



2020-21 REPORT OF THE OSCE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE AND CO-ORDINATOR FOR COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS:

## Advancing new strategies to end exploitation

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is a pan-European security body whose 57 participating States span the geographical area from Vancouver to Vladivostok. Recognized as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, the OSCE is a primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation in its area. Its approach to security is unique in being both comprehensive and co-operative: comprehensive in that it deals with three dimensions of security – the human, the politico-military and the economic/environmental. It therefore addresses a wide range of security-related concerns, including human rights, arms control, confidence- and security-building measures, national minorities, democratization, policing strategies, counterterrorism and economic and environmental activities.

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# Acronyms

<b>AECT</b>	Alliance Expert Co-ordination Team	<b>ODIHR</b>	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
<b>ATU</b>	Autonomous Territorial Unit	<b>OMIK</b>	OSCE Mission in Kosovo
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	<b>OSR/CTHB</b>	Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
<b>CoESPU</b>	Center of Excellence for Stability Police Units	<b>OSCE PA</b>	OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
<b>CoE</b>	Council of Europe	<b>PCU OSCE</b>	Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine
<b>CTHB</b>	Combating Trafficking in Human Beings	<b>POiD OSCE</b>	Program Office in Dushanabe
<b>EJTN</b>	European Judicial Training Network	<b>PCUz OSCE</b>	Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan
<b>FIU</b>	Financial Investigation Unit	<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>GRETA</b>	Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings	<b>SMM OSCE</b>	Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine
<b>HDIM</b>	Human Dimension Implementation Meeting	<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedures
<b>IAJ</b>	International Association of Judges	<b>SR/CTHB</b>	Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
<b>IAP</b>	International Association of Prosecutors	<b>THB</b>	Trafficking in Human Beings
<b>ICAT</b>	Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons	<b>THB/LE</b>	Trafficking in Human Beings for the purposes of Labour Exploitation
<b>ICMPD</b>	International Centre for Migration Policy Development	<b>THB/OR</b>	Trafficking in Human Beings for Organ Removal
<b>IDPs</b>	Internally Displaced Persons	<b>TNTD</b>	Transnational Threats Department
<b>IJM</b>	International Justice Mission	<b>TNTD/SPMU</b>	Transnational Threats Department/Strategic Police Matters Unit
<b>INTERPOL</b>	International Criminal Police Organization	<b>ToT</b>	Training of Trainers
<b>IO</b>	International Organization	<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>IOJT</b>	International Organization for Judicial Training	<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration	<b>UN OHCHR</b>	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>MC</b>	Ministerial Council	<b>UNSC</b>	United Nations Security Council
<b>NAGTRI</b>	U.S. National Attorneys General Training & Research Institute	<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization		
<b>NRM</b>	National Referral Mechanism		

# Foreword



**Helga Maria Schmid**

OSCE Secretary General

Trafficking in human beings is a gross violation of human rights which undermines the rule of law and democratic values, posing a significant security threat to States and their citizens. That is why *combating* human trafficking remains a priority for the OSCE. And given the complexity and cross-dimensional nature of the problem, the OSCE is ideally placed to address it through its broad membership and its comprehensive and co-operative approach to security, which allows us to work on hard security matters, on economic issues and on questions related to human rights.

Human trafficking is as embedded in our societies and economies as it has ever been. Its scale is growing, and so is its pervasiveness in our lives. Every day thousands of children and adults are exploited; \$150 BLN are paid every year for goods and services produced by or extracted from trafficking victims; our criminal justice interventions are barely scratching the surface of this horrible crime, resulting in widespread impunity for criminals profiting off the exploitation of their fellow humans.

Trafficking in human beings is a stark example of why we need effective multilateralism: large, complex and common problems are better tackled together, with common strategies and multi-faced approaches. The OSCE's agile mandate has great value for bringing together countries of origin, transit and destination in the design common strategies to address all stages of the crime - from recruitment to exploitation, including in the online domain, which is increasingly relevant and is forcing up to look for innovative solutions. Utilized to the fullest, the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security can help us confront the structural aspects of our societies allowing trafficking to thrive.

Governments, businesses, individuals - all have a collective responsibility to combat trafficking in all its form and ensure their purchases do not contribute to trafficking. The OSCE is striving to build a "whole of society" approach to combat trafficking - one where individual choices, company policies and State laws and practices all move in the same direction. Ending exploitation and trafficking in human beings is not the task of anti-trafficking practitioners alone, but of society at large. The OSCE is working to build that coalition, for a safe and free OSCE region.

# Acknowledgements



I would like to express my deep and sincere gratitude to the Albanian and Swedish OSCE Chairs and to all OSCE participating States for their support of my Office, and for providing the political and financial backing necessary for us to carry out our work and help the OSCE region effectively combat human trafficking. My thanks also go to relevant units within the OSCE Secretariat and other OSCE structures, particularly in the field, for their invaluable support and cooperation.

My warmest thanks go to my team. I feel honored to work alongside such a dedicated group of passionate and professional staff. They all have contributed to the rich outputs over the last biennium, and I wish to thank each one of them: Tarana Baghirova, Radu Cucos, Alexandra Donskova-Huber, Evan Karr, Oleksandr Kyrylenko, Szilvia Okolicsanyi, Anne-Lise Robin, Lilia Rotoloni, Tetiana

Rudenko, Julia Rutz, Andrea Salvoni, Jeyran Shafiyeva, Katharina Thon, Boris Topic, Alexander Trautrimis, as well as our short-term assistants, JPOs and interns who worked with us during over the past two years.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to all our donors, in particular the governments of Andorra, Austria, Cyprus, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy and Monaco, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Japan. A special thanks also to Italy, Germany and the United States of America for seconding staff to my Office: your support is very much appreciated and reflected in the efforts documented in the following pages.



# Introduction



**Valiant Richey**

OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator  
for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

2020 and 2021 posed unprecedented challenges to modern society and public health, stressing the economic and social cohesion of all our communities.

At the onset of the pandemic, it was clear that while the COVID-19 threat was universal, the negative consequences of the crisis would be disproportionately felt by the most vulnerable in our society. Victims of trafficking faced exceptional danger as entrenched systems of exploitation were thrown into disarray and traffickers sought to maintain their revenue through greater violence and new forms of exploitation. Meanwhile, access to shelters and other support structures was increasingly limited at a time when need was at its greatest. Further, with increasing unemployment and pressure on social welfare systems, vulnerable persons already living in precarious circumstances across the OSCE region experienced higher risks of being swept into exploitative situations. Human traffickers were already operating with impunity and increasing their profit before the pandemic; COVID19 provided them with a whole new range of opportunities to expand their operations.

In response to these challenges, we increased our efforts, expanded our political guidance and technical assistance to governments, including with [recommendations](#) on States' short-term response to COVID-19, and continued delivering on our programmatic mandate across the OSCE region. Our research and policy briefs focused on the most pressing challenges of the day, from combating the demand fueling trafficking to addressing the gendered nature of the crime, and our capacity building efforts expanded and evolved to meet emerging threats like technology-facilitated trafficking.

This Biennial Report aims to present our comprehensive strategy to end trafficking, the priorities informing our programmatic work, the efforts we made with governments and parliaments to help them design more effective laws and policies, and the impact we aim to achieve on the ground. The broad scope of our efforts reflects not only the hard work of our team, but also shows that our support is in high demand.

Over the past two years, I met with ministers and parliaments, with victims and activists, with NGOs and service providers, with academics and bankers, with prosecutors and technology companies. The current situation is challenging – trafficking has never been so intertwined with our societies and economy as it is today. It is hidden deep in supply chains and in plain sight in our communities and in the digital sphere. Yet, I also see today a new and unprecedented level of attention among political leaders across the OSCE region. Something is changing, and what used to be a crime too often left to “experts” to deal with, is now increasingly seen a societal problem - as everyone’s problem. Everyone has a role to play to defeat it. As I look back on the past two years and think of the next ones, I believe we have a unique opportunity today. That of building safer and more resilient societies and economies, finally free from exploitation. Human trafficking remains an open wound in our world. It is time to prioritize the necessary political and financial resources to seriously combat it, and to finally adopt strategies towards ending it. It is not only possible, but necessary – to provide justice and freedom to the millions who still enjoy neither.

## SECTION 1

# Building Political Will to Combat Trafficking

Ending trafficking is the responsibility of society at large. The OSR/CTHB is working to foster broad engagement and keep trafficking high on the political agenda to build an OSCE region finally free from exploitation.



OSCE Special Representative for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Valiant Richey visiting a facility used for training by Central Office for Combating Illegal Employment (OCLTI) in Arcueil, France, 30 June 2021

### Special Representative's Visits

Human trafficking is a huge challenge requiring strong commitment and investment from countries in order to defeat it. This means developing laws and policies that reflect the current issues in the field, prioritizing the necessary resources for law enforcement, prosecution and judicial bodies to carry out their tasks, adequately funding identification, protection and assistance programmes for victims, and investing in prevention efforts commensurate to the scale of exploitation.

One of the main tools the SR/CTHB has to foster political

will and support national authorities are country visits and other official visits. They offer a unique opportunity to provide advice and expertise, exchange good practices, and consult relevant legislative, judicial, and executive authorities, as well as to raise the political profile of anti-trafficking efforts in any given country.

After each country visit, the Special Representative prepares a report highlighting the promising practices of the country in question, existing challenges, and recommendations on areas where anti-trafficking policies and practices could be enhanced. These reports are publicly available on the OSCE website.

## Country Visits

# 20/21

In 2020 and 2021, country visits were conducted to: Bulgaria, France, Ireland, and Türkiye.

Other official visits were conducted to: Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Holy See, Italy, Liechtenstein, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

An online visit was conducted to: Finland.

Reports were published on visits from 2019 to: Georgia and Croatia.



## Contribution from France



**Dominique POTIER**

Member of the French National Assembly,  
France

One of the laws I am most proud of is the 2017 Corporate Duty of Vigilance Law. For the first time, it established a legally binding obligation for large companies to prepare and implement a vigilance plan, to identify and prevent serious human rights violations resulting from the company's activities and from the activities of its subsidiaries, subcontractors and suppliers.

It is with laws like this that we can move the needle and advance the protection of human rights in our globalized economies. To be truly effective and to finally eradicate forced and child labour, laws like this need to become the norm and be adopted in multiple countries.

Since Valiant Richey's visit to France as OSCE Special Representative in the summer of 2021, I have enjoyed a constant and fruitful exchange with his Office and the Organization. In the OSCE, I have found a great platform to promote the French law and to encourage other countries to adopt similar approaches. I believe this is the frontier of the battle for human rights in the world, and I am delighted to have found in the OSCE a partner in promoting these efforts.

## Contribution from Finland



**Venla ROTH**

National Anti-trafficking Co-ordinator of Finland

There are different ways International Organizations can support State authorities in strengthening their anti-trafficking response.

One that is rarely talked about, and yet is fundamental, is raising the political profile of, and attention to, trafficking among high level officials. In September 2020, I organized a series of online meetings between the OSCE Special Representative and some key national interlocutors. In the course of two days, he met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Interior and Minister of Justice, as well as with the Prosecutor General, the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman and National Rapporteur on Trafficking and the Deputy National Police Commissioner and government Anti-trafficking co-ordinator.

The visit was highly useful in that it provided the opportunity to discuss in depth a number of crucial matters, spanning from victim identification and assistance to successful prosecution, technology, and financial investigations. These conversations with senior officials helped us place trafficking higher in the political agenda and give it the push needed to further advance our efforts.



Valiant Richey, OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (centre), and Petya Nestorova, Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings and Head of the Anti-trafficking Division of the Council of Europe (left), co-chairing the annual gathering of National Anti-trafficking Co-ordinators and Rapporteurs in Strasbourg, 15 November 2021 (OSCE)

## Leveraging partnerships - amplifying impact

Partnerships are a “force multiplier” to advance our goals, foster political will and trigger interventions adapted to the scale of the issue. They not only help build synergies and avoid duplication, they also ensure that our initiatives have a multiplier effect across the entire partnership network.

They are key to everything the OSR/CTHB undertakes, from large-scale capacity building initiatives to political advocacy.

- UN’s Inter-Agency Coordination Group Against Trafficking (ICAT). In 2020, the OSR/CTHB served a second year as co-chair of ICAT, the UN’s Inter-Agency Coordination Group Against Trafficking. By the end of 2020, ICAT adopted its first [Plan of Action](#) which will guide multi-

year work-plans around six priorities areas, including addressing core drivers, ensuring a rights-based approach in CTHB, holding traffickers accountable, and discouraging the demand that fosters exploitation. The OSR/CTHB actively supported the drafting and publication of the Plan of Action as well as Issue Briefs on the [non-punishment principle](#), [trafficking for the purpose of forced labour](#), [the role of public procurement in preventing trafficking](#), and trafficking for the purpose of [organ removal](#), as well as an [analytical review](#) on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Palermo protocol.

