
PROJECT:

FROM HARM TO SAFETY:
IMPROVING THE PROTECTION
OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING
(VOTS) IN SERBIA

BASELINE STUDY REPORT

May 2018



Funding provided by the
United States Government



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List of abbreviations and acronyms

AT - Anti-trafficking
CSO - Civil society organization
CSW - Center for Social Work
CoE - Council of Europe
CPTV - Center for the protection of the victims of human trafficking
EU/EC - European Union / European Commission
FG(D) - Focus group (discussion)
FYRoM - Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia
GBV - Gender Based Violence
GRETA - the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by the Parties
ICMPD - International Centre for Migration Policy Development
ILO - International Labor Organization
IOM - International Organization for Migrations
JRS - Jesuit Relief services
KII - Key informants interviews
KI - Key informants
MICS3 - Evaluation of UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys Round 3
MLEVSA - Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs
MOI - Ministry of the Interior
MoU - Memorandum of Understanding
NGO - Nongovernmental Organization
NAP/NPA - National Action Plan
NES - National Employment Service
NRM - National Referral Mechanism
OSCE - Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PTSD - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
RSD - Serbian currency dinar
SCRM - Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration
SOP - Standard Operating Procedure
SWC - social welfare center
THB - Trafficking in Human Beings
TIP - Trafficking in Persons
UASC(s) - Unaccompanied and Separated Child/Children
UNHCR - United Nations the High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USAID - United States Agency for International Development
VoTs - Victims of Trafficking

1. Introduction

The project entitled *From Harm to Safety: Improving the Protection of Victims of Trafficking (VoTs) in Serbia* is being implemented by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and NGO Atina for a period of 30 months starting from Feb 1st 2018. It aims to support victims of human trafficking in the Republic of Serbia and alleviate the consequences of the exploitation they have survived. The overall goal of the project is the following: victims of trafficking are identified, protected, and supported to recover from the consequences of violence and exploitation, including in populations of refugees and migrants. Three specific objectives are pursued:

- Victims of human trafficking receive effective, client-centered care through proactive victim identification and victim-centered support;
- Relevant local authorities and non-governmental organizations deliver age- and gender- appropriate support to victims of trafficking;
- A safe and equitable legal environment for victims of human trafficking exists and supports their right to disclose and seek assistance. The Government of Serbia takes concrete steps to revise the national anti-trafficking strategy and action plan in line with the current context.

In line with these three specific objectives, the project is organized into **three pillars**.

The first pillar focusses on **service delivery**, including early identification, referral to the center for the protection of victims of human trafficking (hereafter: CPTV), and support to reintegration. Activities to be conducted under this pillar include building capacities of relevant stakeholders, ensuring the operation of mobile teams (particularly in locations with significant presence of refugee and migrant population, in proximity to existing reception and asylum centers), and supporting the recovery and integration of victims.

The second pillar focuses on **strengthening specialized services** available to human trafficking victims and building the capacities of key actors in the support system. This will be achieved through the delivery of various trainings and provision of direct support to relevant institutions throughout the project.

The third pillar is dedicated to **institutional strengthening**. This will include supporting the development of the 2019-2020 Action Plan to deliver on the Strategy for Suppressing Human Trafficking, as well as the revision of the existing standard operational procedures. Activities planned under this pillar will also strengthen local response and coordination by supporting the development of local service mapping and referral pathways, as well as promoting exchange of knowledge and experience between relevant stakeholders via **local working groups** for prevention and assistance to victims of human trafficking. Working groups will be supported to reinforce their actions, including through roundtables, meetings and coordination support. Project activities will target seven local municipalities in Serbia where local networks for suppressing human trafficking exist and are functional: Vranje, Subotica, Novi Sad, Niš, Sremska Mitrovica, Kragujevac and Kraljevo. Under this project, Atina will continue to support their development and operation, through the establishment of formal working groups under the direct jurisdiction of local municipalities.

2. Methodology of baseline study

The baseline study was carried out jointly by IRC and Atina between March and May 2018. It provides an updated contextual overview, an analysis of the relevant legal and institutional framework, and identifies gaps and shortages in the system of support and protection. Its purpose is to set baseline values for evaluation, and to further inform the design of specific project activities. The study relies on data gathered through various sources, including reports, analysis and recommendations of relevant actors, as well as through key informant interviews in the field. Aside from providing an overview of the legal and strategic framework in place for the protection of victims, data also reflects its practical implementation throughout 2017. A mixed-method approach was utilized, employing several data collection tools:

- **Desk review:** The objective was to research available sources of information related to trafficking in humans in Serbia as well as the social context. These included relevant documents issued by national and local state authorities, key documents and reports of international organizations active in the field of suppressing trafficking in human beings¹, reports of relevant civil society organizations and other stakeholders, as well as laws and by-laws relating to the human trafficking problem in Serbia.
- **Structured interviews:** Another methodological tool used to gain insight into the matter was structured individual interview with key informants (KII). Interviews were conducted with representatives of the most relevant institutions/organizations on the national level dealing with suppressing the trafficking in humans, and authorized service providers within the protection system. The representatives of the local anti-trafficking (AT) teams from seven local municipalities included in the project, Vranje, Subotica, Novi Sad, Niš, Sremska Mitrovica, Kragujevac, and Kraljevo were also interviewed. The full list of key informants interviewed is presented in [Table 1 below](#).
Aside from specific data and statistics, other relevant information relating to a key informant's interpretation of certain procedures, the manner in which they define certain phenomena and/or problems, whether they measure them, how they interpret them, etc. was collected. Attention was also paid to unanswered questions, i.e. those that a large number of interviewees failed to comment on. A specific questionnaire was developed for KIIs based on the logical framework of the project. This allowed the baseline study team to ensure baseline values for project indicators were captured, as well as to collect data on the gaps in services and capacities to inform further planning of the project activities.
- **Focus group discussion:** Finally, focus group discussion (FGD) with beneficiaries of the support programs made up the third methodological tool used to gather information. In total, six VoTs beneficiaries of Atina's Victim Assistance Program participated in the discussion; all six participants were female citizens of Serbia (Serbian and Roma ethnicity), age 19 – 51. The focus group was used to generate information on their views and was very useful in understanding of participants' experiences and perspective(s). An additional goal of the FGD was to clarify, validate and illustrate data collected through other methods.

The statistical techniques used to process the data in the baseline study were: proportion, correlation coefficients and the arithmetic mean.

At the end of the project, the IRC will hire an external evaluator to carry out the final evaluation.

¹ Such as the Greta and TiP reports.

Table no.1: Organization, institutions on the national level and international organizations included in the KI interviews

#	Organization/institution	Name/gender of the KI	Date of interview
1	Center for Protection of Human Trafficking Victims (Centar za zaštitu žrtava trgovine ljudima)	Lidija Milanović	April 3, 2018
2	CSO ASTRA	Marija Anđelković	April 11, 2018
3	CSO CIM	Marko Šijan	April 11, 2018
4	IOM – International organization for migration	Jelena Miloradović	April 4, 2018
5	Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (SCRM) (Komesarijat za izbeglice i migracije)	Jelena Šurlan	April 11, 2018
6	National AT Coordinator (Nacionalni koordinator za borbu protiv trgovine ljudima)	Mitar Đurašković	March 30, 2018
7	Center for social work/Centar za socijalni rad „Sava“, Sremska Mitrovica	Female	April 11, 2018
8	City of Subotica Center for social work/ Centar za socijalni rad Grada Subotice	Female	April 12, 2018
9	Vranje health center/ Zdravstveni centar Vranje	Female	April 13, 2018
10	Center for social work/Centar za socijalni rad „Sveti Sava“ Niš	Female	April 15, 2018

3. Executive summary of the baseline study

Over the past ten years, Serbia has primarily been a country of origin of victims of human trafficking, exploited both in-country and abroad, including in EU countries or, especially in labor exploitation cases, in other European countries (countries of former Yugoslavia, Russia, Belarus, and Azerbaijan). Although this can vary slightly from year to year, the majority of victims identified in Serbia are female Serbian citizens, and a large proportion of identified victims are children². The most dominant forms of trafficking inside Serbia remain sexual exploitation, exploitation for pornographic purposes, forced marriage and labor exploitation, while the multiple exploitation³ and forced marriage are dominant forms for transnational trafficking.

Although the Republic of Serbia is primarily a country of origin, it is also a transit and destination country for trafficked persons. In the past three years, Serbia has also been facing increased migratory pressure due to the influx of refugees and migrants transiting on their way to Western Europe. As of March 2016, border closures along the route forced refugees / migrants to stay longer in transit countries, including Serbia. By the end of 2017, according to the UNHCR, there were over 4,000 refugees and migrants residing in Serbia, 95% of which were accommodated in one of 18 reception and asylum centers. Restrictive border policies and lack of legal options to travel to countries of destination left refugees and migrants facing increased risks of trafficking.

After a period of stagnation during which the first National Strategy expired without much action taking place, efforts to combat trafficking are presently gathering momentum. Important institutional steps were taken in 2017, including the adoption of the *Strategy for Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings, especially Women and Children, and Protection of the Victims 2017-2022* and its accompanying Action Plan for 2017-2018, as well as the development of different anti-trafficking institutions and mechanisms.

This recent progress has yet to make its impact felt however, and various international reports in the area of human trafficking still point to unfavorable trends over the past few years. The identification rate has dropped significantly, and identification among unaccompanied and separated children in refugee / asylum centers as well as outside any formal facilities, is still carried out in a very ad hoc and non-systematic manner. Protection and support services in favor of VoT still lack effective care arrangements, including in cases of unaccompanied children among refugees and migrants - safe and appropriate accommodation, timely appointment of guardians and effective guardianship. Victims of trafficking are also unable to exercise their right to compensation in criminal proceedings and the response to labor exploitation remains inadequate.

In the project design phase three key areas were prioritized: improving the victim protection system/mechanism including for refugees and migrants, improving the quality of services, especially for child victims, and further strengthening of the strategic anti-trafficking framework in the Republic of Serbia. This study focusses on these areas in an attempt to analyse the situation and establish baseline values for key performance indicators that were selected in the logical framework. During the research phase for the baseline study, initial assumptions and prioritization from the project design phase were confirmed:

- In terms of **identification rate**, the number of victims identified overall has been rapidly and constantly decreasing from year to year. In the last three years⁴ (2015-2017) 138 VoTs were identified in total. In the

² PrEUgovor alarm - report on the progress of Serbia in chapters 23 and 24; Milan Aleksić et al, Belgrade, March 2018; Statistics for last 3 years show that 48% of identified VoTs in Serbia are children.

³ The phenomenon in which victims are exploited in several ways at the same time, for example sexual exploitation and forced labor, or coercion to commit crimes etc.

⁴ It coincides with the beginning of the refugee crisis.

previous period 2012-2014, that number was more than double, with 296 victims identified (114% more than in 2015-2017). The identification rate among refugees and migrants is even lower. Statistics of the CPTV show that only five VoTs were officially identified between 2015 and April 2018, out of hundreds of thousands of persons transiting through Serbia on their way towards countries of destination (CPTV KII April, 2018).

- In relation to the **quality of care for child VoTs** the baseline study confirms that adequate accommodation and/or shelter for child victims is still not available. This was reported as one of the key gaps by a majority of key informants interviewed. In addition, specialized and tailor-made programs for children VoTs do not exist. Interviews confirmed that a comprehensive, multidisciplinary and victim-oriented approach to human trafficking, especially for children, has not been developed yet.
- With regards to the **strategic framework** for combating trafficking, one major challenge has been the long process of adoption of the new Trafficking in Human Beings (THB) Strategy and related Action Plan. At the moment of their adoption in 2017, the Action Plan had a validity period of one year and was already out of date. There is currently no draft action plan for the following period of 2019-2020. Adoption of the new Action Plan is therefore observed by most of the key informants interviewed as an important step to ensure continuity in implementation of the Strategy and maintain momentum, therefore avoiding a new period of stagnation in improving protection systems.
- The Standard Operating Procedures for the identification and referral of victims of trafficking, which were adopted as part/appendix of the Agreement on Cooperation signed on 12 November 2009, have also become outdated. The clarity and comprehensiveness of the SOPs was already questionable at the time of adoption ten years ago, and require in depth revision. This process was finally started in February 2018, led by the Ministry of Interior with support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Council of Europe. With regards to local capacities and coordination, and based on results of key informant interviews, the study found that maps of specialized services for VoTs do not exist, that clear and operational referral pathways are not in place at local level, and that only two local AT teams developed local plans harmonized with the national document (Nis and Vranje municipality).

The study established following baseline values for the indicators from the log frame:

Indicators	Determined baseline values
Indicators related to identification:	
# of potential VoTs identified by authorities and service providers disaggregated by age, gender and refugee status (log frame: Outcome indicator 1.1)	# of victims (disaggregated by gender and refugee status) 2017 – 43 victims were identified (21 children and 22 adults, 39 female and four male victims; only 1 victim from refugee/migrant population) 2016 – 55 THB victims were identified (21 children and 34 adults, 47 female and eight male victims; only 2 victims from refugee/migrant population) 2015 – 40 THB victims were identified (24 children and 16 adults, 32 female and eight male victims; only 1 victim from refugee/migrant population)

	Identification rate of child victims: 24 in 2017, 21 in 2016, and 21 in 2015). Out of a total of 66, 57 victims were girls (86%) and nine were boys (14%)
Indicators related to the strategic framework for combating trafficking:	
#/existence of the national SOPs for identification and referral of VoTs (log frame: Outcome indicator 3.1)	One SOP exists but it is out of date. A revision initiated by IOM and MoI in February 2018, but a draft is still not available.
% of improvement in practices ⁵ to prevent and address HT in 7 local self-governments (log frame: Outcome indicator 3.1)	The map(s) of specialized services for VoTs on local/national level and local referral pathway(s) do not exist as well as. According to KIs, in 2017 only Vranje local team had regular meetings (one per month), Niš two times (in November 2017) and Sremska Mitrovica. In other municipalities local AT teams did not have meetings.
#/existence of action plan for the period 2019-2020 (log frame: Outcome indicator 3.2)	There is no draft of the National action plan for the period 2019-2020.

