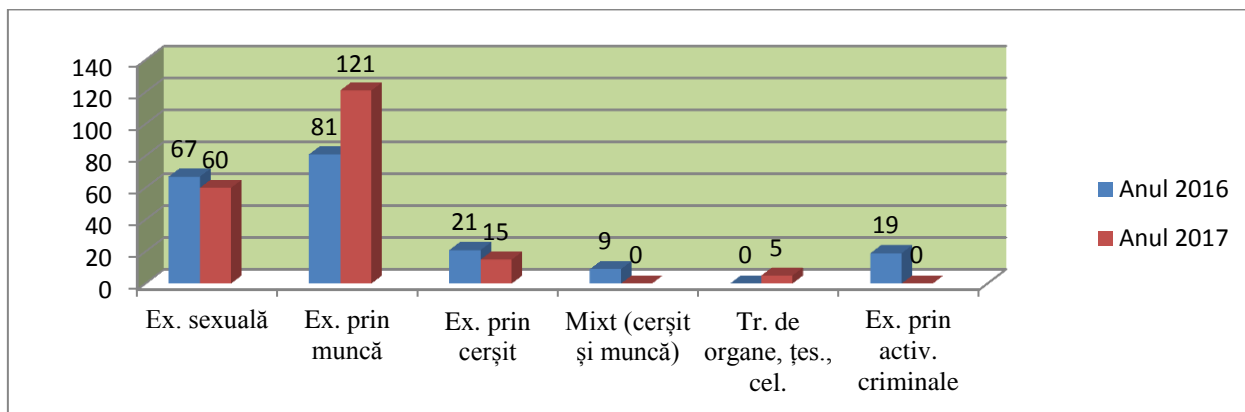
During 2017, CCTHB identified **201 adult victims of trafficking in human beings (THB) and 48 victims of trafficking in children**. Of them, 98 (49%) were women and 103 (51%) men, respectively 31 (65%) girls and 17 (35%) boys, and the Centre for Assistance and Protection (CAP) of Chisinau provided assistance to 90 victims of THB, of which: 68 adult victims and 22 juvenile victims (of them, 61 were referred to the law enforcement agencies).

The share of women and men continues to be equal - 95 women and 102 men were identified *in the previous year*.

➤ By the **exploitation form** in the THB offenses, the situation is as follows:

Diagram 2

Exploitation form of (adult) victims



Source: CCTHB

➤ As regards the **countries of destination** (see Table 1), it is noted that 25 adult persons (12 women and 13 men) were identified as victims of **internal trafficking**, of which 15 were exploited for labor purposes, mainly in agriculture (3 women and 12 men), 8 female victims were exploited for sexual purposes, one male victim was exploited for begging and one for cell sampling.

The main country of destination for **foreign trafficking** (in terms of the number of victims identified) is still the Russian Federation, where 92 trafficked persons were exploited, mainly for labor purposes (75 persons), begging (14 persons: 9 women and 5 men) and sexual purposes (3 women).

The area of the European Union countries is still a destination for THB. The destinations are the same as in the past: Turkey, with 11 female victims, all exploited for sexual purposes, the Northern Cyprus region, with 13 female victims (9 exploited for sexual purposes, 4 exploited for cell sampling), the Czech Republic, with 8 victims, all exploited for labor purposes (2 women and 6 men), Germany, with 7 victims (2 women exploited for sexual purposes and 5 men exploited for labor purposes), Italy, with 15 victims (8 women for sexual purposes, 7 victims for labor purposes), Sweden, with 5 victims (3 men exploited for labor purposes and 2 women for sexual purposes), Greece, with 6 female victims (5 for sexual purposes and 1 for labor purposes), UAE, with 2 women exploited for sexual purposes, Cyprus - 5 victims (4 - sexual exploitation, 1 - labor), Ukraine, with 2 victims (1 - sexual exploitation, 1 - begging).

At the same time, there are also **other destinations**, such as Norway, with 2 sexually exploited women, Switzerland, with 2 sexually exploited women, and Poland, with 2 male victims of labor exploitation, Portugal - 2 victims exploited for labor purposes, one victim in Spain (sexual exploitation) and one in the UK (labor exploitation).