- Council of Europe (CoE). Our co-operation with the Council of Europe remained instrumental in developing complementary lines of action and co-ordinating our efforts toward ending trafficking in human beings. The jointly-organized annual meeting of National Anti-Trafficking Co-ordinators and Rapporteurs or equivalent mechanisms represents a unique opportunity for high-

level country officials directly responsible for combating trafficking to exchange views on the ongoing trends and best practices in the field.

- In 2020-21, the OSR/CTHB enhanced engagement with other regional entities, including:
  - Co-operation with the European Union (EU) strengthened through contributions to the new EU anti-trafficking strategy and the review of the EU anti-trafficking directive.
  - In the same spirit of co-operation, the SR/CTHB delivered a speech on the role of the judiciary in combating human trafficking at the Heads of Supreme Courts meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).
  - The OSR/CTHB extensively contributed also to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) anti-trafficking strategy (including with a presentation to NATO's Operations Policy Committee).
- The OSR/CTHB also intensified its exchanges with the OSCE Field Operations and executive structures. These contacts are instrumental for strategic planning and concrete activities such as workshops and conferences, or wider capacity-building activities like the national simulation-based exercises in organized in 2021 in Albania, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Ukraine.

In 2022, a research on national minorities and trafficking in human beings will be jointly published by the OSR/CTHB and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). It will offer empirical evidence on the vulnerability stemming from discrimination based on race and ethnicity during and after the trafficking process.

## Working with Parliaments

One of the most important stakeholders to foster political will and create change are parliaments. In 2020-2021, the SR/CTHB increased his engagement with elected bodies and officials, supporting them in identifying crucial emerging challenges in the field of trafficking and elaborating comprehensive solutions. The SR/CTHB addressed the parliaments of Romania, the United Kingdom, and Scotland on topics including the impact of COVID on victims of trafficking, and combating sexual exploitation and technology-facilitated trafficking. During his official visits, the SR/CTHB also met with member of parliament from Austria, Finland, France, Spain, Sweden, and the United States.

In parallel, the SR/CTHB strengthened engagement with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA): he addressed the ad hoc OSCE PA working group on migration and conducted an official visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina with the deputy chair of that committee to assess the risks of trafficking among the migrant population transiting through the country.

**Valiant Richey**

OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator  
for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

**Margareta Cederfelt**

Deputy Head of Delegation, President of the  
OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

## Intensifying Synergies to Better Tackle Human Trafficking

The President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Margareta Cederfelt, and OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Valiant Richey, met numerous times over the past two years. On 19 November 2021, they conferred on how to build new synergies between parliaments and governments across the OSCE region to address trafficking and discussed ways to enhance political will to combat this heinous crime. The following is a summary of their exchange:

### A much-needed co-operation

**OSCE Special Representative for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Valiant Richey:** Margareta, great to connect with you again and recall our recent joint initiatives, including the three-day visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina to address the risks of trafficking in mixed migration flows. Bringing a whole-of-OSCE approach is crucial when addressing big challenges, and I thought the collaboration between the Parliamentary Assembly (PA) and my Office in 2021 was very fruitful in this regard.

**President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Margareta Cederfelt:** I couldn't agree more Val; it's essential to foster co-operation between the governmental side of the OSCE and the Parliamentary Assembly. We are in the same OSCE family. We may bring different views and perspectives, but when it comes to combating human trafficking, it is essential that we co-operate to increase our effectiveness.

### Parliaments' role in advancing the anti-trafficking agenda

**Cederfelt:** One of the most prominent issues in anti-trafficking today is forced labour. I know it has been a problem for a long time, but the challenges have evolved, especially in the area of labor recruitment. As something that occurs more and more online, it remains an open and pressing issue in our societies.

Fundamentally, this is about the misuse of people. As elected representatives we are accountable to our citizens, and we need to do something. This is where the OSCE's expertise can help us identify a way forward. I have read horrifying descriptions of forced labour and the treatment of victims, so for me this is a topic close to my heart. I also feel that there is not enough public awareness of forced labor because it's still very much hidden in society.

**Richey:** Parliaments have a critical role in the fight against trafficking - that of law-making, while also monitoring what



OSCE SR Valiant Richey sharing views with OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt

governments are implementing. The first role is increasingly relevant today because we need new laws to keep up with the evolving nature of trafficking. I am thinking for example about laws to prevent trafficking for forced labour in supply chains. But the oversight function is also crucial, when governments lack the motivation to ensure that laws are fully implemented. In short, I think parliamentary action is at the heart of combating trafficking today.

## Addressing the misuse of technology

**Richey:** Another challenge is that criminals are using technology much better than we are. One of the topics that my Office has focused on lately is how traffickers are misusing social media to exploit women and children, especially young girls. We have just published a paper on policy analysis and what governments can do to confront this problem, and I believe it will be of interest to parliaments. It's a complex but urgent issue: there is a pressing need for greater safety online. And for parliaments, it's a relevant issue because of the strong intersections with organized crime, technological development, fundamental freedoms, and human rights.

**Cederfelt:** Indeed, it is a critical issue. Technology promotes progress and moves us forward, but we cannot forget its dark side. We must limit the problems it creates, and we need a wide debate on this - an open and transparent discussion - because what do we actually mean with internet freedom? Is it freedom to do anything we want online or is it freedom from harm? How do we define it? Governments and parliaments should address this together, and there is a need for a serious debate and for action. We need to broaden the discussion and foster freedom of expression while at the same time being careful not to facilitate human trafficking. I think this should be an earnest and transparent debate that should involve a diverse group of stakeholders (NGOs, companies, universities...). My biggest fear is that politics is several steps behind exploiters.



OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt discussing with OSCE SR Valiant Richey

**Richey:** You are right, and unfortunately, there have been cases where entities and governments have used the excuse of combating trafficking for infringing upon personal freedoms, and that, of course, is something that we don't want to encourage either. Finding a balance there is hard; debate and dialogue is vital if we are going to succeed.

## Human trafficking as a gender issue

**Cederfelt:** When we talk about trafficking in human beings, I think gender considerations are crucial - we need to include that perspective when we talk about human trafficking.

**Richey:** I agree entirely. We have done a lot of work on gender-based violence recently; it's an issue that's very important to me. In particular, we need men to take a stronger role in advocating for policies and action to curb men's violence against women. I feel we could find opportunities to collaborate in this area with the OSCE PA.

## The growing scale of the problem

**Cederfelt:** Taking a step back, I'm concerned that human trafficking is growing in Europe. We need to reverse the trend.

**Richey:** The problem is indeed growing, and today is so intertwined with our economies and societies, that we barely see it. That is why it's so urgent that we collectively take steps toward its eradication. And that is also why I strongly believe in fostering greater engagement with parliaments, to complement and scale-up governmental efforts.

**Cederfelt:** Let's make this meeting a step forward. There are many issues where we need collaborate on in 2022 and beyond, to build those synergies that will help us finally defeat trafficking.





## SECTION 2 / Focus 1

# Ending Impunity: Enhancing Prosecution to Deliver Justice to Victims

### POLICY



OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Valiant Richey delivering closing remarks at the 20th Alliance against Trafficking in Persons Conference, Vienna, 22 July 2020

There are an estimated 25 million victims of human trafficking in the world. Yet **very few ever see their traffickers prosecuted and brought to justice**. The impunity traffickers largely enjoy is a grave concern for the rule of law across our region, the security of our societies, and the safety of all our citizens. **The current culture of impunity must be replaced with a culture of justice.**

In 2020, OSR/CTHB launched a comprehensive and **ambitious strategy on prosecution**, aimed at identifying the main gaps and opportunities in this field, and at supporting OSCE participating States, particularly through policy recommendations and capacity building.



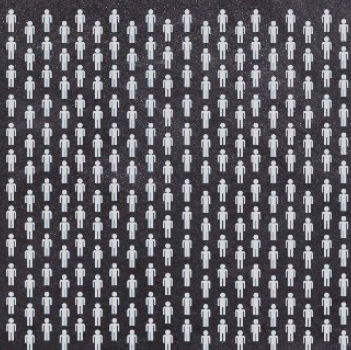
NEWS RELEASE: States urged to triple no. of prosecutions against human traffickers within next 3 yrs as 20th Alliance conference ends.

Action needed to reverse alarming fall in no. of prosecutions for **#humantrafficking**, said senior OSCE officials

<https://osce.org/cthb/457855>  
**#CTHB20**

In a year, for every 2200  
victims of trafficking...

...only 1 trafficker is  
prosecuted



#### [The 20th OSCE Conference of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons](#) (20-22 July

2020) launched a renewed effort to increase the quantity and improve the quality of prosecutions. For three days, State representatives, survivors of trafficking in human beings, international and non-governmental organizations, and academic experts discussed challenges and opportunities to enhance the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking, as well as linkages between prosecution of offenders and protection of victims before, during and after criminal proceedings.

## Identified Gaps

- Lack of understanding and data on perpetrators is an impediment to the development of effective prosecution strategies.
- The complexity, cross-border and cross-cutting nature of the crime poses numerous evidential issues to investigators and prosecutors.
- Lack of implementation of a victim-centered approach.
- Under-utilization of financial investigations tools, limited financial resources and length of trials.
- Reclassification of trafficking cases to minor offences, thereby leading to shorter sentences.

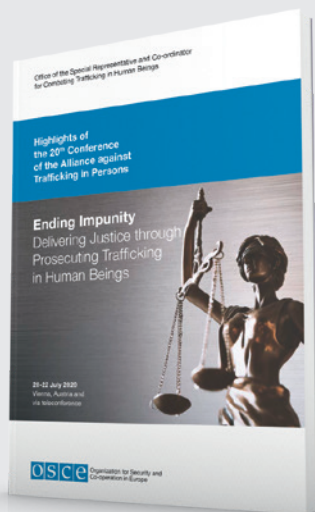


WATCH the full conference



## Recommended steps for action

- Expanding the use of specialized prosecutors and police units, as well as multi-agency co-operation and joint investigation teams.
- Advancing investigative techniques to carry out “victim-less prosecutions” relying more on evidence gathered using specialized investigative techniques, financial investigations and technological tools.
- Improving support and protection to victims who come forward.
- Strengthening capacity building and training across adjacent sectors such as financial, cyber, labour, migration, border police and social services.
- Investing in new technology tools and proactive methods to better detect offenders and victims.
- Filling research gaps and enhance data on perpetrators.
- Promoting efforts to hold the whole trafficking chain accountable, including users, facilitators, and legal entities which benefit from the crime.



Download the conference report





## PRACTICE

### International and National Simulation-based Training Exercises

#### Real Time Action – Real Life Impact

After a forced pause induced by the global COVID-19 pandemic, the roll out of the [OSCE's ground-breaking training methodology](#) continued.

A second international simulation-based training focused on the Mediterranean region sought to enhance the capacity of participants to effectively identify, investigate, and prosecute human trafficking cases among migrants and refugees in mixed migration flows.

Over the course of one week, the exercise engaged over 40 participants from multi-agency teams from 6 OSCE Participating States. Participants from law enforcement, the judiciary, labour inspectorates, immigration authorities, public social services, NGOs, and lawyers practiced a multi-disciplinary response to tackle complex cases of human trafficking, while ensuring a victim-centered and human rights-based approach. The 2021 simulation also introduced some new elements to better reflect current trends in human trafficking including tackling online sexual exploitation, which spiked during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants were also encouraged to promote better judicial co-operation, for example by engaging EUROJUST in the context of the operation.



**The social path is an important tool for identification of #victims, with #civilsociety as first responders.**

Here, an NGO team interviews a potential victim to confirm indications of #trafficking and provide support services.



**Day 2, @osce simulation at @CoESPU\_News**

Collaboration between #LawEnforcement agencies is critical when investigating cases of #HumanTrafficking. We train this by having the criminal investigative teams, #FIU and #prosecutors work together to identify best strategies



**Adequate #support for #victims of #humantrafficking is too often lacking. Victims remain unaware of their #rights or services at their disposal.**

Here, a #socialworker prepares a victim for her meeting with #asylum authorities.

Many OSCE participating States have subsequently embraced the simulation-based training methodology and have launched a series of national exercises for their own authorities, in co-operation with local OSCE Field Operations and the OSR/CTHB. Representatives from criminal justice systems, including law enforcement

and prosecutors, as well as NGOs, public social service providers, labour inspectorates, asylum authorities, and lawyers had the chance to respond to real-time simulated cases of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual and labour exploitation. For the first time, border guards were included in some of these OSCE-facilitated exercises.



## NATIONAL EXERCISES ROLLED OUT

**Albania**  
**Kazakhstan**  
**Kyrgyzstan**  
**Tajikistan**  
**Ukraine**



WATCH the  
Kyrgyzstan National  
exercise Video

## Contribution by Karly Church



### **Karly Church**

Crisis Intervention Counsellor at a regional support service for victims of human trafficking in Canada, and trafficking survivor

Most victims never see justice after exploitation. I believe that there are a few key strategies that can be implemented to ignite change.