⁵ Indicator *improvement in practices to prevent and address HT* was operationalized through: existence of map of specialized services and awareness of relevant stakeholders thereof; existence of clear referral pathway for VoTs; and frequency of the meetings of the local anti-trafficking networks.

4. Overview of the context⁶:

Human trafficking is a global problem, recognized and sanctioned by the law in many countries, including Serbia, as a criminal act, and grave violation of human rights. At the international level, several meaningful documents define the key aspects of human trafficking. Among them, it is important to mention the adoption of the *UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children* (one of the three so-called Palermo protocols, in force since 2003), as well as the Council of Europe *Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings* (so-called Warsaw Convention, in force since 2008), both ratified by the Republic of Serbia. In relation to the latter document, the Council of Europe established a group of experts (so-called GRETA) in order to regularly monitor the implementation of the Convention in member states and to report on its findings. The latest GRETA report for Serbia was issued at the beginning of 2018, which marked the end of the second evaluation cycle⁷.

The overall conclusion of the reports issued by international actors (GRETA, TiP EU progress report), is that Serbia did make improvements in the systemic response to human trafficking in 2017, but that there are numerous additional challenges that need to be more appropriately addressed. In line with this, Serbia was once again put on the watch list of the US State Department, according to its Trafficking of Victims annual report, published in June, 2017.⁸

4.1 Legal framework

Domestic legislation contains provisions relevant for trafficking in human beings in the following documents: the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia⁹, the Criminal Code¹⁰, the Criminal Procedure Code¹¹, the Law on Public Order and Peace¹², the Law on Aliens¹³, the Social Protection Law¹⁴, the Healthcare Law¹⁵, the Law on Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime¹⁶, the Law on Juvenile Criminal Offenders and Criminal Justice Protection of

⁶ Including information on the changes in the context since the proposal was submitted.

⁷ Source: Council of Europe. Available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/greta-s-new-report-on-serbia> (seen: April, 2018)

⁸ Source: Council of Europe. Available at: <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/271339.pdf> (seen: April, 2018)

⁹ "Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", no. 98/2006, Article 26 - Prohibition of slavery, servitude and forced labor: No person may be kept in slavery or servitude. All forms of human trafficking are prohibited. Forced labor is prohibited. Sexual or financial exploitation of person in unfavorable position shall be deemed forced labor. Labor or service of persons serving sentence of imprisonment if their labor is based on the principle of voluntarily with financial compensation, labor or service of military persons, nor labor or services during war or state of emergency in accordance with measures prescribed on the declaration of war or state of emergency, shall not be considered forced labor.

¹⁰ "Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 85/2005, 88/2005 - amend 107/2005 - amend, 72/2009, 111/2009, 121/2012, 104/2013 and 108/2014.

¹¹ "Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 72/2011, 101/2011, 121/2012, 32/2013, 45/2013, 55/2014.

¹² "Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 65/2013, 13/2016.

¹³ "Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 97/2008.

¹⁴ "Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 24/2011. The Law on Social Protection, which was passed in April 2011 within the reform of the social protection system, clearly specifies trafficked persons as direct beneficiaries of social protection services for the first time (Article 41 – Beneficiaries).

¹⁵ "Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 107/2005, 72/2009, 88/2010, 99/2010, 57/2011, 119/2012, 45/2013, 93/2014, 96/2015, 106/2015

¹⁶ "Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 32/2013

Juveniles¹⁷, the Law on the Protection Program for Participants in Criminal Proceedings¹⁸, the Law on Personal Data Protection¹⁹, Law on Prohibition of Discrimination²⁰.

Criminal Code of Serbia ("Official Gazette RS", no. 85/2005, 88/2005 - amend, 107/2005 - amend, 72/2009, 111/2009, 121/2012, 104/2013, 108/2014 and 94/2016

Human trafficking, Article 388

(1) Whoever by force or threat, deception or maintaining deception, abuse of authority, trust, dependency relationship, difficult circumstances of another, retaining identity papers or by giving or accepting money or other benefit, recruits, transports, transfers, sells, buys, acts as intermediary in sale, hides or holds another person aimed at exploiting such person's labor, forced labor, commission of offenses, prostitution, other forms of sexual exploitation, begging, pornography, establishing slavery or slavery-like relation, the removal of organs or body parts or service in armed conflicts, shall be punished by imprisonment of three to twelve years.

(2) When the offence specified in Paragraph 1 of this Article is committed against a minor, the offender shall be punished by the penalty prescribed for that offense even if there was no use of force, threat or any of the other mentioned methods of perpetration.

(3) If the offence specified in Paragraph 1 of this Article is committed against a minor, the offender shall be punished by imprisonment of not less than five years.

(4) If the offence specified in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article resulted in grave bodily injury of a person, the offender shall be punished by imprisonment of five to fifteen years. If the offence specified in Paragraph 3 hereof resulted in grave bodily injury of a minor, the offender shall be punished by imprisonment of not less than five years.

(5) If the offence specified in Paragraphs 1 and 3 of this Article resulted in death of one or more persons, the offender shall be punished by imprisonment of not less than ten years.

(6) Whoever habitually engages in offences specified in Paragraphs 1 to 3 of this Article or if the offence is committed by a group, shall be punished by imprisonment of not less than five years.

(7) If the offence specified in Paragraphs 1 to 3 of this Article is committed by an organized group, the offender shall be punished by imprisonment of not less than ten years.

(8) Whoever knew or could have known that a person is the victim of trafficking, but nevertheless made use of her/his position or facilitated another person to make use of her/his position for the purpose of exploitation referred to in Paragraph 1 of this Article, shall be punished by imprisonment of six months to five years.

Since 2003 and ratification of the *UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime with supplementary protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children* (Palermo Protocol)²¹ the Serbian Government has taken significant steps towards improving its national legal and institutional framework in

¹⁷"Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 85/2005.

¹⁸"Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 85/2005.

¹⁹"Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 97/2008, 104/2009 - another law, 68/2012 - the decision of the Constitutional Court i 107/2012.

²⁰"Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 22/2009.

²¹ According to the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (Article 16 - International relations: The foreign policy of the Republic of Serbia shall be based on generally accepted principles and rules of international law. Generally accepted rules of international law and ratified international treaties shall be an integral part of the legal system in the Republic of Serbia and applied directly. Ratified international treaties must be in accordance with the Constitution.

relation to suppressing human trafficking and protecting the victims. The overall response, including all of its specific legal and institutional mechanisms, was designed in a way to address two main aspects of human trafficking:

- Suppression of the very activity, encompassing prevention and risk reduction;
- Supporting and protecting victims, including in their recovery, empowerment and sustainable reintegration.

However, while Serbia has developed a robust legal framework and has made efforts to improve it over the past 15 years implementation remains a challenge. This is mostly the case due to lack of resources, and more efforts needed to further strengthen the coordination as the trafficking remains a complex issue requiring multisectoral response.

4.2 Anti-Trafficking Strategy and associated Plan of Action

In December 2006, the Government of Serbia adopted its first national **Anti-Trafficking Strategy**. It was only three years later that the **National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings** for the period 2009-2011 was adopted²². In 2012, the Ministry of the Interior launched the preparation of a new Strategy for the period 2013-2018, but its adoption was considerably delayed. Pending its adoption, the previous Strategy dating from 2006 continued to be applicable. The absence of a new Strategy and Action Plan resulted in significant difficulties to mobilize anti-trafficking efforts and resources, and had a negative impact on the co-ordination of anti-trafficking actors and co-operation with civil society.

Finally, the new *Strategy for the Prevention and Suppression of trafficking in human beings, Especially Women and Children, and Victim Protection* for the period 2017-2022, accompanied by an Action Plan for the period of 2017-2018, was adopted by the Government on August 4th 2017²³. An annual budget for the implementation of the Strategy is earmarked, indicating the amount of funding to be allocated from the budgets of different Ministries²⁴.

The Strategy sets out five main objectives for the foreseen period:

1. The systemic strengthening of relevant partnerships on the local, national and international level;
2. Improved prevention and decrease in the leverage of the causes of trafficking;
3. Improved and proactive detection of human trafficking cases, as well as efficient prosecution of perpetrators and legal protection of victims;
4. Improved system of identification, protection and support of human trafficking victims, through continuous and sustainable programs of social inclusion;
5. Children are protected from human trafficking and its consequences through particular participative programs, based on the child best interest principle.

As the Action Plan for 2017-2018 was adopted in late 2017, the implementation of the Strategy was somewhat impeded. Currently the Office of the National Coordinator is performing an evaluation of the progress with the implementation of the Strategy.

In order to ensure continuity of the strategic framework and prevent delays the Action plan for the following two years (2019-2019) needs to be developed and adopted during 2018.

4.3 Relevant National Anti-Trafficking Bodies

Over the past fifteen years, Serbia made changes in its legislation so as to criminalize trafficking in humans (most importantly by Article 388 in the Criminal Code), but also defined formal competencies and established institutions that are directly in charge of suppressing human trafficking, including identifying and supporting victims. The **Republican Team for Suppressing Human Trafficking** was formed in 2001, subsequently replaced by the **National**

²² Although there were several attempts to that end in between 2006 and 2009, the NPA was finally designed and passed in 2009 and in an urgent procedure at the moment when its existence was necessary for the liberalization of visa regime with the EU.

²³ "Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 77/2017.

²⁴ The equivalent of €89 656 (approximately \$ 109,000) have been allocated from the state budget for 2018.

Council for Suppressing the Human Trafficking (Council)²⁵, formed by the Government of Serbia in 2017 as its advisory body. Its mandate is to coordinate national and international activities in the fight against human trafficking, review relevant international reports, and suggest measures to be taken in order to comply with the recommendations of these reports, as well as to monitor and evaluate the implementation of national anti-trafficking strategies and action plans. The Council is presided by the Minister of Internal Affairs, and includes the Minister of Education, Science and Technological Development, Minister of labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, Minister of Health, and Minister of Justice.

The Council for Suppressing Human Trafficking, as the highest instance in charge of implementing the Strategy, held its first session in December 2017. According to the report of the Council, sexual exploitation, exploitation for pornographic purposes, forced marriage and labor exploitation are the most dominant forms of trafficking inside Serbia, while multiple exploitation²⁶ and forced marriage are dominant forms for transnational trafficking. The Council also revealed that in the period of January – November 2017, police officers filed five criminal charges based on suspicions of human trafficking activities against 16 alleged perpetrators. In total, 13 victims were identified in these five cases. The Council reported a decreasing trend in the number of criminal charges submitted, which reflects the weakened systemic response to the detection of human trafficking cases and prosecution thereof. The Council's conclusions are in line with statistics for previous years which show that while 15 criminal charges were submitted by police in 2015, 11 were submitted in 2016, further dropping to only five in 2017.

In the same report the Council also stated that in the upcoming period particular attention will be paid to the improvement of the system of identification, protection and support of human trafficking victims, as well as to strengthening the capacities of the CPTV and the local anti-trafficking teams, without further specifying what measures will be prioritized. In addition, the Council proposed that its members²⁷ should identify more financial resources for the urgent improvement of victim identification and protection, and appoint members of the inter-sectoral working group for the adjustment of the existing mechanisms of cooperation between competent authorities. Finally, Council members were also encouraged to raise the issue of human trafficking in front of the Government more frequently, including during joint sessions between the governments of Serbia and other countries.

The **Office of the National Coordinator for Suppressing Human Trafficking** was set up in 2017, housed within the Police Directorate of the Ministry of Interior, as a result of long-standing advocacy efforts by civil society organizations (CSOs), prominent individuals from the relevant institutions, and international organizations. The National Coordinator is mandated to coordinate efforts of all relevant stakeholders in combating trafficking in human beings in Serbia.

In order to execute the decisions of the Council, as well as to monitor their implementation, the **Special Working Group**, consisting of representatives of other relevant institutions and non-governmental organizations was formed in 2017. It reports to the Council, and has the mandate to implement and monitor implementation of the national strategy and action plans. The Ministry of Interior also issues semi-annual reports on the implementation of the Action Plans for Chapter 24²⁸, including the human trafficking area, but these reports only reflect the present status of the defined activities (whether they are implemented or not), without deeper analysis of the causes for delays or

²⁵ Decision on the Establishment of the Council for Suppressing Human Trafficking, *Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia* No. 92/2017.

²⁶ The phenomenon in which victims are exploited in several ways at the same time, for example sexual exploitation and forced labor, or coercion to commit crimes etc.

²⁷ The members of the Council are Ministries of the relevant sectors: police, social system, judiciary, education and health.

²⁸ Action Plan for meeting the criteria of the European Commission for opening negotiations for Chapter 24 – Justice, Freedom, and Security.

practical effects of the implemented activities and measures. The National Coordinator for Suppressing Human Trafficking heads this Special Working Group and reports to the Council. The main recommendation from the Special Working Group's first meeting held in November 2017 was that this body can and should significantly contribute to improving the preliminary identification of the human trafficking victims.

