

**IMPLEMENTING PROTOCOL**  
**BETWEEN**  
**THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA**  
**AND**  
**THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA**  
**ON**  
**COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF THE FIGHT AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN**  
**BEINGS AND ABUSE OF CHILDREN VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia (hereinafter the Parties),

Referring to the obligations that the Parties have taken with the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime of 15 November 2000, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime of 15 November 2000, the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings done at Warsaw on 16 May 2005, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted and opened for signature on 20 November 1989, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography of 25 May 2000, Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children Against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse done at Lanzarote on 25 October 2007, as well as other international instruments,

Aiming to consistently apply the provisions of the Agreement on Police Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Republic of Macedonia of 16 April 2015 (hereinafter Police Cooperation Agreement),

Having regard of the Police Cooperation Convention for Southeast Europe done at Vienna on 5 May 2006,

Having in mind that trafficking in human beings and abuse of children victims of trafficking present the most severe types of human rights violations,

Aiming to improve prevention of trafficking in human beings and all forms of abuse of children victims of trafficking and efficiency in detection and prosecution of offenders, as well as identification, protection, referral and cooperation in criminal and other procedures, and assisted voluntary return of victims and potential victims of trafficking in human beings, while respecting the basic human rights,

Have agreed as follows:

**Article 1**  
**Scope of cooperation**

1. This Protocol shall govern the issues related to the prevention of trafficking in human beings and detection and prosecution of offenders, identification, referral, protection and voluntary return of victims or potential victims of trafficking in human beings.
2. This Protocol shall also govern the issues related to the identification and protection of and assistance to children who are victims or potential victims of trafficking:
  - a) on-line and physical sexual exploitation of children victims of trafficking who are nationals of the states of the Parties to this Protocol;
  - b) other forms of violence against and abuse of children victims of trafficking who are nationals of the states of the Parties to this Protocol or nationals of third countries in case of cross-border activity.

**Article 2**  
**Forms of cooperation**

The Competent Authorities of the Parties to this Protocol shall cooperate in:

- a) the prevention of all forms of trafficking in human beings and the fight against them;
- b) the prevention, detection and investigation of abuse of children victims of trafficking;
- c) the exchange of information and data in pre-trial and criminal proceedings enabling rapid detection and efficient prosecution of criminal offenders;
- d) the exchange of all relevant information and data between the Competent Authorities involved in identification and protection of children victims of trafficking and in identification, protection, referral and return of victims or potential victims of trafficking in human beings to the country of origin;
- e) the regular exchange of information on identified criminal groups and new forms of human trafficking and abuse of children victims of trafficking;
- f) the implementation of joint awareness raising projects in the field of countering trafficking in human beings;
- g) the organisation of trainings, workshops and seminars and exchange of experience aimed at strengthening capacities in the fight against trafficking in human beings, as well as in the fight against trafficking in children;
- h) the implementation of joint activities for the identification of new trends related to trafficking in human beings and abuse of children victims of trafficking, and providing proper response.

**Article 3**  
**Competent Authorities**

The authorities responsible for the prevention of and fight against trafficking in human beings as well as protection of victims or potential victims of trafficking of human beings, including the fight against abuse of children victims of trafficking and for monitoring the implementation of this Protocol (hereinafter Competent Authorities) shall be:

- for the Government of the Republic of Slovenia:

Ministry of the Interior, Anti-Trafficking Service,

General Police Directorate, Criminal Police Directorate, International Police Cooperation Division;

- for the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia:

National Committee for Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration and

National Unit for Suppression of Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Human beings, Department for Suppression of Organized and Serious Crime, Bureau For Public Security, Ministry of Interior.

#### **Article 4 Initial notification**

1. The Competent Authorities of the Parties shall inform each other of all identified cases of victims or potential victims of trafficking in human beings in the states of the Parties.
2. The Competent Authorities shall notify each other of all cases of abuse of children victims of trafficking relating to both Parties and shall act to provide the best interest of the child.
3. The Competent Authorities shall notify each other of all cases involving identified and apprehended offenders, including the modus operandi used to commit crimes relating to both Parties.
4. The initial notification shall be made immediately after identifying a victim or potential victim of trafficking, yet within 7 days at the latest.
5. If the victim or potential victim of trafficking in human beings is a child, the Parties shall undertake all necessary measures and activities in order to identify and provide the best interest of the child.
6. Upon the initial notification, the Parties shall undertake all necessary measures for risk assessment and shall provide conditions for voluntary return and protection of victims or potential victims of trafficking in human beings, as well as the child – victim of trafficking.

