Biannual Bulletin

January - June 2026

MINISTRY OF SECURITY OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
DEPARTMENT FOR COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

STATISTICAL DATA FOR JANUARY – JUNE 2026

During the first half of 2026, a total of 19 potential/identified victims of trafficking in human beings were registered in Bosnia and Herzegovina, of whom 14 were female victims and 5 were male victims. A total of 6 victims were adults (2 male victims, 4 female victims), while 13 victims were minors (10 female and 3 male). The forms of exploitation registered during the first half of 2026 were: 2 cases of begging, 5 cases of sexual exploitation, 3 cases of labour exploitation, 4 cases of labour exploitation and begging, 1 case of other forms of exploitation and 2 cases of unknown forms of exploitation. During the reporting period, a total of 17 victims were citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, while 2 victims were foreign nationals, of whom: 1 victim was a citizen of Azerbaijan, 1 victim was a citizen of Germany.

During the reporting period, 10 victims of trafficking in human beings stayed in safe houses.

PROTOCOL ON COOPERATION AND PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

During the reporting period, the Ministry of Security of BiH selected non-governmental organizations that will provide accommodation and care for victims of trafficking in human beings upon the public call *"Accommodation for Victims of Trafficking in human beings"* for 2026. The Ministry of Security signed protocols with four non-governmental organizations. These are: Žene sa Une from Bihać, Ipsia from Bihać, Budućnost from Modriča and Žena BiH from Mostar.

MEETING OF THE TASK FORCE FOR COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS AND SMUGGLING OF MIGRANTS



On 28 April 2026, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in cooperation with the Prosecutor's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina, organized a regular meeting of the **Task Force for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Smuggling of Migrants** in Sarajevo. The meeting brought together representatives of prosecutor's offices, law enforcement agencies, migration institutions, institutions responsible for labour and employment, as well as international partners, and served as an important platform for exchanging information on current trends, challenges and joint activities in the field of combating trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Prior to the regular session of the Task Force, a thematic session entitled **"Current Trends and Challenges in the Engagement of Foreign Workers"** was held, focusing on growing trends in labour migration, risks of labour exploitation, inspection oversight, and strengthening inter-institutional cooperation in preventing trafficking in human beings. The event enabled the exchange of experiences and practices among relevant stakeholders and highlighted the importance of coordinated action in responding to new challenges and vulnerabilities faced by foreign workers in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The meeting further strengthened cooperation among key institutions and organizations involved in the response to trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants, and contributed to identifying priority areas for further improvement of preventive and operational mechanisms in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL REFERRAL MECHANISM FOR COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Coordinators of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for combating trafficking in human beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina held a meeting in Sarajevo in June with the aim of reviewing current challenges and defining priorities for further improvement of the system for the identification, referral, protection and assistance of victims of trafficking in human beings.

The meeting was organized based on an analysis of responses collected through a questionnaire sent to NRM coordinators throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, the results of which indicated key needs, challenges in their work and areas requiring further strengthening of coordination and institutional capacities.

During the meeting, representatives of relevant institutions and organizations exchanged experiences and discussed improving existing procedures, more efficient functioning of referral mechanisms, and strengthening cooperation among all actors involved in the protection of victims of trafficking in human beings.

A particular outcome of the meeting was the agreement on the methodology and programme of thematic workshops to be implemented at several locations in Bosnia and Herzegovina by the end of 2026. The workshops will focus on practical solutions, improving procedures and responding to the needs of institutions operating in the field.

The conclusions and recommendations from the meeting will serve as a basis for further strengthening the National Referral Mechanism and developing a more effective, coordinated and victim-centred system for combating trafficking in human beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



SPECIALIZED TRAINING FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS TO VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Within the framework of the regional project “Safe Haven: Expanding Shelter Resources for Victims of Trafficking in human beings in the Western Balkans”, funded by the U.S. Department of State, **World Vision BiH** and project partner **Foundation Lara** continued activities aimed at strengthening the knowledge and capacities of professionals through two organized specialized trainings.

The **first training** brought together **23 professionals** (20 women and 3 men) from safe houses, centres for social work and civil society organizations, with a focus on **case management** and **intersectoral cooperation**.

The **second** and final **training** within the cycle of activities for building the capacities of professionals focused on protecting the best

interests of the child in the context of cross-border security challenges. This training brought together **33 professionals** (22 women and 11 men) from police agencies, centres for social work, safe houses, organizations working with migrants and refugees, and civil society organizations involved in the protection of victims and potential victims of trafficking in human beings, who improved their capacities for identifying and protecting child victims of trafficking in human beings in complex migration contexts.



