



Information and Consultative Centers in the cities of Astrakhan, Moscow and Petrozavodsk on the Project “Prevention of Human Trafficking in the RF”: Results of the Work for the Period of May 2007 – May 2008

1. General information about functions and structure of the Information and Consultative Centers (ICCs)

Since March 1st, 2006 the International Organization for Migration (IOM) started the implementation of the project “Prevention of Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation” in three regions: Moscow region, Republic of Karelia and Astrakhan region. The Project implementation period is March 1st, 2006 - of August 31st, 2008 (with possibility of extension). The Project is financed by the European Commission and co-funded by the US Department of State and the Swiss Government.

The Project envisions a number of comprehensive measures aimed at enhancing the capacities of the Russian Federation in the following areas: policy advice, preventive action, cooperation with law enforcement authorities and direct assistance to victims.

Preventive work is one of the most important components of the project. In May – June 2007 in the cities of Astrakhan, Moscow and Petrozavodsk the Information and Consultative Centers (ICCs) opened within the framework of the project. ICCs are aimed at providing information, consultative and psychological assistance to victims of human trafficking as well as to at-risk groups including the most vulnerable social groups such as women-migrants, unemployed youth, problematic teenagers, orphans, irregular migrants, etc. Special attention is paid to issues of labour migration.

ICCs activities include:

- Provision of *consultative assistance* (personal, through the free of charge anonymous “hot line” and by e-mail) on a wide range of issues (prevention through raising the beneficiaries’ awareness on the risks related to trafficking in human beings (THB); increasing their access to employment, integration and reintegration options available in the regions through the provision of relevant information);

- *Promoting cooperation* in the development of a structure providing migration, integration and counter-trafficking-related services *among the relevant agencies in the Russian Federation* in the selected regions, as well as on an inter-regional level (including governmental and non-governmental agencies, state and private employment companies, etc.);
- *Monitoring the trends and situation in the areas of THB, forced labour and related phenomena* by recording data collected during individual visits, telephone and e-mail enquiries. Such information is systematized and forwarded to the corresponding governmental structures with the purpose of increasing the efficiency of decisions in the area of counter-trafficking;
- *Enhancing the professional skills and raising the level of expertise* of officials, representatives of state and private employment companies, as well as NGOs, which can use the ICs as a training site. For sustainability-building purposes, the ICs could also become a structure providing internship opportunities and practical work (on a voluntary basis) for graduating students – future social workers, lawyers and psychologists.
- Moscow ICC is also active in the *search of missed persons* (on the basis of requests of relatives to the “hot line”).

The personnel of the ICCs include operators of the “hot line”, lawyers and psychologists. ICCs staff have been trained by representatives of the RF Federal Migration Service, RF Federal Service on Labour and Employment, RF Ministry of the Interior as well as representatives of relevant business structures (agencies dealing with employment) and independent experts.

The Moscow ICC manages a toll-free hotline at **8 800 333 00 16** (receiving calls from all Russian regions), available on workdays from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.. Individual legal consultations are also provided by the ICC lawyers; consultations are also provided via e-mail.

In the evening and during week-ends an answering machine gives the possibility to leave a message or to call back to the project’s emergency telephone working 24 hours a day.

In Petrozavodsk counseling is provided over the phone at **(8142) 57 65 19, mobile 8 911 436 5555** and on the ICC premises at 34, Aleksandra Nevskogo prospect. E-mail addresses: ikc_mom@mail.ru; karelia@no2slavery.ru

In Astrakhan the ICC hotline number is **(8512) 63 34 17; (8512) 743 753; mobile 8 927 580 88 49**, and the address is 46, Zhelyabova St. E-mail addresses: ikc_astrahan@mail.ru; astrahan@no2slavery.ru

Information about all enquiries received by ICCs is registered and stored in a special data base. Project experts have developed a standard questionnaire which is filled in by ICCs staff. Since enquiries are *anonymous and confidential* the answers are not obligatory; they are registered only with the consent of the enquirer. The data received during the consultation (gender, age, citizenship, education, migration registration for foreigners, work permit, source of information about ICCs, topics of enquiries) are summarized and inserted into a general statistic report on a monthly basis. The report is available at www.no2slavery.ru.

