



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 15 March 2007**

**7365/07**

**LIMITE**

**CRIMORG 55  
ENFOPOL 48**

**NOTE**

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from :	Presidency
to :	Article 36 Committee
prev.doc.:	6659/07 CRIMORG 38 ENFOPOL 28
Subject :	Protecting and supporting victims of trafficking by bringing together up-to-date information on the support schemes available in the Member States

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1. At its meeting on 1 and 2 December 2005, the JHA Council adopted an EU plan on best practices, standards and procedures for combating and preventing trafficking in human beings (OJ C 311, 9.12.2005).  
Point 2(b) of Chapter 6 of the Action Plan on "Protecting and supporting victims of trafficking" provides that the Presidency, with Commission support, should develop an EU-wide directory of services to map available support schemes.  
The aim is to build and consolidate effective links between the organisations providing support and re-integration services and Member States.
2. The Finnish Presidency accordingly sent out a questionnaire to Member States (15293/06 of 15 December 2006) and asked them to reply to the General Secretariat by 31 January 2007. The directory will be published once the General Secretariat has assembled the replies.

3. Publication of the directory will be an important step towards providing improved protection and more comprehensive support for the victims of human trafficking. The directory will help to establish effective links between organisations providing support and re-integration services and Member States.

However, the directory lists only support structures which existed at the time the questionnaire was answered, while the advice and support landscape in the Member States is constantly changing. The contact details of those active in the advice and support field, precisely those needed for the network to operate properly, change rapidly. Important details and even basic components of the directory can therefore be out of date relatively soon.

4. To ensure that links between the organisations providing support and re-integration services and the relevant authorities in the Member States are lasting and effective, the map of available support schemes needs to be updated constantly.

The Member States and the Commission should develop an uncomplicated mechanism for this purpose, which can be run with the minimum of effort.

5. The best way of achieving this would seem to be to bring together up-to-date information from all the Member States on their existing support schemes on *one* freely accessible home page.

This homepage should contain links to a central body in each Member State, whether public or private, which could be accessed for information on existing support structures and contact details.

In addition, further information on victim protection could also be called up from this homepage. Initially, this should be limited to basic information which will remain valid in the long term.

All the individual Member State would be required to do would be to designate the central body once and guarantee that this central body will make available updated information on support structures. There would therefore be no need for any more questionnaires on the subject.

6. The Commission homepage (<http://ec.europa.eu>) would be one suitable homepage for setting out the above links and information, firstly because the technical conditions are already in place and secondly because the Commission has already published links to individual institutions and bodies on it, together with a wealth of information on human trafficking<sup>1</sup>. The proposed mechanism could therefore build on this. The directory of existing support schemes referred to in paragraph 2 would be a basis for extending the Commission's existing homepage.

To keep the directory up-to-date, the Commission should contact Member States at the beginning of each year and remind them, as a precaution, of their guarantee obligation under paragraph 5.

Setting up a separate homepage, for example, under [www.anti-trafficking.eu](http://www.anti-trafficking.eu), might have the advantage, as compared with extending the Commission's existing homepage, of raising public awareness more quickly, but it would cost more and involve more technical work which can not be accomplished by the Commission in the short term.

However, setting up a homepage of this type is [...] an objective for the medium term.

7. At the meeting of the Multidisciplinary group (MDG) of 2 March 2007, the above proposal was generally welcomed. The Commission consented to the proposal.

*The Article 36 Committee is invited to confirm the agreement reached at the MDG and to task the Commission with the establishment of an EU-wide directory of services to map available support schemes on the basis of information to be delivered by Member States, as indicated above.*

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/doc\\_centre/crime/trafficking/wai/doc\\_crime\\_human\\_trafficking\\_en.htm#Experts%20Group%20on%20Trafficking%20in%20Human%20Beings](http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/doc_centre/crime/trafficking/wai/doc_crime_human_trafficking_en.htm#Experts%20Group%20on%20Trafficking%20in%20Human%20Beings)