

The background features a large, light grey triangle pointing downwards, centered on the page. This triangle is surrounded by several dark blue triangles of various sizes, some pointing upwards and others downwards, creating a dynamic, geometric pattern. The overall design is clean and modern, using a limited color palette of blue and grey.

# Biannual Bulletin

July - December 2024

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

## STATISTICAL DATA FOR 2024

In 2024, a total of 37 people were identified as potential victims of human trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with 16 female victims and 21 male victims, 12 adult victims (seven male victims and five female victims), and 25 minor victims (11 female and 14 male). In regards to types of exploitation, in 2024 there were 12 cases of begging, six cases of sexual exploitation, eight cases of labor exploitation, and ten other types of exploitation reported. In regards to nationality, 24 victims are from Bosnia and Herzegovina, while 13 victims are foreign nationals, including one Russian, eight Turkish, Croatian, Afghan, and German nationals. During the reporting period, 24 human trafficking victims were housed in safe houses in BiH.

## “SUMMER POLICE SCHOOL”

The Council of Europe project supported the organization of the “Summer Police School” of the Police of Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2024. The summer school syllabus is intended to serve as a preventive program for young people as well as a special community policing initiative. Participants in this school range in age from 15 to 35 years. The Summer Police School took place from 20 to 23 August 2024. The Project also supported 58 participants’ visit to the State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA) on 22 August 2024, which was also supported by the BDBiH Coordination Body for Combating Human Trafficking. The visit focused on “raising awareness of the issue of trafficking of human beings.”



## SUPPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE ANTI-TRAFFICKING PROJECT IN ORGANIZATION OF SYMPOSIUM OF PROSECUTORS (PANEL ON TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS)

The Council of Europe anti-trafficking project, in collaboration with partners (OSCE Mission to BiH, IOM, IFS EMMAUS, and EU4FAST), **organized a panel on the issue of trafficking in human beings at the Annual Symposium of Prosecutors on held from 1 to 4 September in Neum**, with the goal of supporting capacity building of judicial professionals in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as it has done every year. The Symposium gathered 39 professionals, including prosecutors, representatives from law enforcement agencies and academia, as well as international and non-governmental organizations. Every year, this event serves as a training platform.

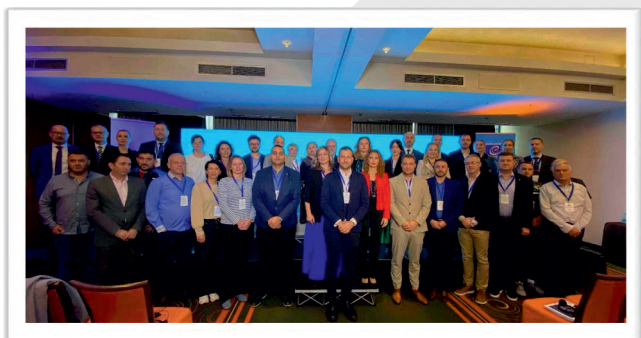


The panel discussed referral mechanisms, victims’ access to justice, accommodation procedures, safe house operations, victim-centered and trauma-informed approaches, and the issue of victims’ consent, particularly in cyber-related human trafficking cases.

The Council of Europe’s educators held a workshop on victims’ rights and the situations that victims face when they first meet with professionals.

They also discussed providing free legal assistance to victims of human trafficking, as well as emerging challenges associated with human trafficking cases involving the internet and technology, such as significant difficulties in collecting digital evidence.

## **REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON “THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING: CHANGING APPROACHES FOR A MORE EFFECTIVE RESPONSE”**



The Council of Europe project, in co-operation with sister projects combating human trafficking in Serbia and North Macedonia, and with the support of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Ministry of Security, organized a regional conference on the challenges posed by the growing use of information and communication technologies (ICT) for the recruitment, control, and exploitation of trafficked victims. On 2 and 3 October 2024, more than 50 local and regional experts met in Sarajevo for a two-day conference to discuss these challenges and share best practices. Particular emphasis was placed on the protection and exchange of digital evidence in trafficking cases, as well as how ICT can help to strengthen trafficking prevention and improve victims' access to services. The focus was also on collaboration and partnerships among governments, technology companies, financial institutions, and civil society. The conference resulted in new contacts and

increased collaboration among experts from various industries and agencies..

## **CONSULTATIONS WITH INSTITUTIONS AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS ON ACTION AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**



The Council of Europe project supported a co-ordination meeting organized by the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina held on 10 and 11 October 2024 in Sarajevo. Thirty participants of the co-ordination meeting discussed and provided feedback on the actual situation on the ground in the field of combating trafficking in human beings. They also discussed the development of action plans and the implementation of the newly adopted Strategy.