The information received helps monitor the situation and define the most topical problems in the area of migration, labour legislation and its actual implementation as well as to unveil violations that call for action. Information about violations is forwarded to the corresponding governmental structures for check and action.

The ICC are also a resource to *evaluate the effectiveness of the information campaign* (the messages of the information campaign can be adjusted or reinforced accordingly);

2. General results of the work of ICCs in the cities of Astrakhan, Moscow and Petrozavodsk.

General statistics of queries

To date, the Information and Consultative Centers received over 5500 calls and provided over 4700 consultations. The majority of queries were handled by the Moscow ICC (3516 queries), while Petrozavodsk ICC received 248 queries and Astrakhan ICC – 931. This trend is connected to the fact that the Moscow region is where the majority of migrants are concentrated, including irregular migrants, and information about migration legislation and procedures is in high demand. Moreover, the “hot line” of the Moscow ICC is nation-wide and free of charge for all calls from any region of the RF, and applications are received not only from the region where the ICC is located but from all Russian regions.

Citizenship of enquirers

Approximately an equal number of foreign and Russian citizenship address the ICCs for consultations. It proves the demand for such information services being the problems are topical both for Russians and foreigners.

More specifically, among foreign citizens labour migrants coming to Russia from the CIS countries prevail.

Gender of enquirers

As to the gender of inquirers, statistics show that Russians women tend to address information Centers more often than men (53% and 47% respectively). As to the foreigners, make up a bigger share of the total (60%) in comparison to women (40%). Such trend is likely to be connected with the fact that labour migration to Russia is still to a considerable extent a man’s business: according to official statistics, the percentage of men among labour migrants is around 82.4%¹. The prevalence of men in labour migration is primarily connected, to the sector of the economy they work in (mainly construction, production and other sectors which require physical work). However, there are also grounds to assume that women are not fully represented in the statistics of research studies as well as in the official statistics. Such discrepancy may be a result of certain aspects of their work (informal, high percentage in private house keeping), which make them invisible to researchers and as well as to official governmental statistics. Another cause is that this latent group has less access to information (including information about the possibilities of receiving consultations) and consequently this groups is more difficult to be addressed by general informational campaigns, and demands specialized information strategy.. At the same time experts believe that the proportion of women immigrants will also continue to grow. This means that this particular target group should be considered separately, and it is necessary to conduct tailored information campaign (including specialized information materials accompanied by a specific dissemination strategy). Coupled with that, migrant women more often could be subject to both kinds of exploitation – labour and sexual.

Age of enquirers

The overwhelming majority of enquirers are in their working age; out of them youth makes a sizeable share. Among Russian citizens some 71% are under the age of 40 (7% of enquirers are

¹ “Prevention and Countering Spreading of Slavery and Trafficking in Human Beings. Final report on the baseline study of the EC-IOM Project “Prevention of Human Trafficking in the RF”. Moscow, 2008. Full text of the report is available at the web-site: www.no2slavery.ru

persons under 20 38% in the age of 20 - 30.; 26% in the age of 30 - 40.); 18% are in the age of 40 - 50 and 11% are persons over 50.

Among foreign citizens the number of young people is even higher – 73% of enquirers are under the age of 40 (3% under 20; in the age of 20- 30 and 30 - 40 – 36% and 34% respectively) and 21% of enquirers are between 40 and 50 y.o.. The number of persons over 50 y.o. is quite small , namely 6%. The data on age of migrants who applied to ICCs are in line with the data of numerous surveys on migration topics which define the average age of migrants in Russia as 35 y.o (based on sociological polls).