GUIDELINES FOR SHELTER PROVIDERS WORKING WITH VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Under the regional project "Safe Haven: Expanding Shelter Resources for Victims of Trafficking in human beings in the Western Balkans", World Vision BiH developed **Guidelines for Shelter Providers Working with Victims of Trafficking in human beings**, primarily intended for shelter service providers in the target Western Balkan countries – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Serbia – with the aim of providing them with practical, ethically grounded and legally informed approaches to developing shelter standards in order to ensure quality shelter services and the protection of victims of trafficking in human beings, with a particular focus on vulnerable and marginalized groups (children, men/boys, persons with disabilities and others). The Guidelines were developed in a way that allows them to be used as a universal tool for developing shelter standards for the protection and assistance of victims of trafficking in human beings and are intended as a regional reference document. They are based on international standards and human rights protection instruments relating to trafficking in human beings and the protection of victims, and are guided by key human rights principles and DEIA principles. They also reflect recommendations issued by the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) and the United States Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in human beings (TIP Office), particularly with regard to improving shelter protection standards and ensuring access to victim-centred and rights-based assistance and protection. The document is available in BHS and ENG versions in the document archive of the statistical portal of the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

https://elearningapi-thb.msb.gov.ba/api/Documents/download/101

REVISION OF MINIMUM STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF SHELTER SERVICE PROVIDERS

In cooperation with the **Ministry of Security of BiH**, Department for Combating Trafficking in human beings, **World Vision BiH**, in partnership with **Foundation Lara**, launched the process of revising and amending the document **Minimum Standards and Criteria for the Selection of Providers of Accommodation and Support Services to Victims of Trafficking in human beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina**.

Given the competences of the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, this document does not constitute a normative act prescribing binding minimum standards at the state level, but rather defines a set of minimum conditions and criteria that accommodation service providers must meet

in order to be selected through a public call for the provision of accommodation and support services to victims of trafficking in human beings and to qualify for funding from budgetary resources.

The purpose of this document is to ensure a uniform, transparent and quality approach in the process of selecting service providers, and to contribute to improving the quality of accommodation and support for victims of trafficking in human beings in shelters. By defining minimum conditions and criteria, the aim is to ensure that services are provided by organizations that have adequate capacities, qualified staff and established procedures, in accordance with the principles of human rights protection, a victim-centred approach and the best interests of the child.

In addition to revising the document itself, 11 standardized forms were amended covering the entire service provision process, including admission of beneficiaries, assessment of needs and risks, informed consent, individual support planning, documentation of services, transfers between shelters, complaints mechanisms, discharge procedures and personal data protection.

As part of this process, a public presentation of the revised document was organized in June, attended by 50 representatives of relevant ministries, police agencies, centres for social work, prosecutor's offices, accommodation service providers, civil society organizations and international organizations. On that occasion, experts from the working group presented to the participants the key changes and improvements introduced by this revision.



FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

With the aim of ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of accommodation services for victims of trafficking in human beings, World Vision BiH organized a regional fundraising training for representatives of partner organizations and accommodation service providers across the Western Balkans. The training was attended by 12 representatives (11 women and 1 man), who, upon completion of the training, demonstrated improved skills in establishing relations with donors, developing funding strategies and accessing sustainable funding. In this way, the resource mobilization and fundraising capacities of organizations providing shelter services throughout the region were strengthened.



COUNCIL OF EUROPE PRESENTED PUBLICATION ON THE FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

On 17 March 2026, the Council of Europe organized in Sarajevo a presentation of the publication *"Financial Aspects of Trafficking in human beings: General Trends, Typologies and Money Laundering Indicators"*, in cooperation with the Ministry of Security and the State Investigation and Protection Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The event was held following the first meeting of the Project Steering Committee *"Strengthening the*

Response to Trafficking in human beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina through Systemic Reforms, Policy Development and Comprehensive Victim Support", during which it was confirmed that improving mechanisms for compensation of victims, together with the development and operationalization of financial investigation tools, including the identification, seizure and confiscation of assets, would represent one of the key priorities of the project.

The publication provides an overview of key trends and patterns related to the financial aspects of trafficking in human beings, with a particular focus on identifying financial flows, money laundering typologies and indicators relevant to the detection and prosecution of trafficking in human beings offences. The report also describes common methods of concealing illicit proceeds, including cash transactions, shell companies, trade-based money laundering, investments in real estate and high-value assets, as well as the use of betting shops, cryptocurrencies and informal payment systems.



The publication was designed as a practical tool for financial institutions, financial intelligence units, prosecutors, investigators and other professionals involved in combating trafficking in human beings. Of particular significance is that SIPA shared the publication with financial institutions that are obliged entities under the Law on Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorist Activities, in order to facilitate their monitoring of indicators related to trafficking in human beings and enhance their role in detecting suspicious financial flows.

REGIONAL DIALOGUE ON PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT TO VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS BROUGHT TOGETHER MORE THAN 60 EXPERTS FROM THE WESTERN BALKANS

More than 60 experts and practitioners from Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Serbia participated on 28 April 2026 in the online regional dialogue *"From Trauma to Testimony: The Role of Psychological Support in Trafficking in human beings Cases"*, organized in cooperation with the Council of Europe's sister projects addressing trafficking in human beings implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and North Macedonia.

The event brought together representatives of the judiciary, social protection institutions, police, relevant ministries and civil society organizations with the aim of exchanging experiences, strengthening regional cooperation and improving the protection of victims of trafficking in human beings in criminal proceedings, in accordance with European standards.

Particular focus was placed on the importance of psychological support based on a trauma-informed approach as a key prerequisite for the safe and active participation of victims in proceedings and the exercise of access to justice. Participants exchanged experiences on available forms of psychological support to victims, challenges in ensuring testimony based on a trauma-informed approach, and identified the gap between existing support mechanisms and their application in practice.

