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Amendment to the Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings 2015 -2018 - strengthened outreach work

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Case no.:

Introduction

Trafficking in human beings is unacceptable and a fundamental breach of human rights. In connection with the 2015 rate adjustment pool agreement, funding has been allocated to a new action plan to combat human trafficking from 2015-2018, continuing and building upon prior action plans. The outreach work in this action plan has been cut back in comparison to earlier incarnations, and focuses in particular on sex trafficking.

This amendment ensures that the outreach work to individuals who have been trafficked into prostitution or forced labour is developed and strengthened. In addition, outreach work will also receive a boost in relation to foreign nationals working in brothels and a mid-term evaluation of the Centre against Human Trafficking (CMM) will be carried out.

The amendment includes the following initiatives:

- *Pool for the development of an outreach effort among persons trafficked into prostitution promulgated through digital messaging platforms*
- *Pool for the development and strengthening of outreach work among victims of forced labour in selected industries*
- *Nationwide outreach efforts and systematic screening for victims of human trafficking among foreign nationals working in brothels*
- *Mid-term evaluation of CMM's performance*

The initiatives are funded within the Ministry for Children, Education and Gender Equality's existing budget.

Background and initiatives

The International Labour Organisation estimates that there are around 880,000 victims of forced labour in Europe, whereof a portion are victims of human trafficking. In Denmark, 418 victims of human trafficking have been identified in the period 2007-2014. Of these, 36 were assessed to be trafficked into forced labour and 356 - 86% - into prostitution.

Many trafficking victims end up in Denmark because of a desire to leave their country of origin for a better quality of life for themselves (and in some cases their families). These individuals may end up being recruited through deception and subsequently be subjected to coercion, threats, gross exploitation and violation of their fundamental human rights, thereby ending up as victims of human trafficking.

Past evaluations¹ have shown that it is generally difficult to identify victims of human trafficking through outreach work in the prostitution environment. This outreach work may however have an indirect effect through, for instance, identification conversations and passing-on of information about brothels with indications of human trafficking to the police or other authorities. In an evaluation carried out by Rambøll,² there was identified a particular need for outreach work among foreign nationals working in Danish brothels. This is because it is not possible to carry out outreach work through other actors to the same extent as is the case for forced labour or minors in the asylum system and secure institutions.

Reviews from the National Board of Social Services³ indicates that in recent years, there has been an increase in more un-transparent forms of prostitution such as escort and 'private/discreet' services where it is not immediately apparent what they entail. These are typically forms of prostitution advertised over the internet through online ads and chat rooms, among other channels. No victims of human trafficking have been identified through direct contact in these environments.

Trafficking for forced labour is a growing problem globally. The ILO estimates that there are 20.9 million victims of forced labour in the world, some of which are victims of human trafficking. In Denmark, too, previous action plans have observed a rise in the number of victims of human trafficking for forced labour. Areas of the Danish labour market where salaries are low have in recent years experienced a large influx of foreign workers. Most labour migrants work under reasonable conditions and do well in Denmark, but some risk being subjected to various forms of exploitation including trafficking. Just as with the types of prostitution advertised through digital messaging platforms, it is difficult to carry out outreach work with possible forced labour victims and make contact with vulnerable groups of migrant workers.

There is a need for strengthening the outreach and focusing on developing methods to reach potential victims of trafficking working in both prostitution and forced labour. In order to continuously ensure that efforts against human trafficking are functioning well, a mid-term evaluation of CMM and its operations will also be carried out.

¹ Cowi (2014): Evaluering af Handlingsplan om menneskehandel 2011-14, Rambøll (2015): Pro Vest Evaluering

² Rambøll (2015): Pro Vest evaluering

³ National Board of Social Services(2014): Prostitutionens omfang og former 2012/2013

The amendment includes the following initiatives:

1. *Pool for the development of an outreach effort among persons trafficked into prostitution promulgated over digital messaging platforms*

A funding pool will be earmarked for developing methods relating to contacting and identifying victims of human trafficking among escort services and in private/discrete prostitution advertised over digital messaging platforms. The pool will enable different methods relating to outreach work to be trialled for the purposes of spreading information to these environments about human trafficking as well as identifying victims in these prostitution environments.

These efforts must be undertaken in cooperation with knowledge institutions to ensure that outcomes and lessons are documented. The pool must therefore help produce new knowledge about these forms of prostitution and about possible victims of human trafficking operating in these circles who are difficult to reach through existing social and health services.

3.5 million DKK will be allocated to this pool covering the period 2016-2018. A mid-term review will be carried out in June 2017.

2. *Pool for the development and strengthening of outreach work among victims of forced labour in selected industries*

A funding pool will be earmarked for actors to obtain grants to screen selected industries for the purpose of making contact with and identifying victims of human trafficking doing forced labour. Specific activities may involve the development of a screening tool, outreach, awareness raising and information dissemination aimed at the target group. These efforts must be undertaken in cooperation with knowledge institutions to ensure that outcomes and lessons are documented.

An authorities group concerning trafficking into forced labour, consisting of SKAT, the Danish National Police, the Danish Working Environment Authority, the Danish Agency for Labour Market and Recruitment, the Danish Immigration Service and CMM will follow up on and discuss lessons learned from this funding pool.

4.5 million DKK will be allocated to this pool covering the period 2016-2018. A mid-term review will be carried out in June 2017.

3. *Nationwide outreach efforts and systematic screening for victims of human trafficking among foreign nationals working in brothels*

The nationwide outreach work among foreign nationals working in brothels will be strengthened and standardised through systematic screening and by focusing on 'brothels of concern'.

The outreach work among foreign nationals working in brothels will be strengthened in the Region Zealand. The work will be based on a screening technique where CMM's health and social workers will be deployed to brothels of concern. The goal is to help identify victims of human trafficking as well as inform individuals about human trafficking and the support services that are available to such victims.

On the basis of Rambøll's evaluation of Pro Vest, the Finance Committee's approval is requested to provide funding to the NGO-operated counselling and health service Pro Vest, which will allow them to carry out outreach work with potential victims of human trafficking among foreign nationals working in brothels in Region Zealand in the period 2016-2018. The outreach work will be targeted through a systematic screening and focus on brothels of concern, based on the Rambøll evaluation.

4. Mid-term evaluation of the Danish Centre against Human Trafficking

A mid-term evaluation of CMM will be carried out. The aim is to ensure that the work of CMM is well-functioning, fulfilling its goals and making efficient use of its resources. The evaluation must be completed by spring 2017 and will be discussed in among the parties involved in the action plan.