



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator
for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

Are countries making progress on combating trafficking in human beings? *Findings of the 2026 Survey Report*

23 March 2026

14:30 – 16:00 CET/8:30 – 10:00 EST

Bibliothekasaal, Hofburg and online ([Zoom registration link](#))

Over the last 25 years since the adoption of the first internationally recognized definition of trafficking in human beings and the first OSCE anti-trafficking commitments, OSCE participating States have been combating trafficking in human beings. But are they making progress? In 2024 alone, close to 30,000 trafficking victims were reported by the States throughout the region, reflecting both the expanding scope of the crime and the increased detection and identification capacities across participating States. The 2026 OSCE Survey reveals that while States have transitioned toward protection-centred governance, a persistent “implementation gap” remains between legislative advancement and practical enforcement.

To what extent are evolving regulatory frameworks for **labour recruitment** and the surge in **human rights due diligence** legislation successfully addressing systemic risks like debt bondage and trafficking for labor exploitation? How has the landscape of **victim identification** changed as pathways shift from traditional law enforcement leads toward multi-disciplinary partnerships and **autonomous help-seeking** by victims? Furthermore, as traffickers increasingly utilize encrypted tools and AI, is there a growing "**digital divide**" between the agility of criminal networks and the technical capacity of law enforcement?

What explains the current paradox in **child protection**, where formalized institutional frameworks are at an all-time high while practical, on-the-ground measures appear to be in decline? Finally, are the efforts to **target the assets of traffickers** actually leading to better outcomes for victims, or is there still a significant disconnect between legal provisions and practical accessibility to redress? Is the increased **institutionalization of survivor feedback**—which has nearly tripled in use since 2021—changing the way we evaluate the quality of assistance and overall impact of our anti-trafficking laws and policies?

In the context of such developments and evolving forms of exploitation, measuring legal and institutional progress, along with reviewing how countries address trafficking in human beings in practice, is crucial to advancing the common objective of ending trafficking in human beings, protecting victims, and empowering survivors across the OSCE region.

In 2025/2026, the Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (OSR/CTHB) conducted this latest survey of OSCE participating States and NGOs to assess the implementation of anti-trafficking commitments and provide a structured and comparative overview. This iteration tracks progress made since the 2021 and 2016 reports, focusing on key pillars of anti-trafficking responses, including labour exploitation and child-trafficking, victim identification and support, capacity-building, criminal justice responses, and financial investigations. The survey also features analysis on the expanding role of technology and current developments, such as the war against Ukraine, providing an evidence base for further discussion, interpretation, and practical implementation.

This launch event will present the key findings of the 2026 Survey, providing a comprehensive overview of how countries are progressing since the 2016 and 2021 benchmarks. It will also provide an opportunity to bring together participating States, civil society, and the broader anti-trafficking community to discuss the findings and recommendations, exchange experiences related to both challenges and promising practices, and reflect on how to bridge the gap between policy and practice. The insights gained can guide future programmes and learning activities, highlight opportunities for co-operation, and ensure the Survey's findings serve as a practical tool for national and regional responses to trafficking in human beings.

AGENDA:

Opening remarks

Dr. Kari Johnstone, OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

Presentation of the Findings of the 2026 Survey Report

Dr. Dorothea Czarniecki, researcher and consultant for the OSCE Office of the Special Representative for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

Panel Discussion:

- H.E. Minister Petre-Florin Manole, Minister of Labor, Youth, Sport and Social Solidarity, member of Parliament, former President of the Parliamentary Commission Against Human Trafficking, Romania
- Dr. Conny Rijken, Dutch National Rapporteur on Human Trafficking and Sexual Violence against Children, the Netherlands
- Ms. Megan Lundstrom, lived experience expert, US
- Mr. Stefano Pizzicanella, Director General, Office for Equal Opportunities Policies, Special Envoy on Human Trafficking Issues, Italy
- Ms. Mariana Meshi, Executive Director, NGO Different & Equal, Albania