**Response of the Croatian Authorities on sale and sexual exploitation of children**

1. The Republic of Croatia criminalized trafficking in persons in all its forms and continuously implements efforts to condemn these practices and to investigate, prosecute and penalize traffickers and intermediaries, while providing protection and assistance to the victims of trafficking with full respect for their human rights.

The sale and trafficking of children constitute a criminal offence according to the Criminal Code (Official Gazette No. 125/11, 144/12, 56/15, 61/15, 101/17, 118/18). According to the paragraph 2 of the Article 106, the sentence to imprisonment “shall be imposed on whoever recruits, transports, transfers, harbors or receives a child, or exchanges or gives over control over a child for the purpose of exploiting his/her labor by means of forced labor or services, slavery or a relationship similar thereto, or for the purpose of exploitation of prostitution of the child or of other forms of sexual exploitation, including pornography, or of contracting an illicit or forced marriage, or of illegal adoption, or of taking parts of a child's body, or of using the child in armed conflicts”.

The national system of combatting trafficking in human beings in Republic of Croatia consists of the National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, the National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and the Operational Team of National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. The national anti-trafficking coordinator operatively leads and coordinates all activities related to the suppression of trafficking in human beings as well as the sessions of the Operational team. The National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister responsible for social affairs and human rights, develops programs and plans on combating trafficking in human beings. The Operational team plans, resolves and coordinates the activities of all parties related to human trafficking.

Protection and assistance to victims of trafficking in the Republic of Croatia is human rights centered and tailored to the individual needs, including age and gender, and it includes access to health services, labor market, vocational training, education and compensations. It is operationalized in protocols adopted by the Government of the Republic of Croatia, including the Protocol on Identification, Assistance and Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking, Protocol on Trafficking in Human Beings Victims Integration/Reintegration and Protocol on Procedures during Voluntary Return of Victims of Human Trafficking. In case the victim of trafficking in human beings is a child, representatives of the institutions responsible for social welfare are continuously present during all stages of the process of investigation and services provision, and a legal guardian is appointed. The Government funds a special national shelter for children who are victims of human trafficking.

1. Surrogacy arrangements, both altruistic and commercial, are prohibited by the Act on Medically Assisted Procreation (Official Gazette No. 86/12). No specific safeguards against the sale of children and child trafficking specifically created for surrogacy arrangements are in place.