Table 2. Number of adult victims by country of destination

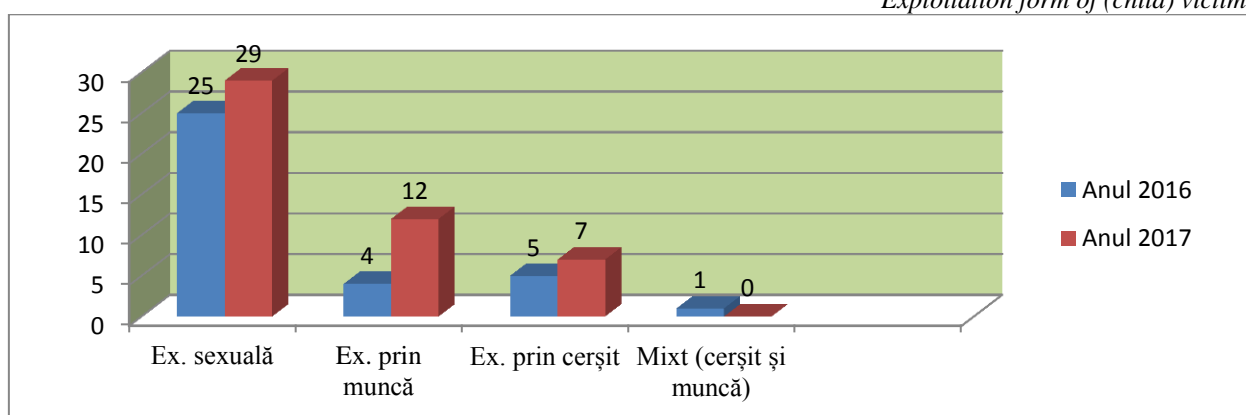
No	Country of destination	Total number of victims	
		Year 2017	Year 2016
1.	Russian Federation	92	95
2.	Turkey	11	12
3.	Northern Cyprus region	13	11
4.	Czech Republic	8	8
5.	Germany	7	9
6.	Italy	15	6
7.	Sweden	5	0
8.	Greece	6	1
9.	UAE	2	8

10.	Cyprus	5	3
11.	Ukraine	2	1
12.	Norway	2	0
13.	Switzerland	2	0
14.	Poland	2	2
15.	Portugal	2	0
16.	Spain	1	4
17.	Great Britain	1	0
18.	Romania	0	7
19.	Qatar	0	4
20.	Azerbaijan	0	1
21.	Lebanon	0	1
22.	France	0	1
23.	Austria	0	0
24.	Republic of Moldova (<i>internal trafficking</i>)	25	23

As regards **the victims of trafficking in children** (see Table 2), it is revealed that: 7 child victims were exploited for begging (6 girls (12-17 years) and 1 boy (13 years)), 12 child victims were exploited for labor purposes (2 girls aged 14-16 and 10 boys aged 8-17) and 29 child victims were sexually exploited (23 girls aged 14-17 and 6 boys aged 10-15).

Diagram 3

Exploitation form of (child) victims



In terms of **countries of destination** (see Table 4), internal trafficking is dominant, i.e. in-country exploitation, with 31 juvenile victims, followed by the Russian Federation, with 9 victims identified, Italy, with 3 victims, Romania, with 2 victims, and Turkey, with 2 victims (*Note: geographical destination for one victim has not yet been established*).

Of the total number of victims exploited on the territory of Moldova, 4 girl victims were exploited for begging, one girl and 6 boys for labor purposes and 17 girls and 3 boys for sexual purposes.

Table 3. Number of child victims by the form of exploitation

Form of exploitation.	Disaggregation by gender		Number of victims
	Female	Male	
sexual	23	6	29
labor	2	10	12
begging	6	1	7
			Total - 48

Table 4. Number of child victims by country of destination

No	Country of destination	Number of victims	
		Year 2017	Year 2016
1.	Russian Federation	9	2
2.	Italy	3	0
3.	Romania	2	0
4.	Turkey	2	2
5.	<i>Country not established by the criminal investigation body</i>	1	0
6.	Spain	0	1
7.	Great Britain	0	1
8.	Germany	0	2
9.	Ukraine	0	2
10.	Republic of Moldova (<i>internal trafficking</i>)	31	25
Total		48	35

Most of the victims of trafficking in human beings come from the rural localities of the country and represent the category of people with a low level of information; in most cases the reason for accepting the proposed labor offer is the insufficient income for living or even the total lack thereof. The continuous migration of the population (parents) has favored the increase in the number of ‘street children’, eventually resulting in cases of exploitation of these children by begging or other criminal activities within the country.

Additionally, it is equally worth mentioning the work of the development partners to identify the victims of THB. During the year 2017, the hotline of IC La Strada received **199** SOS calls related to cases of THB, exploitation, migrants in difficulty, etc. As a result, **17** presumed victims of THB (10 adults and 7 children) and **37** migrants in difficulty, who were referred to the SNR partners, have been identified.

3.2. Statistics on Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings and Assisted Trafficking in Children. Victim’s Profile

In 2017, the centers of Chisinau Municipality and Causeni District provided assistance to 91 victims, of whom 68 adults and 23 juveniles, a relatively similar number compared to 2016 (86 victims).

The profile of assisted (adult) victim of THB

Of the total number of 68 victims of THB, 43 are women and 25 are men.

Analyzing the age of the victims, we notice that most of the female victims (18 women) are aged 26-35 and most of the male victims (14 men) are aged 36-50.

Regarding the education level, 56% of the victims have secondary education, 25% have secondary and specialized education, 6% are without education, 12% have primary education, and 1% (1 victim) have higher education.

Most victims (about 80%) come from *rural areas*.

Analyzing the civil status of the victims, we note that 51.5% of the victims are unmarried, 18% are married, while 7.5% are divorced, 22% live in cohabitation, and 1% (1 victim) are widows.

Regarding the type of exploitation, we note that 28% of the victims were sexually exploited, 55% were exploited by labor, 13% for begging and 4% were exploited in another form.