During the event, the publication *"From Trauma to Testimony: Guidelines for Psychological Support to Victims of Trafficking in human beings during Criminal Investigations and Court Proceedings"*, developed with the support of the European Union and the Council of Europe, was presented. The event once again confirmed the importance of regional

cooperation and exchange of experiences for improving the system for the protection of victims of trafficking in human beings and developing approaches that respond to the actual needs of victims.

The activity was implemented within the framework of the joint European Union and Council of Europe programme *"Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye"* and the Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2026–2029.



TRAINING ON THE RIGHTS OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS HELD ON 20–21 MAY 2026



The Council of Europe project *"Strengthening the Response to Trafficking in human beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina through Systemic Reforms, Policy Development and Comprehensive Victim Support"*, in cooperation with the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU4FAST/GIZ project, organized a two-day training on the rights of victims of trafficking in human beings in criminal proceedings, which was held on 20 and 21 May 2026 in Buna, Mostar.

The training brought together 20 lawyers from across Bosnia and Herzegovina, certified to represent clients before the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the aim of strengthening their capacities to represent and provide support to victims of trafficking in human beings in accordance with international standards and the national legislative framework.

The training placed particular focus on victims' rights, access to legal remedies and practical aspects of legal representation in trafficking in human beings cases. Participants improved their knowledge and skills in the area of protecting the rights of victims of trafficking in human beings and were certified upon successful completion of the training.



COUNCIL OF EUROPE DEVELOPING NEW TOOLS TO STRENGTHEN THE RESPONSE TO TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

During the first half of 2026, the Council of Europe, within the framework of the project *"Strengthening the Response to Trafficking in human beings in Bosnia*

and Herzegovina through Systemic Reforms, Policy Development and Comprehensive Victim Support", continued developing practical tools and guidelines with the aim of strengthening the capacities of competent institutions and professionals involved in the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of trafficking in human beings cases.

The development of recommendations and a roadmap for integrating the Council of Europe module on victims' rights and trafficking in human beings into the training programmes of judicial and prosecutorial training centres, as well as into the lawyer certification process, is underway, with the aim of ensuring the sustainability and long-term institutional ownership of the materials developed.

At the same time, technical guidelines on financial investigations, confiscation and recovery of proceeds of crime, and compensation for victims of trafficking in human beings are being developed, which will provide practical guidance for improving financial investigations, identifying and confiscating proceeds derived from criminal offences, and improving access to compensation mechanisms for victims.

In addition, the Council of Europe is working on the development of Guidelines for Recognizing Trafficking in human beings on Digital Platforms and in Informal Sectors. This document is intended for frontline practitioners and contains indicators, methodologies and practical tools for analysing online job advertisements, recognizing suspicious recruitment patterns and identifying indicators of trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation, including exploitation facilitated by digital technologies.



ACTIVITIES OF THE TUZLA CANTON MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

In March 2026, the Police Administration of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tuzla Canton, Criminal Police Sector, in cooperation with the Cantonal Prosecutor's Office of Tuzla Canton, continued activities initiated during 2025 relating to the criminal offence of Trafficking in human beings under Article 210a of the Criminal Code of the Federation of BiH, to the detriment of two minor females for the purpose of exploitation through prostitution, committed by 8 suspects, including 4 police officers, and the further investigation resulted in the arrest of an additional 4 persons, three of whom were police officers, on reasonable grounds for suspicion that they had committed the criminal offence of Trafficking in human beings under Article 210a, paragraph 6 of the Criminal Code of the Federation of BiH, in connection with paragraph 2, namely for using the services of victims of trafficking in human beings.

In June 2026, a workshop for police officers of the Police Administration of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tuzla Canton was held in Tuzla on the topic "Identification and Police Procedures in Trafficking in human beings Cases", within the framework of the Training Plan and Programme for Police Officers, in cooperation with the OSCE Mission to BiH.



EDUCATION – EDUCATION AS A FOUNDATION FOR RECOVERY AND PREVENTION OF RE-VICTIMIZATION

The Association "Zemlja djece u BiH" launched initiatives to amend laws on adult education in the Bosnian-Podrinje, Una-Sana and Tuzla Cantons. The proposed amendments aim to ensure that children aged 15 to 18 have unconditional access to basic adult education programmes, while adult victims of trafficking in human beings and domestic violence would be recognized as particularly vulnerable categories who would be provided with free basic and vocational education, including retraining and further training, as part of their recovery and reintegration process.



The first significant result was achieved in the Bosnian-Podrinje Canton of Goražde, where the Assembly adopted on 2 June 2026 amendments to the law prepared in partnership with the Coordination Team for Combating Trafficking in human beings. The initiative was also submitted to the Assembly of Una-Sana Canton, while in Tuzla Canton it was presented to the competent parliamentary committee.

In order to initiate the same solutions in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, a round table was organized in Mostar on 29 June 2026, bringing together representatives of the relevant ministry, the Institution of the Human Rights Ombudsman of BiH, centres for social work, educational institutions and the Coordination Team for Combating Trafficking in human beings of HNC.

FAMILY LEGISLATION – ABOLITION OF EXCEPTIONS FOR CHILD MARRIAGES

The Association "Zemlja djece u BiH" organized a round table on 9 April 2026 dedicated to child marriages as a form of violation of children's rights and one of the risk factors for trafficking in human beings.

Representatives of academia, centres for social work, police, educational and health institutions, and civil society organizations participated in the meeting. Participants supported the initiative to amend the Family Law of the Federation of BiH, which would abolish the possibility of marriage before the age of 18, without exceptions, in accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.



