

News

Council of Europe calls on Bosnia and Herzegovina to improve protection of child victims of trafficking

STRASBOURG | 17/07/2017




In a [report](#) published today, the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings ([GRETA](#)) welcomes the legislative changes that have been made since the publication of its [first report](#) on Bosnia and Herzegovina in May 2013. The introduction of the criminal offence of human trafficking in the criminal codes of the Republika Srpska, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Brčko District ensures that human trafficking is criminalised consistently throughout the country. GRETA also commends the introduction of legal provisions concerning the non-punishment of victims of trafficking for offences committed as a result of being trafficked, as well as the establishment of the right of victims to be granted a recovery and reflection period pursuant to the new Law on Foreigners.

The enlargement of the composition of the four Regional Monitoring Teams co-ordinating anti-trafficking activities by including labour inspectors and staff of mental health centres and day centres for children is another positive development noted by GRETA, along with the adoption of the 2016-2019 National Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings.

However, despite the progress achieved, a number of issues continue to give rise to concern. The majority of identified victims of human trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been children. GRETA urges the authorities to strengthen their efforts to prevent child trafficking, including by strengthening the role and capacity of social work centres to play a proactive role in alerting other relevant authorities to possible cases of human trafficking and exploitation.

Further, GRETA calls on the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to improve the identification of victims of trafficking and the provision of adequate assistance to them, regardless of the victims' co-operation with the investigating and prosecuting authorities. As regards in particular child victims of trafficking, the report highlights the need for ensuring long-term monitoring of their reintegration

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and a proper risk assessment before returning children to their parents.

GRETA also urges the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to adopt measures to facilitate and guarantee access to compensation for victims of trafficking from the perpetrators or the State. In addition, the report underlines the need to set up a comprehensive statistical system on measures to protect and promote the rights of victims of trafficking.

The [Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings](#) entered into force in Bosnia and Herzegovina in May 2008. This report is the second assessment of the implementation of the Convention by this member country

MEDIA COVERAGE

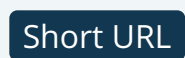
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BOSNIA DAILY N° 4088, PAGE 4, 18/07/2017

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