Of the total number of victims, we note that 31% were exploited on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, while 69% were exploited abroad.

As regards the type of service provided to the victims, we note that 100% of the victims have received social assistance, 53% health care, 54% legal aid, 50% psychological assistance and only 4% (3 victims) vocational training.

The profile of child trafficking victim assisted

Out of the total number of victims of child trafficking, 61% (14 victims) are female and 39% (9 victims) are male.

- 44% of child victims come from rural areas,
- The majority of victims (about 74%) were exploited on the territory of the Republic of Moldova,

Regarding the type of exploitation, we note that 54% of child victims were sexually exploited, 27% were exploited by labor, 19% for begging.

In conclusion, the following profile for adult and child victims is outlined:

- Most of the victims were female
- 63% of the victims exploited by labor were male and 37% female, which shows an increase in the number of women (adult and girls) exploited by this form, compared to the previous year, by about 68%.
- All sexually exploited adult victims were female
- Most victims come from rural areas.
- In the case of adult victims, external trafficking is predominant
- In the case of child victims, internal trafficking is predominant.

The victim's profile was drawn up in accordance with the indicators of the form filled in by the MoHLSP.

3.3. Repatriation of THB victims

The repatriation missions targeting citizens of the Republic of Moldova are organized and carried out in accordance with the Regulation on Procedure for Repatriation of Child and Adult Victims of Human Trafficking, People in Difficulty and Unattended Children, approved by the Government Decision No 948 of 07.08.2008. For the year 2017, the amount of MDL 426,000 has been planned in the budget of the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Protection (MoHLSP) for repatriation services. During the reporting period, the amount of MDL 227,800 was spent in this respect.

In 2017 MoHLSP held 9 repatriation missions, repatriating 22 children (*children identified without a companion*), of whom: 6 children from Ukraine (5 missions) and 16 children from the Russian Federation (4 missions). Of the total number of repatriated children, 7 have been reintegrated into their biological/extended families, 1 child has been placed in foster care service, 1 child has been placed in family-type children's home, and 13 children have been placed in temporary placement centres. Also, 6 adults from the following countries have been repatriated by using funds from the state budget: Russian Federation, Ukraine, Czech Republic and Belgium.

The Centre for Assistance and Protection for Victims and Potential Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings (CAP) has provided assistance at state border crossing points for 12 repatriated victims of THB. Among them, 7 victims were provided with placement services and 5 victims have accessed CAP day services.

Of the total number of victims of THB who have been repatriated and placed in CAP, 3 have received assistance in the preparation of identity papers, 2 - legal assistance, 5 - psychological assistance, 6 - health care, 7 - social care.

3.4. Services of Assistance, Protection and (Re)integration for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings

A constant recommendation and need over the last few years has been related to the institutionalization of the National Coordination Unit for the THB Victim Assistance and Protection System (NCU). In this respect, as a result of the institutional reform, the

responsibilities of the NCU previously fulfilled through a function co-financed by the partners have been assigned to a consultant in the Gender Equality Policy Division of MoHLSP.

At the same time, following the amendments to the *Government Decision No 948 of 07.08.2008 approving the Regulation on Procedure for Repatriation of Child and Adult Victims of Human Trafficking, People in Difficulty and Unattended Children* and

the inclusion of a new beneficiary profile ('person in difficulty'), during May - December 2017, 9 people in difficulty were repatriated on the basis of partnerships established between ILO and MoHLSP, of which 2 were repatriated by using funds from the state budget.

During the year 2017, NEA registered as unemployed **2** persons (women) victim of trafficking in human beings, who also benefited from mediation services. Free information and professional advice services were also provided to 3 victims of trafficking in human beings, one of whom was registered as unemployed at NEA in 2015. During this period, the victims of trafficking in human beings benefited from the integration or reintegration allowance (MDL 762.6 per month). The lack of a formal mechanism, under which the status of presumed victim of THB is established, may damage the right of those people to receive the professional integration or reintegration allowance, the preparation of identity documents, etc. services provided by the state budget.

During the reporting period IC La Strada provided legal assistance, court representation and psychological assistance for **27** children, out of which 14 victims of child trafficking (art. 206 CC) and 13 victims of sexual exploitation and abuse (art. 171, 172, 174 and 175 CC).

At the same time, during the year, priorities were identified and established regarding the consolidation of services for victims of THB, to be achieved by the development of specialized services for men victims of THB, long-term assistance and protection services for rehabilitation and (re)integration victims of THB, and with the support of sign language interpreters, the specialists who provide assistance to the hearing-impaired are informed about trafficking in human beings, its consequences and the rights to assistance and protection.