It was concluded that the initiative would be submitted to the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the purpose of initiating the procedure for amendments to the law.

INTER-AGENCY MEETING



Regulatory frameworks are essential for effective risk management and responding to threats of organized crime, particularly trafficking in human beings. Clear, practical and coordinated recommendations are key to strengthening institutional responses and aligning them with continuously evolving EU standards. In this context, EU4FAST organized a two-day inter-agency meeting in Sarajevo, bringing together practitioners from the state level of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as representatives of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and Brčko District BiH. The event focused on identifying challenges and exchanging best practices related to the revision of regulatory frameworks for combating trafficking in human beings in accordance with the consolidated EU Anti-Trafficking Directive. The event was opened by Elvir Mahmuzić, Deputy Minister of Justice in the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Stanislava Tanić, Head of the Department for Combating Trafficking in human beings at the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Vojtěch H., Home Affairs Programme Manager at the Delegation of the European Union to Bosnia and Herzegovina; and Damir Hadžić, Project Manager of the EU4FAST team at the Center for International Legal Cooperation. Building on the key findings and discussions during the meeting, and taking into account relevant EU standards, Erwann Tor, EU4FAST Policy and Legislation Strategy Coordinator from Expertise France, presented a set of clear and practical recommendations aimed at strengthening the regulatory framework for combating trafficking in human beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The EU Support to Strengthening the Fight against Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in human beings in the Western Balkans project (EU4FAST) is jointly funded by the European Commission, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Italian Ministry of the Interior and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken).

ROUND TABLE ON STRENGTHENING COORDINATION AND THE INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE TO TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN MIXED MIGRATION CONTEXTS IN BiH



On 31 March 2026 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, one of EU4FAST's civil society partners in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Vaša prava BiH – organized a round table on strengthening coordination and the institutional response to trafficking in human beings in mixed migration contexts in BiH. The event brought together representatives of state institutions at different levels across BiH, representatives of international

organizations, as well as civil society, including Dr. Kari Johnstone – OSCE Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Davor Bunoza – Minister of Justice of BiH, Stanislava Tanić – Head of the Department for Combating Trafficking in human beings, Sector for International Cooperation and European Integration, Ministry of Security of BiH, and Vojtěch Hons – Home Affairs Programme Manager, Good Governance Department, Delegation of the European Union to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Martin Hiebsch, Component Leader, welcomed the participants on behalf of the EU4FAST project. Discussions focused on reviewing key protection risks, current patterns and institutional priorities related to trafficking in human beings within the migrant and refugee population in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as reviewing institutional cooperation in identification, referral and protection; discussing what works, where coordination gaps still exist and which mechanisms need to be strengthened. The discussion addressed access to protection, legal assistance, information, accommodation, trust-building and specialized support for victims and persons at increased risk in mixed migration contexts, as well as the legal and policy framework and institutional response in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including operational and regulatory issues relevant to protection, status and future policy development. The event highlighted the need for further coordination and stronger cooperation between state and non-state actors, the positive impact and relevance of the role, expertise and efforts of civil society, the need for continuous capacity-building of relevant institutions in BiH at all levels, policy alignment and operational cooperation in the field, and is expected to further strengthen sustainability in combating migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings in mixed migration contexts in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

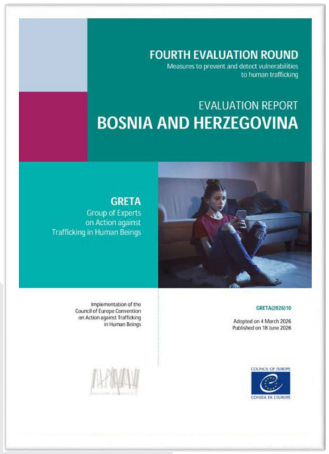
REGIONAL MEETING ON ALIGNING REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS WITH THE EU ANTI-TRAFFICKING DIRECTIVE

The regional EU4FAST project recently supported a regional meeting on aligning regulatory frameworks with the EU Anti-Trafficking Directive, held on 14 and 15 April in Tirana, marking a concrete step towards aligning regional legislation with EU standards. Representatives of the European Commission actively engaged with colleagues from across the region, helping to clarify key requirements of the revised Directive and its practical implications. Bringing together senior representatives of judicial and internal affairs institutions, the meeting resulted in a shared understanding of priority gaps in national legal frameworks and a strengthened commitment to improving their alignment in the period ahead. The event was opened by Deputy Minister of Justice of Albania Elona Hoxha, Director General for Public Security and Migration Policy at the Ministry of Interior of Albania Ami Carcani, Head of the Legislative Framework Sector at the European Commission Edoardo Gabriele Vacca, Political Officer at the EU Delegation to Albania Velislav Ivanov and Franck Fortin, CIVIPOL Project Manager for EU4FAST. Building on a series of EU4FAST multi-agency workshops already held across the Western Balkans region in 2025, the regional exchange confirmed the need to strengthen cross-border referral mechanisms and more consistent data protection practices in line with EU standards. On the first day of the event, following a European Commission presentation addressing anonymized statistical data, taking into account the forthcoming study supported by the EU Anti-Trafficking Centre, participants discussed challenges and best practices in the process of revising regulatory frameworks for combating trafficking in human beings in light of the consolidated EU Anti-Trafficking Directive. Contributions by Jenny Kotz Bjerlestam and Annali Kristiansen from the Danish Institute for Human Rights further supported participants in