4.4 National Referral Mechanism and the Center for the Protection of Trafficking Victims

The CPTV was created to carry out the process of identification of victims and to provide them with urgent assistance. It is divided into two units – the protection agency and the urgent shelter. The CPTV is independent in its operation, which means that it is not required to take into account the assessment of other competent institutions. In cases of identified victims, the CPTV informs other relevant actors in the protection system, if this is necessary, and refers the victims to long- term support programs carried out by NGOs.

The CPTV issues annual reports and monthly statistical reviews. According to the 2017 annual report²⁹, the CPTV received applications for 138 suspected cases of human trafficking, including adults and children, but also continued the identification process in **ten** more cases, already initiated in 2016. Out of these 138 applications, the CPTV initiated the process of identification (thus recognized them as potential victims) in 99 cases. By the end of 2017, the CPTV had officially identified **43** victims of human trafficking (out of 138 referred suspected cases).

In general, number of identified victims has been rapidly and constantly decreasing from year to year. In the last three years³⁰ (2015-2017) **138** VoTs were identified in total. In the previous period 2012-2014, that number was more than double, with **296** victims identified (114% more than in 2015-2017). A significant reduction in the number of identified victims has been recorded in all relevant reports including GRETA, TiP and EU reports.

4.5 Local teams

As it was recognized that for developing a successful response to human trafficking, it is also necessary to work with local communities and to upgrade their capacities to effectively operate in the field, **anti-trafficking local teams (AT)** were established in 17 local self-government units (municipalities). According to the National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, in nine of these municipalities MoUs³¹ have been signed between relevant local authorities in order to define cooperation in this regard. However, only a few of these local teams remain functional for the time being.

Local AT teams consist of professionals from relevant local institutions: police, prosecutors' office, health and social care institutions, media, local government, educational institutions and civil society organizations. The main task of these teams is to effectively participate in the prevention of human trafficking, to implement and monitor the local strategy and action plans so as to improve the social protection system in relation to human trafficking. Despite the fact that these networks maintained a low level of activity in the previous period, the current situation, including the adoption of the new strategy and the currently supportive attitude of other relevant institutions (mainly the Council), works in favor of the improved functioning of these networks in the upcoming period.

In November 2017, the Office of the National Coordinator conducted an analysis of the work of local ATs up-to-date and prepared recommendations for their operation in the forthcoming period. These recommendations state that the local municipalities should appoint members, including a Coordinator, of the local team (the tasks of the teams remain the same as before); the local teams should develop annual work plans containing the map of available

²⁹ Available only in Serbian: <http://www.centarzztlj.rs/images/stat/17/2017%20Statisticki%20izvestaj.pdf>

³⁰ It coincides with the beginning of the refugee crisis.

³¹ MoUs were signed by the competent authorities on the local level. So far, nine local coordination teams have signed memoranda of understanding and work of the local team: Sombor, Leskovac, Niš, Novi Sad, Sremska Mitrovica, Kraljevo, Kragujevac, Vranje and Subotica.

financial resources for suppressing and preventing human trafficking, and should ensure that local plans are in line with priorities defined at national level. As these recommendations are to be adopted by the local anti-trafficking teams, respectively, this project aims at supporting the teams throughout the process, which represents the very added value of the project. Finally, during 2017, seven new local networks were established in seven municipalities and cities in order to improve the position of refugees and migrants, including the human trafficking survivors among this particular population. These new teams are established in the municipalities and cities with significant presence of refugees and migrants, and where the anti-trafficking teams already exist. The work of the anti-trafficking teams on one hand and the refugee and migrant support teams on the other however isn't necessarily duplicating efforts, as their activities can be complimentary and can contribute to better overall combat of human trafficking on the local level.

The term used to qualify teams for the coordination of anti-trafficking activities at local / community level has evolved over the time. For this denotation, **local anti-trafficking teams**, local anti-trafficking **networks** and lately **Working Groups** have been used. Bearing in mind the various documents that we have quoted in this analysis, the above-mentioned names are synonymous.

4.6 Refugee crisis, trafficking in human beings and GBV

Human trafficking as a whole, as well as particular types of exploitation may appear or exist in a society regardless of its state regulation, "cultural practices" or economic performance. Nevertheless, social uncertainties, crises, armed conflicts and other states of emergencies increase the risks of trafficking and weaken the systemic response to it. Despite the institutional developments mentioned above, the most important change in the Serbian context in last two years was undoubtedly marked by the ongoing refugee crisis. Being on the transit route between Turkey and Central and Western Europe, Serbia experienced a mass influx of refugees and migrants since the beginning of the crisis in 2015. As of March 2016 and the closure of the borders on the route, refugees and migrants were forced to stay in transit countries, including Serbia. At the end of 2017 (December), there were around 4,400 refugees and migrants residing in Serbia, with 4,026 accommodated in 18 reception and asylum centers. The average duration of their stay was prolonged (with people staying up to 15 months), and with women (15%) and children (34%) making up close to 50% of this population. At least 68% are from so-called refugee-producing countries: Afghanistan (52%), Iraq (14%) and Syria (2%)³².

For refugees in addition to experiences of violence in countries of origin numerous protection risks are present at every stage of the European refugee route. Refugee women and girls often lack information and are unable to access basic services in transit Centres, including sexual and reproductive health care, while lack of interpreters, especially female, further hinders women and girls from accessing services, and leaves them vulnerable to smugglers³³ and different forms of violence and exploitation. Besides human trafficking, this also includes domestic violence, forced and child marriage, forced prostitution, rape, sexual harassment, physical assaults, threats of honor killings, revenge marriages, and survival sex (for food, shelter, protection). According to a 2017 survey of NGO Atina³⁴, over 50% of refugee and migrant women reported they experienced violence in their country of origin, 65% stated they survived

³² UNHCR Serbia update December 2017, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/61103>

³³ More detailed overview of risks can be found in Women's Refugee Commission report "No safety for refugee women on the European route", available at https://www.frauenrechte.de/online/images/downloads/flucht/2016_01_Refugee-Women-on-the-European-Route.pdf

³⁴ Source NGO Atina; Available at: <http://www.atina.org.rs/en/violence-against-women-and-girls-among-refugee-and-migrant-population-serbia-0> (seen April 23, 2018).

violence while on the move, and 77% said they have witnessed violence against other women. The survey showed that these women do not always recognize the violence they suffer, that they do not consider certain violent acts or extensive violations of human rights as abuse, but as a normal and acceptable practice, such as child and forced marriages. Therefore, the refugee crisis induced the appearance of new challenges to local actors, as it brought forms of exploitation and violence they were not familiar with, and were not sure how to address them respectively. Aside from also being vulnerable to sexual abuse and trafficking unaccompanied boys face somewhat different protection risks, as they are in greater risk of harassment and hostility from security forces, child labor (especially for adolescent boys) as they are often under pressure to send remittances to their relatives, and risk of alcohol and drug abuse as a coping mechanisms³⁵.

In the refugee crisis context one of the key challenges in identification of trafficking cases was what some of the KI's called a "blurred line" between human trafficking and smuggling. What differentiates these two phenomena are consent and exploitation, however in cases of refugees consenting to being part of smuggling arrangement elements of exploitation might occur in the meantime, since the price for transportation services might increase on the way, pushing a person in vulnerable position and with limited choices into an exploitative situation. Namely, some trafficked people might start their journey by agreeing to be smuggled into a country, only to then be deceived, coerced, or forced into an exploitative situation (for instance, being forced to work for very low wages, or in debt bondage to pay for their transportation)³⁶.

In responding to the crisis, Serbia strengthened its capacities, opened additional reception and asylum centers, made changes in relevant legislation, and organized additional trainings and practice for professionals in competent institutions. The situation in 2017 additionally changed compared to 2016, since refugees and migrants are staying for longer periods, requiring more involvement of the protection system. Long-term support programs are now more relevant and more needed, mostly in terms of the prevention and the activities aimed at decreasing the risks of trafficking and violence towards this population.

4.7 EU Integration as a wider context

The improvement of the national support and protection system is not only an obligation deriving from international acts ratified by the Government of Serbia, nor the local solutions adopted, but also from Serbia's aspiration to become a full member of the European Union. Having in mind that Serbia officially opened the accession negotiations with the Union, including the two most relevant chapters for the suppressing human trafficking (23 – judiciary and fundamental rights, and 24 – freedom, security, justice), Serbia has further to upgrade its legal framework, institutional capacities and practical operation in the field. In order to implement necessary reforms in these two chapters timely and effectively, in line with European standards and practice, Serbia also issued respective Action Plans, which came into force in 2015.

³⁵ Source: Men and boys in displacement: Assistance and protection challenges for unaccompanied boys and men in refugee contexts, Care International, available at: https://promundoglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/FINAL_CARE-Promundo_Men-and-boys-in-displacement_2017-1.pdf

³⁶ Source: Human Rights Watch; available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/07/07/smuggling-and-trafficking-human-beings> (seen April 23, 2018).

5. Project components: baseline values for the key performance indicators

Section 5 of the report provides overview of study findings related to 3 project objectives. In three sub-sections (one for each project objective) analysis of the relevant practice, challenges and gaps is provided and at the end of each section baseline values for relevant indicators is captured.

5.1. PROJECT OBJECTIVE 1: WOMEN, MEN, GIRLS AND BOYS ARE PROTECTED FROM AND TREATED FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF TRAFFICKING. VOTS RECEIVE EFFECTIVE-CLIENT CENTERED CARE³⁷

5.1.1. Service providers and the identification process

Service providers within the state social welfare system

a. Center for Protection of Trafficking Victims - Following the adoption of the Regulation on the Network of Social Protection, the Government of the Republic of Serbia established the Center for Protection of Trafficking Victims in Belgrade on 13 April 2012. The CPTV's Statute defines two distinct units to accomplish the Center's mandate: the Agency for Coordination of Protection of Trafficking Victims and the Urgent Shelter for Trafficking Victims, which has yet to be established. According to Article 9 of the Center's Statute CPTV is established to: *"...assess the situation, needs, strengths and risks of human trafficking and based on the indicators which point out that a person is a victim, conducts the identification within the legal framework in the field of registered activity. All of this is done in order to provide appropriate help and support for victims, and to assess other important people in the victim's environment."* Accordingly, one of the main tasks of the CPTV includes identification of trafficking in human beings (THB) victims³⁸. **Although the 2012 Statute³⁹ states that the CPTV is responsible for identification, no official document specifies who (or what range of actors) can conduct preliminary identification (and referral to the CPTV for formal identification procedure).** In the past, the CPTV officially identified some victims by responding to referrals made by other actors. In most cases, referrals originated from the police and the social protection system, but cases were also referred by local and international civil society organizations (CSOs), most often by specialist anti-trafficking CSOs (ASTRA and Atina).

Good practice:

In Serbian system of identification the VoT status is not connected with criminal investigations, the prosecution of traffickers or results of prosecutions. Instead, victims are treated as persons in need of social services and the provisions of the Social Protection Law and bylaws are applied to them (not the Criminal Code), ensuring they are provided with support regardless of the legal proceedings.

Besides identification, according to their Statute, the CPTV is responsible for the **overall coordination of all parties at the national level and activities related to the protection of rights and interests of trafficking victims**, risks and needs assessment, provision of emergency shelter to the victims of trafficking, developing and monitoring implementation of individual protection service plans, referrals to other specialized services, coordination of activities related to the preparation of victims to participate in proceedings, and managing databases on VoTs⁴⁰.

³⁷ Output indicators 1.2 and 1.3, as well as outcome indicators 1.2 and 1.3 will not be evaluated through baseline study as these refer to activities to be implemented/targets to be reached by Atina's mobile team;

³⁸ The CPTV's beneficiaries are all groups of THB victims regardless their gender, age, nationality, types of exploitation etc.

³⁹ While the Statute does not define procedure of identification, it does proscribe principle of confidentiality of personal data of the VoTs as it briefly states that these data cannot be publicly available.

⁴⁰ CPTV official web site: <http://www.centarzztlj.rs/eng/index.php/about-us/our-competence> (seen April 18, 2018)

The CPTV as an institution was not designed to provide direct services, but rather to refer victims to other relevant authorities/institutions/organizations (e.g. referrals to a psychotherapist, lawyer, cultural or health mediator, economic empowerment programs etc.). However, the CPTV is expected to provide shelter for the women trafficking victims, which will be financed from the state budget and run by the CPTV, and which will possibly start by the end of 2018. (CPTV KII, April 2018). Service providers report to the CPTV on the service they have provided to individual cases, including their assessment of the effect of the particular measures/services provided, and the CPTV then conducts continuous monitoring, and leads overall case management (CPTV KII, April 2018).

b. Centers for Social Work play a key role in the protection of children who are at risk, or have already been identified as victims of human trafficking, and lead on case management in these cases, whereas the CPTV is in charge of coordination of protection for adult victims⁴¹. Role of CSW includes:

- the delivery of findings and expert opinions, at the request of the court, to support decision making with regards to child protection, exercise or deprivation of parental rights, and on measures of protection against domestic violence;
- monitoring of the execution of a corrective measure of increased supervision by the parent, adoptive parent, or guardian;
- assistance in obtaining evidence for proceedings to protect against domestic violence;
- urgent intervention services 24 hours a day / 7 days a week, through on-call services and standby shifts (on-duty employee service, availability via telephone).

On April 12, 2018, the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs (MoLEVSA) adopted an instruction conferring the sole mandate to exercise guardianship authority and to organize accommodation for unaccompanied migrant/refugee children to local Centers for Social Work. The instruction is mandatory for centers for social work with regards to obligation to ensure adequate accommodation for UASC.