IV. PUNISHMENT

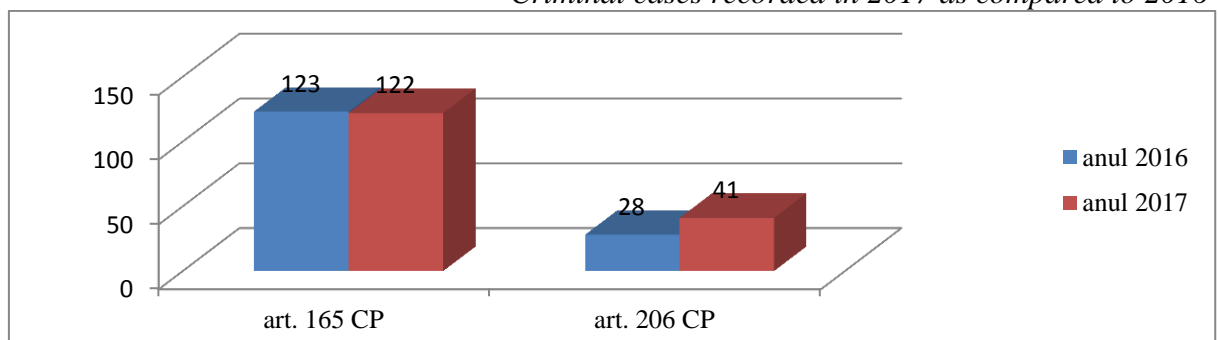
4.1. Criminal prosecution and judging cases

In **punishing** human traffickers, particularly referring to *criminal prosecution*, it was found that in 2017 - 163 cases of human trafficking were recorded in the whole country, including:

- Trafficking in human beings - 122 cases,
- Child trafficking - 41 cases.

Chart no. 4

Criminal cases recorded in 2017 as compared to 2016



Analyzing the activity of detecting crimes related to trafficking in human beings in 2017, there is a constant dynamics in the number of cases of trafficking (article 165 of the Criminal

Code) as compared to the same period of 2016. At the same time, there is an increase of 46% of cases of trafficking in children (article 206 of the Criminal Code) identified during the reporting period as compared to the same period of 2016.

As to crimes similar to human trafficking, there was an increased interest of law enforcement bodies to combat the phenomenon of forced labor of persons. Thus, they detected more cases of crime under art.168 of the Criminal Code (forced labor), with a growth of the indicator of 46%. Simultaneously, 23% less cases of pimping were registered during the reporting period (Article 220 of the Criminal Code).

During 2017, **criminal prosecution was finalized for 197 criminal cases¹** classified in the category of human trafficking, assimilated or connected offenses. From these, 143 criminal cases were sent to court with indictments for examination in first instance; criminal prosecution was terminated in 17 cases, and 37 criminal cases were dismissed.

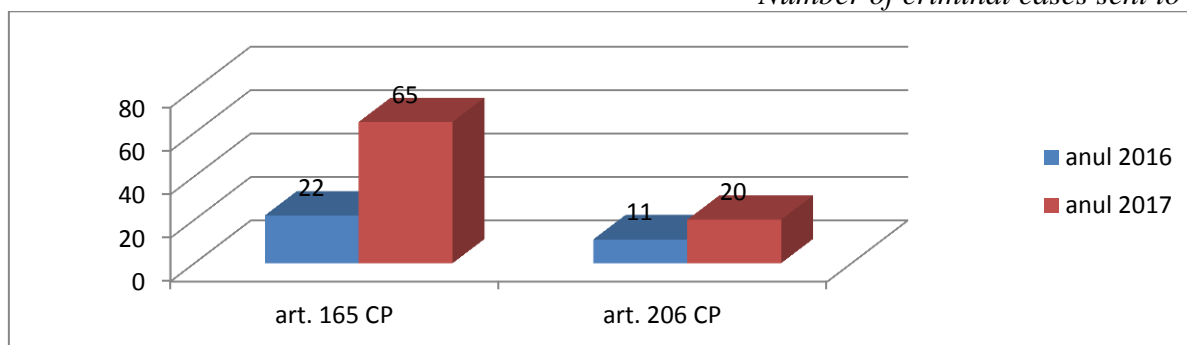
It should be noted that out of the total number of cases for which criminal prosecution was completed during the reporting period (197 criminal cases), criminal prosecution was initiated in 2017 for 67 criminal cases. Out of these, 53 criminal cases were sent to first instance court for examination, and 14 criminal cases were terminated or dismissed.

During the reporting period, indictments were completed for 85 criminal cases and the cases were sent to court for examination, including:

- 65 criminal cases referring to the crime of *human trafficking*,
- 20 criminal cases referring to the crime of *child trafficking*.

Chart no. 5

Number of criminal cases sent to court



Regarding the category of criminal offenses under Article 206 of the Criminal Code, in 2016, indictments for 11 criminal cases were sent to court (initiated during the reporting period), but in 2017, 20 criminal cases were submitted to court (including started prior to the reporting year).

Thus, both categories of crimes show a significant increase in prosecutions completed, since as compared to the number of criminal cases initiated, it is clear that every second criminal case is submitted with indictment to court.

The indicator described above is one of the performance criteria for prosecutors because the number of criminal cases sent to court with indictments depends largely on the work of prosecutors and of the criminal prosecution body.

