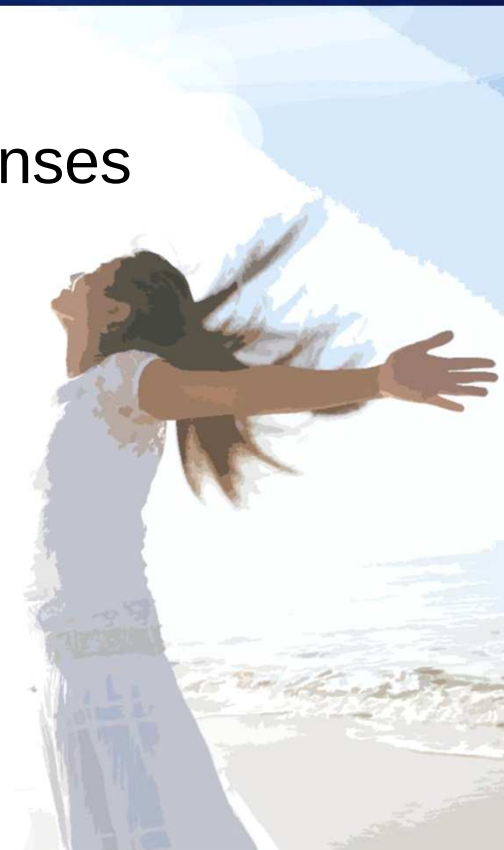




Sofia Center for Prevention of Criminal Offenses /REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA/

“Activity and functions of Sofia Center for Prevention of Criminal Offenses – a successful model of the “Iceberg” project: a program for preventing and combating violence against children, young people and women and protecting victims of violence”

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Establishment and main idea



The improvement of public order and security of citizens is a major priority for the Sofia Municipality that requires providing partnership and coordination of the institutions in line with European practices and standards in this area.

Founded in January 2007 the Center for Prevention of Criminal Offences in Sofia, Bulgaria, "Poduyane" district, "Suha Reka" section, block 18 is a practical model of cooperation between Sofia Municipality, the police, NGOs, civil society organizations and social institutions to deal with problems related to crime, domestic violence and youth delinquency.

Objectives and structure



The main objective of Sofia Center for Prevention of Criminal Offences /SCPCO/ is to improve public order, prevention, interception and disclosure of offenses and to ensure the safety of citizens.

The objective is defined in the Rules of Organization and Operation of the SCPCO, accepted with decision of the Sofia Municipality Council. A program is accepted for preventive activities of the SCPCO with decision №117/2008 by the SMC, based on principles set out in the Rules – voluntariness, equality and transparency.

Board of Directors and members are elected who do not receive remuneration for their activities in the center. SCPCO is dependent on a budget determined by Sofia Municipality. The funds are approved annually based on a prepared plan – account. We can receive funds from sponsorship and donations.

Priority Areas



Preventive activities are carried out in three priority areas:

- Prevention of criminal activities
- Increasing the effectiveness of measures to protect victims of domestic violence and victims of crime
- General prevention

Prevention activities



Reducing delinquency of minors:

- Development of projects for education of children and students to comply with the rules and public policy.
- Training directors and teachers of educational institutions
- Preparing informational materials for parents, teachers, children and students.
- Organizing conferences, seminars, training meetings on the problems of antisocial behavior in children.
- Development of a project for the prevention of aggression among children.

Prevention activities



Implementation of activities to work with perpetrators of antisocial behavior:

- Meetings and discussions with police to establish trust and to overcome illegal conduct.
- Organizing cultural events and fun games with participation of delinquent children.
- Family counseling.

Integration activities



Integration of people released from places of imprisonment

- Development of a mechanism for dealing with exempt and conditionally exempt people:
 - Creating a team to work with the released by regions.
 - Organization of meetings and consultations by regions and residence.
 - Information on job opportunities through employment offices.
 - Training for members of the supervisory commission – municipal officials.

Accompanying measures



- Improving the work for repairing and rehabilitation of prisoners and offenders sentenced to probation
- Providing conditions for assuring safety for people and property protection.
- Training for the Security and Public Order Committee

Protection from violence



Increasing the effectiveness of measures to protect victims of domestic violence and victims of crime:

- Assistance and support of victims of domestic violence and trafficking.
- Creating conditions for cooperation with NGOs , providing reception facilities on schedule.
- Implementing awareness campaigns, seminars, training meetings with relevant experts.
- Attracting media to publicize the activity.
- Preparation of manuals and brochures with preventive focus to combat violence.
- Information about the legal rights of victims.
- Assistance and legal advice.
- If needed - guidance for placement in “crisis center” for immediate support and protection.

Methods of work



SCPCO as a preventive system by:

- applying a series of measures by the police;
- hiring district police inspectors who know the neighborhood well and know the addresses of vulnerable families.
- This allows the application of preventive solutions from the SCPCO team for removing potentially problematic subjects.