



On 26.07.2017, the National Preventive Mechanism conducted the first regular unannounced visit to the Police Station of general competence - Valandovo.

The visit of the NPM team at the PS Valandovo was carried out according to the mandate of the Ombudsman - National Preventive Mechanism, arising from the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Law on the Ombudsman. The Optional Protocol stipulates that the NPM conducts regular visits to places where persons are deprived of their liberty in order to identify the risks and thus prevent torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

During the visit, the National Preventive Mechanism had constructive cooperation with the officials and got insight into all of the premises and the paperwork accordingly.

The NPM team established that regular and continuous trainings on various topics are being organized for the police officers.

The NPM team concluded that the records in the PS Valandovo are kept neatly and meticulously. In the Registries that have been kept for the last three years, no corrector pen was used at all and the events were noted in chronological order.

The NPM team also found that there is no separate premise for interrogation of apprehended persons and persons deprived of liberty, nor there is separate premise for detention of minors in accordance with the Law on Juvenile Justice.

Moreover, there is no wheelchair ramp for persons with physical disability at the entrance, which makes the police station difficult to access for these persons.

The NPM team found that the detention premises are in an extremely poor material condition and do not meet the minimum standards required for detention.

The NPM team found that there is a negative practice of detention of persons who were actually transferred from PS Gevgelija due to lack of shift managers, although the premises for detention in the PS Valandovo do not meet the standards required for detention of persons.

Also, none of the interrogation premises has an audio or video monitoring system.

The National Preventive Mechanism issued a Special Report on the visit noting the positive and negative conditions established and gave specific recommendations to the Ministry of Interior and to the commander of PS Valandovo, in order to eliminate the weaknesses identified, as well as to improve the conditions and the treatment of the persons deprived of their liberty and the detainees.