



OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

*International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council (ISTAC)*

# **CALL FOR MEMBERS**



### *About the ISTAC*

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has been active in preventing and combating trafficking in human beings (THB) across the OSCE region since 1999. Guided by a comprehensive framework grounded in human rights, rule of law, equality, and non-discrimination, ODIHR adopts a victim- and survivor-centred, gender-sensitive, and trauma-informed approach to addressing THB.

The importance of ethical survivor inclusion in anti-trafficking efforts has gained increasing global recognition in the past decade. OSCE participating States have made clear commitments to ensuring the inclusion of survivor voices in anti-trafficking efforts, as expressed in Ministerial Council Decisions No. 6/18<sup>1</sup>, 6/17<sup>2</sup>, and 7/17<sup>3</sup>. At global level, an increasing number of multilateral bodies have also acknowledged the importance of engaging people with lived experience. For example, the 2021 Political Declaration on the Implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, adopted by the UN General Assembly, affirms the commitment of States to involve survivors of trafficking in persons in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating of anti-trafficking efforts.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the UN-mandated Inter-Agency Coordination Group Against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT), comprising of 31 key UN and regional organizations with a mandate on countering human trafficking, has published policy guidance on Ensuring Ethical Survivor Inclusion, laying out specific recommendations for States and organizations on engaging survivor leaders in anti-trafficking efforts in a way that is both ethical and meaningful.

In alignment with various commitments undertaken by the OSCE participating States, ODIHR has thus focused on the promotion on ethical survivor inclusion. In 2021, ODIHR established the first-ever International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council (ISTAC). Since its inception, ISTAC is a project-based initiative that serves to advise ODIHR in promoting ethical survivor engagement in all anti-trafficking initiatives within the OSCE region.

In consultation with ISTAC, ODIHR has promoted the importance of meaningful and ethical engagement of survivor leaders in the anti-trafficking efforts through advocacy and policy guidance papers, including:

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<sup>1</sup> OSCE Ministerial Council (2018), MC.DEC No. 6/18 on Strengthening Efforts to Prevent and Combat Child Trafficking, Including of Unaccompanied Minors, 7 December 2018. <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/406745>

<sup>2</sup> OSCE Ministerial Council (2017), MC.DEC No. 6/17 on Strengthening Efforts to Prevent Trafficking in Human Beings, 8 December 2017. <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/362096>

<sup>3</sup> OSCE Ministerial Council (2017), MC.DEC No. 7/17 on Strengthening Efforts to Combat All forms of Child Trafficking, Including for Sexual Exploitation, as well as Other Forms of Sexual Exploitation of Children, 8 December 2017. <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/362016>

<sup>4</sup> UN General Assembly (2021), A/RES/76/7, para. 12.  
<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3949299?ln=en&v=pdf>



- *Code of Practice for Ensuring the Rights of Victims and Survivors of Human Trafficking*<sup>5</sup>
- *Guidance on Establishing and Maintaining National Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Councils (NSTACs)*<sup>6</sup>
- *Survivor-Informed Indicators for the Identification of Victims and Survivors of Trafficking in Human Beings*<sup>7</sup>

This Call for Application will aim to recruit ISTAC's third term.

## Composition and membership

The composition of ISTAC will ensure diversity in terms of lived experience, professional background, gender balance, and geographical representation within the OSCE region. Membership in ISTAC does not require full-time engagement and is compatible with other professional responsibilities. However, members are expected to actively contribute to the implementation of the ISTAC's medium-term strategy 2026-2028, through participation in scheduled meetings, provision of expert input, and engagement in related activities as appropriate.

## Term of ISTAC

Members of the ISTAC shall be appointed for a term of three years and may be eligible to apply for one consecutive term. This will be the third term of ISTAC and the new membership of ISTAC will commence on 1 January 2026 and conclude on 31 December 2028.

## Role

The role of the ISTAC is to provide advice, guidance and recommendations to ODIHR, and, through ODIHR, to the OSCE participating States, on matters pertaining to CTHB, including but not limited to the development of legislation, policies and state practices; the implementation of relevant OSCE commitments; research, drafting and/or reviewing of material, tools and guidance as well as contributing to educational and capacity-building efforts undertaken by ODIHR in the implementation of its CTHB efforts in the OSCE region. The ISTAC as requested by ODIHR may also provide guidance to survivor leaders on the tools necessary to foster growth of national and international survivor networks.