One would be early detection and intervention which can start from education and training. If law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, NGOs, and public service providers are equipped with the knowledge and tools to identify trafficking, they will have the information to identify trafficking, to truly understand the complexities of trafficking and the ability to implement appropriate interventions using trauma informed and victim-centered approaches. This could support more successful prosecutions of human trafficking as investigations will improve, and assistance for victims in navigating the judicial system will grow. A small suggestion would be the development of human trafficking-specific investigation units, human trafficking-specific prosecutors and the utilization of people with lived experience to assist with victim care and development of programming. Often times the testimony of a victim is the key evidence in a human trafficking investigation. This can lead to re-traumatization and re-victimization, which can negatively impact the prosecution. I believe that if a victim-centered approach is utilized from the initial identification of trafficking there could be an increase in convictions. In order to make this change possible, an evidence-based best practice model needs to be developed.



## Training Initiatives: Improving the Use of Victim-Centered Approaches

Following the 20th Conference of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons on enhancing the prosecution of human trafficking, OSR/CTHB launched bi-annual capacity building meetings to build strategic partnerships and help foster a more harmonized and co-ordinated approach in the field of CTHB-related training initiatives while also addressing gaps in global training efforts.

In 2020 and 2021, OSR/CTHB organized four such meetings, which gathered 29 international and regional organizations, networks and associations that focus on training. During these discussions, CTHB-related training initiatives and capacity building strategies to enhance judicial, prosecutorial, and investigative efforts in combating trafficking in human beings were addressed and best practices shared among the stakeholders. Participants highlighted that “non-legal aspects” of CTHB are often neglected in training with too little attention given to victims’ rights and protection as well as appropriate ways of working with victims in order to avoid re-victimization, highlighting a key gap in training initiatives for law enforcement, prosecutors and judges.

Therefore, OSR/CTHB in close collaboration with professional associations, international experts and survivors of human trafficking organized a series of targeted activities to increase the ability of anti-trafficking practitioners throughout the criminal justice system to adopt victim centered approaches.

## Investigating and Prosecuting Cases Effectively Using Victim-Centered Approaches

A victim-centered, gender-sensitive and trauma-informed approach to the identification and protection of victims and the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking are cornerstones of any effective counter-trafficking response. However, while it may seem obvious that the best interest of the victim should be of utmost priority when prosecuting a THB case, it is often not the reality. Victims of human trafficking often experience fear of disbelief, social and familial harm, and severe mental and physical health symptoms - recapping traumatic events repeatedly in front of different actors such as investigators, prosecutors and judges triggers re-traumatization.

## Expert Contribution



**Rahel Gershuni**  
Independent Expert

**Just as the crime of murder protects the basic value of human life**, and the crime of grievous injury protects the basic value of bodily integrity, the crime of Human Trafficking protects the fundamental values of **#freedom**, **#autonomy** and **#dignity**, which society should not allow a person to waive.”Rahel Gershuni, Independent Expert, speaking at the OSCE Roundtable ‘Building stronger Human Trafficking cases: overcoming challenges related to prosecution of THB cases through a **#victim\_centered** approach.

A victim-centered approach therefore aims to minimize re-traumatization of victims associated with the criminal processes by providing them with the required support and assistance, empowering survivors to engage in the process, and by giving them the opportunity to play an active role in seeing their traffickers brought to justice.

In some countries, the concept of a victim-centered approach is still unknown and not utilized, while in others it is noted as important but not necessarily fully implemented.

In both 2020 and 2021, with the support and co-sponsorship from the [International Association of Prosecutors \(IAP\)](#), and in partnership with the [U.S. National Attorneys General Training & Research Institute \(NAGTRI\)](#) and supported

by the [International Justice Mission \(IJM\)](#) and [Aequitas](#), OSR/CTHB conducted a global webinars series offering clarity and different perspectives on the importance of adopting a victim-centered approach. The webinars equipped criminal justice professionals—investigators and prosecutors— with the knowledge and the ability to better understand and apply victim-centered, trauma-informed, gender-sensitive and human rights-based approaches to human trafficking.

On 8 and 9 November 2021, OSR/CTHB also hosted a roundtable discussion on effective prosecution strategies where prosecutors, law enforcement, lawyers, and experts in the field shared experiences and worked on a fictitious scenario involving labor trafficking. A mock trial was held, with participants serving as judges, prosecutors, and

// As a former prosecutor, I have listened to victims describing the harm they experienced, heard their feelings of hopelessness and their pleas for justice. It is however not enough to listen to victims and survivors. **We must follow with action.**

Valiant Richey, OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

## Covered topics included

- **Victim centered, gender-sensitive and trauma informed approach to combating trafficking in human beings**
- **Victim Identification and Interviewing**
- **Protection and assistance**
- **Using a victim-centered approach to investigating & prosecuting THB cases**
- **Overcoming challenges related to victim consent in trafficking in human beings' cases**

defense attorneys. Applying victim-centered approaches to evidential issues around victim consent in law and practice. Participants emphasized the irrelevance of victim consent to exploitation and improved their skills to counter consent-based defense arguments thus enhancing prosecution efforts in cases where victim consent is obtained by subtle forms of coercion such as through abuse of vulnerability.

### Building Judicial Capacity to Address Trafficking in Human Beings

To ensure fair and effective adjudication of human trafficking cases, judges must be aware of the law and the social context of trafficking cases and have the skills to manage cases to ensure efficient processes. This includes understanding trends and patterns in human trafficking cases, national and international legal principles, and frameworks as well as the best national and international practices and lessons learned.

To help develop judicial capacity to handle trafficking cases, OSR/CTHB, in partnership with the [European Judicial Training Network \(EJTN\)](#), the [International](#)



Participants in the roundtable discussion 'Building stronger trafficking cases: overcoming challenges related to prosecution of trafficking in human beings cases through a victim-centered approach,' 8 November 2021, Vienna. (OSCE/Jennifer Geminiani)

[Organization for Judicial Training \(IOJT\)](#) and the [International Association of Judges \(IAJ\)](#) hosted a series of capacity building initiatives.

First, to assess the availability, frequency, and scope of human trafficking-related trainings for the judiciary, as well as to identify topics of interest for trainings, OSR/CTHB distributed a survey to the members of EJTN and IAJ. We received responses from over 67 judicial training academies and judges in OSCE participating States and Partners for Cooperation (including 18 from academies in Non-OSCE States in Africa, South, and South-east Asia, and Central and Latin America). The survey highlighted that 84% of judicial training academies in the OSCE region provide training on THB for judges, either within or outside regular curricula but that additional training is needed in relation to the legal framework; adjudication of THB cases; application of victim-centered approaches; international cooperation; and tech-facilitated THB.

In July 2021, more than 39 representatives from over 29 organizations met to discuss the outcomes of the survey and to identify opportunities to address the training gaps.

The meeting concluded with the recommendation to give due consideration to the development of a model skills-based training module on trafficking in human beings (THB) that judicial academies can adapt and integrate into their national curricula. Currently, OSR/CTHB, in close collaboration with judicial associations as well as international experts, is developing a training module that provides the judiciary with a fundamental understanding of CTHB and the soft skills necessary to effectively apply victim-centered and trauma-informed approaches while securing adequate judicial responses to human trafficking.



Why focusing on victims matters: first webinar series on victim-centered investigation and prosecution.



October/November 2020



OSCE Special Representative for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Valiant Richey welcoming the human trafficking survivors contributing to the Second Webinar Series on Investigating and Prosecuting Cases Effectively Using Victim-Centered Approaches



October/November 2021

## SECTION 2 / Focus 2

# Confronting Demand: Tackling a Root Cause of Trafficking in Human Beings

Trafficking in human beings is a financially motivated crime that has infected virtually every aspect of our society and economy, from agriculture and construction to technology and health care.

Trafficking as a crime follows the basic rules of economics: human traffickers can meet consumer demand with goods and services extracted from exploited persons. By creating such a lucrative market, demand provides traffickers with the financial motivation for pursuing the crime

In 2021, the OSR/CTHB has focused on demand side of the problem to **shift the focus from combating trafficking in human beings on a case-by-case basis and towards preventing it at the macro-level.**

### **The financial scale of demand that fosters exploitation is vast and growing**

The market for goods and services which can be extracted from trafficked persons generates a massive incentive for traffickers to identify and exploit new victims. Over the past fifteen years, the estimated profits from trafficking in human beings has risen fivefold.

## If we want to defeat trafficking, we must stop paying for it.



Tens of billions of dollars in profits are generated by human trafficking. Every year. 95% are related to trafficking for the purposes of forced labour and sexual exploitation





## POLICY



OSCE Special Representative Valiant Richey at the 21st OSCE Alliance Conference against Trafficking in Persons, 14 June 2021, Vienna. (OSCE)

### Many participating States have begun introducing policies and laws to discourage the demand that fosters trafficking.

In June 2021, over the course of three days, the [21st OSCE Alliance Against Trafficking in Persons Conference](#) aimed to increase knowledge of these policies and tools by putting a spotlight on addressing demand as a means of prevention – and specifically on discouraging the demand that fosters trafficking for the purposes of labour and sexual exploitation as a core, long-term strategy towards ending human trafficking.



Download the conference report

## Conference in numbers

3 days - 4 expert panels

6 virtual side-events and webinars

871 registered participants from 56 countries

329 international and civil society organizations

236K single contacts on OSCE/CTHB Twitter page during conference

## Key Expert Conclusions

1. Make demand a pillar of national anti-trafficking strategies and action plans.
2. Develop a holistic approach to discouraging demand.
3. Invest in prevention.
4. Develop and implement legislation that discourages demand.

## PRACTICE

### Tackling the Demand that Fosters Sexual Exploitation

Trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation is the most common form of human trafficking within the OSCE region and generates nearly two-thirds of all profits from trafficking globally. The scale of this crime, as well as its unique gender and market characteristics, elevates the need for States to prioritize combating the demand that fosters sex trafficking within their prevention strategies.

#### WHILE \$99 BILLION IS PAID ANNUALLY TO TRAFFICKERS, IT IS PAID BY USERS

Shedding light on the importance of addressing the demand that fosters trafficking for sexual exploitation, in particular the exploitation of the prostitution of others, in June 2021 the OSR/CTHB published Occasional Paper no.11 “Discouraging the demand that fosters trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation”.

The report:

- highlights the role of demand in encouraging exploitation and causing harm to victims;
- analyses how States have responded to international obligations and commitments to discourage demand;
- and offers recommendations on how to better incorporate demand into national efforts to combat trafficking.

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Research



## Contribution by Diane Martin



**Diane Martin**

CBE – Survivor Leader and Vice Chair ISTAC (International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council)

“We must address trafficking in a way that brings positive change for victims and society. We must also widen our focus to encompass *all* the ways women and girls are sexually exploited; recognizing the irrefutable links between prostitution, sex trafficking and pornography. They are not just linked, they are one entity that finds different expressions.

It is demand that fuels and sustains these oppressive systems and it is time to put the emphasis exactly where it belongs, *on* that demand.

On the men creating the demand, profiting from it, and causing harm and trauma, by renting the bodies of women and children; trafficked from other countries or fast tracked into prostitution in their own.

The more demand you have in a country, the bigger the sex trade. The bigger the sex trade, the larger the scale of sex trafficking.

Those of you who are leaders in your field are in unique positions of power. I was paid for and hurt by men who abused their considerable power and position; who felt entitled to do whatever they wanted with no accountability. And they did.

The *modus operandi* of pimps and traffickers and the lengths to which sex buyers will go to get what they want, even in a pandemic, knows no boundaries, and neither must we.

Together internationally, we must comply with our legal obligations to suppress and eradicate the commercial sexual exploitation of women and children.

Listen to survivors and examine the strong evidence base that favours an ‘*end demand*’ approach.

STAND with us, SPEAK out and TAKE action!”



## Addressing the Demand Fostering Trafficking for Forced Labour

Trafficking for the purpose of forced labour is a complex form of trafficking wherein the methods of exploitation, victim profiles and economic sectors vary. This form of trafficking is characterized by its infiltration into the legal economy and its common interaction with daily life. Consumers, businesses, and States, as buyers, indirectly contribute to trafficking in their pursuit of cheaper goods and services. Discouraging the demand that fosters trafficking for forced labour thus requires States to enact and enforce laws and regulations, including in public procurement, that reduce and prevent the purchase of goods and services produced by or extracted from trafficked persons.