Interviewees from the local anti-trafficking teams list the following available services to all groups of trafficked person as the most frequently in demand:

- Providing information on the types of support and help available in the Republic of Serbia, as well as contacts details of the organizations dealing with the problem of human trafficking and working directly with (potential) victims of human trafficking;
- Legal aid and information concerning status, rights, and relevant law procedures;
- Case management, including access to different services (acquisition of personal documents, child support, social welfare);
- Medical referrals to general and specialist medical examinations, and lab analysis;
- Psychosocial support within health care and Social Services' competencies;
- Accommodation;
- Education and training for employment and co-operation with the National Employment Service.

Service providers outside the state social welfare system

a. Atina - Through its Transition house, which is the only safe accommodation for VoTs in Serbia, NGO Atina provided support to recovery of hundreds of women and girls victims of human trafficking, including refugees and migrants, in last 15 years, using a tailor-made approach. Through the Reintegration Center and Field Support Team programs, Atina provides these women and girls with assistance in rebuilding their lives. Furthermore, dozens of women and

⁴¹ Regarding THB victims, CSWs mandate originates from the general authority to work with all beneficiaries of the social protection system which is defined in the Law on Social Protection.

girls who expressed the need desire have been supported to achieve economic independence through the Bagel Bejgl Shop - a social enterprise which produces and sells bagel pastry. Besides providing safe accommodation, Atina also provides case management, cultural mediation, psychological support, as well as other services necessary for the recovery, successful and sustainable reintegration for victims of human trafficking⁴². The reintegration center is available for all identified and potential persons (women, man, boys and girls). The licensed safe house is crated for women. In one of three Atina's save houses for refugees and migrants it is possible for boys to be there.

b. ASTRA - ASTRA addresses the problem of human trafficking comprehensively, offering assistance to all categories of victims – women, children and men regardless of the type of exploitation they survived⁴³. ASTRA SOS Hotline is still the only SOS hotline in Serbia specialized for direct assistance to victims and their families, as well as for prevention of human trafficking - support and aid during search, process of identification, recovery, and reintegration.

Types of services available to ASTRA's clients and (potential) trafficking victims include information provision on available assistance and support programs in the Republic of Serbia and abroad, as well as contacts with organizations that deal with the problem of human trafficking and work directly with (potential) victims of trafficking; legal assistance, including provision of comprehensive information regarding status, rights and relevant legal procedures, as well as legal representation of trafficked persons in court proceedings; psychological counseling and/or psychotherapy (individual and group therapy); medical assistance; support and accompaniment through institutional procedures helping clients gain effective access to their rights (obtaining personal documents, assistance in realizing the right to child allowance, state benefits etc.); long-term assistance in the process of (re)integration and social inclusion; transportation; assistance in the process of return (voluntary return to the country of origin); interpretation if ASTRA's client is a foreign national or does not understand Serbian. Reintegration support services consist of economic empowerment and improving employability - professional development, foreign languages and computer courses, support and assistance in job searching (ASTRA Day Center).

c. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) deals with assisted voluntary return of Serbian citizen victims of human trafficking to the Republic of Serbia, but also with return/relocation of migrants in their country of origin (so far no victims have been identified among them). Ten or so years ago, IOM Serbia provided direct support/help to the victims, however, as institutional mechanisms were strengthened with time, these services were slowly phased out⁴⁴.

Gaps in Services

At the national level, all KIIs unanimously point to accommodation facilities, especially *lack of urgent shelter for adults as well for children* (see the Table 2 below) as the key gap in protection of VOTs. They were thus echoing findings of the latest GRETA (2018) which states in their recommendation for the issues for immediate action that the Serbian

⁴² With respect to the refugee and migrant population, during 2017, Atina made 151 interventions, provided direct support for 2,550 refugees, of which 133 were victims of some form of exploitation or violence, and 24 were provided with safe accommodation. In the same period, Atina empowered 24 adult women, victims of trafficking and gender-based violence, providing them with the practice and periodic trainings in Bejgl Bagel shop, as well as with the job search support. Out of the 24 beneficiaries who participated in the program of economic empowerment in 2017, five found full-time jobs, seven were employed under contract on temporary /occasional jobs, while one beneficiary started her own business from home.

⁴³ In the period from 2002 until April 2018, the ASTRA SOS Hotline received 34,280 calls and identified and assisted 499 victims. Out of the total number, 421 (84%) victims were women, among them 157 girls, while 78 were men, including 14 boys. Over the past two years, the frequency of calls varied from 188 to 560 calls a month, with an average of 339.

⁴⁴ Adittionally IOM has continuously been supporting state authorities in the process of establishing public policies and institutions.

authorities should strengthen their efforts in *provision of specialized support and safe accommodation for unaccompanied minors and timely assignment of legal guardians as well as the provision of specialized shelters for human trafficking victims, including men, and the coordination of their reintegration processes*. At the local level, professionals interviewed identified same point, but added the *lack of specialized reintegration programs* outside Belgrade as additional key gap in service provision.

Apart from the general comment on missing capacities, in the table no 2. KIs pointed out other challenges they are facing with in their daily work:

TABLE NO 2: GAPS IN SERVICES FOR VOTS	# OF KII
THERE IS A PERSPECTIVE/IDEA ABOUT “TAILOR MADE⁴⁵” services, but no knowledge how to implement that concept	20% (2/10)
LACK OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES: SECURITY/SUPERVISED HOUSING SERVICE FOR VOTS DOES NOT EXIST, URGENT SHELTER FOR VOTS (CPTV IS NOT OPERATIONAL), SHELTER FOR CHILD MALE VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING; ADEQUATE FACILITIES FOR DIFFERENT VULNERABLE GROUPS: CHILDREN MIGRANTS, PERSONS with disabilities, etc.	100% (10/10)
REINTEGRATION PROGRAMS OUTSIDE BELGRADE DO NOT EXIST	30% (3/10)
LACK OF TRAINED/SPECIALIZED PSYCHOTHERAPISTS FOR THB, ESPECIALLY IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES	30% (3/10)
OTHER PROBLEMS (MONITORING OF CASES RELATED TO MIGRANTS OUTSIDE OF THE CENTERS IS NOT POSSIBLE; VICTIMS ARE NOT OFFICIALLY INFORMED ONCE THE PERPETRATOR IS OUT OF THE PRISON	20% (2/10)

In terms of the capacities for safe accommodation dedicated to victims of THB Atina’s safe house program (which can house six persons) is available for women and girls⁴⁶ victims of THB. Safe house(s) which would be available for male VoTs as well as unaccompanied children remain a gap.

While other existing emergency accommodation capacities, such as shelters for women victims of domestic violence or foster families, could also be made available for women or children VoTs, in practice there are many obstacles to their utilization. Key challenge is the insufficient coordination between different social welfare “sub-systems” (THB and GBV), but also inadequate capacities for provision of specialized, tailored made care for VoTs in the non-specialized programs.

5.1.2. Identification procedure and practice

“I do not have a clear picture about the time. During that torture, I felt like it would never end.”

Women identified as a victim of trafficking (FG April, 2018).

Latest **TIP Report⁴⁷** states that the government did not have formal victim identification procedures and used an outdated national referral mechanism (NRM) to refer victims to support services. The procedure for identification is in fact insufficiently defined in the Statute of CPTV⁴⁸ and memorandums of understanding with different actors such as the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia, CSOs (ASTRA and Atina), etc. Identification process starts with the *preliminary identification* of the victim, which may be performed by a wide range of actors, including non-

⁴⁵ Services adapted to individual needs of a specific case

⁴⁶ Only with the permission of the CSW authorized in a concrete case.

⁴⁷ US Office to monitor and combat trafficking in persons [2017 Trafficking in Persons Report](#)

⁴⁸ Source: CPTV <http://www.centarzztlj.rs/images/download/StatutCZZTLJ.pdf> (seen April 17, 2018)

governmental organizations, police, service providers and diplomatic / consular missions, institutions in the social and health protection system, Labor Inspectorate, Trade Inspection, educational institutions, National Employment Service units, reception and asylum centers for refugees and migrants, institutes for child / unaccompanied minors care, Maternity Home, shelters for gender-based violence survivors, and civil society organizations. They all have the duty to refer *presumed/potential human trafficking cases* to CPTV and support victims, in line with their scope of work, however clear guidance informing the preliminary identification process doesn't exist. The highest number of reported cases in 2017 were received by the CPTV from social protection institutions (39%), police (27%) and NGOs (11%).

Presumed (or potential) victim of trafficking: A 'presumed' or 'potential' or 'suspected' victim of trafficking is a person for whom there is reasonable ground to believe that she or he may be a victim of trafficking in human beings but who has not yet been formally recognized by the authorities as a victim. Presumed or potential victims should be entitled to the full range of protection services and procedural guarantees offered to recognized victims until their status is clarified (i.e. if they are a victim or not).

The formal criteria/indicators for preliminary identification, have not been adopted yet, although CPTV professionals developed the list of indicators for the system of social protection, as well as for the police and for the professionals from the educational system⁴⁹. Those indicators are based on relevant documents like *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*⁵⁰ *list of indicators* and *International labor organization (ILO) Operational indicators of trafficking in human beings*⁵¹.

After the preliminary identification is performed by the any of the actors listed above, and the case is referred to CPTV its representatives are obliged to directly contact this person and initiate an admission assessment and with it a procedure of formal identification. These steps are reflected in the Chart No. 1 below.

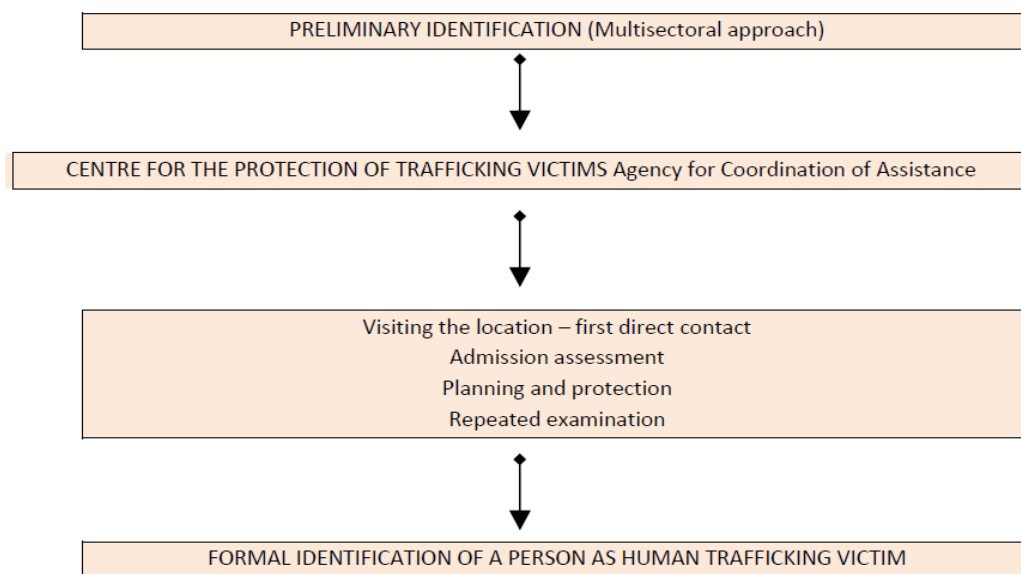


Chart No. 1

⁴⁹ Source: CPTV. Available at: <http://www.centarzztlj.rs/index.php/aktivnosti/item/65-objavljeni-indikatori-za-preliminarnu-identifikaciju-%C5%Bertava-trgovine-ljudima> (seen May, 2018)

⁵⁰ Source: UNODC. Available at: https://www.unodc.org/pdf/HT_indicators_E_LOWRES.pdf (seen May, 2018)

⁵¹ Source: ILO. Available at: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@declaration/documents/publication/wcms_105023.pdf (seen May, 2018)

The official identification, as well as coordination of assistance and protection in cases of **adult victims** (with legal capacity), is performed by the CPTV, after the victim provides his / her consent. In cases of the **child victims of human trafficking** and adult victims without legal capacity, the same service is performed by the authorized social welfare center, with the mandatory participation of the CPTV.

The CPTV Statute offers following definition of their two-step model VoT formal identification process:⁵²

- *Step 1 – initial assessment of data from the application*: this step is supposed to provide initial information and assessment of the situation, and define if the Center continues working on the case or not. If, at this stage, the CPTV assesses that it is not a case of human trafficking, the application is rejected.
- *Step 2 – Implementation of the identification procedure for victims of trafficking in human beings*. At this stage more detailed identification is carried out through the process of learning more details and facts, analysis and assessment of the situation, relations, and needs of victims.

Despite the lack of formal procedures, the identification of VoTs, as reported by CPTV, is carried out on the basis of three factors:

1. Estimation of the series of indicators of trafficking in human beings (also based on practice, as they have not been formalized yet);
2. Responses provided by the presumed VoTs during a structured interview done by CPTV and
3. Data from other sources and from other actors.

KI interviews with NGO representatives point to the lack of clear criteria for formal identification. Especially with regards to the first step in the identification process (*initial assessment of data from the application*) NGOs report that the criteria are neither clear enough, nor sufficiently transparent, resulting in lots of referred potential cases being dismissed and persons being left without needed protection. At the same time CPTV reports lacking sufficient financial and human resources to maintain its mandate in an appropriate manner⁵³.

There was a visible disproportion between the reported (suspected) cases of human trafficking in relation to migrants and refugees - 54⁵⁴ and the final number of identified victims, which is five from the beginning of the crises in summer 2015 until now. This disproportion is caused mainly by the overload of the border police with migration related activities in the respective period, and they were previously very active in THB preliminary identification. This was compounded by difficulties in distinguishing between human trafficking and smuggling and by the lack of willingness of the victims themselves to talk about the trafficking or exploitation they survived. The tenuous nature of the legal status of refugees and migrants in Serbia, also undermines people's openness to reporting. Luckily, due to recent reforms of the police in the last few years, THB mandate has been moved from the border police to the criminal police units who will be more available to work on the cases involving migrants as well.