Thus, the young and very young age of many migrants (both foreign migrants and Russian leaving for abroad with the purpose of employment or study) could represent a risk factor; on the one hand, many of them lack experience, skills and necessary knowledge, implying a certain inability to organize necessary social interaction, while on the other hand they are strongly motivated to find an income source.

Citizenship of enquirers

To date, citizens of more than 35 countries applied to ICCs. The vast majority of foreign citizens are labour migrants from CIS countries: Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Belarus, Turkmenistan, Georgia (the countries are listed in a descending order of applications). Citizens of the “far abroad” countries apply more seldom, mainly due to the language barrier (as consultations in the ICCs are provided in Russian). However, ICCs have received applications from citizens of Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ethiopia, Ghana, Peru, Pakistan, China, North Korea, etc.

Applications to the Moscow ICC are more heterogeneous from the point of view of citizenship of enquirers, as migrants from nearly all CIS and “far abroad” countries are present in the statistics; at the same time the regional ICCs have their own peculiarities. Experts note that in general the structure of labour migrants by origin countries depend on the region of Russia, and the following rule still remains: in the western regions of Russia the share of migrants from Ukraine, Moldova and Belorussia is higher; at the same time, the share of migrants from the Central Asian countries is increasing in all regions of RF. It is possible to mention that this assumption in principle does not contradict the data collected by the regional ICCs, although in this case there is not direct connection since the picture of the citizenship of enquirers depends in the first place not on the number of migrants from certain origin countries in this particular region, but on: a) the cooperation between the ICCs with Diaspora NGOs, b) the scale of the information campaign and dissemination, c) the development and dissemination of *specific* informational materials designed for special target groups of migrants from certain origin counties, etc.

This issue will be covered in more details in the part which shows the peculiarities of work of the regional ICCs.

Education of enquirers

In the group of Russian some 50% are persons with higher education and 32% - with secondary specialized education. 18% have completed secondary education. These percentages may be given by the fact that the recurring questions which are of interest of Russian citizens are about the possibility to obtain information about possible employment or/and study abroad, something which is important for this particular group of people.. Besides, as an educated group, it tends to be more analytically inclined to learn about the problem of THB and possible risks connected to it.

Among migrants the share of enquirers with higher and secondary specialized education is also quite high (27% and 32% respectively) while the 41% of enquirers has completed secondary education . However, it is necessary to note that those migrants who apply to the ICCs are the ones able to understand the information contained on advertisement materials (i.e. in general those who have at least a basic or intermediate knowledge of the Russian language) as well as the most active

and educated ones who understand the necessity of getting specialized consultations. It should also be mentioned that foreign citizens with a lower level of education may not be inclined to trust the advertisement and may also fear that consultations are provided by state structures therefore comporting the risk of exposure.; they may also not believe that consultations are provided on a free of charge basis (based on the well-spread opinion that “free cheese could be only in a mouse trap”).

Regarding the the level of education of labour migrants in Russia, according to experts’ estimates the number of migrants coming from small towns and villages where there is less access educational possibilities is currently increasing. The level of knowledge of the Russian language is lowering. It is necessary to note that migrants with low level of education, in particular those without specialized professional skills and knowledge of the Russian language have less possibilities of adaptation, that is why the risk of become victims of trafficking is much higher for them.

Thus it seems important to more actively work with this target group –namely migrants with low education, bad knowledge of the Russian language- and to develop specialized informational materials for them (in the national languages), more actively cooperate with Diaspora NGOs and embassies both in Russia and with state structures, NGOs and international organizations in the countries of origin of migrants thus preventing this target group from falling prey to traffickers.

Foreign citizens who applied to ICCs: work permit and migration registration

Not all foreign citizens answered the questions on the topic of work permit and migration registration. Despite the anonymous character of the consultations (personal data is not requested), migrants are still afraid of providing this information because of the threat of penalties from law-enforcement bodies. However the data received allows some interpretations.