With reference to the *means used* by prosecutors to conduct criminal proceedings in cases of human trafficking, related or assimilated offenses, it was found that in 2017 prosecutors were not limited to the hearing of victims and witnesses. Thus, based on requests (demarches) by prosecutors, investigating judges has authorized criminal prosecution actions and special investigative measures for 368 cases, of which:

Criminal investigation actions / special investigation measures	Requests made
Searches	125
Collecting information from electronic communication service providers	35

¹ According to data collected based on Prosecutor General's Order No.44 / 15 from 24.11.2016

Interception and recording of communications	166
Visual tracking and interception of conversations and recording of visual images	13
Monitoring and control of financial transactions and access to financial information	5
Searches of residences and/or installation of devices providing audio and video supervision and recording, photographing and filming devices	4
Home surveillance using recording technical means	1
Documentation using technical methods and means as well as tracking and tracing using the global positioning system, GPS	6
Other	13
Total	368

However, in 27 cases, within their competences, prosecutors authorized special investigative measures which included: visual tracking, covert investigation and identification of subscribers.

Following an analysis of the *judicial practice* in 2017 in respect to trafficking in human beings and trafficking in children, it was found that:

During the reporting period, the courts issued a total of 41 convictions on cases of trafficking in human beings for 59 defendants², from whom:

- 25 convictions on *trafficking in human beings* for 31 defendants;
- 16 convictions on *trafficking in children* for 28 defendants³;

Out of the total number of convictions pronounced, 34 were for sentencing 48 people, including:

- 21 convictions on *trafficking in human beings* for 26 defendants;
- 13 convictions on *trafficking in children* for 22 defendants⁴.

Referring to punishments imposed by the courts, it appears that of the 48 individuals who were **sentenced**, imprisonment was applied to 46 people. Out of these, for trafficking in human beings - 25 persons, for trafficking in children - 21 persons.

However, 1 person was imposed a custodial sentence for trafficking in human beings with conditional suspension of the sentence.

The analysis of judicial practice shows that first instance court judges have requalified the actions of defendants from article 165 of the Criminal Code (Trafficking in human beings) to Article 220 of the Criminal Code (Pandering) in 5 cases. Out of these, four rulings were appealed by prosecutors as illegal.

Analyzing the convictions made on cases of trafficking in human beings and trafficking in children, it was noted that:

- by *gender criterion* – out of the 26 people convicted of the crime stipulated by Art. 165 of the Criminal Code - 13 are men, and 13 are women; out of the 21 people convicted of the crime stipulated by Article 206 of the Criminal Code - 10 are men and 11 are women;

- by *purpose of exploitation* – for sexual exploitation - 13 people were convicted for crimes under Article 165 of the Criminal Code and 20 people for crimes under Article 206 of the Criminal Code; for the purpose of labor exploitation - 5 people were convicted under Article 165 of the Criminal Code and 1 (one) person under Article 206 of the Criminal Code; for the purpose

² According to data collected based on Prosecutor General's Order No.44 / 15 from 24.11.2016

³ The same conviction for others for committing *trafficking in children* (art. 206 of the Criminal Code), a defendant was convicted of the crime *Using the results of the work or services of a person who is victim of human trafficking* (Art. 165¹ of the Criminal Code).

⁴ The same conviction for others for committing *trafficking in children* (art. 206 of the Criminal Code), a defendant was convicted of the crime *Using the results of the work or services of a person who is victim of human trafficking* (Art. 165¹ of the Criminal Code).

of exploitation through begging - 7 persons were convicted under Article 165 of the Criminal Code.

Referring to the *penalties applied* for crimes under Article 165 of the Criminal Code and Article 206 of the Criminal Code, it was found that all sentenced defendants have been convicted to imprisonment - from 4 years and 10 months to 25 years.

Regarding the aspect of organized crime, during the reporting period, the courts have pronounced 6 convictions, which relate to sentencing members of organized criminal groups. Out of these, 2 convictions refer to crimes stipulated in article 165 paragraph (3) letter a) of the Criminal Code (trafficking in human beings) and 3 convictions refer to crimes stipulated in article 206 paragraph (3) lit. d) of the Criminal Code (trafficking in children). The rulings sentenced traffickers to prison terms between 12 to 25 years.

In order to ensure the continuity of parallel financial investigations, while convicting the defendants, during the reporting period, courts have ordered *seizure* of proceeds resulting from criminal activities or used for committing criminal activities related to trafficking in persons as well, under Articles 106 and art.106¹ of the Criminal Code. Thus, in 8 criminal cases, special seizure of the following assets: money in the amount of 100.300 lei; 2 cars, one half from 2 apartments, a house in Chisinau (the Court of Appeal admitted the appeal of the prosecutor, including seizure of the real estate), 13 computers, 9 mobile phones, 3 web cameras, 1 (one) camera, a portable hard disk, was ruled.

However, it should be mentioned that following the requests of prosecutors, courts ruled for **court expenses** to be paid by defendants, the total value of which amounted to **132.493 lei**.