## CoE WORKSHOP ON THE USE OF CONFISCATED PROPERTY FOR COMPENSATION OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

On 30 and 31 October in Jahorina, with the aim of initiating a discussion on possibilities of establishing a mechanism for compensation of human trafficking victims using confiscated assets from traffickers, the Council of Europe anti-trafficking action and the BiH Ministry of Security, co-organized the workshop titled *“Trafficking in human beings, financial investigations, and confiscation and use of confiscated property for compensation of victims of human trafficking”*. The discussion focused on the specific challenges of conducting financial investigations, identifying, locating, and assessing specific types of assets acquired through human trafficking, and preventing and suppressing money laundering in the context of human trafficking as a predicate crime. The workshop resulted in conclusions and recommendations for future action in this area, which will be considered when developing a new Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking in BiH.



The workshop gathered 30 experts. The importance of cross-institutional and international collaboration in the detection, monitoring, and temporary and permanent confiscation of property obtained through human trafficking was emphasized. The workshop also discussed the management of confiscated property and the potential for social re-use of confiscated profits in order to assist, rehabilitate, and compensate victims of human trafficking. Presentations included the Prosecutor's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina's

approach to this issue, as well as best practices for permanently confiscating illegal assets obtained through human trafficking.

## CERTIFIED TRAINERS CONDUCTED THE FIRST INDEPENDENT TRAINING

Certified trainers (14), selected from police agencies and labor inspectorates, conducted a series of training sessions on combating human trafficking for the purpose of labor exploitation for more than 50 professionals from Bosnia and Herzegovina between April and June 2024, using modules and materials developed by the Council of Europe. This initiative marks their **first independent engagement** as emerging focal points for knowledge-sharing and capacity-building, helping to ensure the long-term **sustainability and continuous improvement of local efforts to combat human trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina**.



The one-day basic training sessions took place in Banja Luka (18 November), Bihać (19 November), Brčko (20 November), and Sarajevo (21 November). They covered important topics like basic elements, mechanisms for combating human trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the legal framework, and indicators for identifying victims of trafficking. Trainers emphasized the **critical importance of a multi-sectoral approach**, specifically encouraging collaboration between labor inspectors and law enforcement agencies. Participants were also given the opportunity to interact with real-life cases of labor trafficking, with some encountering human trafficking issues for the first time.



Certified officials were awarded certificates at the CoE project's final event on 5 December 2024 in Sarajevo.

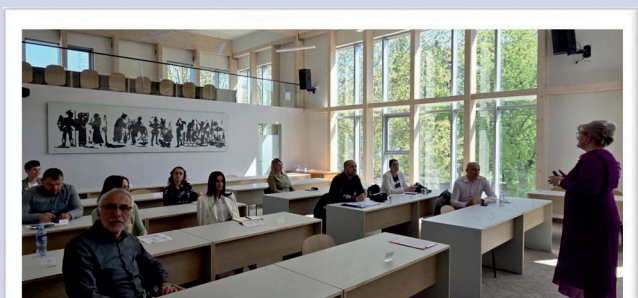
## **AS PART OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S GRANT PROGRAMME, THE ASSOCIATION "LAND OF CHILDREN IN BiH" IMPLEMENTED A PROJECT WITH A FOCUS ON THE PREVENTION OF CHILD TRAFFICKING**

Between 15 February and 25 November 2024, the Association "Land of Children in BiH" (Zemlja djece u BiH) from Tuzla implemented, through the allocated grants, the project *"Improving the National Referral Mechanism for Combating Child Trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina in Five Local Communities"*. The results include, but are not limited to, the establishment of local referral mechanisms coordinated by social protection centers in the target communities of Olovo, Kiseljak, Velika Kladuša, and Brčko District BiH, which function as local multi-sectoral teams and represent an operational framework for the identification, referral, and protection of potential victims of child trafficking. Additionally, 10 workshops and three trainings for local institutions were organized, focusing on preventive measures and identification. In addition, three protocols for prevention, proactive identification, and referral in cases of child trafficking were signed in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Olovo, Kiseljak, Velika Kladuša), Standard Operating Procedures were developed in the Brčko District BiH (a document submitted to