### Contribution by Yvan Sagnet



**Yvan Sagnet**

President of NoCap, International network against gangmaster system, Italy

I'm Yvan Sagnet, President of the Association NoCap. In 2011, I organized the first strike of migrant workers in the agricultural sector against the labour exploitation perpetrated by the gang masters and the employers in Italy. Every year, hundreds of thousands of Italian and migrant workers harvest fruits and vegetables that will supply supermarkets' shelves and later on will reach our tables at home. My message today is primarily directed to us, the citizen-consumers. Every time we go to the grocery store, let's remember that behind those products we see, there are human lives, there are human beings that work and thus, our awareness can make a difference and give dignity back to these people.

## Mitigating the Risks of THB in Supply Chains

OSCE EFFORTS: THREE PILLARS OF ACTIONS

### Working with OSCE participating States

To support the adoption and implementation of measures to prevent trafficking for forced labour in supply chains, the OSR/CTHB works with the OSCE participating States directly, and in conjunction with civil society and the private sector.

In 2020-21, we raised awareness among States of the practical tools – such as our [Model Guidelines](#) and our new [online database of resources](#) - developed in previous years. We also organized a regional roundtable in Belgrade for governments in South Eastern Europe to discuss what laws and policies best suit local needs. And we engaged with the private sector in roundtables in Paris and London to discuss with businesses and financial institutions what opportunities and risks lie behind due diligence legislation.

### Working within the OSCE to enhance sustainable procurement practices

Leading by example, the OSR/CTHB, in partnership with the OSCE Department for Management and Finance, has helped the OSCE strengthen its own procurement policies to mitigate the risk of doing business with suppliers who might contribute, directly or indirectly, to child labour or any form of trafficking in human beings. Our work included:

- An [independent analysis](#) of THB risks to the OSCE Mission to Serbia within its Tier 1 suppliers, undertaken in partnership with the [University of Nottingham's Rights Lab](#). This represented the first time such an evaluation was undertaken for the procurement portfolio of an inter-governmental organisation.

- Developing guidelines for OSCE Field Operations, Structures and Institutions on managing and mitigating THB risks when procuring goods and services as well as rolling out a training module for relevant anti-trafficking and procurement staff.

Access  
The Full  
Research



### Working with other international Organizations

These initiatives have placed the OSCE at the forefront of this work at the global level. Since 2019, the OSCE has co-chaired - with ILO - a Task Force mandated by the UN High-Level Committee on Management to develop a common approach to combat trafficking in human beings and forced labour in supply chains of international organizations.

And in 2021 the OSCE led efforts within ICAT to draft and publish an [Issue Brief](#) specifically looking at the role of public procurement in combating trafficking.

## SECTION 2 / Focus 3

# The Gender Dimension of Human Trafficking

Trafficking in human beings is a highly gendered crime that affects women, men, girls, and boys in different ways. In recent years, considerable attention has been paid to the gender dimension of THB. However, many gender aspects of this crime remain hidden and unaddressed in existing strategies for prevention, protection and prosecution.



### International Instruments and Commitments

The importance of gender as a factor in trafficking in human beings led to the recognition of the need for gender-sensitive approaches in several international legally binding instruments:

- [United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children](#) (Arts. 6 and 10)
- [The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings](#) (Arts. 5 and 17)
- [The 2011/36/EU Directive of the European Parliament](#) (Paras. 3 and 25)

At the OSCE, all 57 participating States have committed to adopt gender-sensitive approaches to combat trafficking in human beings through the adoption of a series of gender-specific commitments, including [PC.DEC/557](#), and the following Ministerial Council Decisions:

- [MC.DEC/10/11](#) on the promoting equal opportunity for women in the economic sphere

- [MC.DEC/6/17](#) - Strengthening Efforts to Prevent Trafficking in Human Beings
- [MC.DEC/7/17](#), Strengthening Efforts to Combat All forms of Child Trafficking, Including for Sexual Exploitation, as well as Other Forms of Sexual Exploitation of Children

While these instruments take into account the fact that trafficking affects women, men, girls and boys differently, in none of the legal or policy anti-trafficking instruments is there clear guidance about what a gender-sensitive approach entails.

The lack of a comprehensive focus on the gender dimensions of trafficking, including awareness of and response to, those who do not fit the ideal victim profile, such as the increasing share of detected male victims of various forms of trafficking, has limited the understanding of who potential victims might be or what their vulnerabilities and needs are.

Most worryingly, this has hindered the development of tailored assistance and protection systems, as well as of prevention and prosecution strategies.



# Contribution by Jerome Elam



**Jerome Elam**

OSCE International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council (ISTAC)/CEO  
[Trafficking in America Task Force](#)/DMST Survivor

As a five-year-old I was brutally trafficked by a gang of pedophiles for seven years. One of the images that will be forever seared in my memory are the many adults who passed through my life and never once noticed the bruises, scars or malnutrition that gripped my fragile body.

There were so many people who could have stopped the abuse that I was subjected to, but their eyes looked through me as if I were invisible. My escape from the darkness came only as my life hung in the balance in the emergency room due to a nurse who would not let my suffering go unnoticed.

The widespread use of gender-sensitive protocols for victims of human trafficking would have saved me as a child. Today, the OSR/CTHB is leading the way on saving the next child from the hell that I endured.

With the publication of the Occasional Paper *Applying gender sensitive approaches in combating trafficking in human beings*, the OSCE has given invaluable guidance that will help participating States stem the tide of victims who have escaped detection.

Using the insights of survivors, the publication has cut through the fog of the current lack of understanding of

how gender impacts the crime of human trafficking. With this solid foundation, we can now make significant strides in stopping the many victims who have fallen through the cracks. In particular, with the continued help of survivors, we can expand our understanding of how people who do not fit the ideal victim profile are targeted and victimized and examine more closely the role of gender in the trafficking of those with developmental disabilities.

In closing, I want to say that as a victim of child sex trafficking, I will never know the joy of being a carefree child lying in a field watching clouds as I imagine figures in their gentle shapes. However, I know that given the compassion, drive, and professionalism that I have seen in everyone associated with the OSCE CTHB, working together, we will make sure that every child has the chance to watch the clouds and imagine a world where anything is possible.

## POLICY

### Applying gender-sensitive approaches in combating trafficking in human beings

OSR/CTHB Occasional Paper no. 10

Gender-sensitive approaches can contribute to achieving gender equality and empowerment, as well as ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against all persons.

To help ensure that strategies for prevention, protection, and prosecution are comprehensive and leave no victim behind, regardless of the form of exploitation they have endured, the OSR/CTHB delivered the breakthrough study *Applying gender-sensitive approaches in combating trafficking in human beings*.

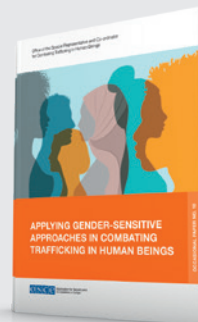
The study is based on findings from a multi-method research project, including surveys, expert interviews, and expert group meetings carried out with participants from more than half of the OSCE's participating States.

It explores a range of gender aspects that are often not addressed in existing prevention, protection, and prosecution strategies and provides a basis for policy development and better implementation of promising gender-sensitive approaches.

By bringing together the voices of survivors, anti-trafficking experts, service providers and law enforcement, **this paper offers a comprehensive account of gender aspects in trafficking in human beings.**

## Key policy recommendations

- 1. Data collection and production of knowledge**  
 Due to constant shifts in the trends and patterns of trafficking, continuous research on gender aspects of THB is needed.
- 2. Capacity building and addressing biases in the anti-trafficking response**  
 It is critical to increase the knowledge of anti-trafficking actors to strengthen their ability to identify non-ideal victim profiles and adequately respond to the needs of all victims in line with States' gender-related obligations and commitments.
- 3. Needs-based intervention for underserved populations**  
 Interventions to support the identification of both male and female victims in non-corresponding trafficking sectors, as well as to respond to their specific needs and address their vulnerabilities, are urgently needed.
- 4. Awareness raising and youth education**  
 Stereotypical representations can be harmful to identification processes and to victims themselves, forcing them to relive their experiences. It is also important to educate on harmful and positive masculinities in order to promote engagement and tackle stereotypes.



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## FURTHER THEMATIC AREAS

### Technology and Human Trafficking

Traffickers have misused technology to their advantage for many years. Trafficking for sexual exploitation is now primarily an online phenomena. increasing traffickers' revenue, enhancing their anonymity, and allowing them to better isolate and control victims, particularly women and girls, who comprise 92% of the identified victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. The global Covid-19 pandemic has only accelerated traffickers use of technology and put more groups at risk. Children in particular, at a time of school closures and more hours

spent online, face a greater risk of online grooming and reports of online exploitation have skyrocketed.

Although technology is often misused by traffickers, it can also be a tool to stop trafficking and protect victims. Through innovative research and analysis, the OSR/CTHB highlighted how technology can be used to identify and mitigate the risks of human trafficking on online platforms, enhance investigations and prosecutions, and provide support and resources to vulnerable populations, including children.

## RESEARCH

Building on our pioneering 2019 Alliance Conference "Using Technology to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings: Turning a Liability Into an Asset", in 2020, we published - in collaboration with Tech Against Trafficking, a global coalition of technology companies - the ground-breaking research *Leveraging innovation to fight trafficking in human beings: a comprehensive analysis of technology tools*.

A first of its kind, the research contains a global analysis of how different stakeholders, including law enforcement, civil society, businesses, and academia, are using technology to advance responses against human trafficking.

Our publication is available in English, Russian and Bosnian languages.

Over 300 technology initiatives in the field of anti-trafficking were identified and analyzed, and ethical considerations and data protection issues in the use of technology were explored.

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# PRACTICE

OSR/CTHB also raised awareness on the misuse of technology to facilitate trafficking. In April 2021 **OSCE and its Asian Partners for Co-operation** organized a roundtable on combating technology-facilitated trafficking in human beings in Central Asia and across the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation (Afghanistan, Australia, Japan, Republic of Korea, and Thailand). The roundtable discussed how technology is being misused by traffickers in human beings in these regions, especially at the stage of advertising victims of sexual exploitation, including children, on online platforms.

The event was held online and attracted more than 170 registered practitioners representing a broad spectrum of national and international stakeholders working on combating trafficking in human beings. Panelists included prominent experts from international organizations and law enforcement agencies including Europol, Interpol, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, as well as from OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation.

The event also facilitated sharing among participants of knowledge and experience on addressing technology-facilitated trafficking by leveraging policies and legislation.

**In January 2021 the OSR/CTHB started the implementation of a new extra-budgetary project on Responding to Technology-Facilitated Trafficking in Human Beings. The objective of the project is to develop evidence-based policy and operational frameworks for combating technology-facilitated trafficking in human beings. To achieve these results, the project, among other outcomes, will facilitate research on high-risk online platforms; develop guidance on how to map online THB marketplaces and THB risks indicators; and draft guidance on the pro-active identification of THB victims on online platforms. The project will be implemented in all OSCE participating States during 2021-2023.**



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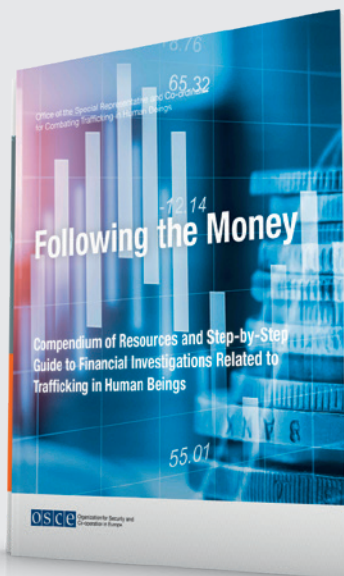


## FURTHER THEMATIC AREAS

### Financial Investigations

Trafficking in human beings at its core is a financially motivated crime. Nevertheless, one of the areas least explored and understood in the trafficking process is the profit generated by human trafficking and the flow of trafficking proceeds through financial systems. For these reasons, enhancing States' capacities in the area of financial investigations and identifying the illicit revenues of trafficking, has received increasing focus in recent years. By identifying the financial networks between all actors in the trafficking business model, States and the private sector can cut off the lifeblood of human trafficking.

In 2020-2021, OSR/CTHB capitalized on its breakthrough publication *Following the Money* by putting the necessary knowledge and tools into the hands of practitioners on the ground and supporting them with an array of technical assistance and capacity-building activities to help put policies into practice.



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In line with this strategy, in July 2021, OSR/CTHB held a roundtable with international organizations and civil society to conduct a landscape assessment of existing initiatives on financial flows related to THB. During the event, OSR/CTHB presented the findings of its survey which mapped our existing initiatives. It then fostered dialogue on how to enhance information exchange and improve the harmonization of financial investigatory strategies and tactics to detect and dismantle THB networks.