Table no. 5
Statistics for enforcing the provisions of the Criminal Code, trafficking in human beings/children (art.165/art.206 of the Criminal Code)

Year	Criminal cases registered	Criminal cases sent to court	Defendants (Traffickers) for whom convictions were issued	People sentenced to imprisonment	People sentenced to imprisonment With conditional suspension of sentence	The number of victims according to CCTHB
2010	142/23	45/10	48/5	27/4	11/1	-
2011	111/24	45/14	35/2	7/1	11/1	131
2012	151/20	60/5	21/10	13/9	8/1	266/24
2013	135/20	43/8	27/12	20/4	1/0	233/29
2014	151/24	42/7	34/9	28/9	6/0	238/26
2015	151/38	52/24	29/10	27/9	0/0	242/68
2016	123/28	22/11	48/8	39/8	1/0	197/35
2017	122/41	65/20	31/28	25/21	1/0	201/48

4.2. Protection of Victims and Witnesses in Criminal Proceedings

Given the importance of respecting the rights of victims of trafficking in human beings, and providing assistance and protection to these individuals, during 2017, the Public Prosecution Office conducted the *following general actions*:

To ensure quality and efficiency of work, the **instruction of the Prosecutor General** from May 4, 2017 ordered the body of prosecutors to study in detail the provisions of Law no. 137 of 29.07.2016 for its proper and uniform enforcement. Thus, the provisions of this law were studied by the entire body of prosecutors – 692 people.

In addition, the General Prosecution Office developed a **General Instruction** on how to inform victims about support services available to them, which was sent to senior prosecutors and heads of criminal prosecution bodies for implementation on 12.10.2017.

In this context, the General Prosecution Office developed a **set of useful information** for victims of human trafficking on the rights and guarantees they enjoy, which was posted on the website of the Prosecution Office under the directory "News" in November 2017.

In order to improve activities preventing and combating criminal offenses related to trafficking in human beings, child trafficking and other assimilated and related crimes through developing mechanisms for first hand referral to prosecutors, considering the provisions of article 27 par. (2) of the Council of Europe Convention on action against trafficking in human beings, by order of the Prosecutor General no.56/15 from December 8, 2017, an "Anti-trafficking Green Line" with the mobile phone number (373)69999021 and email antitrafic@procuratura.md was established with the Prosecution Office.

As for *actions on criminal proceedings* undertaken by prosecutors in order to provide assistance and protection to victims of trafficking, the following was established:

During 2017, 25 victims were heard in special conditions in order to exclude repeated victimization of victims of trafficking in human beings and child trafficking following requests submitted by prosecutors. Among them - 21 victims were heard under conditions provided by Article 109 para. (3) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 4 - were heard by the investigating judge in dedicated facilities equipped with audio/video recording devices, via an interviewer, pursuant to art. 110¹ of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

At the same time, as a result of explaining their procedural rights to victims of trafficking - 21 victims received legal assistance.

Also, **15 children victims-witnesses** of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse were interviewed by a specially trained psychologist of IC "La Strada" in an interview room specially equipped for interviewing children in a friendly manner. At the request of law enforcement bodies, IC "La Strada" specialists produced **17 psychological evaluation reports** for children victims-witnesses.

In one case, to ensure the security of victims of trafficking whose life, physical integrity, freedom or property were endangered due to the fact that they had information that they had agreed to provide to judicial bodies and which constituted conclusive evidence of committing the crime of trafficking, by order of the prosecutor, measures were taken to protect the victim.

In accordance with national and international legislation, as a special measure of protection, victims and also potential victims are informed about their rights in such situations. Prosecutors were cautioned to provide explanations on the right of victims to receive protection (Article 58 para. (5) of the Code of Criminal Procedure). During the reporting period, law enforcement bodies have referred 103 victims of trafficking (adults and children) to institutions responsible for providing social and legal assistance.

At the same time, two persons were absolved of criminal liability under the provisions of Article 165 para. (4) of the Criminal Code because it was found that they had committed offences being victims of trafficking.

In addition, the response of law enforcement bodies was increased in all cases of intimidation aimed at changing statements reported by victims/witnesses of trafficking cases. In this regard, during the reporting period, 8 criminal cases were initiated under art.314 of the Criminal Code - *"determination to submission of false statements"* (on cases of human

trafficking and child trafficking), from which as a result of verifications, 6 criminal cases were initiated.

4.3. Recovery of Damages Caused to Victims of Trafficking

During 2017, in 9 criminal cases, the courts have allowed civil actions to injured parties totaling 365.792 lei.

As for judicial practice in this segment, it was found that in most cases victims do not file civil actions. This is due including to corruption of victims by traffickers who, as a result, refuse to participate in trials. Also, victims do not always identify themselves as being affected by acts of trafficking, which is why they do not want to continue civil action.

As a result of explaining procedural rights to victims of trafficking, they filed 59 civil actions worth 3,556,622 MDL, 101,600 EUR, 6000 USD, and 14,000 Russian rubles.

Sanctioning Legal Persons

During 2017, the competent bodies suspended and withdrawn licenses for several economic entities:

- **3 licenses suspended** under art. 17 para. (1), (2) and (3) of the Law no. 235 from 20.07.2006, art. 10 para. (1), (4), 12⁴ par. (4) letter a) of Law no. 160 from 22.07.2011, art. 18 para. (1) letter b) of Law no. 180 from 10.07.2008);

- **4 licenses withdrawn** under art. 17 para. (3) of Law no. 235 from 20.07.2006, art. 7 para. (2) a) art. 21 para. (2) e) of the Law. 451 30.07.2001).