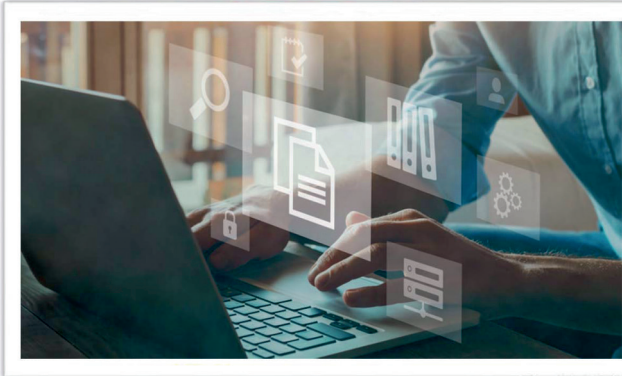
the Brčko District BiH Government for adoption), and a draft framework of operating procedures for Republika Srpska was developed, which was used in the development of comprehensive operating procedures for combating human trafficking.

## **AS PART OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S GRANT PROGRAMME, THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE IN MOSTAR IMPLEMENTED A PROJECT WITH A FOCUS ON VICTIMS' RIGHTS AND FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE**

Between 31 May and 15 November 2024, the Human Rights Centre in Mostar, through the allocated grants, implemented the project *"Improving Access to Justice for Victims of Human Trafficking through Free Legal Assistance"*. Some of the outcomes included: increasing the capacity of members of the Free Legal Aid Network (FLA Network), lawyers, judges, and prosecutors through two trainings (30 legal experts); developing and implementing the Network's Action Plan on Access to Justice and Free Legal Aid in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2024-2026); A Memorandum of Understanding to Strengthen the Provision of Legal Assistance and Free Legal Assistance to Victims of Human Trafficking was signed by 13 Network members.



## COUNCIL OF EUROPE IMPLEMENTED AN UPDATED VERSION OF THE ONLINE HELP TRAINING ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING



The Council of Europe's Anti-Trafficking Project in Bosnia and Herzegovina implemented another online HELP training on human trafficking in the second half of 2024, which was developed by the Council of Europe's HELP Programme.

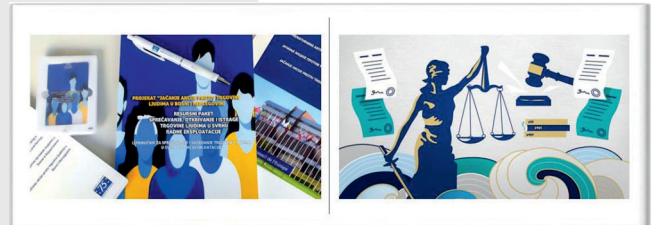
The HELP online training was launched on 20 September (completed on 10 December) and is an updated version of the Council of Europe's general module on human trafficking. The goal was to improve the ability of legal and other relevant professionals to detect, identify, investigate, prosecute, and convict trafficking cases while also protecting victims' rights in accordance with the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings.

The updated course covered the most recent practice of the European Court of Human Rights and the European Court of Justice, as well as the European Union and Council of Europe's legal frameworks. The course content has also been adjusted to reflect the BiH legal framework. Out of 36 professionals, 21 completed all modules and received certificates.

During the five years of implementing the Anti-trafficking project, the Council of Europe organized six online HELP trainings, which were successfully completed by 107 BiH professionals.

## NEW TOOLS FOR EFFECTIVE PREVENTION, DETECTION AND INVESTIGATION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

As part of its action against human trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council of Europe has developed and produced a new **Resource pack** with **a Handbook** and **training materials** to improve the prevention, detection, and investigation of **human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation**.



The developed materials have already been used by the trainers which were **certified as part of Council of Europe project** in the period between April and June 2024. These expert trainers have **conducted their first independent basic trainings in November** for about 60 law enforcement officers and labor inspectors. Thanks to their training, together with the new Resource pack, these experts will continue to pass the knowledge on to their colleagues. They are also on the Ministry of Security BiH's list of trainers.

In addition, a **Resource pack for providers of free legal aid** on rights of victims was developed (Trafficking in human beings: **phenomenon, the status and the rights of victims: manual, leaflet for victims of trafficking, leaflet for providers of legal aid and materials for trainers**). This resource pack will be used for trainings on the rights of victims of human trafficking in criminal proceedings that will be organized for free legal assistance providers, lawyers, and NGOs in 2025. Resource packs are available also on the web portal of the Ministry of Security BiH and at disposal for use by any interested institutions and experts.