identifying practical solutions to enable the secure exchange of information for the protection of victims in accordance with the GDPR, which is a key challenge in trafficking in human beings cases linked to migration. The need to strengthen regulatory frameworks for cross-border referral mechanisms was highlighted as a key priority for the region, as emphasized by Erwann Tor, EU4FAST Policy and Legislation Strategy Coordinator at Expertise France. As a concrete follow-up, EU4FAST will continue to support normative reforms through targeted workshops in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia in 2026, maintaining momentum towards full alignment with the EU Anti-Trafficking Directive and improved victim protection across the Western Balkans. EU4FAST is jointly funded by the European Commission and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Italian Ministry of the Interior and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken).



FOURTH GRETA EVALUATION REPORT FOR BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA PUBLISHED



On 18 June 2026, GRETA published the report of the fourth evaluation round. In its report, the **Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)** welcomes the steps taken by Bosnia and Herzegovina to strengthen its response to trafficking in human beings, while highlighting the need for further progress in the areas of prevention, victim identification, provision of assistance, free legal aid and access to compensation.

GRETA notes a number of positive developments since the previous evaluation, including the adoption of the new Strategy for Combating Trafficking in human beings for the period 2024–2027, amendments to the Criminal Code of Brčko District aimed at strengthening the legislative framework for combating trafficking in human beings, proactive work by mobile teams to identify victims, specialized training for professionals, and a significant increase in the number of convictions for trafficking in human beings offences.

The report notes that Bosnia and Herzegovina remains a country of origin, transit and destination for victims of trafficking in human beings. Between 2022 and 2025, 177 victims were identified, approximately three quarters of whom were children. Forced begging remained the most

prevalent form of exploitation, followed by labour and sexual exploitation. GRETA also points to the increasing use of information and communication technologies by traffickers to recruit, exploit and control victims, particularly children and young people.

The report places particular emphasis on the vulnerability of Roma children, asylum seekers and migrant workers to trafficking in human beings. GRETA calls for strengthened measures to prevent trafficking in children and child marriages, improved detection of labour exploitation, strengthened procedures for identifying victims among migrants and asylum seekers, and ensuring appropriate support and protection for unaccompanied migrant children.

GRETA also notes that support services for victims remain largely dependent on funding from international donors and that the closure of the largest safe house for victims of trafficking in human beings in the country in 2024 reduced accommodation capacities, particularly for children. The report calls on the competent authorities to ensure sustainable funding for victim support services and establish specialized safe houses for child victims of trafficking in human beings.

Welcoming the progress achieved in prosecuting trafficking in human beings offences, GRETA reiterates the recommendation to establish a state compensation system for victims of trafficking in human beings, as well as to make further efforts to ensure that trafficking in human beings offences are consistently qualified and prosecuted as such. The competent authorities are also recommended to invest further in digital tools and specialized capacities to combat technology-facilitated trafficking in human beings, as well as to strengthen investigations concerning online exploitation.

The report was published on the website of the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina. (file:///C:/Users/stanislava.tanic/Downloads/%C4%8Cetvrti%20evaluacijski%20izvje%C5%A1taj%20GRETA-e%20o%20Bosni%20i%20Hercegovini_ENG.pdf)

CONFERENCE "BORDERS OF PROTECTION: MIGRATION, EXPLOITATION AND MODERN SLAVERY"

A representative of the Ministry of Security participated in an international conference organized by the Atina Association from Belgrade, in cooperation with the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Serbia, entitled: "Borders of Protection: Migration, Exploitation and Modern Slavery". The meeting highlighted that addressing migration issues is one of the priorities, both for the countries of the region and for Europe.

The conference brought together experts from the United Kingdom and the Balkan countries, and the topics included protection, prevention and accountability in the field of trafficking in human beings and modern slavery.



THE OSCE MISSION TO BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Mission supports presentation of CTHB Compendium 2015–2025 across BiH

In 2026, the OSCE Mission to BiH organized and supported the presentation of the Compendium of Jurisprudence in THB Cases 2015–2025 at several key professional and academic events across the country. The activities aimed to bring together key findings, lessons learned and good practices in combating trafficking in human beings and make them accessible to professionals working on prevention, victim identification, prosecution and victim protection.

The first presentation took place on 17 March at the University of Banja Luka Faculty of Law, bringing together representatives of law enforcement, the judiciary and other relevant stakeholders. The event was attended by 21 participants (12 women / 9 men).



The Compendium was subsequently presented on 24 and 25 April in Mostar, as part of the International Scientific Conference on Criminal Justice, providing an opportunity to share experiences and foster discussion on criminal justice responses to trafficking in human beings. The third activity took place on 5 June 2026, combining a presentation of the Compendium to members of the judiciary and police officers in Tuzla. The activity brought together 37 participants (16 women / 21 men).

Through these activities, the Mission helped ensure that the CTHB Compendium 2015–2025 became more than a publication, but rather a practical tool for sharing knowledge and experience among law enforcement, the judiciary, academia and other relevant stakeholders. By bringing the Compendium's findings directly to professionals, the activities contributed to strengthening inter-institutional understanding and supporting the application of lessons learned in Bosnia and Herzegovina's ongoing efforts to combat trafficking in human beings.