V. PARTNERSHIP

5.1. National Partnership

National partnership development and strengthening interaction between different institutions responsible for preventing and combating trafficking with development partners remains a priority. In 2017, development partners (OSCE and IOM Moldova, IC "La Strada" NCPA, ICMPD, UNHCR) continued to provide support in training specialists and informing the general public about the risks and consequences of trafficking by developing and distributing information materials and publishing/editing them.

In 2017, NCPA issued the following publications:

- *Guidelines "Evaluation and development of psychological evaluation reports in cases of violence, neglect, exploitation and trafficking of children"* - methodological support for psychologists from institutions providing services of assessing children who are victims, developed based on NCPA experience of providing this kind of service. The methodology can be found at the following link
http://cnpac.org.md/uploaded/Publicatii/PDF/publicatii/Metodologia_EvRapPsi.pdf
- Guide for parents "Education without Violence", a publication offering parents advice on nonviolent education of children of different ages;
http://cnpac.org.md/uploaded/Publicatii/PDF/educatie_fara_violenta_2016.pdf
- The brochure "How to Recognize Abuse" – for children in I-IV grades
http://cnpac.org.md/uploaded/Publicatii/PDF/Cartea_Copii.pdf
- The brochure "How to Recognize Abuse" - for adolescents in V-XII grades
<http://cnpac.org.md/uploaded/Publicatii/PDF/publicatii/BROSURA%20ADOLESCENT.pdf>

Also, to facilitate and strengthen the exchange of information between local authorities and local NGOs, within 03 – 10.31.17, the Permanent Secretariat of the NCCTHB in partnership with the OSCE Mission to Moldova organized 5 regional workshops that trained 162 specialists from 34 raions. Participants were specialists with relevant expertise - chairs and secretaries of Territorial Commissions (TCs), coordinators of territorial multidisciplinary teams, specialized prosecutors, police, public health specialists and representatives of local NGOs. Regional workshops aimed at disseminating best practices learned during the study visit to Alba Iulia, Romania in May 2017 attended by chairs of TCs from 9 raions of the country. During meetings held in raions, various information was presented, the needs and issues faced by LPAs were identified as well as information materials were handed out.

In 2017, the process of *revising and amending the Memorandum of Cooperation signed in 2008 between the central public authorities, the civil society/international organizations* was initiated. On 27.12.2017, a meeting with representatives of relevant institutions and development partners was held when they discussed their opinions and proposals to the document, the institutions to be included as additional members. This activity will continue in 2018.

5.2. Operations and International Legal Cooperation

As to international cooperation in criminal proceedings, during the reporting period, prosecutors acting in accordance with the standards set out in Art. 32 of the Convention of the Council of Europe on action against trafficking, in 2017, the General Prosecution Office of the Republic of Moldova submitted 18 requests for international legal assistance (Romania - 1, Ukraine - 1, Czech Republic – 1, Russian Federation -15) in connection with the investigation of cases of human trafficking, of which 6 were executed and 12 are being executed. Also, a rogatory commission letter was submitted to the competent authorities of Ukraine in connection with the investigation of child trafficking cases, which was executed.

At the same time, the General Prosecution Office of the Republic of Moldova received a rogatory commission letter from competent bodies of the Russian Federation in connection with the investigation of trafficking cases, which was executed. Other requests for rogatory commissions in connection with the investigation of trafficking children were not received.

In addition, during the reporting period, 10 requests for extradition of persons accused of committing trafficking in human beings were submitted (Ukraine-1, Poland-1, Italy-1, Russian Federation-2, Georgia-2, Turkey-2, Greece-1), of which 7 were admitted and 3 are still under examination. In the same period, two requests for extradition of persons accused of committing child trafficking were submitted (Russian Federation-1, Georgia-1), one was admitted and one is still pending. Other extradition requests initiated by other countries over the investigation of trafficking in human beings and trafficking in children were not received.

During 2017, CCTHB cooperated:

✓ *with law enforcement bodies from Greece* for retaining 6 accomplices involved in commercial sexual exploitation of several female persons originating from Moldova, who were transported to Athens, Greece, and forced to perform sexual services for money. During the operation and searches, 7 young women from Moldova were released from sexual slavery, and provided assistance and protection.

✓ *with law enforcement bodies from Germany (liaison officer to the German Embassy in Bucharest)* to identify suspects involved in commercial sexual exploitation of two female persons originating from Moldova who were transported to Switzerland under false pretenses, where they were sexually exploited for 2-3 weeks, after which they were transported to Germany for the same purpose. At the moment, this case is under documentation and creation of a joint team for documentation was requested.

✓ *with law enforcement bodies from Romania/Iasi* for the documentation of a criminal group that committed crimes related to human trafficking and pimping for sexual exploitation of citizens of Republic of Moldova in Romania, Sweden, Denmark and Norway. The criminal group consisting of citizens of Republic of Moldova and Romania recruited, incited and

determined women to engage in commercial prostitution in Bucharest, Romania through social networks. At present, this case is in the documentation phase.