To encourage proactive investigation of human trafficking financial flows by financial service providers, in November 2021, together with the United Kingdom Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner and the Finance against Slavery and Trafficking (FAST), OSR/CTHB co-facilitated a roundtable discussion with the financial services sector, financial intelligence units and anti-trafficking agencies. Attended by over 60 representatives from 12 participating States, the roundtable led to a [Joint Statement on the Critical Role of the Financial Sector in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Modern-day Slavery](#), issued by the three partner organizations and joined by 10 other organizations and experts. The statement called for:

- Raising awareness and investing resources into financial institutions, financial intelligence units and financial regulators
- Supporting a proactive approach by financial service providers to prevent and eliminate financial flows generated from THB
- Including THB and slavery risks in National Risk Assessments and conducting research
- Learning from survivors to design and implement programs
- Building capacities on the use of financial indicators and red flag related to THB and slavery
- Establishing public and private partnerships between the financial sector, FIUs and law enforcement

## FURTHER THEMATIC AREAS

### Examining the Nexus between Human Trafficking and Terrorism

Since trafficking in human beings continues to evolve, with criminals employing ever more sophisticated and subtle modus operandi, a multi-disciplinary approach to combating trafficking is not only recommended but necessary. Despite the acknowledgement in various international reports of links between human trafficking and terrorism, there remains a dearth of research on this nexus, as well as a scarcity of policy guidelines for effectively tackling both crimes while protecting victims.

To better understand the intersection between two complex crimes such as human trafficking and terrorism, in 2021 OSR/CTHB released the research study *Trafficking in Human Beings and Terrorism: Where and How they intersect*.

The research paper:

- Critically reviews normative and policy frameworks governing actions against human trafficking and terrorism
- Provides an in-depth look at the aspects of human trafficking used by terrorist groups through analysis of over twenty illustrative examples
- Analyses gender and age dimensions of trafficking perpetrated by terrorist groups
- Discusses key principles in anti-trafficking responses – such as the non-punishment principle and the irrelevance of consent - and the complexity of their application with regard to the trafficking-terror nexus.
- Offers targeted recommendations to assist OSCE’s participating States in identifying and protecting victims of trafficking committed by terrorist groups; to develop tailored and effective prevention programs targeted at vulnerable persons and risk groups; and to guarantee prosecution of trafficking offences, including by tracking illicit trafficking profits, of terrorist groups.

Office of the Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

# TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS AND TERRORISM

Where and how they intersect  
Analysis and recommendations for more effective policy responses

OSCE

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## FURTHER THEMATIC AREAS

### Addressing Child Trafficking

Our multi-year effort on strengthening responses to child trafficking continued throughout 2020-2021.

Children are at great and growing risk of human trafficking: they represent one-third of victims— and the number of identified children has tripled in the last 15 years. When a child is on the move and goes missing, countries are not consistently communicating with each other to find a solution. The OSCE has promoted the establishment of better systems for sharing information across borders, including national child trafficking focal points, a function within national child protection systems responsible for the development of a durable solution for trafficked children. The goal is to help States better identify and assist trafficked children, and to develop a network among States that contributes to uniform standards and facilitates effective and well-established bi-lateral and multi-lateral cooperation.

The OSR/CTHB report on national child trafficking focal points provides an overview of prerequisites and essential conditions for such focal points to improve information exchange between countries, and an inventory of the tools and procedures they need to co-ordinate.

Our tool is available in English, Russian and Bosnian languages.

Download the full report

### Trafficking in Children

Recommendations for effective protection in the best interests of the child

- "First and foremost, I'm a child!"*

  - Ensure that child trafficking is addressed as a child protection issue within a child protection framework
  - Ensure that the National Referral Mechanism recognizes the specific situation of child victims of THB and sets out the referral channels that are most appropriate for children
- "Keep me safe!"*

  - From the moment a child is first identified, initiate action to keep the child safe, including action, appropriate to the child's age and gender, to prevent sexual abuse
- "Who will take care of me?"*

  - Ensure that children who may have been trafficked are provided with a temporary guardian as soon as possible after they are identified and that a child's legal advisor and guardian are involved in decisions concerning a comprehensive solution for the child
  - Child protection officials should take the lead in exploring which long-lasting solution would be most appropriate for the child
- "Who will nurse me back to health?"*

  - Ensure that child victims of ill-treatment are provided with proper care and rehabilitation programmes and that re-victimization of any kind is avoided
- "Act in my best interest"*

  - Ensure that a framework or procedures are in place to involve a multidisciplinary and systemic approach in assessing and determining the best interests of the individual child
- "What if I cannot go back home?"*

  - Trafficked children who are deemed unable to return home should be provided with specialized safe accommodation from the moment of first identification
- "What if I come from another country?"*

RETURN/ REPATRIATION

  - Before taking a decision on the return of a trafficked child to their country, risk and security assessment must be carried out
  - Focal points to deal with social enquiries about trafficked children should be appointed in a central government agency
  - Adequate resources should be provided to respond promptly to requests for a social inquiry about a trafficked child
- "I'm the victim, not the offender"*

  - Ensure that trafficked children are not detained; restrictions should only be imposed on a child as a last resort

This diagram is sourced from OSCE/Office of the Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Child Trafficking and Child Protection: Ensuring that Child Protection Mechanisms Protect the Rights and Meet the Needs of Child Victims of Human Trafficking (Vienna 2018)

## FURTHER THEMATIC AREAS

### Human Trafficking for the Removal of Organs

Despite being specifically mentioned in the internationally recognized definition of THB/OR remains one of the most unknown and least addressed forms of human trafficking globally.

In partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the World Health Organization (WHO), on 6-7 July 2020 the OSR/CTHB co-organized an expert meeting gathering legal, criminal justice, medical and anti-trafficking experts and academics from 20 OSCE Participating States and Partners for Co-operation as well as international organizations. The focus was on the OSCE region’s response to trafficking in human beings for the purpose of the removal of organs (THB/OR) and ways of enhancing that response through raising awareness, increasing the political profile of the issue and building capacity of the stakeholders involved.

The OSR/CTHB also supported the UN’s ICAT (Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons) in publishing a comprehensive policy brief on the scope and impact of THB/OR, as well as recommendations for States and practitioners on how to tackle this issue.



Screenshot from the Expert Meeting on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the Removal of Organs, co-organized with OHCHR and WHO on 6-7 July 2020

Download the full publication

Download the full highlights



## SECTION 3

# OSCE's wider efforts on trafficking

The OSR/CTHB co-ordinates anti-trafficking efforts across the OSCE, helping to foster the exchange of expertise, regional synergies and impact on the ground.

Despite the limitations imposed by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021, OSCE Field Operations, Institutions and Structures adapted their work and continued to provide a range of technical assistance, research and awareness-raising support across the OSCE region.

Examples of their work are featured here.

- 1 **OSCE Presence in Albania**
- 2 **OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina**
- 3 **OSCE Mission in Kosovo**
- 4 **OSCE Mission to Montenegro**
- 5 **OSCE Mission to Serbia**
- 6 **OSCE Mission to Skopje**
- 7 **OSCE Mission to Moldova**
- 8 **OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine**
- 9 **OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine**
- 10 **OSCE Centre in Ashgabat**
- 11 **OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek**
- 12 **OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe**
- 13 **OSCE Programme Office in Nur-Sultan**
- 14 **OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan**
- 15 **Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)**
- 16 **The Transnational Threats Department's Strategic Police Matters Unit**



## Field Operations SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

### OSCE Presence in Albania

#### Capacity-building

The [OSCE Presence in Albania](#) focused its capacity-building efforts on aiding judges and prosecutors on the effective application of a victim-centered and human rights-based approach in criminal proceedings. Twenty-six judges and prosecutors (9 women and 17 men) were trained through a training manual developed for the Albanian School of Magistrates specifically for this purpose. Complimentary training was also provided to specialized police units.

Based on the innovative simulation-based training methodology developed by OSR/CTHB, a group of police, labour inspectors, prosecutors, and service providers developed, under the co-ordination of the OSCE Presence in Albania, the first-ever national simulation-based training exercise for Albanian responders. The training was conducted from 18 to 21 October 2021 in Tirana, with around 50 anti-trafficking practitioners – including social workers, police officers, prosecutors, labour inspectors, and civil society activists – participating. The exercise aimed to enhance anti-trafficking officials' ability to identify and investigate human trafficking and assist trafficked persons in a victim-centered and human rights-based manner.



//  
The OSCE Presence in Albania has long prioritized the fight against trafficking of human beings, and this simulation-based training encapsulates many core elements of our commitment – to pursuing a human-rights based, victim-centered approach, to advancing multi-stakeholder, inter-institutional co-ordination, to applying cutting edge tools to develop capacities and respond.

Ambassador Vincenzo del Monaco, Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania [remarks at the opening ceremony held on 18 October](#), the European Anti-Trafficking Day.



Head of OSCE Presence in Albania Ambassador Vincenzo Del Monaco (l) speaks at the opening ceremony of the first-ever simulation-based training for anti-trafficking practitioners in Albania, Tirana, 18 October 2021. (OSCE/Joana Karapataqi)

## Research and Knowledge Development

In 2020, a number of research and knowledge products were developed for the child protection system in Albania, such as the report [A Typology of Child Trafficking Cases in Albania](#) and a guidance tool on "Data gathering, analysis, and determination of action for children at risk of exploitation or trafficking."

To ensure better integration of anti-trafficking policy in child protection, the OSCE Presence supported the drafting of Albania's new strategy for children's rights 2021-2026.

Further to that, the OSCE Presence assisted national authorities in developing an online database that unifies child trafficking data collected from child protection workers and law-enforcement agencies. In addition, on-the-job training was delivered to ten child protection workers in five municipalities with a high prevalence of child trafficking cases.

## Partnership and Co-ordination

To promote the importance of partnerships in enhancing action against trafficking in human beings, a national conference was organized by the OSCE Presence in co-operation with OSR/CTHB in June 2021. Attended by representatives of central and local government institutions, parliament, the judiciary and law enforcement, civil society, and academia, the conference provided a platform for dialogue and co-operation and discussed strengthening human rights-based and victim-centered

approaches in all anti-trafficking efforts. The Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania, Vincenzo Del Monaco, OSCE Special Representative Valiant Richey, Swedish Ambassador at Large for Combating Trafficking in Persons Anna Ekstedt, United States Ambassador to Albania Yuri Kim and Albania's Deputy Minister of Interior Romina Kuko each addressed the conference.

## OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

### Capacity-building

Capacity-building efforts of the [OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) were focused on supporting the implementation of the BiH National 2020-23 Strategy for Combating THB ([BiH Strategy](#)). Prosecutors and judges from BiH Judicial and Prosecutorial Training Centres across the country were trained to enhance THB case-handling through an analysis of recent developments in case law.

Further to that, the Mission, together with domestic and international partners, supported a symposium for prosecutors, which enabled participants to broaden their knowledge of international case law relevant to THB; of trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation; as well as on the nexus between child trafficking and mixed migration flows.

In its efforts to increase the identification of and assistance to victims of trafficking in the context of mixed migration flows, in June 2020 the Mission organized a two-day webinar entitled "THB in mixed movements of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers" which was done in co-operation with OSR/CTHB, UNICEF, UNHCR, and IOM.



Participants at an OSCE-supported training course for judges and prosecutors from across BiH on addressing trafficking in human beings and related crimes, February 2020 (OSCE/Svetlana Stanisavljevic)



(L-r) Valiant Richey, OSCE SR/CTHB Special Representative, Dmitry Iordanidi, Deputy Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Gudrun Kugler, Vice-Chair of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Ad-Hoc Committee on Migration addressing media at a press conference in Sarajevo, July 2021 (OSCE/Vedran Pribilovic)

As part of such efforts, the Mission facilitated virtual meetings and in-person visits by OSCE SR/CTHB Richey and members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, including to transit and reception facilities, to discuss the situation of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in BiH and offer OSCE support to increase the country's capacity to prevent exploitation.

This was complemented with a Mission-organized training for border police on the differences between human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants.

**// All national and international stakeholders have to co-operate to jointly find solutions for the identification and protection of victims in migration flows as it is a transnational problem.**

Samir Rizvo, State Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

**// Continuous training is of crucial importance for enhancing the capacity of the criminal justice sector, including its effective processing of THB-related cases.**

Šeila Heljić, President of the FBiH

To mark World Children's Day on 20 November 2020, the Mission organized a [webinar](#) for members of the judiciary, representatives of executive and legislative bodies, social service providers, and civil rights organizations from BiH and the wider region, on the topics of child trafficking for forced criminality, forced begging, and sex trafficking. The webinar identified a set of recommendations for relevant national authorities to improve the overall response to forced child marriages.

## Research and Knowledge Development

In co-operation with the BiH national anti-trafficking task force, the Mission developed a [Manual for Investigating Trafficking in Human Beings](#) to aid prosecutors and investigators in conducting victim-centered investigations in THB cases. To assist criminal justice practitioners, legislators, and policymakers in their efforts to combat THB, the Mission also analyzed more than 100 THB cases completed before the courts in BiH and shared its findings with national counterparts.