Mission strengthens police capacity to combat trafficking in human beings

In 2026, the Mission continued to support the implementation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings 2024–2027[1] by strengthening the knowledge and practical skills of police officers and other frontline professionals responsible for preventing and responding to trafficking in human beings.

As part of these efforts, the Mission supported a series of targeted anti-trafficking training activities in Doboj, Goražde and Livno, bringing together law enforcement officers and professionals working with vulnerable groups, including children and juveniles.

On 28 and 29 April 2026 in Goražde, a two-day certified training brought together 47 participants (16 women / 31 men), including 39 law enforcement officers and eight representatives of civil society. The training focused on strengthening the capacity of professionals working with children and juveniles, an especially important area given the heightened risks of exploitation and trafficking faced by children and other vulnerable groups.

The Mission also supported specialized CTHB training for police officers in Canton 10, held in Livno on 15 June 2026, with 22 law enforcement officers (13 men / 9 women) participating. This was followed by a training for police officers from Banja Luka, Doboj and Prijedor, held in Doboj on 25

[1] In particular objective 3.1 Strengthening the criminal justice response to human trafficking

June, which brought together 21 law enforcement officers (16 men / 5 women).

By delivering training directly to police and other frontline professionals across different parts of the country, these activities contributed to translating the priorities of the applicable anti-trafficking Strategy 2024–2027 into practical action at the local level. They strengthened the ability of those most likely to encounter potential victims to recognize indicators of trafficking, respond appropriately and co-operate with other relevant institutions.



Together, the training events reached 90 participants (45 women/45 men), helping build a more informed, co-ordinated and victim-centred response to trafficking in human beings across Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Visit of OSCE Special Representative Kari Johnstone strengthens national anti-trafficking co-operation

From 31 March to 2 April 2026, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina facilitated the visit of Dr. Kari Johnstone, OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, providing an important opportunity to strengthen dialogue and co-operation with key national anti-trafficking actors.

During her visit, Dr. Johnstone engaged with a wide range of stakeholders, including the State Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, the Deputy Minister of Security, the Chief Prosecutor of the Prosecutor's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina, civil society organizations and representatives working with asylum seekers and migrants. She also visited an asylum centre to gain first-hand insight into the challenges of identifying potential victims of trafficking among people in mixed migration flows.



At an event organized by Vaša prava BiH and EU4FAST, Dr. Johnstone highlighted OSCE tools and efforts to combat trafficking and stressed the importance of ensuring that victims in vulnerable and mixed migration settings are identified and protected.

The visit provided a platform to discuss practical steps for strengthening prevention, victim identification, protection and prosecution, while reinforcing co-operation between national institutions and international partners. By bringing the OSCE's expertise and tools directly into dialogue with national stakeholders, the visit contributed to keeping the fight against trafficking high on the national agenda and supporting a more co-ordinated, victim-centred response in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

International exchange of experiences on new forms of human trafficking

On 20 and 21 April 2026, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina supported the participation of Stanislava Tanić, Head of the Department for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings at the Ministry of Security of BiH, at the 26th Alliance against Trafficking in Persons Conference in Vienna.



The conference brought together anti-trafficking practitioners and experts to examine emerging trends and challenges, with particular attention to trafficking for the purpose of forced criminality, including cyber-enabled fraud, drug distribution and other forms of organized criminal activity.

The discussions highlighted the complex realities faced by victims who are coerced into committing criminal acts and the continuing challenges in their timely identification. Survivor testimonies provided a particularly powerful reminder that failure to recognize victims at an early stage can have long-lasting consequences, including criminal records and potential civil liability.

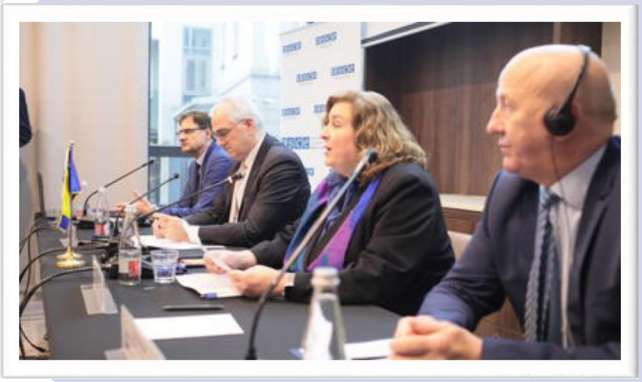
The conference also underscored the role of national preventive mechanisms in identifying victims who may enter the penitentiary system without being recognized as victims, reinforcing the need for stronger co-operation among law enforcement, justice, penitentiary and victim-support institutions.

Participation in the Alliance provided Bosnia and Herzegovina with an opportunity to exchange national experience, learn from international practice and strengthen its understanding of emerging trafficking risks. The discussions and lessons from the conference can inform ongoing efforts to further develop a systematic, co-ordinated and victim-centred response to trafficking in human beings, in line with the priorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings 2024–2027.

Building trafficking-free supply chains through stronger public-private co-operation

On 1 and 2 April 2026, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (Mission) brought together government institutions, civil society and private-sector representatives for a seminar on combating trafficking in human beings in supply chains, with a particular focus on the hospitality sector.

