



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The UN Migration Agency

TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (TIP) IN UKRAINE — SITUATION ANALYSIS, JANUARY–JUNE 2018

From January to June 2018, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mission in Ukraine identified and assisted **582 victims of trafficking (VoTs)** who suffered from forced labour and sexual exploitation in 23 different countries, including Ukraine.

The Russian Federation remained the top **destination country** for trafficking from Ukraine, with 57% of cases in the first six months of 2018 (61% in 2017). The European Union (EU) continued to occupy second place, with 23% of victims returning from its Member States (same as in 2017). Out of those, 74% of victims were trafficked to Poland and the remaining 26% were exploited in Italy, Germany, Sweden, Spain, Slovenia, Netherlands, France, Belgium, Ireland, Czech Republic, Denmark and the United Kingdom. Other countries of destination in 2018 were Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Israel, Kazakhstan, China, Belarus, Azerbaijan and the Republic of Korea. The share of domestic trafficking cases in 2018 remained the same as in 2017 — 12.5% of VoTs identified were exploited within Ukraine. This includes 7 victims of forced labour in the non-government controlled area (NGCA) in eastern Ukraine.

Men prevailed in the 2018 caseload (59%) and more than half (52%) of the victims identified were **under the age of 35**. In the first six months of 2018, IOM Ukraine has identified and assisted 26 child VoTs (19 in the same period of 2017). In addition, 21 children at high risk of trafficking were provided with support to mitigate their risks. The increase in identification of child VoTs is a result of a targeted effort and the increased capacity of governmental and non-governmental agencies. Child VoTs identified in 2018 were predominantly exploited within Ukraine (70%), but also in the Russian Federation and Poland. Of the children assisted by IOM, boys constituted 53% and girls 47%. Children were trafficked for sexual exploitation and exploitation in pornography (11 cases) and labour exploitation (8 cases, including three cases of exploitation in forced begging); they were also exploited in criminal activities (6 cases). One of the cases identified in child trafficking was an attempt of trafficking for organ transplantation.

The majority (84%) of victims identified in 2018 had university or vocational education and 60% came from cities and towns, which is a reflection of the deepening economic hardship in Ukraine. **Recruitment** was chiefly carried out locally, through informal contacts (78.7%), the Internet (6%), and to a lesser extent through local newspapers, street advertisements or employment agencies. In 2018, however, IOM has observed an emerging trend in the increase of recruitment in countries of destination, especially in the EU Member States. The share of cases of recruitment through private ads placed by individuals¹ in overall caseload continues to increase: 35 cases in 2018 (6% of the caseload) compared to 25 cases in 2017 (4.2% of the caseload). Furthermore, in 2018, for the first time in the past several years, IOM Ukraine has identified and assisted VoTs who were kidnapped and forced into labour exploitation (two cases) and sexual exploitation (one case). The average **period of exploitation** was two months, after which the victims were either released by their exploiters once they were deemed worthless or escaped after they realized they were being exploited.

Following the stable trend of the past years, an overwhelming majority of victims identified in the first half of 2018 were trafficked for forced labour (84.6% compared to 90% in 2017). The most prevalent sectors for this type of exploitation have been construction, manufacturing and agriculture.

Government response to human trafficking

Recognizing the increasing risks of TIP and the corresponding consequences for the country's population, the Government of Ukraine (GoU) has demonstrated commitment and dedicated resources to enhance inter-agency coordination and joint response to newly emerging TIP threats.

The Ministry of Social Policy — designated National Counter-Trafficking (CT) Coordinator in Ukraine, was particularly successful in their efforts to enhance victim identification, which resulted in a stable increase in the number of certified VoTs — 122 in the first 6 months of 2018 (compared to 101 in the same period of 2017). Efforts to prosecute TIP crime solidified and, in the first six months of 2018, the Ukrainian National Police registered 188 TIP cases, in comparison to 144 in 2017 (January–June) and 60 in 2016 (January–June). The number of TIP verdicts, however, remains relatively low — 14 in the first six months of 2018, compared to 23 in the entire of 2017.

The National CT Coordinator in Ukraine promotes harmonization of the CT Legislation in Ukraine with international best practices. The draft Law of Ukraine On Amending Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine to Strengthen Countering Trafficking in Human Beings and Protection of Victims of Trafficking was adopted by the Parliament in the first hearing in November 2017, and is awaiting the second Parliamentary hearing in late 2018. The amendments to the Law, if approved, will introduce additional provisions in order to guarantee free legal aid for VoTs, provide labour opportunities, as well as legal stay for foreigners who suffered from trafficking in Ukraine. The amendments to the law include a recovery and reflection period, so a foreigner or

¹ Private advertisement placed on local bulletin boards, bus stops and so on.

stateless person who has applied for the status of victim of trafficking in Ukraine would be granted the right to a 30-day period to make a decision on whether or not to cooperate with law enforcement authorities.