✓ *with law enforcement bodies from Turkey* to create joint investigation teams in order to document a criminal group that committed crimes related to trafficking in human beings, trafficking in human organs, tissues and cells in Cyprus, Turkey. The members of this group, who are citizens of Republic of Moldova and Turkey, recruited and transported to the Northern region of Cyprus women from Moldova for the purpose of removing human egg cells. At present, this group is in the process of being documented.

✓ *with law enforcement bodies from Romania/Iasi* in order to exchange information for the purpose of documenting a criminal group consisting of citizens of Republic of Moldova, which under the guise of massage parlors in Romania, are recruiting young women from Moldova, including minors, who are forced to provide commercial sexual services. At present, this group is in the process of being documented.

✓ *with law enforcement bodies from Spain* for the purpose of saving from trafficking and later transporting to Republic of Moldova a female person. Thus, two people, a Moldovan citizen and a Romanian citizen, together with other unknown people, recruited several young women from Republic of Moldova with the intention to organize their travel to Spain in the near future for commercial sexual exploitation. At present, this group is in the process of being documented.

✓ *with law enforcement bodies from the Russian Federation* for the purpose of saving from trafficking and later repatriating to Republic of Moldova 7 people. Thus, a citizen of Republic of Moldova with other unknown people, under the guise of providing farming jobs with a good salary recruited and transported to the Russian Federation 7 persons, citizens of Republic of Moldova, for the purpose of commercial labor exploitation by fraud. At present, this group is in the process of being documented.

✓ *with law enforcement bodies from Israel* to identify and bring under criminal liability members of a criminal organization specialized in illegal migration of Moldovan citizens for labor exploitation, which acts on the territory of Israel. At present, this case is being documented.

✓ *with law enforcement bodies from Germany* to identify traffickers (German citizens) involved in the commission of trafficking of children for the purpose of organ harvesting. At present, this case is being documented.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

- there is an increase of 46% of criminal cases registered as trafficking in children (article 206 of the Criminal Code) during the reporting period as compared to the same period of the previous year, which is due to the intensification of work of law enforcement bodies and proactive identification of these kind of cases,
- there is a significant increase in completed prosecutions pursuant to Articles 165 and 206 of the Criminal Code, which, comparing to the number of criminal cases initiated, shows that indictments for every second criminal case are submitted to court,
- significant steps were taken to implement the provisions of Law no. 137/2016 on the rehabilitation of victims of crime to grant financial compensation from the state to victims of crime through approving the Regulation of the Interdepartmental Commission for Financial Compensation by the State for Damages caused by Crime,
- there is an increase in the number of children trafficked within the country due to effective involvement of law enforcement in identifying victims of child trafficking, especially those exploited in Republic of Moldova,
- the institutionalization of the National Coordination Unit of the system for the protection and assistance of victims and potential victims of trafficking will ensure its constant operation without depending on external sources,

- TCs are still insufficiently active and their collaboration capacities with small local NGOs are low,
- lack of a formal mechanism determining a person's status as presumed victim of trafficking,
- lack of specialized training for onboard plane, rail and international motor transportation teams on preventing human trafficking,
- agriculture and livestock sector employers are not sufficiently informed to build knowledge on legal employment and avoiding labor exploitation,
- training community mediators was conducted during the year on the subject of human trafficking,
- during the last reporting period new forms of exploitation appeared which are not criminalized under current legislation,
- there is lack of services for male victims of trafficking in human beings,
- there are no information modules on the prevention of trafficking for people seeking work,
- changes were made in the procedure of legal documentation of vulnerable people, but there are difficulties in issuance of civil status documents.

Recommendations

- train professionals in the air, road, rail and water transport sectors on how to prevent international trafficking;
- inform professionals assisting people with hearing impairments with the support of skilled sign language interpreters about human trafficking, its consequences and their rights to assistance and protection;
- carry out training for community mediators;
- inform/train employers in the agriculture, animal husbandry and construction sectors on the need to respect legal procedures for employment and avoid situations of labor exploitation for the prevention of trafficking in human beings;
- competent institutions to enforce Law on the rehabilitation of victims of crime no. 137 of 29.07.2016 published in the Official Gazette no.293-305/618 from 09.09.2016;
- modify and amend the Criminal Code to criminalize new forms of exploitation;
- expand the experience of prosecutors with civil actions being filed and collecting damages from traffickers, and the work of other prosecutors, in particular, who must explicitly inform the victims about their right to request recovery of damages from defendants;
- strengthen a national coordination and referral mechanism for victims of crime, including victims of trafficking in human beings;
- strengthen TCs capacities to plan financial resources for implementing activities to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings and to cooperate with NGOs;
- identify and define the mechanism for granting the status of presumed victims of trafficking in human beings in order to ensure their access to services provided by the state;
- develop specialized services for male victims of trafficking in human beings;
- include a module on prevention of trafficking in human beings in the information program for individuals looking for jobs;
- amend para. (2) of art. 18 of Law no. 100 from 26.04.2001 on civil status documents (*include social assistance bodies and/or other institutions (where appropriate, placement centers for assistance and protection) in the category of authorities to which civil status bodies, civil status offices, submit information on registration of civil status documents, copies or extracts from them*).