Organized jointly by the Mission, the OSCE Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, , and the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the seminar highlighted the important role businesses can play in preventing trafficking and labour exploitation.



Participants were introduced to the Mission's efforts to promote trafficking-free procurement and supply chains and heard directly from

Mission suppliers about practical experiences and challenges. The discussions also connected these efforts with Bosnia and Herzegovina's strategic framework for combating trafficking, including priorities related to prevention, victim protection, prosecution and partnership-building.

The seminar helped move the anti-trafficking discussion beyond traditional law enforcement responses and into the private sector, highlighting that preventing exploitation requires action across the entire supply chain. By strengthening dialogue between public authorities, civil society and businesses, the initiative contributed to building greater awareness of trafficking risks and identifying practical opportunities for businesses to become active partners in preventing trafficking and labour exploitation.

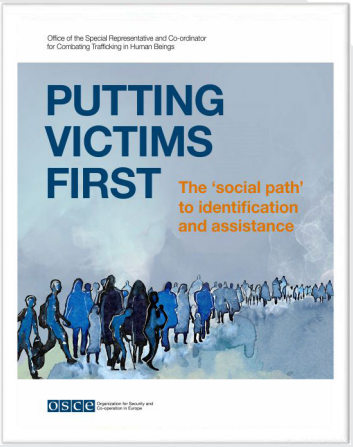
Mission promotes a victim-centred approach to early identification and assistance

On 26 May 2026, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina participated in a regional online workshop on the early and effective identification of victims of trafficking in human beings and access to assistance, organized in co-operation with the OSCE Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and OSCE field operations across the Western Balkans.

The workshop brought together more than 60 practitioners from across the region, including 14 participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina (7 men / 7 women), including seven law enforcement officers, four representatives of international organizations and three representatives of civil society.

Discussions focused on a persistent challenge in the anti-trafficking response: victims should not have to enter or participate in criminal proceedings in order to access protection and assistance. Participants explored how linking support to criminal justice processes can create barriers to identification and assistance, particularly for people in vulnerable situations and those affected by migration. The workshop introduced and discussed the OSCE-promoted "social path" approach, which enables victims to be identified and referred to assistance through social protection systems, independently of criminal proceedings. This approach offers an important opportunity to strengthen early identification and ensure that support is based first and foremost on victims' needs.

To support the practical application of this approach in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the OSCE Mission to BiH translated the OSCE publication *Putting Victims First: The "Social Path" to Identification and Assistance* into the official languages of BiH, making this practical resource accessible to national practitioners. The translated publication is now available to relevant institutions and professionals in BiH.



By combining regional exchange with access to practical guidance in local languages, the Mission is supporting the translation of international standards and recommendations into practical national action, contributing to a more accessible, co-ordinated and victim-centred system of identification, referral and assistance.

Regional Workshop on Trafficking in Human Beings in Cyber Scam Operations

On 2 and 3 June, the Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina supported the participation of five national professionals - two police officers, a labour inspector, a prosecutor and a recruitment agency representative - in a regional workshop on trafficking in human beings in cyber scam operations, held in Bar, Montenegro. Organized by

the OSCE Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, in co-operation with OSCE field operations in the region, the workshop brought together law enforcement, prosecutors, labour inspectors, private-sector representatives and anti-trafficking experts.

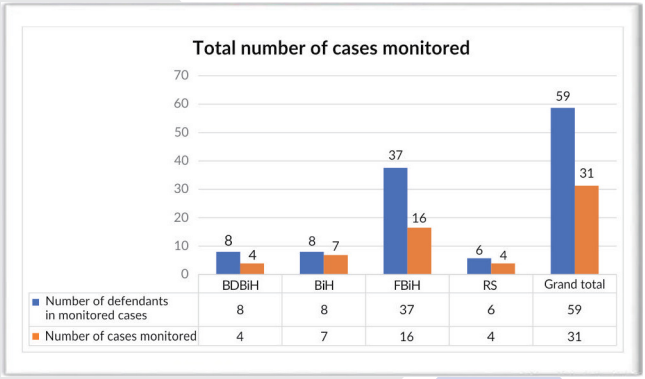


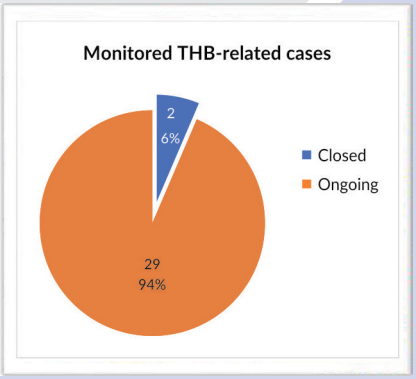
The workshop examined the growing spread of cyber scam operations in the Western Balkans and their links to trafficking for forced criminality. Participants explored deceptive recruitment, labour exploitation, digital technologies and fraudulent business structures, while exchanging practices on victim identification, cross-border co-operation, investigation and prosecution. Particular attention was given to corporate accountability, human rights due diligence and the role of recruitment agencies.

This activity strengthened national stakeholders' capacity to recognize and address emerging trafficking risks associated with cyber scam operations and enhanced inter-institutional and regional co-operation for more effective prevention, victim protection and prosecution.

