

HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR EXPLOITATION IN CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES: UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING A MAJOR TREND



Side-event at Chairpersonship's Warsaw Human Dimension Conference

14:30-15:30, 15 October 2025 (lunch will be provided at 14:00)

BELWEDER room and livestream <https://www.osce.org/cthb/598570>

Interpretation: English and Russian

Agenda

Opening and moderation: Kari Johnstone, OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

Speakers:

Sosa Henkoma, Expert by experience, public speaker, consultant, mentor and school governor

Tetiana Rudenko, Senior Project Officer, OSCE OSR/CTHB

Tarana Baghirova, Programme Officer, OSCE OSR/CTHB

Ulan Nogoibaev, Head of the Secretariat, Migration and Human Trafficking Council under the Speaker of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic

Closing: Tea Jaliashvili, First Deputy Director, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)

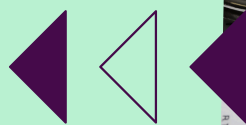


The side event aims to discuss the increasing pattern of trafficking in human beings for the purpose of forced criminality, examine challenges of identification of victims of such crimes, and offer solutions and safeguards to ensure effective identification and protection of victims.



Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe

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In recent years, trafficking in human beings for the purpose of exploitation in criminal activities (forced criminality) has expanded significantly in both scale and scope, drawing increased attention from governments, civil society, and international organizations. According to the UN Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2024, **identification of this form of trafficking rose sharply from 1 percent** of total victims detected globally in 2016, to 6 percent in 2019 and **8 percent** in 2022. A similar trend has been documented in the OSCE region, with **63 percent of participating States reporting cases of human trafficking for forced criminality** under investigation and/or in the judicial process in 2020 versus 47 percent reporting such cases in 2016. This alarming trajectory reflects both heightened awareness and a troubling reality of its growing prevalence.

Persistent global crises, such as armed conflicts and climate change, as well as social and deep-rooted economic inequalities continue to fuel conditions conducive to exploitation. Traffickers prey on the complex interplay of personal, social, and systemic vulnerabilities – especially those affecting adults and children from marginalized and displaced communities.



Recruitment through deceptive online advertisements, systemic corruption, and lax enforcement of laws against criminals have been the key drivers in the increase and expansion of this form of exploitation to more grave crimes. **Victims of this form of trafficking** are now often **compelled to commit serious criminal acts** such as fraud, money laundering, drug cultivation and distribution, smuggling of migrants, and violent acts. These individuals are frequently **misidentified as offenders, which compounds their revictimization and perpetuates impunity**, undermining overall anti-trafficking measures and efforts of States. Against this backdrop, effective application of the non-punishment principle remains a pressing concern, consistently underscored by the OSCE and its international partners.