

National Consulting and Intervention Centre for the Victims of Trafficking

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What is the National Centre?

The National Consulting and Intervention Centre for the Victims of Trafficking (KCIK) addresses the needs of persons who are or may become victims of human trafficking – both Polish citizens and foreigners. As Poland is the area of operation of the National Centre but its clients contact it also from abroad, the majority of contacts between the clients/inquirers and the employees of KCIK take place by phone.

In 2008, the National Program for Combating and Preventing Human Trafficking Team (presently, the National Action Plan Against Human Trafficking) recommended a solution in the form of creation of the National Centre. In March 2009, the Minister of the Internal and Administration announced a tender for the implementation of the public task: "Creation and Management of the National Centre for Polish and Foreign Victims of Trafficking".

Statistic

The consultants of the helpline for victims and potential victims answer 7 thousand calls a year.

The work done by the National Centre is divided into the following tasks: identification of victims of human trafficking, intervention, preventive counselling, consultancy for institutions and organisations and a specialist shelter for the victims.

In practice, this means that, from Monday to Friday, a team of trained consultants who are experienced in preventing human trafficking give advice, carry out consultations, as well as organise help for victims of trafficking. During the rest of the time, a mobile phone number is active and only urgent matters are taken care of.

Assistance and consultations is offered to victims of trafficking, their families, organisations and institutions working for them, persons exposed to the risk of trafficking, as well as the law enforcement and the judiciary. The offer is also extended to persons who are considering moving abroad for non-tourist purposes in the situation where such persons want to minimise the risk connected with this type of decision.

Aid

The information on the aid offered to victims of human trafficking must begin with the answers to two questions:

What do victims of trafficking need?

What can the National Consulting and Intervention Centre offer to them?

The condition to give any professional aid to a victim of trafficking is their identification. In many cases, preliminary verification is conducted and actions are undertaken on the assumption that it is a human trafficking case. It often happens in situations where the contact with the victim is difficult, e.g. because of their mental condition or physical barriers (imprisonment) or language barriers. Because the standards of treatment of human trafficking victims are more stringent than those for victims of other crimes, it is good to use them when we only suspect such a case. It is mainly about ensuring the safety of the victim, a feeling of security, and separating them from the potential perpetrators. From the moment of identification, even provisional, the victim should be given professional support and counselling from a person perceived as friendly and having a driving force. Such a person should have specialist knowledge and skills in working with victims of human trafficking.

As some of human trafficking victims are foreigners, it is essential that it is possible with them in a language they understand.

Another step which follows identification is to ensure safety on the objective and subjective plane, that is liberation – when the victim is held captive – to separate the victim from the perpetrators and place the victim in a safe place and, as a consequence, to enable the victim to understand their situation, also their legal situation, and to create a situation where it is possible for them to take their independent decisions concerning key matters such as cooperation with the law enforcement, contacts with the family or the return to their country of origin.

Ensuring safety also means accommodation in a proper place.

Another important step is counselling concerning health, both mental and physical health and – if necessary, to undertake an immediate intervention.

Legal advice on the criminal procedure, the right of residence (for foreigners) and family law is also necessary. The advice helps the victim to understand their legal situation and to consciously take decisions and exercise their rights.

The National Centre for Polish and Foreign Victims of Trafficking was created to provide such comprehensive assistance. However, as its office is in Warsaw, it also operates through counselling for other entities that support victims of trafficking. The assistance is provided free of charge. Each case is thoroughly analysed, treated individually and the subsequent steps are planned and organized by the case manager who provides the assistance.

Emergency interventions are undertaken 24 hours a day. You can contact the Centre only by phone or by mail – for security reasons, it is always the employee's initiative to meet.

The persons who provide the assistance have a few years of experience in this type of work.