In 2020-21, the Mission translated into local languages and widely disseminated a number of OSCE tools for their utilization by local institutions, such as the OSR/CTHB [recommendations](#) on COVID-19 and THB; the [Model Guidelines on Government Measures to Prevent Trafficking for Labour Exploitation in Supply Chains](#); the publications [Following the Money: Compendium of Resources and Step-by-step Guide to Financial Investigations Into Trafficking in Human Beings](#); [Leveraging innovation to fight trafficking in human beings: a comprehensive analysis of technology tools](#); [Establishing National Focal Points to Protect Child Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings](#).





## OSCE Mission in Kosovo

### Capacity-building

The [OSCE Mission in Kosovo](#)<sup>1</sup> centered its action on enhancing criminal justice responses, with particular attention to addressing the misuse of technology by traffickers.



An OSCE-facilitated specialized training on investigating cases of THB online, especially of child trafficking for the purpose of sexual abuse, June 2020 (OSCE/Sedat Shala)

In 2020-2021, examples of such engagement have included specialized training on investigating cases of THB online, especially of child trafficking for the purpose of sexual abuse. Kosovo police officers were trained in online undercover investigation techniques, handling complex cases involving organized and transnational crime, and in facilitating inter-agency co-operation.

For the end of 2021, the Mission in Kosovo also planned to facilitate the annual revision of the Strategy and Action Plan against THB 2021-2025, with the aim to identify potential shortcomings and remedial measures. The Mission gathered 30 officials representing the Ministry of Interior, the Anti-trafficking Co-ordinator's Office, police, judicial and prosecutorial councils, ministries of justice, education science and technology, local government administration, culture, youth and sports, labour and social welfare, health, foreign affairs, and finance, as well as representatives of the Agency for Gender Equality, the Prosecutor's Office, courts, municipalities, and civil society involved in countering THB in Kosovo.

### Awareness-raising

In recent years, the Mission has supported the Anti-Trafficking Co-ordinator and the Secretariat for Strategies as a co-ordinating body for implementing the Strategy against THB in Kosovo through a variety of activities within the framework of the European Union Anti-Trafficking Day.

The Mission also developed a comprehensive awareness-raising campaign with a view to increase public awareness, particularly of vulnerable individuals such as girls and boys, regarding the misuse of internet for trafficking purposes. The campaign was carried out in Albanian and Serbian languages and featured a number of initiatives for children aged 9-18 to raise their awareness of the risks associated with social media, as well as for youth between 18-30 years old, on fake job advertisements online for the purpose of labour and sexual exploitation.



## OSCE Mission to Montenegro

### Capacity-building

The [OSCE Mission to Montenegro's](#) activities in countering THB aimed at addressing gaps in criminal justice responses by training criminal justice responders who may encounter potential victims of trafficking.

The Mission provided specialized training on identifying THB victims to national police officers through four dedicated regional [workshops](#); one for the Heads of security centers and three others for police officers from the Sector of public order and peace from all police stations within Montenegro.

<sup>1</sup> All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions, or population, in this text should be understood in full compliance with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244.



Anti-trafficking training for the Heads of the security centres from all municipalities in Montenegro, Podgorica, October 2021 (OSCE/Mission to Montenegro)

In 2020, in line with the national THB Strategy 2019-2024 and 2020 Action Plan, the Mission trained police state prosecutors on enhancing inter-institutional co-ordination and co-operation for preventing and combating THB, victims' rights, referral and protection, as well as on the implementation of the non-punishment principle.

To strengthen such efforts, the Mission is developing, at the request of the Ministry of Interior, a standardized questionnaire for the Montenegrin police to interview and refer potential victims of THB.

## OSCE Mission to Serbia

In 2020 and 2021, [OSCE Mission to Serbia](#) focused on combating trafficking in human beings and victims' protection by providing its expertise and technical assistance through capacity building activities and workshops for specialized state institutions in combating THB.

## Research and Knowledge Development

The Mission focused on supporting the country in developing knowledge on THB for labour exploitation in different sectors and across supply chains, as well as on assisting relevant national authorities and criminal justice

actors in adopting policies for the prevention of THB through sustainable procurement processes.

As part of this effort, in 2020 the Mission translated the [Model Guidelines on Government Measures to Prevent Trafficking for Labour Exploitation in Supply Chains](#) into Serbian and disseminated them amongst relevant national stakeholders.



Marking World Day against Trafficking in Persons, July 2021 (OSCE/Milan Obradovic)

In 2020, the Mission piloted an innovative project to assess internal supply chains and procurement practices with the collaboration of the University of Nottingham's Rights Lab, which undertook an independent evaluation of THB risks with the Mission's 480 first tier suppliers for a total of 2,667 purchase orders. A [report](#) published in 2020 outlined the supplier portfolio of the Mission and provided recommendations for managing THB risks in supply chains. It was the first time that such an evaluation of procurement practices was undertaken for an inter-governmental organization.

In September 2021, the Mission, together with the OSR/CTHB, and in close co-operation with the Ministry of Interior's Office of the CTHB National Co-ordinator, organized a two-day conference in Belgrade gathering prosecutors, judges, business associations, private enterprises, and civil society organizations to discuss promising practices in human-rights compliance, public-private partnerships for the prevention of THB in supply chains, and related normative and policy development in Serbia. To strengthen regional co-operation, the conference was also attended by the national anti-trafficking co-ordinators from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, North Macedonia, and Montenegro.



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## Awareness-raising

In 2021, the Mission provided support to the Center for the Protection of THB Victims and the Serbian Red Cross in marking World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. Volunteers distributed materials containing general information on THB and on services available to victims.

## Capacity-building

In 2021, the Mission organized two training sessions for employees of local centers for social protection, shelters for elderly people and shelters for children with an aim to increase the efficiency in recognizing the signs of THB and conducting the preliminary identification of victims of THB. The training sessions were delivered by employees of the Center for the Protection of THB Victims for approximately 40 participants from different institutions, and focused on presentations and discussions of indicators for preliminary identification of THB victims.

With an aim to build the capacity of the Center for the Protection of THB Victims, the Mission organized a two-day training on project development and writing. In this way, the Mission aided the Center in developing their own projects and liaising with donors to help fundraise for the specific needs of the Center.

In 2021, in co-operation with the Serbian Judicial Academy, the Mission organized a training for 30 police officers, prosecutors and judges of misdemeanor courts on the application of the non-punishment principle of THB victims. By doing so, the Mission increased the awareness of the participants on the victim-centered approach, the exclusion of liability for THB victims, and the elements of the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings.

## OSCE Mission to Skopje

In 2020-2021, the [OSCE Mission to Skopje](#) aimed to improve the country's adherence to OSCE commitments and international standards by reinforcing a human rights-based and victim-centered approach in addressing THB. The Mission focused on improving access to child protection services through promoting multi-agency co-operation, and in raising awareness on THB among girls and boys from the most disadvantaged groups. The Mission worked in close partnership with the National Commission against Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration, as well as the ministries of justice, labor and social policy, and internal affairs. The Mission also collaborated with judges, prosecutors, labor inspectors, and civil society organizations.



Participants at an OSCE-supported workshop for Roma children on preventing trafficking in human beings, Skopje, November 2020. (Open Gate/Jana Todorovska)



## Capacity-building and expert support

Between 2020 and 2021, the Mission provided expert support in the development of draft legislation on state compensation for victims of trafficking as part of a draft law on Compensation of Victims of Violent Crime. Being finalized by the Government, the draft is expected to be adopted by the Parliament by the beginning of 2022.

The Mission, in co-operation with the National Academy for Judges and Public Prosecutors, also conducted a training on the principle of non-punishment of victims of trafficking in human beings. Nineteen judges and prosecutors (10 male and 9 female), coming from 9 basic courts with criminal

jurisdiction, as well as 3 labour inspectors, were trained on the applications of relevant provisions of the Criminal Code, as well as on the role of the Public Prosecution and the National Task Force against THB in investigating child trafficking and illegal migration.

## Awareness-raising

In co-operation with the local NGO Open Gate/La Strada, the Mission supported a series of workshops aimed at increasing the awareness of children to the risks of THB, especially of those most at risk of exploitation. During the workshops, children accompanied by their parents were introduced the anti-trafficking SOS hotline 0800 111 11.

## Field Operations EASTERN EUROPE

## OSCE Mission to Moldova

### Capacity-building

In 2020-2021, the [OSCE Mission to Moldova](#) focused on enhancing the capacity of legal professionals and civil society organizations working with THB victims on both banks of the Dniester/Nistru River in identifying, investigating and prosecuting cases of exploitation and abuse, including through improved data collection.

To that end, the Mission teamed up with the National Institute of Justice to train Moldovan judges and prosecutors on the implementation of the legal framework on compensation and rehabilitation of victims of THB and learn more about best practices in the OSCE region. To contribute to the sustainability of such a technical assistance programme, the Mission is supporting the development of a guide for legal professionals on compensation for victims of THB. In addition, the Mission supported a series of public lectures on the risks of THB and available assistance for victims of abuse and exploitation.

### Research and Knowledge Development

International actors working on CTHB in Moldova have noted that there is no reliable data concerning THB on the left bank of the Dniester/Nistru river. In 2020-2021, the Mission commissioned a number of studies to research recent trends in THB and exploitation on both banks of the river. The Mission also contributed to strengthening qualitative data collection on THB cases and new THB tendencies by Transdniestrian civil society organizations – as no other source of information exists – with a view to ensure context-specific response and assistance.

### Awareness-raising

The Mission focused on raising awareness on the increasing misuse of technology by traffickers and the associated risks of THB online.

During a hackathon in November 2020, 36 young women and men from both banks of the Dniester/Nistru River worked for a total of 72 hours on the development of



proposals for innovative tech-based solutions to prevent and combat THB for sexual exploitation of children in Moldova. The hackathon was the result of a partnership between the OSCE Mission and the local NGO “Generația NIKA”.

Participants proposed a host of applications to support THB responses through tech-based solutions. The web extension “CoParent”, which analyses content accessed by children online; the online platform “4safe”, which verifies the security of job offers for individuals seeking employment abroad; and “onLife”, a choose-your-ending story game, which informs teenagers about the dangers of sexting and bullying won the contest.

Further to that, the Mission, in partnership with the NGO “La Strada” launched a social media campaign aimed at raising awareness on the risks of online exploitation with a focus on child abuse.

### Partnership and Co-ordination

The Mission continued to focus on addressing the low capacity to combat THB on the left bank of the Dniester/Nistru River, as well as weak co-operation on combating THB between the left and the right banks of the Dniester/Nistru river. The Mission continued applying the “mirror” approach to provide support at a similar scale to both banks of the Dniester/Nistru river to produce impact in a more harmonized, coherent, and effective manner through more sustainable activities and support the settlement process.



Civil society leaders from both banks of the Dniester/Nistru River learning about promising practices in managing centers for victims of gender-based violence and exploitation during an OSCE-supported study visit to Drochia-based centers, June 2021 (OSCE/Igor Schimbator)

Regular Technical Co-ordination Meetings (TCMs) under the aegis of the OSCE, constitute a unique and fruitful platform of communication between Moldovan government authorities, international partners, donors active in the anti-trafficking field, and civil society from both banks of Dniester/Nistru river. This platform not only enables to raise awareness on legislative amendments, initiatives, developments, and activities but also contributes to co-operation and partnerships between its participants in various capacity-building activities and prevention campaigns. As of 2020, TCMs are also organized on the left bank of the Dniester/Nistru river to enhance the communication and co-operation among Transdniestrian civil society organizations and their counterparts from the right bank.

## OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine

### Capacity-building

In 2020-2021, the [OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine \(PCU\)](#) focused its efforts on community-level engagement with the aim to bring anti-THB policy to the attention of the newly created territorial communities (TC). In partnership with the Ministry of Social Police of Ukraine, the PCU supported the conduction of twelve regional roundtables and online consultations for 480 TC members to facilitate the establishment of anti-trafficking co-operation frameworks with the central government.

In support of the ongoing decentralization reform, the PCU also developed a guidance on “The Role of Communities in Countering Human Trafficking” to help the newly created communities understand their role within the national CTHB framework.



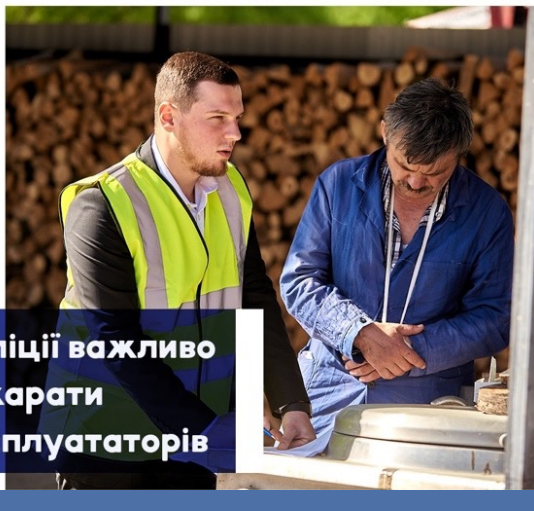
Exhibition “Expectations vs. Reality”, Kyiv, 30 July 2020 (OSCE/Kostiantyn Chernichkin)

Expert roundtables were also organized with NRM stakeholders and relevant NGOs to discuss improvements to the current policies regarding identification, assistance, and rehabilitation of victims of trafficking. The recommendations were submitted to the Ministry of Social Policy with the aim to be included in the drafting of a national Social Programme on CTHB 2021-2025.