Statistical analysis of the queries received during 12 months of the work of ICCs in 2007-2008 show that some 51% of enquirers-foreign migrants did not have a work permit while the rest 49% was working in the RF on the legal basis. If we compare these figures with the data of the sociological survey among migrants conducted by IOM in 2001-2002 in six regions of RF² (only 23,3% of migrants polled had a work permit while 76,7% did not), it is possible to observe that the changes introduced in the Russian legislation effective as of 15 January 2007, and aimed at facilitation of the procedure of obtaining the work permit for foreign migrants from the CIS countries, have had a positive impact on decreasing irregular migration (in particular, irregular employment) in the RF.

Nevertheless, over 50% of enquirers did not have a work permit. This figure could be partially explained by the fact that those persons who addressed the ICCs wanted indeed to learn about the procedures, addresses of the FMS, etc, and had not yet applied to the state structure for the work permit. At the same time it shows the insufficient level of awareness of migrants and proves the fact that the state structures have to conduct a more active informational work on clarification of procedures related to the possibility to get a work permit for foreign citizens.

Nonetheless, more than the half of applicants did not have a work permit.
(Тем не менее, все же более половины обратившихся не имели разрешения на работу).

If we take the data of queries received in 2008 it is possible to observe the following trend: in January and February 2008 the number of foreign citizens who did not have a work permit was increasing (56% in January and 64% in February). At the same time the majority of enquirers during this period have pointed out the fact that when applying for work permit in January and February they received a refusal from the FMS, receiving the explanation that the branches of the FMS in several regions did not have instructions about the number of quotas for 2008. Hence it is possible to establish a connection between the number of foreign citizens without work permit was and a certain

² Problem of Irregular Migration in Russia: Reality and Search for Solutions (results of the sociological survey). IOM, 2004., p. 151

kind of mis-coordination in the work of the FMS on the issue of quotas for work permits for foreign migrants. Statistics of March and April show a decrease of the acuteness of this problem which allows assuming that the quota issue has been settled inside the FMS by March 2008.

Statistics show that the figures on migration registration for foreign citizens were approximately equal in 2007 (77%) and in the beginning of 2008 (in general 71%). As compared to the date of the previously mentioned sociological IOM survey of 2001-2002.³, the figures on migration registration prove the positive impact of the new migration legislation: in 2001-2002 around 50% of migrants polled answered that they had a temporary registration on the place of staying while 41,6% answered negatively and 7,1% answered “difficult to answer” (that indirectly proves the absence of the registration since they didn’t know what was it) as compared to the average 74% of foreign citizens with migration registration who applied to ICCs in 2007-2008. Facilitation of the procedure had a positive impact and resulted in decrease of the number of migrants who stay irregularly in the Russian Federation.

In general the trends that have been observed on the basis of to the information collected by the ICCs confirm the statistics presented by the FMS on the increase of the share of foreign citizens in the RF in 2007 working and staying legally as compared to previous years: in 2007⁴ almost 8 million of foreign citizens were officially registered (migration registration), and the figure is almost twice as much if compared to 2006. For the first time one out of ten used the opportunity to get a migration registration through a post office. The number of foreign migrants with the work permit increased of four times, and the number of issued work permits exceeded 2,1 million. According to the FMS estimations the irregular migration decreased as minimum twice. It is necessary to mention that the positive trends influenced as well the level of crimes among migrants.

According to MoI data, the level of crimes among migrants for the first time during many years went down to 7%. The number of deportations of foreign citizens decreased of 50%, and 25% is the percentage of those who have been subjects to administrative sanctions for violation of the regime of stay in the RF. At the same time, the number of raids conducted jointly with the law enforcement bodies aimed at checking the observance of the migration legislation rules doubled.

In this regards it seems reasonable to assume that the newly introduced migration legislation has promoted the legalization of a significant part of migrants and has played as a significant factor contrasting the risk of becoming a victim of human trafficking.