#### **Article 5 Protection of victims or potential victims of trafficking in human beings and children who are victims of trafficking**

1. The Competent Authorities under this Protocol shall carry out the following activities in accordance with their competence and the national legislation of the states of the Parties:
  - a) initial assessment of the needs of victims or potential victims of trafficking and children who are victims of trafficking;
  - b) informing the victims of their rights and obligations concerning accommodation, healthcare and social protection, legal assistance etc.;

- c) drafting an individual plan of activities in accordance with the possibilities, needs and interests of the victims or potential victims of trafficking in human beings; that is, the child victim of trafficking in line with the national legislation;
- d) assistance in acquiring documents needed for the establishment of the identity;
- e) providing a period for decision making/reflection to victims of trafficking in human beings in order to provide assistance and protection in a period of recovery and to avoid the influence on the victims or potential victims of trafficking in human beings;
- f) issuing temporary residence permits to victims of trafficking in human beings in accordance with the national legislation;
- g) providing conditions for cooperation of the victim and his or her legal guardian with the judicial authorities.

2. The Competent Authorities shall cooperate with civil society organisations providing services to victims or potential victims of trafficking in human beings and children who are victims of trafficking.

#### **Article 6**

#### **Assisted voluntary return of victims or potential victims of trafficking in human beings and children who are victims of trafficking**

1. The Competent Authority shall, immediately after a victim or potential victim expresses his or her wish to return, provide the victim with information on safe return at the beginning of the decision making/reflection period in a language that the victim understands.
2. For purposes of implementing this Protocol, the Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure and facilitate effective assisted voluntary return of victims or potential victims of trafficking in human beings and children who are victims of trafficking in due time, and with particular care to their security and social protection.
3. Upon receipt of the initial notification and a request for assisted voluntary return of a victim or potential victim of trafficking in human beings, the Parties shall coordinate and jointly prepare an individual plan of activities and share the necessary documentation.
4. When a risk analysis raises an assumption or suspicion that family members or the legal guardian are involved in trafficking in human beings, appropriate measures shall be taken to meet the child's needs in the country of origin and the child's best interests until the conditions for the child's safe return have been met.
5. Each Party shall bear the costs related to assisted voluntary return to their territory, in compliance with their national legislation.

#### **Article 7**

#### **Communication**

1. Communication between the Competent Authorities of the Parties shall be conducted through designated points of contacts or contact persons or directly, as the case may be, in the Slovenian, Macedonian or English languages.

2. The Competent Authorities of the Parties shall appoint points of contacts or contact persons in 30 days from the date of entry into force of this Protocol, and shall notify the other Party thereof.

3. The Parties shall inform each other of any changes in the points of contact or contact persons in due time.

### **Article 8 Resolution of disputes**

Disputes concerning the interpretation or implementation of this Protocol shall be settled by consultations between the authorities responsible for monitoring the implementation of this Protocol.

### **Article 9 Entry into force, duration, amendments and termination**

1. This Protocol shall enter into force on the date of receipt of the last written notification, through diplomatic channels, through which the Contracting Parties shall notify each other of the completion of the internal legal procedures necessary for its entry into force.

2. This Protocol shall be concluded for an indefinite period of time.

3. This Protocol may be amended only by mutual written consent of the Parties. The amendments shall enter into force in accordance with paragraph one of this Article.

4. Either Party may terminate this Protocol by written termination notification through diplomatic channels. The Protocol shall cease to be in force after the 90th day following the receipt of such termination notification.

Done, in duplicate, in/at Skopje..... on 18.3.2022..... in the Slovenian, Macedonian and English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of divergence in interpretation the English text shall prevail.

For the Government  
of the Republic of Slovenia



For the Government  
of the Republic of North Macedonia