MONITORING FINDINGS

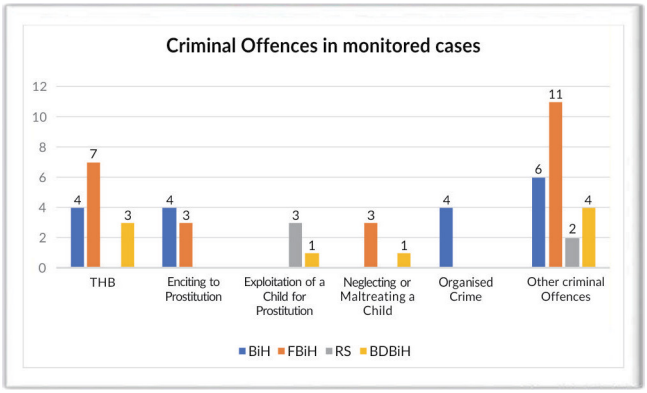
The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina monitors THB and trafficking-related cases in order to identify the best practices and shortcomings in prosecutorial and judicial responses to human trafficking. Between 1 January 2026 and 30 June 2026, the Mission monitored 31 cases that have been either legally qualified as criminal offences of trafficking in human beings (THB) as stipulated in the applicable criminal legislation in BiH, or, regardless of their legal qualification, the cases where the salient facts indicated the existence of the required elements of the criminal offences of THB.





Monitored cases included 29 ongoing and 2 cases that was finalized in the reporting period.

The monitored cases included 59 defendants (48 men and 11 women). As shown in the chart below the monitored cases refer to the criminal offence of international THB under Article 186 of the Criminal Code of BiH (CC BiH) in 4 cases; the criminal offence of THB under Article 210a CC FBiH in 7 cases, and the criminal offence of THB under Article 207a CC BDBiH in 3 cases.



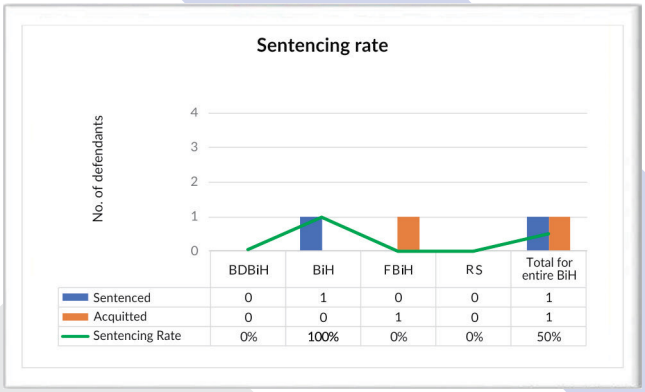
Seven **cases** concern conduct involving the enticement of persons into prostitution: four cases were charged under Article 187 CC BiH for international procurement to prostitution, while in 3 cases the charges from indictments refer to the criminal offence of **enticing to prostitution** from Article 210 CC FBiH. In **four cases**, the charges refer to the criminal offence of **exploitation of a child for pornography**: Article 175 CC RS in 3 cases and Article 207i CC BDBiH in one case.

In **four cases**, the charges refer to the criminal offence of **neglecting and maltreating a child**: Article 219 CC FBiH in three cases and Article 216 CC BDBiH in one case.

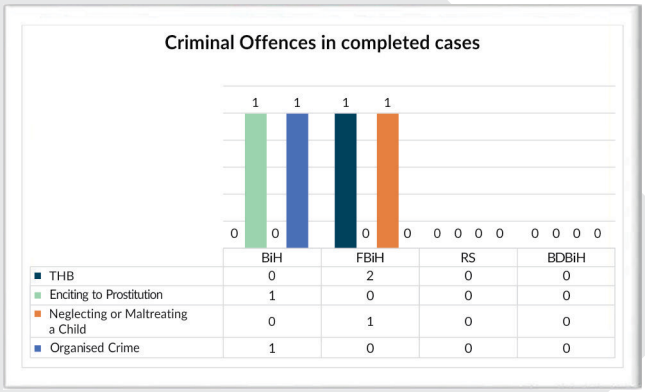
Four of the monitored cases concerns organized crime under Article 250 CC BiH. In addition to the trafficking-related offences, the indictments in the monitored cases included charges for various other criminal offences, including sexual offences against children and juveniles, drug-related offences, money laundering, deprivation of liberty, document forgery, bribery, and other related offences.



During the reporting period in one case the Court of BiH found one defendant guilty and sentenced her to one year of imprisonment, while in another case in the FBiH, one defendant was acquitted of THB charges.



In the completed cases in the reporting period the court decisions referred to the following criminal offences:



During the reporting period, a total of 157 victims were identified in monitored THB cases, including 29 men and 128 women. Among them, 78 victims were subjected to gender-related offenses. In terms of ethnic representation, 85 victims were Bosniaks, 15 were Serbs, 19 belonged to other ethnic groups, and the ethnicity of 38 victims remained unknown. In terms of citizenship, 129 are citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 12 of Serbia, 1 of Afghanistan, for 15 victims the citizenship is unknown.

During the reporting period, no compensation claim was awarded within the criminal proceedings. In cases where such claim had been submitted, the injured party was referred to pursue it in the civil proceedings. In one ongoing case, an additional compensation claims were filed however it has not been decided yet as the first-instance criminal proceedings are still pending before the court.

In the monitored cases, no requests by prosecutors for the confiscation of unlawfully acquired proceeds were recorded.



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