## Awareness-raising

Following the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, the PCU contributed to raising awareness of Ukrainians on the heightened risks of THB with dedicated campaigns and informational material. Jointly with the Ministry of Social Policy, IOM and A-21, the PCU supported the open-air exhibition “Expectation vs Reality” in sixteen Ukrainian cities across the country. The exhibition was visited by more than 10,000 people, who got acquainted with their rights and the obligations of employers, governmental assistance to victims of THB, and available legal support.

**#ПРАЦЮЙ  
БЕЗПЕЧНО**



A poster from the #worksafe social media campaign (OSCE/Yulia Buhorska)

Through the [#worksafe](https://m.facebook.com/work.safe.ua) (#працюй безпечно) social media campaign (<https://m.facebook.com/work.safe.ua>), the PCU has also raised awareness of workers and youth on THB risks and on remedial mechanisms available to victims of THB for labour exploitation. During the campaign, more than 1,000 people received advice from experts (lawyers, NGO representatives, psychologists) on available assistance for victims of trafficking.



CTHB summer school participants, August 2020. PCU organized a series of workshops for social workers and police on THB topics (Photo credit: Masym Levin)

Particular emphasis during the reporting period was placed on raising awareness among youth. In 2020, the PCU organized Winter and Summer Schools for future social workers/psychologists and two CTHB interactive contests for cadets from seven Ukrainian higher education Mol institutions. Interactive presentations, respective practical assignments, and real case studies helped participants build up a deeper understanding of the topic and become actively involved in spreading information on THB risks and ways to avoid them among the youth community.

## Partnership and Co-ordination

In cooperation with the OSR/CTHB, the PCU continued to organize a series of simulation-based exercises on real THB scenarios to enhance inter-agency responses, covering 10 oblasts of Ukraine and 100 CTHB practitioners, including police, social service providers, labour inspectors, and NGO representatives.



Simulated case of labour exploitation at the regional simulation exercise, Vinnytsya, May 2021 (OSCE/Yulia Buhorska)



Participants were trained to apply a gender-sensitive and trauma-informed approach while interacting with victims of THB. The exercises prompted the participants to test and improve their capacity to prevent, detect and disrupt the crime, as well as to ensure adequate referral of, and assistance to, victims.

## OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine

The [OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine \(SMM\)](#) continued to strengthen the capacity of its staff to understand concepts related to trafficking in human beings.

In April 2020, the SMM invited the OSR/CTHB to host an introductory webinar on CTHB. Approximately 120 participants from different OSCE structures attended the session. In the spring of 2020 and 2021, the SMM

Gender Unit, in cooperation with the OSR/CTHB and the PCU, organized four additional online webinars for SMM Monitoring Officers, including Gender Focal Points. The webinars outlined the role that SMM Monitoring Officers can play with respect to facilitating referral and access to services for alleged victims of trafficking. In total, about 65 Mission members attended the four sessions. Additionally, in July 2021 a webinar on THB basics and indicators, with practical examples from several countries, was organized by the Luhansk Monitoring team and was attended by 38 Mission members.

Furthermore, to capitalize on its extensive presence in Ukraine, in July 2020, the SMM established a new referral mechanism through which cases of persons or communities in humanitarian need or cases of alleged human rights violations, including trafficking in human beings, are referred to mandated organizations including the ICRC and OHCHR.

## Field Operations CENTRAL ASIA

## OSCE Centre in Ashgabat

Following the adoption of the National Action Plan on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings 2020-2023 in Turkmenistan, the [OSCE Centre in Ashgabat](#) offered expert advice in its implementation and actively contributed to discussions related to THB prevention, prosecution, and partnership during relevant events with the participation of the national technical working group members.

### Awareness-raising

The Centre has sought to raise awareness of the increased risks of THB as a result of the effects of the global pandemic. As part of its continued co-operation with

civil society, the Centre held meetings with local NGOs “Keyik Okara” and “Yenme” to discuss the organization of joint activities to raise awareness about THB. This engagement focused on measures and best practices at the national and international level to prevent and reduce human trafficking and the functioning of the relevant victim assistance institutions.

In November 2021, with support of the OSR/CTHB, the Centre held a roundtable event to discuss THB responses in Turkmenistan for 40 representatives of the Mejlis (lower chamber) of the Milli Gengesh (Parliament) of Turkmenistan, law enforcement, and the ministries of health, medical industry, education, finance, and labour, as well as for social protection services and representatives of the Women’s and Youth Unions.

## OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek

### Capacity-building

In September 2021, the [OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek \(POiB\)](#), in co-ordination with the OSR/CTHB, hosted the first ever, week-long national simulation exercise on combating trafficking in human beings in Kyrgyzstan. The effectiveness of the fight against human trafficking largely depends on effective co-ordination between government agencies, social services, and NGOs, so the simulation exercise offered front-line responders the opportunity to practice together real-time anti-trafficking responses, utilizing actors to recreate simulations of real cases of labour and sexual exploitation, including of children.

More than 70 professionals (47 male and 28 female) from law enforcement agencies, including representatives of the Ministry of Interior, the Prosecutor General's Office, labour inspectors, civil society organizations, and social services took part in the training, enhancing their capacity to apply the national referral mechanism.

Following the training exercise, a number of criminal investigations were initiated in Kyrgyzstan, whereas social services and NGOs were able to assist an increased number of identified victims of THB. The exercises were held in line with the Kyrgyz's Cabinet of Ministers State Programme on Combating Human Trafficking for 2021-2024.

Further to that, in 2021, an additional 15 members of the Parliament (10 male and 5 female), 25 law enforcement officers (18 male and 7 female) and 40 social workers (17 male and 23 female) participated in specialized training sessions organized by the Office on the legal framework on national referral mechanism and National anti-trafficking legislation.

### Awareness-raising

Through the "International Protection Support Centre" foundation, the Office continued to raise awareness of youth on the risks of illegal migration and THB. More than 150 high schools and college students (60 male and 90 female) participated in awareness-raising activities on THB and migration issues in 2021. The purpose of the informational meeting was to raise awareness of students on the issues of responding to migration challenges and preventing human trafficking. Students took an active part in the activity and discussions remained active throughout the whole event. Numerous questions regarding unregulated migration, on national and international practice on the problem of human trafficking, prevention of human trafficking and on mechanisms for preventing human trafficking, were brought up during the training. As a result of the informational meetings, the students increased their awareness on the issues of responding to and preventing human trafficking. On September 27 the POiB also organized a week-long *School of young leaders* on THB and risks of illegal migration, which saw the participation of 50 (26 male and 24 female) representatives from youth initiative groups.

## OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe

### Capacity-building

The [OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe](#) provided extensive support to the government in implementing its 2019-2021 National Action Plan on CTHB. This included supporting the work of the national Inter-Ministerial Commission for CTHB, the development of a new Commission's website, the donation of equipment to the Regional Centre for Support to TiP victims under the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population and to the anti-trafficking NGO Femida, and the hiring of a national expert to provide support to the most vulnerable THB victims in Dushanbe who need legal protection and legal representation services in criminal proceedings.



Participants at the OSCE/POiB organized training course for the law enforcement from across Kyrgyzstan on the national referral mechanism, May 2021, (POiB SSA consultant/Alena Muhovikova)





Actors simulating cases of human trafficking for labour and sexual exploitation during a four-day national simulation-based training on combating trafficking in persons, Safed-Dara, Tajikistan, 28 October 2021. (OSCE/Dior Sadulloev)

Furthermore, in 2021, the Office co-operated with the NGO Femida to conduct a roundtable devoted to World Day against Trafficking in Persons. Twenty participants (6 women, 14 men) participated in the event, which aimed to strengthen the co-operation between governmental entities and non-governmental and international organizations on CTHB and provide support to THB victims.

The Office continued to support the implementation of the National Referral Mechanism by building the capacities of key stakeholders. For example, in November 2020, the Office conducted three NRM training exercises covering Sughd, GBAO, and Khatlon regions.

In July 2021, the Office organized a series of five two-day training courses on effective financial investigations in THB cases in Dushanbe, Khorog, Bokhtar, Kulob, and Guliston. Some 63 representatives (1 woman, 62 men) from Tajikistan's Customs Service, State Committee for National Security, Drug Control Agency, and General Prosecutor's Office, who are involved in investigating and prosecuting THB crimes, participated in the courses. The courses focused on the issues related to effective detection of financial means and assets used by traffickers to commit the crime.

In October 2021 in Safed Dara resort the Office conducted a four-day national simulation-based training course on combating human trafficking. The event was organized jointly by the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe and the OSR/CTHB. The event was attended by 40 representatives (15 women, 25 men) of the Prosecutor General's Office, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tajikistan,

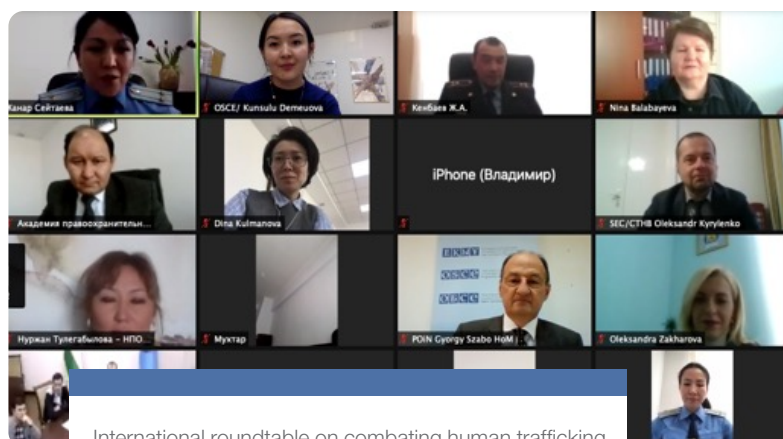
the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Tajikistan, and NGOs "Femida" and "Caravan of Hope". For the first time in Tajikistan, these innovative exercises provided frontline workers with the opportunity to model real action to combat human trafficking using actors to recreate human trafficking scenarios. During the training, cases of trafficking for the purpose of labour and sexual exploitation were addressed. Live simulation exercises were carried out as part of the ongoing efforts of the Program Office to help the host country fight human trafficking and better identify and assist victims of human trafficking through a new coordinated approach.

Further to that, the Office focused on building the capacities of lawyers from the Bar association of Tajikistan on THB-related court cases and on the protection of victim's rights within court proceedings. Through the end of 2021, representatives of the judiciary (e.g., Academy of Judges, Ministry of Justice) gathered to discuss the main findings and recommendations of a survey conducted by the Office on the rights of THB victims in the criminal proceedings in Tajikistan.

## OSCE Programme Office in Nur-Sultan

### Capacity-building

On 29 January 2021, the [OSCE Programme Office in Nur-Sultan](#) organized a roundtable discussion on THB for labour exploitation in the CIS region. Over 40 representatives from law-enforcement agencies, the prosecutor general, civil society and academia from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Ukraine took part in this event. A set of recommendations was published and presented to criminal justice actors, scientific and pedagogical workers,



International roundtable on combating human trafficking and labor exploitation, January 2021 (OSCE)

and law students. The report provided an analysis of existing anti-trafficking legislation and identified gaps in its implementation, including on addressing labor exploitation in supply chains and a lack of a victim-centered approach in criminal proceedings.

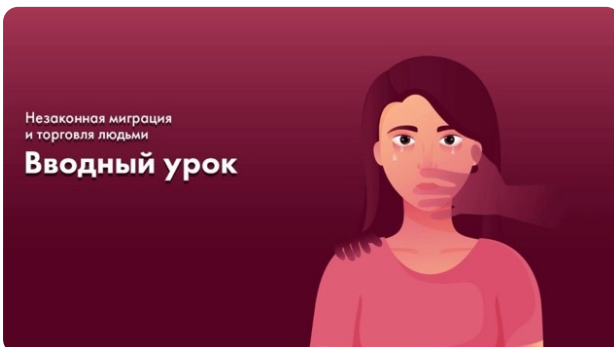
In June 2021, 16 prosecutors of the Akmola region (11 men and 5 women), participated in a seminar co-organized with the Law Enforcement Academy under the Prosecutor



An OSCE-organized week-long simulation exercise to save victims of sexual and labour exploitation and arrest alleged perpetrators, Almaty, 13 October 2021. (OSCE/Kunsulu Demeuova)

General's Office to discuss victims' identification and challenges in court trials. International experts from Lithuania and Ukraine presented their legislative models and promising practices.

