

Information about Human Trafficking in Malta

Human trafficking is a reality in Malta. We have seen cases of labour exploitation of trafficked Vietnamese and persons from the Philippines. Becoming more aware of this problem The Malta Action Plan covering the period 2013 to 2014 has been followed by a second Action plan covering the period of 2015-2016. A committee, namely the “Anti –Human Trafficking Monitoring Committee” has been appointed and during the course of 2015 and 2016 will be meeting regularly with the “Stakeholder Task Force” on Trafficking in Human Beings. These are agencies coming in contact with victims, namely the Police Vice Squad, the Immigration and Border Police, the Employment and Training Corporation, Jesuit Refugee Services, Caritas Malta, Health services, AWAS.

The Action Plan includes enforcing the Administrative Capacity of the authorities involved in victim identification, victim support, or the apprehension/ prosecution of offenders. It emphasises the fostering of awareness among persons vulnerable to human trafficking and the strengthening of Police efforts towards identification of new crime trends and risks

A project called LIMES (Launching Initiatives supporting Malta`s Efforts to Suppress Trafficking) whereby IOM (International Organization for Migration) was contracted by Government to provide international experts for prevention, for the prosecution of the case and the protection and assistance of victims. A list of indicators and a victim Referral Mechanism was mapped out for victim referral. Standard Operating Procedures were devised.

Victims of trafficking are offered a two – month reflection period during which they may decide whether to cooperate with the Maltese authorities in relation to criminal proceedings. Those who cooperate are granted temporary residence permits valid for a period of six months that can be renewed. Also available is the Witness Protection Programme Article 75 of the Police Act.

Experience shows that the fight against Human Trafficking is by no means an easy one. Victims are often reluctant to speak, as they would have been intimidated by their traffickers. Therefore identification of victims of Human Trafficking remains one of the major challenges.

As part of the Malta Government`s standing commitment to protect the vulnerable further amendments were made to the Criminal Code (cap 9) of the Laws of Malta, introducing a penalty in respect of persons who knowingly make use of the services of a trafficked person.

We are aware of the importance of research and statistics.