



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
IOM Internationale Organisatie voor Migratie

UKRAINE

Country Information Sheet

Return and Re-integration assistance to victims of Trafficking in Human Beings

This factsheet contains important and useful information related to the return and reintegration assistance available in Ukraine for victims of trafficking. This information has been collated by IOM in close co-operation with its Field Mission in Kiev in view of setting up mechanisms and procedures for the voluntary, orderly, safe and dignified return of victims of trafficking.

Do not hesitate to contact IOM Brussels if you need any further information

1. Introduction

Although the Government of Ukraine does not meet international standards regarding the fight against trafficking in human beings limited by lack of financial resources and low-level corruption, Ukraine has increased efforts to combat trafficking over the past three years.

The amendment of the Criminal Code regarding trafficking in human beings,

legal prosecution of traffickers, the creation of a National Co-ordination Council against Trafficking in Ukraine are some of the steps that have been taken to fight trafficking in the country.

Assistance to victims of trafficking who wish to return to Ukraine can be ensured by IOM Kiev and an active network of NGOs in Ukraine.

2. Legal Background

In 1998 the Ukrainian Parliament amended the Criminal Code (Art. 124¹ "Trafficking in human beings" of the Criminal Code of Ukraine). As stipulated by the law, persons who are involved in direct or indirect, open or hidden trafficking in human beings aimed at their sale for sexual exploitation or pornobusiness, or their use in military conflicts, as well as persons who adopt children for commercial purposes, will face criminal charges and will be punished by imprisonment for a period of three to eight years, with confiscation of their property. The persons who are involved in the sale of children and those officials who abuse their positions to this end, will be punished by imprisonment for a period of five to ten

years. In situations where the trafficking in human beings led to serious consequences or was organised by a criminal grouping, and in cases when the trafficking was intended for the transplantation of human organs, the punishment is increased to 8-15 years.

Since then the Government has brought 37 criminal cases against suspected traffickers, sentencing a Greek man to 7 years and two Ukrainian women to 5 years of prison for trafficking.

Ukraine relies on special police units trained by both the Government and NGO to investigate trafficking cases, but they have had limited impact thus far.

3. Government

The Ukrainian government has made large efforts to fight trafficking in Ukraine.

Amongst the initiatives tabled by the Ukrainian government are the esta-

ishment of the National Co-ordination Council against Trafficking in Ukraine, improvement of assistance to victims of trafficking via Ukrainian diplomatic missions and international co-operation in this field.

A National Co-ordination Council against Trafficking has been established in Ukraine, which serves as focal point for a national strategy and for international co-operation. The OSCE office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the European Commission have been actively involved in providing technical assistance to

support this Council. Within the activities of the Council, there is a special focus on anti-trafficking legislation and its enforcement, and supporting counselling hotlines, established in five major cities in Ukraine.

The Government established three business centres to assist unemployed women in Ukraine, and works with Ukrainian diplomatic missions to improve responses to Ukrainian trafficking victims abroad. The Government does not support any other prevention or protection programs. Ukraine co-operates in international investigations of trafficking.

4. Other forms of assistance

Working with the Ukrainian Government, IOM works in the fields of prevention of trafficking in human beings, assistance to victims and law enforcement initiatives.

Within the framework of the assistance provided to victims who choose to return to Ukraine, IOM Kiev (funded by the Swedish International Development Co-operation) can offer the following assistance:

- The IOM office in Kiev has opened a rehabilitation centre and a shelter to provide security assistance and support to victims of trafficking,
- Working with Ukrainian health authorities, IOM provides social and

psychological counselling, psychiatric care, gynaecological and medical examinations and treatment for the victims,

- IOM provides for legal counselling,
- IOM is working with a Ukrainian network of some 17 NGOs and 170 partners to provide assistance to victims and with the authorities to facilitate their reintegration process,
- After victims leave the IOM shelter, regular contact is maintained to monitor their reintegration process and to determine whether they or their families have been threatened or harassed.

5. Contacts

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6. NGO Partners

La Strada

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La Strada is the main NGO in Ukraine which fights against trafficking. It was created in 1997 as part of the La Strada programme – Prevention of trafficking in women from Central and Eastern Europe – which was initiated by the NGO “The Foundation Against Trafficking in Women” (STV) together with NGOs from Poland and the Czech Republic.

Activities carried out by La Strada, include:

- Assistance for victims of trafficking
- Maintenance of a “hot line” for emergency telephone assistance
- Legal expertise on women’s status in Ukraine
- Awareness raising campaigns for the prevention of trafficking in women
- Co-operation with law enforcement bodies and lawyers to improve Ukrainian legislation concerning trafficking in human beings and trafficked persons’ protection.

Winrock International

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In the framework of a USAID funded 4-year-programme, initiated in 1998, Winrock International carries out the following activities in the field of counter-trafficking:

- Women for Women Centres – job skills and crisis prevention services for at-risk women. Seven centres have been created so far in Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kherson, Lviv, Rivne, and Zhytomyr;
- Crisis Prevention Program - walk-in consultations; referral services for psychological and medical assistance; 24-hour telephone hotlines; self-help support groups for victims; and trafficking prevention and violence prevention training seminars;
- Legal Assistance - pro bono legal consultations available at each of the seven Women for Women Centers on employment issues, work abroad and risks of trafficking.