Another key challenge in identification lies in the proscribed competencies of the CPTV which are more reactive than proactive. The CPTV does not maintain field visits, but acts only upon referrals from other institutions and organizations.

⁵² Source: CPTV. Available at: <http://www.centarzztlj.rs> (seen April, 2018)

⁵³ According to job systematization available at:

http://www.centarzztlj.rs/images/download/2017/INFORMATOR_O_RADU_2017.pdf (seen May 2018) CPTV should have 18 employees, but in this moment they have only nine. From that number five of them work directly with the victims covering the whole territory of Serbia. The overall CPTV budget for 2017 was 21,205,168.00 RSD (208,000\$US), with the salaries portion of 9,490,000 RSD (93,322\$US), which is 44% of the total budget. The average salary of social worker is 49.559,80 (490\$US). The CPTV received the first tranche of funds for 2018 from the state budget only in early May.

⁵⁴ Data on reported cases are available for the 2016 and 2017; so that the number of reported cases could be even higher.

Although a common understanding identification process exists, actors / service providers especially outside the social welfare system, emphasized some of the key problems listed in Table 3 below:

TABLE NO 3: PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES	% OF KII
NO BUDGET ALLOCATIONS OR RESTRICTIVE STATE BUDGETING FOR THB/CPTV RESULTING IN: LOW # OF EMPLOYEES IN CPTV, LOW # OF FIELD ACTIONS AND REACTIVE CPTV APPROACH TO IDENTIFICATION (“WAITING FOR THE VICTIMS”), AVOIDING IDENTIFICATION DUE TO THE LACK OF SAFE ACCOMMODATION FOR SPECIFIC GROUPS OF VICTIMS (MEN, CHILDREN, ETC.)	70% (7/10)
LACK OF THE CAPACITY WITHIN POLICE – DE-PRIORITIZATION OF THE THB BY POLICE DUE TO PRIORITIZATION OF RESPONSE TO MIGRANT CRISIS, POLICE REFORM AND TRANSITION OF TRAFFICKING FILE FROM BORDER POLICE TO CRIMINAL POLICE	50% (5/10)
LACK OF INDICATORS AND SOPS FOR THE IDENTIFICATION, FOR EXAMPLE: UNCLEAR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THB AND SMUGGLING IN CASES OF OF MIGRANTS (GREY ZONE) UNCLEAR DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THB AND GBV IN SOME CASES (FOR INSTANCE CASES OF FORCED MARRIAGES) , THB is revealed only when crimes are committed, but not in the context of human rights violations, INSUFFICIENT KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER TYPES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING (APART FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION)	60% (6/10)

Other challenges pointed out by key informants included: refugees and migrants are reluctant to cooperate with officials, lack of trust due to problems related to legal status (police, CPTV, etc.), problematic quality of the first interview with the victim (led by the CPTV), absence of public awareness actions, problems in transnational referral mechanisms, one-way cooperation with CPTV/ inadequate responsiveness of the CPTV, etc.

“In the first contact good timing is crucial. Clear, precise information, explanation of each step ahead are of the utmost importance for me!”
(Focus group discussion, April 2018)

KIIs also revealed that some groups of potential VoTs have particular trouble accessing services: children (generally), Roma people, male victims of labor exploitation, unaccompanied migrant children, and persons with disabilities. This is due to the lack of formalized procedures (line of duties, ToRs, referral paths), inadequate capacity to provide support, lack of knowledge and/or un-sensitized professionals, discrimination and many other factors that lead to failures in identification. As a result, some VoTs do not receive proper assistance and support, and in some cases remain in the situation of trafficking, suffering violence.

The practice of identification is slowly and unevenly developed. All the available data sets conclude that most cases of trafficking in human beings identified in Serbia are cases of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. General knowledge about trafficking for sexual exploitation is overall much higher than the knowledge about trafficking for labor exploitation or other forms of exploitation, which is reflected in the low numbers of referred and identified cases of trafficking for other forms of exploitation. For instance, front-line police lack the understanding of differences between human trafficking and smuggling and consider most trafficking to be linked to sexual exploitation. Additionally, as CSOs have been pointing out for years, some forms of exploitation have also been tolerated and went unaddressed. For instance forced marriages and begging in Roma community have been tolerated as it has been treated by professionals, especially from CWS, as a part of the Roma culture and tradition⁵⁵.

⁵⁵ The Roma community in Serbia, particularly those living in settlements, often live in severe poverty and social exclusion. For instance 67% of Roma children living in settlements are poor, while 62% of Roma families with children are below the poverty line. Source: The State of Children in Serbia 2006. Poor and Excluded Children, UNICEF, Belgrade, 2007. Life in poverty and social exclusion further shape the lives of Roma children, including poor integration in the education system, inadequate access to health care, early marriages, lack of skills and knowledge demanded in the labor market and continuation of the circle of poverty. MICS3 (Evaluation of UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys Round 3) showed that over 40% of Roma girls aged 15-19 are

GRETA has also noted in its reports that measures to discourage demand should target all forms of exploitation and not just the commercial sex industry.

According to representatives of local anti-trafficking teams some **possible solutions to existing problems include:**

- further capacity strengthening of all relevant actors (police, judiciary, health system, schools etc. for more efficient and proactive preliminary identification of the potential VoTs),
- public awareness among general population about risk of trafficking in human beings⁵⁶,
- sharing information and better communication on the local level through improvements in the work of local AT teams,
- additional funds from the state budget should be allocated for THB activities,
- better cooperation of relevant institutions and adoption of normative and standards, as well as operating procedures.

All KIs answered that **victims' participation in the activities** during which identification can happen is very important, but they did not explain how and did not provide specific recommendations in that respect. This lack of knowledge and awareness about the importance of self-identification is an indication that it should be on the agenda and part of the National Action Plan for the period 2019 – 2020 within the activities that are related to the trainings and capacity buildings of the professionals. It also indicates the need for more proactive identification in terms of more efforts invested in outreach and screenings of populations in risk, field assessments, etc. At the time of writing (May 2018), the National AT Coordinator is preparing a report with recommendations for more pro-active investigations and out-reach.

5.1.3. Need for further capacity strengthening of stakeholders to improve identification

The majority of KIIs pointed out the need for training of all relevant actors/stakeholders in the area of the identification, but have put an accent on the capacity building of the representatives of CPTV. KII provided some suggestions in terms of the areas in which further strengthening of the capacities is needed:

- The CPTV recognized the need for additional improvements and knowledge regarding counselling and therapy, communication skills, especially with child VoTs, planning and case management, and stress management.
- The Center for social work identified some gaps in their competencies regarding the use of the risk assessment matrix and strengthening the victims through psycho-social support. Also, it was pointed out the more representatives of Center should receive basic training on THB that would cover definition of trafficking, legal framework, risk sector/areas, difference between THB and smuggling , national referral mechanism etc.).
- As for the reform of the police, i.e. transition of THB mandate from border to criminal police, much more representatives of Criminal Police should be educated and trained on THB problem.

Furthermore, KIs suggested prioritizing activities such as strengthening identification of VoTs in/by the health system, training in observation techniques (verbal, non-verbal techniques) and training in cultural mediation and languages, but also series of workshops for the (re) establishing the protocol and procedures for the identification with detailed and more advance in approach indicators of THB (like concept of scenario, etc.).

married or live in a union, while as much as 12% of Roma girls aged 15 are married or in informal partnership, quoted from The State of Children in Serbia 2006. Poor and Excluded Children, UNICEF, Belgrade, 2007.

⁵⁶ GRETA report states that future awareness raising measures should be designed in light of the assessment of previous measures and be focused on the needs identified.

Lack of funding for additional training is often mentioned as a recurrent bottleneck, as well as insufficient awareness of existing accredited training programs. The overall situation in this areas is characterized with a lack of coordination among different actors (local, national, CSOs, international organizations, donors). Most trainings are organized in an ad hoc manner, without long-term planning supported by needs assessment. The topics of the trainings and target groups have been overlapping and very often realized based on previous agenda and goals of the project and without any assessment. They are also often out of-date and old-fashioned, and do not take into account newest trends. Institutions which do not form part of the 'traditional' group of actors, including communal police, schools and hospitals should also be included in educational plans related to trafficking. The accredited trainings of CPTV professionals, which is crated for the other representatives of the social welfare system (professionals from the centers for social work, institutions for children etc.) need to be improved in the area of recognition of specialized VoT indicators. Trainings need to be adapted to be delivered to professionals in other sectors (police, education, health). Professionals who work within the system of protection need additional trainings with respect to cultural and gender sensitivity and cultural differences between the countries of origin of majority of refugees and migrants, and European countries. Even though certain trainings were organized during the refugee crisis in this respect, the situation has meanwhile changed, as refugees now stay for longer, and majority is not originating from Arabic speaking countries, but from and other language speaking (Farsi, Pashtun) areas.

Finally, a comprehensive national **system of monitoring and evaluation** still needs to be established. There are currently no existing mechanisms, procedures, criteria or mutual agreement on monitoring of the implementation of the National Action Plan, including reporting dynamics to the National Anti-trafficking Coordinator. Evaluations are rarely carried out and for now position of the National Rapporteur who would cover the area of monitoring and evaluation is still not established. These facts should be taken into account during the development of the new NAP and specific provisions should be made to define monitoring and reporting processes. In that respect, creating a matrix for monitoring and reporting would be very useful.

GRETA⁵⁷ considers that the Serbian authorities should take additional steps to ensure that all victims of trafficking are identified as such and can benefit from the assistance and protection measures contained in the Convention, in particular by:

- encouraging law enforcement officials, labor and market inspectors, social workers, asylum officials, NGOs and other relevant actors to adopt a more proactive approach and increase their outreach work to detect victims of THB for different forms of exploitation;
- increasing the involvement of specialized NGOs in the identification of victims of trafficking and strengthening multi-disciplinary co-operation between all relevant partners;
- paying increased attention to detecting victims of trafficking among migrants and asylum seekers;
- providing sufficient staff and resources to the CPTV to enable it to carry out timely identification of VoTs;

Adittionally following *urgent recommendations from the same report are also relevant here:*

1. Provision of specialized support and safe accommodation for UASC and timely assignment of legal guardians;
2. Provision of specialized shelters for human trafficking victims, including men, and the coordination of their reintegration processes;
3. The practical enforcement of the reflection period.

⁵⁷ Recommendation CP(2018)6 on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Serbia, adopted at the 22nd meeting of the Committee of the Parties on 9 February 2018.

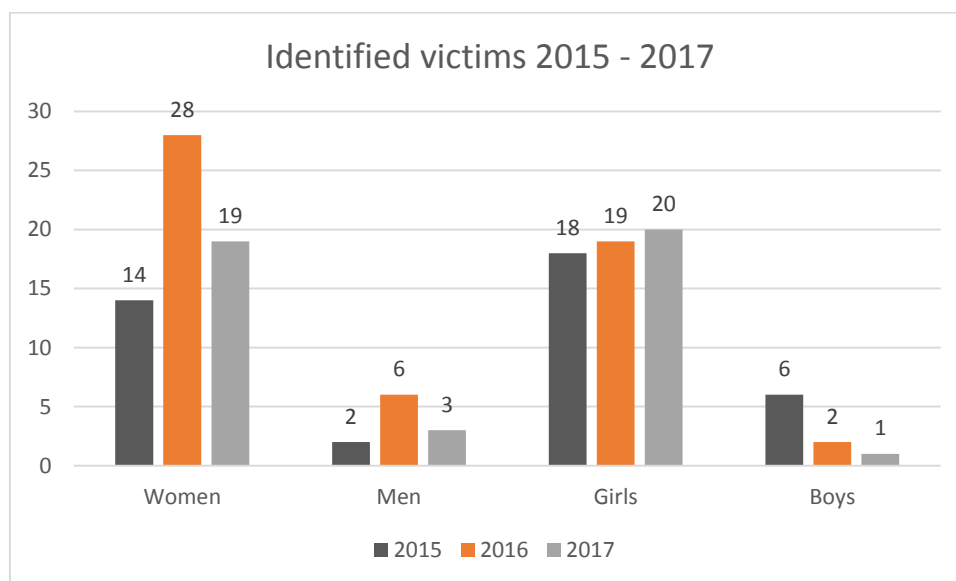
5.1.4. Indicator for which baseline values need to be established: # of potential VoTs identified by authorities and service providers disaggregated by age, gender and refugee status (Log frame: Outcome indicator 1.1)

All KIIs pointed out that the identification rate of potential VoTs is very low and should be significantly improved.

The number of formally identified victims in Serbia between 2015 and 2017 is as follows:

- In **2015**, **40** THB victims were identified, including 24 minors and 16 legal adults, 32 female victims and 8 male victims. Internal trafficking accounts for 25 cases and transnational trafficking for 15. Most of the victims came from Serbia - 37, and three victims were foreign citizens – coming from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Syrian Arab Republic and the Republic of Ukraine respectively, who were exploited in Serbia.
- In **2016**, **55** THB victims were identified, including **21** minors and **34** legal adults, **47** female and **8** male victims. Most of the victims were Serbian nationals – 51. From that number 70% were exploited in Serbia. As for the transnational trafficking, Serbian victims mostly were trafficked to Germany and Russia. **Four** victims were nationals of other countries including Nepal, Afghanistan, Albania and Pakistan (one each), who were exploited in Turkey, Greece, Italy, Montenegro and in Afghanistan.
- In **2017**, **43** victims were identified, including 21 minors and 22 legal adults, 39 female and 4 male victims. Most of the victims were citizens of Serbia – 40, while three victims originated from other countries, including Afghanistan, Macedonia and Montenegro. According to the CPTV, *“foreign citizens were exploited in their countries of origin, but identified in Serbia as victims.”* With regards to 40 Serbian citizens, internal trafficking accounted for 26 cases and transnational trafficking accounted for 14 cases (in Slovenia, France, etc.).

