**Conclusions from SEE NPM Workshop on**

**„Monitoring safeguards in the first hours of police custody“**

12-13 October 2020

1. During the planning of the visit to a police station, the NPM should set clear objectives and a strategy to achieve these objectives.

2. Gathering information is an important stage in the planning process of NPM visits. Sources of information may include complaints received by the Ombudsman Offices, information from other international and national monitoring bodies and CSOs, analysis of the existing laws and regulations, and other information that NPMs may obtain from external sources (e.g. the media, professional associations, such as bar and medical associations etc).

3. It is necessary to conduct visits in all parts of the country to examine how procedural safeguards are implemented during police custody in the different regions.

4. It is important to have a medical doctor among the members of the visiting team. The presence of a doctor during NPM visits not only allows to check whether detainees have access to a doctor and whether medical confidentiality is respected, but also to select detained persons for interviews and, if required, to document medical evidence of ill-treatment.

5. NPMs should use all other possible means beyond visits to police stations to obtain more evidence and information, bearing in mind that it is likely they encounter a small number of persons deprived of their liberty during their visits to police stations or that detainees at police stations may not be willing to share information fearing for reprisals. To this extent, NPMs should consider monitoring the implementation of safeguards in the first hours of police custody also while conducting visits in remand or prison facilities (i.e. retrospective monitoring). Moreover, NPMs might wish to explore alternative monitoring methods, such as carrying out combined visits to police stations and prison facilities, accessing video surveillance, comparing data, or collecting information from other sources.

6. It is important to use the method of triangulation (i.e. cross-checking) of information, by means of interviewing persons deprived of their liberty as well as police staff, verifying video surveillance and analysing quantitative data. In particular, open questions should be used to obtain more information on how the different procedural safeguards are implemented during police detention, and especially during the first hours of custody.

7. Triangulation can also be done outside of the police stations visited, through retrospective interviewing of people held in remand and prison facilities or by analysing data from other sources of information.