Main topics of queries

The biggest number of queries was received from foreign citizens as well as from employers on all aspects of the procedure for obtaining the work permit (22% of queries), and from the Russian citizens on the topics of employment abroad (14%). They were followed by queries related to the migration registration (15%), obtaining of the Russian citizenship (9%) and residence permit (7%). Issues related to the labour legislation (3,6%), in particular, all aspects of the labour contracts, were interesting both for Russian and foreign citizens.

Worth mentioning, experts consider the reliable and timely information of migrants on migration and employment possibilities in the destination country as one of the most important

³ Problem of Irregular Migration in Russia: Reality and Search for Solutions (results of the sociological survey). IOM, 2004., p. 149

⁴ http://www.fms.gov.ru/press/publications/news_detail.php?ID=9792

factors of prevention of irregular migration and THB. Besides, experts suggest⁵ that in Russia informal channels of labour migration prevail over others.

Sociological surveys show that over 70% of migrants find a job through relatives and friends, i.e. through established informal migrant nets. The institutionalization of professional private mediators is still in process, and the majority of those mediators work as shadow mediators, with all possible consequences.

Both informal channels and commercial mediation show that the shadow infrastructure of the labour migration covers up to 90% of the migration flow. State channels of labour migration make up 1% to 3% as well as private structures (agencies on employment, labour exchange) which in total provide service to only some 5% of the migration flow.

According to the same data⁶ only one third of migrants in Moscow and about 50% of migrants in Astrakhan are aware of official structures which offer assistance to migrants in the in the search of employment. At the same time even those migrants who are aware of these structures claim that the unofficial channels are working more effectively, and prefer to use their services. Some 40% of migrants in Moscow and 60% in Astrakhan know how to find an unofficial mediator who could help them organize all the phases of the migration process.

When comparing these figures to the data of the sociological survey conducted by IOM in 2001 -2002⁷, it is possible to infer that the situation has not changed drastically for seven years: only 1,6% of migrants polled applied to official structures when looking for a job in Russia; 30,7% found the job on their own; some 50% through acquaintances and almost 11% through paid mediators. It is provided by the topics of queries to ICCs.

Thus, the development of the infrastructure (both state or/and private but under the state control and based on a corresponding legislation) which services all stages of the migration process – from departure of migrants to their employment and settlement in Russia – is one of the most topical issues at the moment.

In the recent years this issue has been actively debated by the governmental structures, and steps aimed at developing the labour migration infrastructure in Russia have been undertaken: the corresponding draft laws are under discussion; in many RF regions migration centers initiated and/or sponsored by governmental structures in many have been established, etc.

However experts report that at the moment the demand for high quality, accessible informational services for migrants still exceed the existing offer, and it is necessary to continue and maximize efforts in this direction to prevent irregular migration and related shadow and criminal practices, including trafficking in human beings.

As for the queries coming from the RF citizens, questions about reliability of private agencies dealing with employment or education of Russians abroad are also an important part of ICCs work. According to queries forwarded to ICCs, private agencies often offer work abroad on a tourist visa, do not provide all the necessary contracts or offer to sign a contract only on the foreign language (for instance in Korean), do not give a sample of a contract to a person for check and offer to sign it immediately in the office without, deceive with the issue of the validity of a license, etc. It seems advisable to provide free access to information (on the FMS site, in offices of the FMS and Service on Labour and Employment in regions, etc) and to publish a list of agencies which have been licensed by the FMS as being reliable in employing Russian citizens abroad. It could also be possible

⁵ “Prevention and Countering Spreading of Slavery and Trafficking in Human Beings. Final report on the baseline study of the EC-IOM Project “Prevention of Human Trafficking in the RF”. Moscow, 2008. Full text of the report is available at the web-site: www.no2slavery.ru

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Problem of Irregular Migration in Russia: Reality and Search for Solutions (results of the sociological survey). IOM, 2004., p. 108

to create a special page within the FMS website that would cover issues of employment of Russian citizens abroad and clarify the main rights and responsibilities of mediating agencies.