## Selection process

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<sup>5</sup> Code of Practice for Ensuring the Rights of Victims and Survivors of Human Trafficking <https://www.osce.org/odihr/541269>, 18 April 2023

<sup>6</sup> Guidance on establishing and maintaining National Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Councils (NSTACs) <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/e/a/573983.pdf>, 31 July 2024

<sup>7</sup> Survivor-Informed Indicators for the Identification of Victims and Survivors of Trafficking in Human Beings, <https://www.osce.org/odihr/584634>, April 2025.

The members of the forthcoming term shall be chosen from a list of candidates by a four-person panel composed of the Director of ODIHR or a designated representative, the Head of ODIHR's Human Rights Department, the Adviser on Anti-Trafficking Issues and an OSCE Senior Psychologist. The candidates, who will either individually decide to apply, or upon recommendation/nomination by participating States, the ODIHR Anti-Trafficking Portfolio, the Office of the Special Representative for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (OSR/CTHB), the OSCE Field Operations or other survivor networks, will need to submit their application through the application form. While there will be an application process, the selection criteria will not be competitive, meaning that due consideration will be given to factors such as regional and gender representation, professional expertise and experience in survivor advocacy work.

### **Remuneration of ISTAC**

ISTAC is a project-based initiative. Subject to the availability of funds, the work of ISTAC will be remunerated by ODIHR in accordance with the OSCE's regulations and procedures, through Special Service Agreements (external consultancy contracts). ISTAC members will receive compensation for the mandatory tasks associated with their roles as part of the advisory group. Any additional tasks carried out by ISTAC members beyond their core responsibilities will be compensated separately, based on mutual agreement between ODIHR and survivor leader consultant.

### **Status of ISTAC**

ISTAC is an advisory group to ODIHR and the OSCE and, as such, it does not have the status of an organization or institution. ISTAC is overseen, co-ordinated and financed by ODIHR and, as such, all external requests for engagement must be closely co-ordinated with ODIHR Anti-Trafficking Portfolio and management. Further, ISTAC cannot represent ODIHR in public external events.

## ***Requirements, Terms and Conditions***

### **Requirements**

Candidates must meet the following requirements to apply:

- ✓ **Survivor Leadership** – Candidates must be survivor leaders with a minimum of five years of post-survivor experience. Candidates should preferably be a publicly recognized survivor leader of trafficking in human beings or hold the status of victim of trafficking (statutory or non-statutory). Candidates must have experience in anti-trafficking activism/work, nationally or internationally.



- ✓ **Place of residence** – Candidates must have their place of residence in a OSCE participating State<sup>8</sup>.
- ✓ **Language skills** - Professional working proficiency in English.
- ✓ **Integrity** – Candidates must maintain the highest standards of personal integrity and impartiality during their membership in ISTAC. Candidates must act professionally and respectfully in a challenging, diverse and multi-cultural environment. They must also comply with normal standards of professional ethics.
- ✓ **Team Work** – Candidates must be able to work in co-operation with other members of ISTAC or other professionals.

### Selection criteria

Only applications of members meeting the above-mentioned requirements will be considered. They will be assessed with the following criteria:

- ✓ **Expertise** – Candidates should be able to demonstrate experience in anti-trafficking advocacy. Relevant expertise should include work in areas such as international affairs, law and social services for victims and potential victims of human trafficking. Experience and knowledge in fields directly related to addressing trafficking in human beings are required
- ✓ **Active participation** – Candidates should demonstrate their active participation in survivor networks and survivor leadership fora. Where these have not been developed, candidates should demonstrate a genuine interest in doing so.
- ✓ **Gender and geographical representation** – Selection of candidates will ensure gender and geographical balance among ISTAC members, as well as diversity of expertise.

### How can I apply?

- Please send your completed application form to OSCE/ODIHR by **30 September 2025** to: [istac@odihr.pl](mailto:istac@odihr.pl)

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.osce.org/participating-states>

## Communication on the Next Steps

Candidates who are shortlisted will be invited to participate in an online interview with ODIHR staff. Please be advised that candidates selected for membership will receive a set of official documents outlining the terms and responsibilities associated with the role. These documents must be carefully reviewed and signed before the membership can be considered active.

## If you have questions

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