In October 2021, with support of the OSR/CTHB, the Office organized the second national live-based simulation exercise on CTHB in co-operation with the US Embassy, UNHCR, UNODC, MIA and Law Enforcement Academies. The structure of the course was based on a model successfully tested in similar international trainings: one day of theoretical sessions and team-building activities, followed by four-days of the live simulation-based training during which the trainees established multi-agency co-operation while working on the cases of trafficking in human beings for sexual and labour exploitation. More



than 30 professionals from law enforcement, labour inspectorates, migration authorities, prosecutorial offices, NGOs, and public social services participated in the live-action exercise.

In 2020, the Office developed a [video course](#) on the investigation, prosecution, and prevention of crimes related to human trafficking. The curricula, developed in partnership with the U.S. Embassy in Kazakhstan, is aimed at building the training capacity of the Law Enforcement Agencies Academy under the Prosecutor's General Office. Five educational modules in the Russian and Kazakh languages will be used for prosecutors and first responders in Kazakhstan. The material is expected to become part of the education curricula and be administered through the distance learning system under the Law Enforcement Agencies Academy under the Prosecutor General's Office.

## OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan

### Capacity-building

In co-operation with ODIHR, the [OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan \(PCUz\)](#) assisted the host country with the development of a national referral mechanism for victims of THB by providing expert recommendations and advice during the drafting, including on concepts such as that of non-punishment of victims. Further to that, the "National Referral System for Victims of Human Trafficking and Presumed Victims" was then adopted in February 2021 by the Cabinet of Ministers.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the PCUz provided technical assistance for police and prosecutors on new trends and challenges in the prevention of THB and in the identification of victims. This included a series of online expert consultations organized in co-operation with the Uzbek National Anti-Trafficking Commission and ODIHR on the protection of children in the digital environment. In addition, the PCUz conducted a competition among youth on the best script for a short video that raises awareness among children and young people about the dangers associated with human trafficking online.

In 2021, the PCUz, jointly with the National Gender Equality Commission supported a social enterprise to produce bakery products in Tashkent province, which will provide at least 30 women from the most vulnerable groups in the region of Tashkent with a sustainable income.



## OFFICE FOR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS (ODIHR)

ODIHR's key objectives in 2020/2021 were to strengthen national anti-trafficking frameworks to combat THB in line with OSCE commitments, to promote a human rights-based, gender-sensitive, trauma-informed and victim and survivor-centered approach in CTHB, and to foster the inclusion of survivors of trafficking in all matters pertaining to CTHB across the OSCE region.

### Increasing respect for human rights of victims and survivors of trafficking

On the basis of these OSCE commitments on the inclusion and promotion of voices of survivors of trafficking in OSCE anti-trafficking efforts ([MC.DEC No. 6/18](#); [MC.DEC No. 6/17](#)) and in line with its mandate, ODIHR established the [International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council \(ISTAC\)](#), which was launched in January 2021. The Council consists of 21 members (16 women, 5 men), all survivor leaders with multi-disciplinary expertise and diverse backgrounds from 14 OSCE participating States.

ISTAC's purpose is to provide advice, guidance, and recommendations to ODIHR, and through ODIHR to the OSCE participating States. In particular, through their assistance to ODIHR, ISTAC assists in strengthening national legal, policy and regulatory anti-trafficking frameworks and in promoting a stronger victim and survivor-centered approach to CTHB. Beyond the country-specific work, the advisory role of the ISTAC also allows ODIHR to incorporate a stronger victim and survivor-centered approach in its publications and tools.

Since its launch, several governments, intergovernmental organizations and civil society have engaged with the ISTAC. For example, members of the ISTAC participated in a joint ODIHR and ICAT event on World Day Against Trafficking in Persons and contributed to the development of ICAT's statement for the respective World Day.



Overview of the 21 Members of the first International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council (ISTAC), established by ODIHR

“ Human trafficking causes untold suffering, and both combating and preventing this terrible crime is a high priority for ODIHR. ODIHR's Advisory Council on combating human trafficking is entirely made up of survivor leaders, **sending a clear message that each individual matters**, and that their voices count in all our efforts.

Matteo Mecacci – Director of OSCE ODIHR

// My lived experience empowers me to help drive changes for policies and legislation that are critically needed to eradicate human trafficking. Working to prevent trafficking is vital, and eradication requires intervention at all levels of society. I am honored to be part of ISTAC. Together, we will work to implement civil and legal frameworks that support and enforce anti-trafficking legislation.

Shandra Woworuntu – Chair of the ISTAC

### Identifying and responding to new trends and challenges

In June 2021, ODIHR joined Gemeinsam gegen Menschenhandel (Together Against Human Trafficking) and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in organizing a high-level two-day conference titled “Conference on Addressing Human Trafficking and All Forms of Sexual Exploitation: Emerging Trends and Long-Term Strategies”. Experts from governments, civil society, academia and survivor leaders discussed the urgency of strengthening international and national legal and policy approaches on combating trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

In 2020, to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, analyze emerging THB trends and dynamics and to develop an anti-trafficking response based on empirical data, ODIHR and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) conducted a global survey of survivors of trafficking from 40 countries and frontline stakeholders from 102 countries. Advised by a group of experts and based on the survey findings, a set of policy recommendations were developed, to help

OSCE participating States ensure the implementation of a human rights-based, gender-sensitive, trauma-informed, and victim-centered approach to CTHB.

The joint report [\*Addressing Emerging Human Trafficking Trends and Consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic\*](#) was made available in English, French and Russian. The policy recommendations cover a wide range of key areas, including: the need to strengthen the identification of victims of trafficking; accessibility of services to victims and survivors of trafficking; access to remedies including justice and information; addressing specific needs of women, girls, and children; and support and capacity building for both governmental and non-governmental frontline stakeholders.



ODIHR and UN Women organized two events in July and October 2020 to raise awareness of the report for OSCE delegations, policymakers, civil society, and survivors of trafficking.



// In the current pandemic situation and its aftermath, states and communities need effective guidance to address trafficking in human beings with a human right, gender-sensitive, trauma-informed and victim-centered approach. ODIHR and UN Women are responding to this need with the launch of policy recommendations for Addressing Emerging Human Trafficking Trends and Consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Katarzyna Gardapkhadze – former First Deputy Director of ODIHR

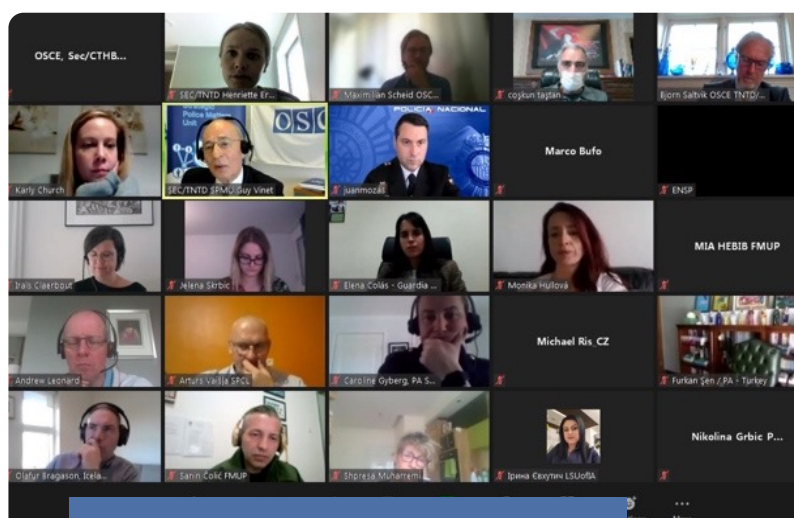
The guidance generated requests from several participating States, such as the Kyrgyz Republic, which requested ODIHR's assistance in developing protocols on CTHB during a state of emergency. In addition, Ukraine and Uzbekistan requested and received assistance in strengthening the capacity of criminal justice stakeholders, especially police, prosecutors, and judges, to address issues relating to the protection of children in the digital environment, as COVID-19 significantly increased children's vulnerability to trafficking in online formats.

## THE TRANSNATIONAL THREATS DEPARTMENT'S STRATEGIC POLICE MATTERS UNIT

The Transnational Threats Department's Strategic Police Matters Unit ([TNTD/ SPMU](#)) co-operates closely with the OSR/ CTHB on issues of mutual concern, in particular police-related matters.

Through the "Anti-Trafficking in Human Beings and Smuggling of Migrants Training in Ukraine" project, TNTD/SPMU continued to support Ukrainian authorities in enhancing their capacity to prevent and fight THB and the smuggling of migrants (SoM) in compliance with international standards and OSCE commitments.

In 2020-2021, a customized training manual for junior law enforcement investigators was developed to help conduct interviews with potential victims of THB, including on how to ensure victims' protection and support while preventing re-victimization.



PAN thematic meeting on CTHB police training methods, May 2021 (OSCE)



Through the TNTD-established Police Academies Network (PAN), a thematic discussion was organized in May 2021 in co-operation with OSR/CTHB on how police academies can develop and integrate effective training curricula for police cadets on methods and practices to address THB.

Participating in a side-event on community policing at the 21th Alliance Against Trafficking in Persons conference in June 2021, OSCE Co-ordinator of Activities to Address Transnational Threats, Alena Kupchyna, highlighted key elements of the SPMU strategy. They included the promotion of a victim-centered approach in all counter-trafficking measures; and the provision of technical assistance to law enforcement agencies in strengthening their capacities to investigate and prosecute perpetrators and seize criminal proceeds. The Co-ordinator also underscored the importance of effective police-public partnerships in combating criminal activity involving THB.

## PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE

The [OSCE Parliamentary Assembly](#) continued to play a leading role in pushing forward the OSCE anti-trafficking agenda with a special focus on preventing child exploitation and trafficking along migration routes, including through the dedicated efforts of its Special Representative on Human Trafficking Issues, Congressman Christopher Smith (United States).

In June 2021, Special Representative Smith participated in the annual Alliance Against Trafficking in Persons Conference focusing on “Confronting Demand”. He furthermore participated in a side event organized on 14 June by the OSR/CTHB on “Protecting the most vulnerable: putting a spotlight on the demand that fosters trafficking in children” which sought to address new patterns of child

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This was not a normal year, as we all continue to struggle to overcome the COVID-19 virus and address its impact and repercussions. This is true for our anti-trafficking efforts as well. **We must respond to these new challenges and ensure that our efforts are effective against these new trends and challenges.**

OSCE PA Special Representative on Human Trafficking Issues Chris Smith (United States)

sexual exploitation which have emerged due to increased online activity and greater use of social media.

Special Representative Smith also continued to report regularly to the Parliamentary Assembly on trends within the OSCE area, paying special attention to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on anti-trafficking efforts, on patterns of trafficking, and on victims and survivors. He highlighted the increased vulnerability of children to online grooming and trafficking as a result of the increased time spent online during lockdown. Smith and the OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues Hedy Fry have also drawn attention to how the pandemic has exacerbated the vulnerability of women and girls to trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

Responding to human trafficking in the context of mixed migration flows continued to be the focus of Parliamentary Assembly work, and especially of its Ad Hoc Committee on Migration. The Committee paid particular attention to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on refugees and migrants, noting in particular their increased vulnerability



Vice-Chair of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly  
Ad-Hoc Committee on Migration Gudrun Kugler and  
Anti-Trafficking Special Representative Valiant Richey  
visit Borići Temporary Reception Centre, July 2021  
(OSCE PA)

to human traffickers. The Committee and the OSR/CTHB co-operated in particular in the area of combating human trafficking along migration routes, with a focus on children. A joint visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina was organized in July 2021, to address the risks of trafficking in the migrant population transiting through the country.

The OSCE PA also facilitated the participation of the SR/CTHB in a web-conference of the UK House of Lords, organized in co-operation with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), on Protecting unaccompanied child refugees: enabling relocations and preventing human trafficking on the eve of World Refugee Day in June 2020.

Similarly, an online conference of the UK House of Lords in June 2021 organized in co-operation with the OSCE PA and PACE to mark the 70th anniversary of the UN Refugee Convention resulted in a Call for Action on World Refugee Day 2021. This Call for Action included an appeal to OSCE participating States and Council of Europe Member States to respect the right to seek asylum, to refrain from collective returns, and to assess each case individually with special attention to the identification of vulnerable categories of migrants such as unaccompanied children or victims of human trafficking or torture.

It also called upon OSCE participating States and Council of Europe Member States to sustain efforts to dismantle criminal networks which profit from smuggling and trafficking in human beings and to offer expanded safe and legal pathways for persons in need of international protection.

Overall, the OSCE PA efforts have contributed to the development of a vast policy framework counting twenty resolutions adopted by the PA.