To get a more detailed list of topics of queries please see Attachment 1 (Statistic report on the work of ICCs for the period of May 2007 – May 2008).

As it was noted before, in general the level of legal awareness of the Russian population and foreign migrants is not very high, that is why it is necessary to disseminate corresponding legal and reference information as well as make the public aware of the the existence of the THB problem and related risks.

Information Campaign: distribution of information about the ICCs

The Information Campaign launched by IOM included the development of specialized materials (among them - outdoor advertizing: advertizing billboard, posters, shields, as well as leaflets in Russian, Uzbek and Tajik, specialized reference materials, info cards etc.) Advertizing materials were distributed in Moscow metro carriages, in public transport: autobuses, trolleys, at bus stops, shuttle taxis, suburban trains; on the radio, on TV, in newspapers and magazines, in Internet. Advertizing materials were also distributed at market places, railway stations, near hostels, industrial enterprises, in schools, through NGOs and Diaspora unions.

It is worth mentioning that information materials were developed in cooperation with the relevant governmental structures, which took active part in the distribution of materials. Such cooperation has contributed to success of informational work with migrants and general public.

More details of such cooperation will follow below.

Basing on the Information Centers' statistics, among the most effective channels of advertizing materials' distribution were: in Moscow – advertizing (information stickers) in metro carriages -(23% of RF citizens and 21% of foreign citizens got information through this channel) - (however this distribution strategy can not be considered as primary due to the high cost of such advertizing), leaflets - (26% of Russian citizens and 23% of foreign citizens) - (distribution through governmental organizations and by special spreaders). Distribution of information through the so called non-formal chains (friends, acquaintances etc) - (20% for Russian citizens and 23% for foreign citizens) - and on radio – (11% for Russian citizens and 6% for foreign citizens) – are also among most effective channels of distribution.

The Internet was used mainly by the residents of Moscow region and other big cities, as well as by employers who called to IC.

It can be concluded that for Moscow region the most effective method of info distribution is advertizing in metro stations, for Astrakhan – distribution of leaflets and info cards with the “hot-line” number and information about services of the Center, for Karelia – advertizing in city public transport, distribution of leaflets.

At the moment IOM has submitted the documents to the Moscow city Government to get official permission to distribute the information as a social advertizing campaign, an effort which is part of a broader cooperation effort with governmental structures within actions of information dissemination on human trafficking and illegal migration among the general public and the at-risk groups, such as labour migrants.

ICCs will continue the information campaigns throughout the life of the project and will develop new strategies tailored on the data collected.

Cooperation with governmental structures.

The International Organization for Migration in Moscow within the framework of the Project “Prevention of Human Trafficking in the RF” has established and developed a successful cooperation with governmental structures both at federal and regional levels. Among them are the Ministry of Interior (MoI), Federal Migration Service of Russia, Federal Labour Service, Ombudsman Office, Moscow city Government, Administration of the city of Petrozavodsk etc.

Cooperation with governmental institutions increase the effectiveness of the work of Information Centers.

As an example, the Federal Migration Service of Russia in cooperation with IOM and IC has developed and distributed through FMS offices all over Russia (including the pilot regions of the project) more than 2, 5 million leaflets. Leaflets and other information materials, developed by IC are available in the offices of the Employment Service, in the MoI units, and other structures working with at-risk groups.

The Interregional Information and Business Center of the Moscow city Government in cooperation with IOM has developed and published a specialized Guide, indicating the main procedures of the migration legislation of Russia to be followed, and which gives recommendations to Russian nationals going abroad for work, study or other reasons.

An effective information exchange was established: the staff members of ICs on regular basis take part in trainings organized by governmental structures. ICCs provide the information received to the governmental structures in an anonymous form (info regarding the revealed irregularities). This enables relevant structures to better monitor the situation in the sphere of migration and human trafficking.