Review of international monitoring mechanisms

The 2018 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report² was launched by the US State Department in June, with Ukraine maintaining ranking in the Tier 2³ category, stating “the government demonstrated increasing efforts by investigating, prosecuting, and convicting officials complicit in trafficking, increasing interagency coordination and training for government officials, and taking some steps to improve law enforcement efforts. The government also improved its efforts to protect trafficking victims in Ukraine, increasing subsistence payments to victims and drafting legislation that would better protect foreign victims.”⁴ TIP report recognizes increasing counter-trafficking efforts of GOU including “investigating and prosecuting a greater number of trafficking cases, increasing coordination among interagency and civil society stakeholders, identifying more victims, providing more financial assistance to victims, opening additional socio-psychological centers to serve victims, and increasing training for government officials”. Additionally, the Report provides a number of recommendations to further improve the country’s response, which includes punishing convicted traffickers with proportionate and dissuasive sentences; clearly defining administrative chains of responsibility and competencies of service providers throughout the decentralization process to minimize disruption in the processes of identification, referral, and assistance to trafficking victims; increasing law enforcement monitoring of recruitment firms engaged in fraudulent practices associated with exploitation. The Report also includes further recommendations on resource allocation, legislation harmonization, and strengthening of investigation and prosecution of crime, among others.

Main challenges

- Growing numbers within risk groups (as well as additional risks groups appearing) and a lack of socio-economic alternatives to unsafe migration.
- Decentralization and ongoing administrative reform require adjustments to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for Victims of Trafficking, to ensure adequate allocation of funds and human resources for prevention and protection activities on the local level.
- The role of the National CT Coordinator needs to be sustained to further foster coordination of national anti-trafficking policies and actors working in this field. This can be achieved through establishment of the Office of the National CT Coordinator or similar decision-making bodies mandated to oversee and coordinate the implementation of the state CT policy by all stakeholders at the national and local levels.
- Need to proactively identify and prosecute trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation, including cases of internal trafficking.
- Need to proactively identify and assist child VoTs, especially among children in institutional care and street children.
- Need to formalize the status of NGOs within the NRM and establish mechanisms that would ensure their access to state funding.
- Need to facilitate the transition of the Medical Rehabilitation Centre — established and run by IOM — to government ownership.
- Need to increase prevention efforts targeting at-risk groups vulnerable to new forms of exploitation (recruitment for exploitation in criminal activities, exploitation of IDPs and ex-combatants).

IOM Ukraine’s Counter-Trafficking Programme

- Since 1998, the IOM Mission in Ukraine has been cooperating with the Government of Ukraine in human trafficking prevention and reintegration through a network of over 30 local NGOs and other international organizations.
- IOM supports the National Counter-Trafficking and Migrant Advice Hotline 527, which assists up to 20,000 persons annually (www.527.org.ua).
- IOM cooperates with law enforcement by providing capacity building on the investigation and prosecution of trafficking-related crimes, networking with countries of transit and destination, and the development of witness protection systems, among other areas.
- Since 2000, IOM has provided reintegration assistance to 14,687 victims of trafficking, including legal aid, medical care, psychological counseling, family support, vocational training and other types of assistance based on individual needs. IOM operates a Medical Rehabilitation Centre, which has provided free-of-charge, comprehensive medical care to 3,445 victims of trafficking since 2002. Almost 1,000 former victims have benefited from IOM’s Economic Empowerment Programme, which has created hundreds of new jobs and contributed tens of thousands of Hryvnia in taxes to local administration budgets.
- IOM implements a variety of human trafficking prevention activities targeting vulnerable and at-risk populations, including youth, IDPs, the unemployed, potential labour migrants, as well as state officials and non-government professionals who might be in contact with potential victims. Awareness raising and outreach to the general population is, among others, done through the designated counter-trafficking website www.stoptrafficking.org
- In 2018, IOM, in partnership with the National CT Coordinator and other CT stakeholders in Ukraine, launched the national information campaign Danger Might be Invisible at First. The campaign is developed in partnership with the Ukrainian singer

² Trafficking in Persons Report 2018, <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2018/index.htm>

³ The governments of countries that do not fully meet the TVPA’s minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards.

⁴ Ibid.

and winner of Eurovision 2016, Jamala, who became a counter-trafficking Goodwill Ambassador for the IOM Mission in Ukraine.

For more information please contact:

IOM Ukraine tel.: +38 044 568 5015

Counter-Trafficking Programme Officer, Ms. Kateryna ARDANYAN: kardanyan@iom.int

Communications Officer, Ms. Varvara ZHLUKTENKO: vzhluktenko@iom.int; iomkievcomm@iom.int