Abstract

This research work addresses the question of how the various roles of NGOs envisaged by the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings are related. It seeks to demonstrate how the potentially dichotomous roles of being a partner of the State while also critically monitoring the implementation of the Convention by the latter are interrelated, interdependent and also combinable. In order to do so, case studies on Austria, Italy and the United Kingdom are conducted. The comparative analysis reveals that the ideal way to improve action is the involvement of NGOs on the institutional level and in policy development. The inclusion of NGOs in the monitoring process conducted by GRETA is found to be most effective when using the channel of consultation with NGOs during country visits. The relationship between the two roles is proposed to be represented as a circle: working as partners of the State provides NGOs with more information to share – ideally – with the State for policy development or with GRETA. GRETA's report can then be used to put pressure on the State, also in terms of more NGO involvement, and thus bring about change and close the circle.

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