The graph number 1 shows the identified victims in the period from 2015 to 2017, broken down by gender and age.



Graph no. 1

With respect to victims identified in 2017, almost half of them (21) were victims of sexual exploitation solely, 10 other cases were subject to multiple forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation, while remaining cases were victims of other forms of THB. Sexual exploitation was therefore the most dominant type of exploitation by far, and affected almost exclusively women, as only one case of a male being sexually exploited was reported.

Out of the total, 93% of the victims were Serbian nationals, a third of whom were exploited abroad. With regards to the refugee and migrant population residing in Serbia, there were 14 cases of presumed victims of human trafficking in 2017 referred to CPTV for formal identification, and in all 14 cases CPTV initiated this process. However, by the end of 2017, only one of these presumed victims was formally identified (a boy identified as a sexual exploitation victim), and three cases were rejected, while in 10 cases the identification process is still ongoing.

Significant discrepancy between the number of suspected cases reported to the CPTV and the number of victims formally identified is noticeable in the statistics for 2017, as well as an insignificant number of VoT identified among refugees and migrants, and this coincides with the situation in previous years. The number of notifications for preliminary identification that resulted in formal identification of victim are presented in the Table No 4. (data presented cover period from 2015 – 2017).

Table no. 4

YEAR	REFERRALS FOR # OF VICTIMS IN THE # OF VICTIMS NOT # OF IDENTIFIED VOTS
	IDENTIFICATION PROCESS OF FORMAL AVAILABLE TO CPTV
2015	106 84 22 40
2016	150 113 37 55
2017*	142 (138) ./ ./ 43

* CPTV's official annual report for 2017 has not been published.

In the last three years CPTV received 398 referrals of potential (presumed/suspected) victims of trafficking. The majority of referrals of potential VoTs came from police (135 representing 33.94% of the total), and Centers for Social

Work (136 victims representing 34% of the total). These were followed by NGOs with 46 (11.6%), International organizations and NGOs from abroad with 21 (5.3%), self-identification in 17 cases (4.3%), and other sources of identification such as Commissariat for refugees, Prosecutor's office, CPTV ex officio etc. (close to 10% in total)⁵⁸.

The number of **identified victims of trafficking among migrants** is still very low. For example, during 2016, the CPTV also received 40 reports for the identification of victims among migrant and refugee population. Of the total number, **2 women were identified as victims**. One case involved labor exploitation and coercion into marriage and the other involved transnational sexual exploitation.

Comparing data on notifications and number of formally identified VoTs shows that out of the 398 notifications one third of potential victims of trafficking were formally identified as victims by CPTV criteria (138, i.e. 34.7%). This points to the above mentioned unclear and un-standardized criteria used by relevant actors.

This relatively low rate of confirmation of presumed victims as officially recognized ones could also be related to the *quality of the initial interview*. VoTs participating in the focus group discussion stated that the interview during the first contact, both with the police and with the CPTV representatives was very exhausting, and that they didn't understand the purpose and the importance of this interview at that time, nor did they get complete information about their rights during this first contact (FGD April, 2018). Representatives of NGOs interviewed during the baseline

⁵⁸ Source: CPTV and GRETA Report

study stressed the crucial importance of the quality of the first interview, and that this can affect identification rates. After experiencing THB, victims in general have difficulties reaching out and developing trust in interactions. Additionally due to existing public perception of high corruption and nepotism, there is a lack of trust in institutions in Serbia.⁵⁹ This poses additional challenges to the initial interviews performed and makes interviewer skills all the more important.

With respect to the low identification rate among refugee and migrant population, KIs, first-line responders, as well as some of the available researches⁶⁰, pointed to the following key contributing factors:

- Factors related to state response and quality of existing anti-trafficking measures in humanitarian crises:
 - ✓ AT measures are not developed, i.e. harmonized operating procedures for migrant and refugee referral are not in place, and neither are multi-agency co-ordination mechanism
 - ✓ migrant reception facilities do not ensure that they are respecting the needs of victims of trafficking and at risk groups (designated separate spaces for interviews)
 - ✓ facilities are accessible to traffickers themselves
 - ✓ primary focus of first responders is on providing humanitarian aid (accommodation, food and medical assistance),
 - ✓ CPTV is not part of the registration procedure or similar action in the first reception phase
 - ✓ information on potential risks of exploitation and human trafficking are insufficiently available to the refugees
 - ✓ competent authorities predominantly focus on smuggling
 - ✓ the number of cultural mediators and interpreters, especially females are not adequate
 - ✓ the professionals in the reception facilities often lack specific expertise to address or recognize THB
 - ✓ The presence of a legal guardian and a cultural mediator is not ensured throughout the process.
- Refugees can be reluctant to report violence and trafficking because of their:
 - ✓ uncertain legal status of migrants - identification can lead to irreversible decisions such as expulsions or forced removals
 - ✓ possible separation from the group and people they are familiar with
 - ✓ family affiliation as a priority
 - ✓ in a case of sexual exploitation, fear that family would know what happened to them
 - ✓ Psychological consequences of THB (changes in self-perception, i.e. hopelessness, feelings of chronic shame and guilt), PTSD etc.
 - ✓ Reasons related to possible stigma etc.

Finally, the identification rate at the local level is very low. Information obtained from municipality representatives shows that only two local AT teams referred cases to the CPTV. The Center for Social Work in Subotica referred one potential victim and the Center for Social Work Niš referred two potential migrant victims. In the later stage of identification, neither of these were confirmed as VoTs by the CPTV. (*Source: KII April, 2018*)

⁵⁹ According to the research of Belgrade Center for Security Police 66% of citizens of Serbia, respondents in the research, answered affirmatively regarding the existence of the corruption in the police, but also in other institutions like judiciary, health system, prosecutor office etc. Source: BCBP. Available on:

http://www.bezbednost.org/upload/document/uporedna_analiza_stavova_graana_o_policiji_na_zapa.pdf

⁶⁰ OSCE, From Reception to Recognition: Identifying and Protecting Human Trafficking Victims in Mixed Migration Flows, Vienna 2017

5.2. PROJECT OBJECTIVE 2: RELEVANT LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND NGOS PROVIDE AGE AND GENDER APPROPRIATE SUPPORT TO VOTS

“In a safe and secure environment and with constant support, I become stronger and I can ask for help”

Woman identified as a victim of trafficking (FGD April, 2018)

5.2.1. Existing capacities and services available for victims of trafficking in line with their age and gender

As mentioned previously, the CPTV as a central body for the coordination and identification of THB victims has two organizational units: The Agency for Coordination of Trafficking Victims’ protection and the emergency **shelter**. However the Agency is the only unit that operates at present, and the emergency shelter is still not operational six year after establishing CPTV. Transition house, a shelter run by NGO Atina remains the only specialized and licensed shelter for female trafficking victims. The gap in accommodation capacities is bridged by the local Centers for Social Work that operate shelters for the victims of domestic violence. There are more than five⁶¹ safe houses for women throughout Serbia, but they are not specialized in working with the victims of human trafficking. Female victims with children can also be accommodated in the Maternity home in Belgrade with limited capacity. Male victims do not have access to a dedicated trafficking shelter, but accommodation is rented as needed and male victims, both adults and boys can access all other rehabilitation services offered to female victims.

Mandated to do case management CPTV prepares individual plans for services and protection of trafficking victims and refers them to service providers. Assistance is provided mainly by NGOs and CSWs. The two main specialized NGOs are Atina and ASTRA. Following the introduction of the licensing procedure for service providers financed by the state budget, the referral of victims of THB to specialized NGOs has considerably decreased, and victims are more often referred to state CSWs, even though specialized NGOs have been providing victim-centered services for over a decade. According to a CPTV representative “in the cases where the institutions can offer the ‘package of services’ it is not necessary to involve NGOs”, and the “Center should not exaggerate with referral of victims to highly specialized services as that way we risk putting victims under the glass bell or under the magnifying glass of various experts.” (KII, April 2018).

While separation from peers, isolation in an artificial environment (such as a safe house) and exposure of victims to a high numbers of different professionals can pose additional challenges in a recovery process, it might be necessary in order to provide adequate and needed specialized services, and resources and technical expertise of NGOs should be utilized to benefit of the VoTs.

Views of other KIs relating to victim protection services provided by CPTV and centers for social work – Qualitative data:

- As institutions for social protection, they (centers for social work) are mandated to provide a number of direct services, but in reality mostly do not have enough capacities to indeed provide these services - especially not in a timely manner.

- CPTV generally does not provide direct services, but rather co-ordinates the existing ones, although, in recent years, they have provided such services by using the funds from the prosecutor’s office.

- The victims need to have not only specialized services at their disposal, but also all other services within the system of social and health care - this is why all institutions must be thoroughly conversant with the problem and complement one another.

⁶¹ Precise data on the number of safe houses is not available as the official list of licensed shelters/safe houses managed by the MoLEVSA has not been updated. This list is available at <https://www.minrzs.gov.rs/ysluge-socijalne-zastite.html>

The majority of participants in the focus group (VoTs) said that it was very difficult for them to communicate their needs because of fear and state of shock. For them trust in the service provider is crucial.

(FG April, 2018).

Participants in the focus group discussions pointed out that information on assistance and support programs that exist in the Republic of Serbia, provided by representatives of the institutions included in National Referral Mechanism, was very unclear and resulted in confusion. On the other hand, one girl, participant in the FG, presented a very positive experience from abroad: “I think that *detailed and precise information resulting in feeling that the situation would be solved*”. (FGD April, 2018). Participants identified the most important types of support as:

- helping them to escape/exit from the situation of violence/trafficking;
- acceptance, trust and support of the representatives of the institutions/CSOs (that the victims are not guilty for the violence they suffer);
- sense of security (being far away from the situation of violence);
- basic needs;
- support of the case manager from Atina (“case manager is always there for them, even if they make mistakes”);
- support and accompanying through institutional procedures helping clients gain effective access to their rights, legal help/ support during legal procedures, preparation for the testimony;
- Support during education, psychological assistance, translation and assistance of a cultural mediator.

Participants suggested some areas for improvement in the assistance provided to victims:

- provision of **information** on available assistance and support programs from the very first contact with the institutions;
- avoiding confrontation with the trafficker during the court procedures/testimony;
- More sensitized / responsive police officers; the interview with the police (giving a statement) could last for hours and should be shortened. It is important if the victims understood the importance of the interview. This should be explained in a proper manner and provided in a sensitive fashion;
- access to NGO services from the beginning (prevention of re-trafficking);
- excursion and other activities outside the reintegration house, leisure time, vocational training;

In terms of gender sensitivity there is an evident lack of services designed for men who are victims of human trafficking, and most prominently for those who are victims of labor exploitation. The challenges in providing support to **children**, and particularly unaccompanied minors, who have been identified as victims of human trafficking are represented in the lack of adequate (and urgent) accommodation, insufficient development of activities which are more child-oriented and aimed at strengthening their work and learning habits, as well as insufficient development of necessary skills of professionals working with children within the institutions (psychologists, pedagogues, teachers etc). More details on services child VoTs are provided in the following section.

5.2.2. Existing capacities and services available for children victims of trafficking

All KII agree that **specific services for child VoTs do not exist**. The problem of accommodation and emergency assistance is often mentioned. Accommodation of children is possible within the shelters run by the centers for social work, homes for children without parental care and foster families. Sometimes child victims are returned to their families. Unaccompanied children can be accommodated in the Institutes for Education of Children and Adolescents

in Belgrade and Niš (each with dedicated accommodation for unaccompanied children), as well as in shelters run by centers for social work, homes for children without parental care, and foster families. Additionally Jesuit Relief services (JRS) has a safe house for unaccompanied refugee children, with a capacity of 13-14 places (KII April, 2018).

The Law on Social Protection recognizes children victims of trafficking in human beings as beneficiaries of social protection services and they have the right to health care and education. Centers for Social Work are play a key role in the protection of child victims. It is within their mandate to appoint a guardian if it necessary, provide case management and referral to healthcare, counselling, psycho-social support, etc. Together with the CPTV, they determine where the child should be accommodated or what kind of the assistance the child needs, on the basis of a joint assessment of the best interests of the child. Generally, there is a lack of both specific procedures and dedicated programs for child trafficking victims.

Given the context of the refugee crisis, the system needs to improve as to design and provide particular and special services to unaccompanied minors. There is no separate accommodation available to these children, and they are all accommodated in one place at the moment (Krnjača Asylum Center). The communication between relevant institutions (centers for social work, Commissariat for Refugees and Migrations, reception and asylum centers) remains slow, thus the appointment of guardians or placement of these children into foster families also takes a long time. There is also a lack of legal guardians which results in inadequate support to these children. As a relatively large number of refugees and migrants is staying outside the asylum and reception centers, there is an evident lack of information with respect to these people and the provision of services to them.