Specialists of ICs (lawyers, psychologists) work with the at-risk groups in FMS offices (provide joint consultations), in specialized MoI centers (for minors), in state crisis centers, educational institutions.

Lawyers of ICs work in close cooperation with the Department of Internal Affairs and with the Department on Combat of Organized Crime in cases of human trafficking (providing consultations for victims, referral of victims to the law-enforcement bodies etc.) Upon the requests from ICs the law-enforcement bodies organize operational checks and victims rescue operations.

During one year of work of ICCs several rescue operations have been carried out in Moscow region and in Astrakhan region thanks to the professionalism and efficiency of law-enforcement bodies.

The specialists of Information Centers are regularly invited to take part in seminars and conferences, organized in the regions.

In view of the above results, it is possible to affirm that the concept of Information and Consultative Centers was positively accepted by the governmental structures of federal and regional levels.

We hope that the experience obtained during this period and the mechanisms of work of such centers will be useful in the future, and after the end of the project life it would be recommendable to continue this work within the framework of governmental structures.

In this regard, IOM has started negotiations with several governmental structures on the possibility of further transferring the Centers to the a state institution. In particular, the FMS of Russia has expressed its interest in discussing possible future endorsement of ICCs activity under its

authority, being it is interested in development of informational work with migrants and general population, one of the most important elements of migration policy.

Cooperation with NGOs

ICCs are actively cooperating with non-governmental organizations including Diaspora ones as well as with organizations dealing with human rights protection. ICCs' lawyers regularly work with these organizations; an effective informational exchange has been established, and a system of mutual referrals has been developed.

Regional peculiarities of the ICCs work (the full text will be to be accessible after 16 May at the web-site: www.no2slavery.ru)

General recommendations based on the experience of the ICCs

On basis of the queries received by the ICCs it is possible to present some general proposals for the improvement of the practical implementation of the legislation in the area of counter trafficking and irregular migration, as well as of the activity of state structures working in this field.

From the point of view of the *legislation*, it seems important to develop and to adopt a comprehensive legal framework on countering trafficking in human beings as well as on countering corruption. It is also important that the Federal Law "On State Protection of Victims, Witnesses and Other Participants of Criminal Legal Proceedings" is implemented in full to avoid possible pressure of criminals (traffickers) on victims and witnesses. It seems also reasonable to strengthen the penalty for crimes related to trafficking in human beings and to introduce confiscation of property of criminals.

Also the work on investigation and criminalization of trafficking crimes is hampered by the absence of a consolidated practice of the RF Supreme Court in this type of crimes. This gap sometimes makes a ground for reclassifying the criminal cases and substituting articles 127.1 and 127.2 by other articles of the Criminal Code.

As for some general recommendations for the *state bodies* that could contribute to improvement of their work, since trafficking in human beings can be a trans-border crime (that could be especially vital for border regions) it seems important to activate international cooperation of law enforcement bodies in countering the phenomenon. Practice shows that there is a strong need to organize on a state level specialized structures where victims of THB could get assistance and could be accommodated during investigation phases and court procedures.

When working with the target groups (for instance labour migrants) it is necessary to conduct a more active information dissemination work both in the origin countries (through consulates of the RF, international organizations, national state agencies) as well as in the RF, including in places of border crossing, railways stations, airports, bus stations, etc., as well as to cooperate with Diaspora NGOs, etc. It seems also important to place information about migration rules and procedures (posters, leaflets, guides, etc) in post offices, where representatives of target groups come for registration, as well as in medical centers where migrants receive the necessary medical certificates. This information could also be disseminated through the banking system, being the latter involved in banking transfers and transactions of migrants' remittances.

