

The **Service for Criminal Policy** is particularly concerned to work closely with the various partners involved, both inside and outside Federal, regional and local authorities. The working links that have been created between a number of authorities and NGOs to combat child prostitution is without precedent.

Given that criminal policy covers *all measures, whether criminal or otherwise, aimed at protecting society against crime, rehabilitating offenders and guaranteeing victims' rights*, the Service for Criminal Policy believes it is its job to ensure these working links are strengthened. Creating a safe, just society, especially for children, is a complex problem which involves us all.

This is why Belgium has played a pioneering role in the approach to dealing with trafficking in human beings for many years. The laws of 1995 on trafficking in human beings, child pornography and sexual abuse against children showed how to deal with this phenomenon effectively. The law of November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2000 on criminal protection for minors has completed this legislative arsenal, aimed at providing better protection for minors who are victims of prostitution, however old they are.

The law on trafficking in human beings was amended to strengthen the fight against trafficking and smuggling on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005. (Sexual) exploitation of minors is now considered an aggravating circumstance.

It is important to have a good legislative arsenal and the right investigation and prosecution policy. The Service for Criminal Policy has been reviewing the 1995 laws and has made recommendations to the Minister of Justice to improve fighting such offences still further.

The Service for Criminal Policy is an important partner to various authorities and NGOs in looking for solutions aimed at protecting children in our society. Prevention is better than cure. The Service is also convinced that campaigns such as "Stop child prostitution" are essential, which is why it supports them resolutely.