The migrant population residing outside the reception and asylum center, especially unaccompanied children, is exposed to higher risks of violence and exploitation and have no access to protection services or to support to meet basic needs. At the same time there are also safety concerns in reception and asylum centers, particularly in regards to refugee and migrant women. Finally, even though health services for refugees and migrants are envisaged by the law, there are a number of practical difficulties in accessing these services

Key informants provided additional feedback with regards to the services for child VoTs:

- All referrals of child victims are done to Centers for social work; NGOs are not partners in that process;⁶²
- Additional training for working with the children is a necessity;
- The exchange of information and cooperation between service-providers working on the same case is not insufficient, for example CPTV which should coordinate care for VoTs don't receive feedback from the Centers for Social Work who also provide services on the case, within their mandate;
- Police interviews conducted with children, are very often not in line with appropriate standards.
- There are not enough interpreters / translators and cultural mediators, particularly for migrant / refugee population.

The list of missing services with the possible solutions is presented in the table below:

TABLE NO 5 MISSING OR LACK OF SERVICES	% OF KII
SHELTER (ACCOMMODATION) FOR CHILD VICTIMS AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMS	80%
INSUFFICIENTLY TRAINED PROFESSIONALS	40%
PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC SUPPORT (OUTSIDE OF BELGRADE)	20%
POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS	

⁶² Lack of adequate cooperation with the specialized CSOs was noted in the GRETA, as well as the TiP report. The government of Serbia is recommended "to include formalizing cooperation with NGOs to ensure victims have access to and receive all necessary support services" (TiP);

CAPACITY BUILDING, DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SKILLS OF ALL RELEVANT PROFESSIONALS AND SPECIALIZATION	60%
PROVISION OF CHILD FRIENDLY/CENTERED SPECIALIZED ACCOMMODATION SERVICE	80%

A representative of CPTV remarked that it is “very important to work on the recovery and integration of children, (activities like socializing, sports, playing etc.) and not to insist on highly specialized services”. Getting back to so called ‘normal life’ rapidly is the goal of (re)integration per se, but on that path it is very crucial not to underestimate the consequences of trauma caused by trafficking but to follow the rhythm of recovery of each child.

On the question - *what is the typical process for child VoTs to access services?* – Half of the KIs did not answer as they hadn’t had sufficient experience with child VoT cases. The rest of them had different opinions. The group of KIs that are not representatives of the social welfare system raised following concerns related to the protection of child VoTs:

- Sometimes child victims are returned to their families without adequate assessment and support;
- Discrimination of Roma and street children; who are at high risk of trafficking affecting their access to services;
- Unclear procedures and responsibilities of the actors within the process of assistance, especially with regards to the cooperation between the police and system of social protection.

According to the representatives of the system of social protection once the child victim is identified and has a guardian, all existing services are available to him/her without any discrimination in relation to gender, language or other characteristics.

GRETA urges the Serbian authorities to take further steps to improve the identification and assistance of child victims of trafficking, and in particular to:

- intensify their efforts to identify victims of trafficking among unaccompanied and separated foreign children in reception centers for migrants and asylum seekers, other facilities and outside any formal facilities;
- provide adequate assistance and services adapted to the needs and the rights of child victims of trafficking;
- provide further training to all stakeholders (police, migration and asylum authorities, centers for social work, NGOs, health care and education professionals) as well as guidance for the identification of child victims of THB.

TiP Report: recommended to the Government of Serbia to include formalizing cooperation with NGOs to ensure victims have access to and receive all necessary support services

5.2.3. Indicator for which baseline values need to be established: % of potential child VoTs identified who are referred to services disaggregated by gender (log frame: Outcome indicator 2.1)

Based on available data, with respect to child victims identified in 2017, 57% (12) were the victims of sexual exploitation solely, while in three other cases of multiple exploitation, children were also sexually exploited. Apart from that, three case of forced marriage as well as three cases of coercion to begging were identified. The CPTV referral data for child VoTs in 2017 are not available.

The detailed number of child victims identified are presented in the table below:

Table 6: number of identified child victims in 2017			
Type of exploitation	Female	Male	Total
Sexual exploitation	12	-	12
Labor exploitation	-	-	-
Forced marriage	3	-	3
Coercion to Begging	2	1	3
Multiple forms of exploitation	3	-	3
Coercion to commit offences	-	-	-
Total	20	1	21

Comparing the data in the last three years (period 2015 – 2017), the identification rate is at the same level (**21** child victims in 2015, **21** in 2016, and **24** child victims in 2017). Out of a total of **66, 57** victims were girls (86%) and **nine** were boys (14%). The dominant types of exploitation were sexual and “multiple forms⁶³” of exploitation (**37** cases - 56%).

The CPTV referred three victims to ASTRA in 2015; one in 2016, and two in 2017 (total of six in three years) (KII, April 2018).

In 2017, the CPTV referred seven victims to Atina. The total number of VoTs that were referred to NGO victim assistance services in 2017 was nine.

According to the CPTV annual reports in 2015⁶⁴, CPTV referred 44.4% of cases. In 2016⁶⁵ that proportion had decreased to only 17%. The referrals of child victims are not visible in the CPTV statistics, but according to NGOs that number is even lower in comparison to adult victims.

Unfortunately, capacities and expertise of NGOs are not adequately used in the process of identification, and this can affect the quality of support to VoTs.

During 2017, out of a total of 14 reports of suspected trafficking among **migrants** that CPTV received **one child victim** of trafficking was identified, a boy who was the victim of multiple forms of exploitation. *Source: CPTV⁶⁶*

There were an estimated 670 to 800 unaccompanied children in Serbia in March 2017. (GRETA, 2017)

According to UNHCR’s report Europe refugee situation: Serbia 2016 in numbers from February 2017, over 1,000 Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASCs) were identified; over 800 UASCs referred to Child protection services/provided with counseling and 197 Best Interest Assessments supported through Child Welfare Services.

The Institute for the upbringing of children and youth in Belgrade has accommodated 540 unaccompanied migrant children since its opening in 2009 and currently houses 13 such children. Since its opening in 2011, the center within the Institute for the upbringing of children and youth in Niš has accommodated a total of 420 unaccompanied migrant children, including 29 in the course of 2017 (TIP Report, 2017).

⁶³ Almost half of them (28) were the victims of sexual exploitation solely, while in nine other cases of multiple exploitation, sexual exploitation was also identified. That means that this type of exploitation was far dominant (56%), thus most exclusively affected women (there was one case of a male sexually exploited).

⁶⁴ Source CPTV: <http://www.centarzztlj.rs/images/stat/Izvestaj%20o%20trgovini%20Ijudima%202016.pdf> (seen April 20, 2018)

⁶⁵ Source CPTV: <http://www.centarzztlj.rs/images/stat/17/Izvestaj%20o%20trgovini%20Ijudima%20u%20Srbiji%202017.pdf> (seen April 20, 2018)

⁶⁶

5.3. PROJECT OBJECTIVE 3: CREATING SAFE AND EQUITABLE LEGAL ENVIRONMENT FOR VOTS SUPPORTING THEIR RIGHT TO DISCLOSE AND SEEK ASSISTANCE

“I personally believe that it is necessary to improve the functioning of local anti-trafficking networks/team but our and their work should be much more supported by the state, because this cannot be based only on volunteerism and a good will of motivated individuals“

(KII Local actor, April 2017)

“Joint meetings of local teams and national actors would be a great experience and opportunity for sharing practices and knowledge.”

(KII Local actor, April 2017)

5.3.1. Action Plan for implementation of national anti trafficking Strategy

As was mentioned in the introduction, the new Strategy for the Prevention and Suppression of THB, Especially Women and Children, and Victim Protection, covering the period 2017-2022, accompanied by an Action Plan for the period of 2017-2018, was adopted by the Government on 4 August 2017. The Action Plan for 2017 - 2018 prioritizes strengthening of the relevant partnerships on the local, national and international level; prevention and education in the area of trafficking, proactive work towards detecting of THB cases and identification of victims, especially children. Latest TiP Report calls Serbian government to allocate adequate staff and resources for the Office for Coordination against Trafficking in Persons and existing coordination structures to ensure effectiveness of the strategic framework.

Adittionally, the Action Plan envisages defining and adopting a model of formalized co-operation with NGOs in the field of suppressing THB. The National Strategy stresses that NGOs shall participate as equal partners in the process of monitoring, reporting and evaluating the implementation of the Strategy, through the appointment of five representatives. A public call addressed to NGOs for participation in the process of monitoring, reporting and evaluating the implementation of the Strategy was issued on 29 September 2017.

5.3.1.a Indicators for which baseline values need to be established: number/existence of action plan for the period 2019-2020 (log frame: Outcome indicator 3.2);

There is no draft of the National action plan for the period 2019-2020. Realization of the national action plan for 2017-2018 is very weak and slow. The main problem are finances, lack of capacities due to the restrictions on hiring new employees in the public sector (it has been extended until the end of 2018) that resulted in limited resources for the realization and over-burdening of actors involved in the implementation of Strategy and NAP.

The system for monitoring and evaluation of the NAP is not in place. Relevant authorities are very reluctant and inert in reporting, and the National Coordinator does not have support in this process.

Two local AT plans harmonized with the national document exist in Nis and Vranje municipalities.

5.3.2. Standard Operating Procedures

The Standard Operative Procedures for the identification and referral of victims of trafficking have been adopted as part (appendix) of the Agreement on Cooperation signed on 12 November 2009 between the Ministries of the Interior, Justice, Health, Education, and Labor and Social Affairs⁶⁷. This document contains chapters with procedures for the identification of victims (without indicators), the provision of emergency care and assistance, long-term assistance, rehabilitation and reintegration, return to the country of origin, participation in criminal proceedings, and compensation⁶⁸.

In 2016, the Ministry of the Interior, in co-operation with IOM, prepared a manual entitled “*Humanitarian Border Management – Standard Operating Procedures for Border Police*”. Indicators and guidance for the identification of victims of THB were made available to all border police officers for the purpose of preliminary identification of victims of human trafficking in the context of border controls. They are not part of the Standard Operative Procedures set up in 2009. This document is meant for border police use only, and not part of a cross-ministerial agreement. The next update of SOPs from 2009 should be harmonized with the border police document. The revision of the SOPs started in February 2018, led by the Ministry of Interior with support from the IOM. This is an ongoing activity and as of May 2018, the draft of SOPs has not been presented to relevant actors in the field of combating THB,

The identification of child victims of trafficking falls under the responsibilities of the Centers for social work, in coordination with the CPTV. No separate guidelines or operating procedures are in place for the identification of child VoTs and Centers for social work and the CPTV apply the Standard Operative Procedures for the identification of victims of THB, which were last updated in 2016. (GRETA, 2017)

Standard Operating Procedures for the Protection of Refugee/Migrant Children were published in March 2016 as part of the project entitled “Strengthening the child protection system in Serbia to respond to the needs of refugee/migrant children at high risk”. The project was implemented in partnership with the NGO Ideas, the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, UNICEF, UNHCR and the Center for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking. These Standard Operating Procedures cover the preliminary identification of refugee/migrant children at risk, assessment and determination of the best interests of the child and protection through temporary guardianship. However the document hasn’t been endorsed officially yet and is not considered mandatory.

Regarding the actual functionality of SOPs and referral mechanisms and whether they adequately protect the safety and confidentiality of VoTs, KIIs revealed a mutual agreement that the document is not operational and not in use, or at least that in practice some problems are occurring. Most of the KIIs stressed that there is a need for new and/or updated SOPs. Based on the KII questionnaire results, there is no clear understanding of whether the local teams are meant to be a local mechanism for identification and assistance to victims, or an AT team for the implementation of the Strategy at local level (40% of answers). Again, almost half of the KIIs did not provide an answer (40%) and 10% said no.

In the local communities where the local referral pathway is operational, representatives described it as follows: In the case of an assessment by a social worker, which involves suspicion of the existence of elements of trafficking in human beings, a social worker informs the local police station and CPTV. The CPTV coordinates all activities in relation to identification and victim assistance and support, to ensure the best interests and safety of victims of trafficking in human beings. After the identification of the victim, an official procedure is initiated with the responsible prosecutor's office.

⁶⁷ They have been developed under a regional project run by ICMPD with the support of United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

⁶⁸ The document did not contain list of indicators.

5.3.2.a Indicator for which baseline values needs to be established: number/existence of the national SOPs for identification and referral of VoTs (log frame: Outcome indicator 3.1)

The Standard Operating Procedures for the identification and referral of victims of trafficking have been adopted as part (appendix) of the Agreement on Cooperation signed on 12 November 2009. Almost 10 years later, SOPs are out of date, having in mind that THB is very dynamic phenomenon. Revision of the existing document is initiated by IOM and MoI in February 2018, but a draft is still not available. The project will be monitoring the process of revision and provide support as needed.

5.3.3. Local response and coordination

During 2013, the Ministry of the Interior and IOM had been implementing the project “*Strengthening the Systematic Partnership for the Implementation of the National Strategy on Suppressing Trafficking in Human Beings*”. Within the project one of the main activities was the establishment of local coordination teams in 10 Serbian municipalities and cities (Pančevo, Kikinda, Sombor, Novi Pazar, Šabac, Smederevo, Požarevac, Leskovac, Pirot and Prokuplje).

In October 2013, within the project “Local Communities in Suppressing Trafficking in Human Beings” implemented by NGO Atina, Memoranda of Understanding were signed in additional 7 municipalities: Niš, Novi Sad, Sremska Mitrovica, Kraljevo, Kragujevac, Vranje and Subotica, where local teams for protection of VoTs and prevention of THB were established. To that effect, within the framework of marking 18 October 2013 – the *European Anti-Trafficking Day* – a central conference was held in the City Hall of Niš, whereby a “Declaration on Suppressing All Forms of Trafficking in Human Beings” was adopted by all local teams.