With regards to some specific issues which were revealed during the work of ICCs it is possible to recommend to the Federal Migration Service to make information about quotas (regional, and on profession) open and accessible, and update it on a monthly basis in each region so that both employers and migrants could understand the actual offer/demand situation and plan employment accordingly. This information (in a way of a monthly updated list with the number of quotas left until

the end of the year) could also be placed into the offices of the FMS, Service on labour and employment, tax service, etc., as well as at the FMS site.

It is also important to mention the necessity of conducting a more active work of information dissemination among private employers (in the area of individual construction, services, etc.) about the specific features of employment of migrants by private persons. Practice shows that a big number of employers (juridical persons) often have staff lawyers who are aware of the main aspects of labour contracts, etc., that is why the issues of employment of migrants by juridical persons are more or less clear and well known (in case organizations apply to ICCs for consulting, queries are mainly about specific aspects but not on procedures). At the same time private persons such as Russian citizens who employ on an individual basis migrants who get work permits on their own are not aware of the steps should be taken, as well as of the kind of documents which should be signed and where. ICCs have often come across cases of persons willing to employ officially a foreign migrant (for instance for construction at the summer house) but who do not possess information information about the procedures, type of a labour contract with a migrant because it is not available. During the summer season the number of such employees tends to grow. According to a survey conducted by IOM⁸, in general some 30% of migrants polled are employed by a private person (16,7% in the Moscow region and 50,8% in Astrakhan oblast and 1% in Karelia) and it is this particular category of migrants (the vast majority are working in the area of construction, trade and agriculture) are the most vulnerable from the point of view of the risk of becoming a victim of trafficking and slave labour. The uncertainty about the legal status, absence of a written labour contract entails possible abuse both by the employer (unpaid salary, non-abidance of conditions of protection of labour) and by law enforcement bodies (exactions, extortions) that results in an increase of corruption.

Thus it seems essential to develop specialized informational materials with detailed explanations on the procedure of migrants' employment by private persons and of signing of a labour contract (with the samples of these documents). This information could also be disseminated through the city and regional branches of the police (militsiya), FMS, employment services, post offices (in a way of posters, leaflets) as well as at the FMS web-site.

An important part of queries collected is addressed to ICCs by Russian citizens who are willing to study or work abroad. It seems advisable to place list of agencies open to public which have been licensed by the FMS as reliable for employment of Russian citizens abroad (this information could be placed on the branches of the service on employment, FMS, including passport and visa service, at the police offices, etc. as well as at the web-site) and to develop specialized leaflets (posters) with detailed clarification of rules and possible risks when employing abroad. Unfortunately many victims who have been referred to IOM for assistance got into the situation of slavery and sexual exploitation to a great extent because of lack of awareness of the THB phenomenon and lack of basic legal knowledge.

It is necessary also to conduct informational work with youth (graduates of schools, institutes and other educational institutions). For schools it could be in a form of after school hours lectures for school pupils and for their parents; for institutes – lectures and specialized seminars. The topics could be: THB related risks when entering the labour market, when looking for employment or studying abroad or in other region.

Worth stressing that IOM is ready to cooperate with state bodies on the issues of joint development and implementation of informational work with general public and at-risk groups with the purpose of preventing irregular migration to/in/from RF and trafficking in human beings.

⁸ "Prevention and Countering Spreading of Slavery and Trafficking in Human Beings. Final report on the baseline study of the EC-IOM Project "Prevention of Human Trafficking in the RF". Moscow, 2008. Full text of the report is available at the web-site: www.no2slavery.ru

Assistance of the governmental structures to the establishment and support of the existing migration and informational and consultative centers where target groups could get reliable and timely information on all aspects related to stay and employment in the Russian Federation is a very important chin in the work on prevention of irregular migration and trafficking in persons.

EC-IOM Project “Prevention of Human Trafficking in the RF” as well as ICCs once again express their sincere gratitude to all governmental structures and other partner organizations who have helped and provided every support to ICCs during one year of their work, and helped establish these Centers, develop effective cooperation and ultimately achieve important results.