Based on the AT National Coordinator report on activities of local teams (November, 2017), some of the teams (e.g. Vranje, Pirot, Šabac, Leskovac, Požarevac, Sombor, Sremska Mitrovica) implement preventive activities continuously, hold regular meetings, produce annual plans and carry out other activities at the local level, while most of the local teams have minimal activities in the fight against human trafficking. The reasons for this inactivity is very often a lack of interest and/or support of the local authorities. To improve the work of Local Anti-Trafficking Teams, the following recommendations have been made: appointment of the local AT coordination, development of the annual work plans, and organization of regular meetings and creation/adoption of the Coordination Plan between the National AT Coordinator Local AT Teams in accordance with the national AT Strategy.

On October 23, 2017, the Minister of Interior sent a note to the regional police offices in 17 towns issuing the instructions to police officers and members of the Local Teams to initiate a meeting in order to produce an analysis of the activities done so far and recommendations for future work.

Work of local AT teams remains limited by the slow process of decentralization in Serbia. Even though decentralization is on government’s agenda there have not been significant improvement, and much of the decision making processes and power still lies at central level. This has a demotivating effect on establishment of all local structures and the perception of their usefulness by the actors involved. This is also visible in the fact that none of the key informants responded to the question what are the main outcomes and benefits of attending the national meetings of local anti-trafficking networks/teams/working groups and how could these be strengthened. However, even with these challenges, adoption of the new Strategy and accompanying commitments is expected to mobilize local actors, and hopefully encourage them to utilize these new local coordinating structures.

5.3.3.a Indicator for which baseline values need to be established: percentage of improvement in practices to prevent and address HT in 7 municipalities and cities (log frame: Outcome indicator 3.1)

Indicator *improvement in practices to prevent and address HT* was operationalized through: existence of map of specialized services and awareness of relevant stakeholders thereof; existence of clear referral pathway for VoTs; and frequency of the meetings of the local anti-trafficking networks.

The map(s) of specialized services for VoTs on local or national level do not exist, which was confirmed by all KIIs. The desk research conducted in addition to KII found that the most relevant document is the *List of all licensed services within the system of social protection*, and this is available on <http://socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/rs/objavljeno-istrazivanje-mapiranje-usluga-socijalne-zastite-u-nadleznosti-lokalnih-samouprava-u-republici-srbiji/>. In the Multisectoral cooperation sheet there is no information on local THB protocols (for example local centers for social work and police, CSOs etc.). The services that are not accredited by the Institution of Social protection are not listed in this document.

According to KIIs, and confirmed by desk research, clear and operational referral pathway at both local and national level do not exist.

In terms of the **frequency of meetings of the local teams** only one (Vranje) of seven municipalities included in the projects had regularly met in 2017 (10 meetings). Local teams in two additional municipalities had occasional meetings (Sremska Mitrovica four times, Nis two times), while in the four remaining municipalities local teams did not meet at all in 2017.

6. Overview of identified gaps and needs the project will be addressing

Comparative analyses of the relevant documents issued by the international bodies, national and local state authorities in the field of suppressing trafficking in human beings, the most recent reports of the relevant civil society organizations and other stakeholders, as well as laws and by-laws related to the human trafficking phenomena, points to several concerns. The national actors involved in this analysis as Key Informants reported similar challenges as the ones requiring urgent action. This analysis confirmed the prioritization performed during the project design phase is still highly relevant. Key areas of intervention for the project remain:

- ✓ Inadequate **identification of victims of trafficking and lack of sufficient multi-disciplinary co-operation** between all relevant partners (GRETA), and need for **formalization of the victim identification procedures along with the update of the national referral mechanism** (TiP report). KIs all agree that the identification rate of potential VoTs is very low and should be significantly improved through further development and better implementation of standards and procedures in the process of identification. In order to improve identification, it is necessary to work simultaneously on several levels, through:
 - Revision of the existing SOPs in order to make identification procedures as well as referral pathways both on the national, local and international level, more clear and efficient;
 - Improving detection of new areas of exploitation and risk sectors, like labor exploitation, exploitation of migrants and refugees, children engaged in street begging, connection of cybercrime and trafficking in human beings, etc. For this purpose, further capacity building for front line workers in different institutions and organizations (*criminal police, social workers, inspections etc.*) is needed in order for them to be more proactive and able to identify these forms of exploitation. One segment of educational programs should cover large number of officials with basic training while specialized agencies and departments would be strengthened with targeted training (first interview with the victims, prevention of secondary traumatization, cultural mediation and basic knowledge of cultures where migrants are coming from etc).
- ✓ A Second set of problems is related to the quality and reach of **victims' assistance and support**. Namely, both GRETA and TiP report recommended that the government should ensure that victims have access to and receive all necessary support services, and in cases of children victims of trafficking adapted to the needs and the rights of the child. Very similar to this, all KIs pointed to the lack of specialized services for child VoTs, and to the problem of lack of accommodation and emergency assistance to other groups of victims. To resolve this gap in Serbian victim assistance mechanisms, the following activities are necessary:
 - Formalization of victim assistance procedures and cooperation with CSOs who provide specialized support;
 - Improved quality of services specifically for *CPTV personnel* related to victim assistance and referral, especially in cases of child victims. Strengthen identification of VoTs in refugee population through more proactive identification in refugee camps;
 - Above mentioned revision of the SOPs.
- ✓ Finally, **insufficient coordination and lack of or delays in revising the strategic framework for anti-trafficking actions**, both on the local and national level are problems that KIs and other relevant actors have been faced with for many years. Namely, the adoption of the new Strategy was delayed considerably. The absence of a new Strategy and Action Plan was a significant impediment for the mobilization of anti-trafficking efforts and the availability of resources (GRETA report). The capacity of the existing coordination structures should be strengthened to ensure their effectiveness (TiP report) and the new action plan against trafficking in human beings needs to be adopted without further delay (GRETA) which is prioritized by KIs as well. This should be done through:

- Allocation of adequate staff and resources for the Office for Coordination against Trafficking in Persons and existing coordination structures to ensure effectiveness (TiP report);
- Timely adoption of the new AP for the period 2019-2020 (not later than end of 2018);
- Above mentioned revision of the existing SOPs;
- Ensuring systematic support to existing local AT teams and support the establishment of new local AT teams in the municipalities where it has not been done so far.

Based the assessment in project design phase, as well as the findings of the baseline analysis, project will prioritize following actions:

1. 11 trainings to 200 frontline service providers and national/local government representatives to highlight considerations for identification, protection, and support to VoTs (Output 1.1)
2. Deployment of mobile teams to 10 strategic locations in Serbia in order to strengthen identification of VoTs, including among refugee population (Output 1.2.)
3. Identification, referral and facilitation of access to safe accommodation and reintegration and recovery services for at least 120 (and 200 of their children) unique beneficiaries VoTs (Output 1.3.)
4. 8 trainings of at least 160 stakeholders, service providers, and authorities to recognize signs, mitigate risks, and provide child-centered support to victims of trafficking at national level and for seven municipalities (Output 2.1, subset of Output Indicator 1.1)
5. During the project design phase convening of a technical working group to develop standard operating procedures for first responders to enhance proactive victim identification and referral to protection services was planned. (Output 3.1.1.) However as in the meantime the process has been initiated with support from IOM and Council of Europe the process will be monitored within the project and support will be provided accordingly.
6. Development of service mappings and referral pathways to strengthen coordination and access to services in 7 municipalities and cities to facilitate care and service provision to VoTs (Output 3.1.2.)
7. Organization of minimum of four national roundtables/different events and two meetings of local anti-trafficking networks to support the government to develop action plan for 2019-2020, and to promote coordination and sharing of best practices. (Output 3.2.).

7. Suggestions for the End line evaluation

In order to support and facilitate end line study methodology development following suggestions were formulated:

1. In the creation of the End line questionnaire special attention should be paid to the problems that KIs were mentioning and that have been identified through the baseline analysis. In order to be able to compare baseline and end line values and ensure the indicators are operationalized consistently the list of questions should correspond with the Baseline questionnaire. Use of the same KI interview tool should be considered.
2. However the analysis of the interviews suggests that there is no shared understanding of what a national referral mechanism is and what the coordination structure for the implementation of AT Strategy is. In the final evaluation this could be avoided by including additional explanations in the KI tool to ensure consistent understanding.
3. The outcome Indicator 3.1 i.e. *(25% improvement in practices to prevent and address human trafficking in 7 municipalities and cities, from baseline to end-of-project)* was operationalized through: existence of local services map, local referral pathway, and frequency of the meeting of the local network. In the Key informant interview tool (Annex b) adequate data was collected with questions 14-19. Repeating the same questions at the end line would enable determining the level of improvement.
4. Additional attention should be paid to questions that predominantly were not answered as the lack of response can indicate important gaps like an absence of specific mechanism, action, and procedure, etc.
5. Specific impact of the project with relation to the refugee population, and improvement of prevention and response to THB among this population should be included as one of the topics in the end line study as well.

8. List of Annexes:

- I. Key informant interview tool for service providers and other stakeholders involved in VoT identification
- II. Focus group discussion tool for (potential) VoTs

Annex I

JTIP project Baseline study Key Informant Interview (KII)					
Demographic Questions					
Date:					
KI is employed at:					
Municipality:					
Baseline Questions					
Project objective 1: Women, men, girls and boys are protected from and treated for the consequences of trafficking. VoTs receive effective-client centered care					
1	During 2017, how many potential VoTs has your institution identified	Total number of identified VoTs:			
		Nationals:		Migrants:	
		Female:		Male:	Other:
		girls:	women:	boys:	men: /
2	List <i>services</i> for VoTs which exist in your municipality (including legal; protection – case management, emergency shelter; medical – MHPSS, CCSAS; reintegration services – job training, education, etc.).				
3	Does any group of VoTs (adults, girls, boys, women, refugees/migrants, people with disabilities, elderly etc.) have trouble accessing these services? If yes why? Please explain.				
4	List <i>most important gaps in services</i> for VoTs in your municipality				
5	In your opinion, is the <i>identification rate</i> of potential VoTs low / high / accurate? Please describe.				
6	List <i>activities and entry points</i> (activities that possible VoTs might be part of during which identification can happen) that can improve VoT identification rates				
7	Describe the <i>typical process of identification and referral</i> to specialized services for potential VoT. Do these pathways differ for different profiles of the VoTs?				
8	What are the <i>priority training needs</i> of your staff and other actors to strengthen protection and identification of VOTs?				
Project objective 2: Relevant local authorities and NGOs provide age and gender appropriate support to VoTs					
9	Out of the potential VoTs your institution identified in 2017, how many did you <i>refer to specialized services</i> ?	Total number of referred VoTs:			
		Nationals:		Migrants:	
		Female:		Male:	
		Adult:		Children:	
10	Are there any <i>specialized services for children VoTs</i> in your municipality? If yes could you describe them? Would you consider these to be child-centered/child friendly? Why or why not?				
11	What is the typical process for child VOTs to access these services? Do you observe any barriers/ challenges for girls or for boys or any other group of children?				
12	What are the most important <i>specialized services for children VoTs that are missing</i> in your municipality				

13	What is needed most to provide/strengthen specialized services for children VoTs?	
Project objective 3: Creating safe and equitable legal environment for VoTs supporting their right to disclose and seek assistance		
14	Does a <i>map of specialized services for VoTs</i> in your municipality exist? If yes are all stakeholders aware of it – please explain.	
15	Is there an official <i>referral pathway</i> for protection of VoTs in your municipality?	
16	If yes, is it operational (describe the typical process of identification and referral for potential VoT in your opinion? If not, please explain why.	
17	During 2017, how many times did local anti – trafficking network meet?	
18	During 2017, how many times did representatives of the local network from your municipality attend the national meeting with other networks?	
19	What are the main outcomes and benefits of attending the national level meetings of local anti-trafficking networks? How could these be strengthened??	
20	In your opinion are national SOPs/referral mechanism operational/ do they adequately protect the safety and confidentiality of VoTs? Please explain.	
21	Did institutions in your municipality take any steps in line with national action plan for 2017/18 and which?	
Any additional relevant information:		

Annex II

JTIP project Baseline study Focus Group Discussion (FGD)	
Note:	
<i>This tool should be used during small group discussions. The team should ensure participants that all information shared within the discussion will remain confidential; if the secretary takes down notes, s/he will not have any information identifying or associating individuals with responses. Some of these questions are sensitive. You should take all potential ethical concerns into consideration before the discussion, considering the safety of respondents, ensuring that all participants agree that no information shared in the discussion will be divulged outside the group, and obtaining informed consent from participants. The group should be made of like members and should not include more than 10 to 12 participants, and should not last more than one to one-and-a-half hours.</i>	
General:	
Date:	
Location:	
FGD facilitated by:	
Municipality:	
# of FGD participants:	
Age of FGD participants:	
Gender of FGD participants:	
Content:	
Focus of the FGD: VoTs perception of the safety risks in context of migration; VoTs understanding of the possibilities of protection for the VoT and the quality of services.	
Key FGD questions: 1) How was their case reported? Did they self-report? 2) How long did it take for them to get help? 3) What are their impressions of the institutions you've had contact with, were your needs met? 4) Did they feel safe in the process? 5) Were they able to communicate concerns they might had with their case manager? 6) To what extent were you able to understand all of the service providers and communicate with them clearly? 7) To which extent were you able to make decisions about the course of action of service providers included in your case? 8) Did something happen during the process of protection that they didn't appreciate?	
Coclude the discussion: • Thank participants for their time and their contributions. • Remind participants that the purpose of this discussion. • Explain the next steps. Again, repeat what you will do with this information and what purpose it will eventually serve. • Remind participants of their agreement to confidentiality, not to share information or the names of other participants. • Ask participants if they have questions, if anyone wishes to speak in private, respond that the facilitator and secretary will be available after the meeting.	