## FINAL CONFERENCE OF THE PROJECT “VOICE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING”



In July 2024, the final conference of the project “The Voice of Civil Society Organizations in Combating Human Trafficking”, funded by the European Union, was held. The conference brought together key stakeholders from across BiH, highlighting challenges and achievements in combating human trafficking. On this occasion, the *Report on the results of monitoring policies to combat human trafficking within the State Referral Mechanism in Bosnia and Herzegovina* was presented, which emphasizes the shortcomings in the treatment of victims. Speakers highlighted the need for better co-ordination between institutions and NGOs, especially in the area of protection of underage victims.

The *Report on the results of monitoring policies to combat human trafficking within the State Referral Mechanism in Bosnia and Herzegovina* provides a detailed overview of challenges in combating trafficking in human beings, with the focus on institutional responses and assistance to victims in the country. The report analyzes the implementation of national legislation and strategies, including the activities of co-ordination teams and non-governmental organizations, which,

through monitoring, have highlighted numerous improvements and shortcomings in the treatment of victims of human trafficking. Particular attention is paid to women and children, whose status in society is particularly vulnerable in the process of combating human trafficking. Recommendations for further improvement of legislative frameworks and institutional capacities have also been developed, and the report also includes analyses of conducted case studies.

## PROJECT OF STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS AND SUPPORT OFFICERS

As part of the project *Strengthening the Capacity of Victims of Human Trafficking and Support Officers*, implemented through the USAID/INSPIRE program, a traditional and online campaign were conducted with the aim of increasing awareness on human trafficking in the digital environment. Particular emphasis was placed on increasing all target groups’ knowledge of reporting mechanisms and available support for victims of human trafficking, as well as raising general public awareness about various forms of human trafficking via digital technologies and methods of protection.





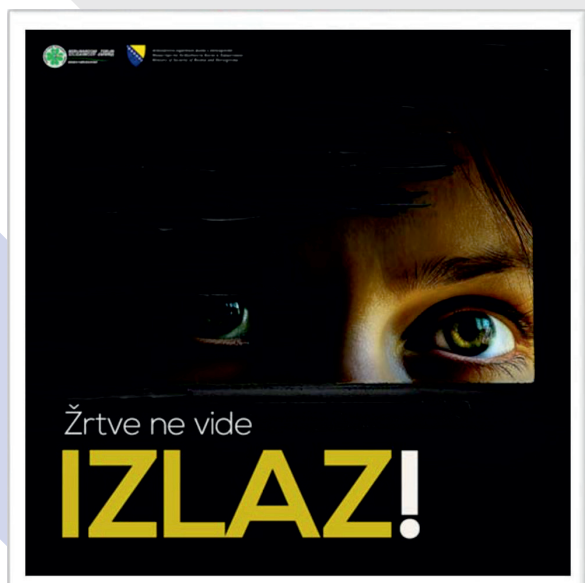
During the reporting period, particular focus was placed on the media campaign, which included radio jingles, a city light campaign, and innovative online activities aimed at raising awareness and educating target audiences.

One of the key results of the project is the development of a *Manual for providing support to witnesses and victims of human trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with a special emphasis on children*. The Manual is an invaluable resource for professionals from various institutions who work directly with victims, as it provides clear guidelines for ensuring their rights are protected during court proceedings. Special emphasis was placed on legal and psychological support for children, who are among the most vulnerable victims, emphasizing the importance of free legal aid. The Manual, in accordance with international standards and national legal frameworks, provides practical information and recommendations for all experts working to protect and support victims of human trafficking.

campaign “Together for Security” which aims to raise awareness on human trafficking through the Internet. The campaign was aimed at victims and at-risk groups, particularly children and youth, as well as BiH citizens looking for work abroad. The campaign made a significant contribution to educating the public about safe internet use, reporting methods, and protection mechanisms by utilizing digital tools such as web platforms, social networks, visuals, reels, and expert podcasts.

An online survey was part of the activity, and it revealed a high level of awareness about the phenomenon of human trafficking, as well as disturbing data about the reckless sharing of personal information when looking for work online. The campaign successfully met the project's objectives, contributing to increased awareness of human trafficking in the digital environment, support mechanisms, and prevention. The collected data will be used to develop future strategies to combat this problem in BiH.

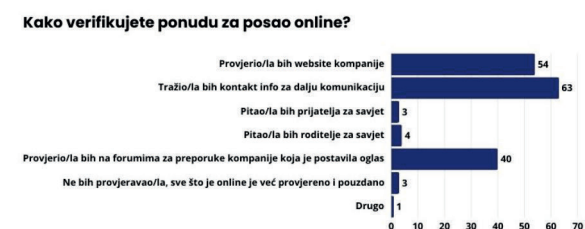
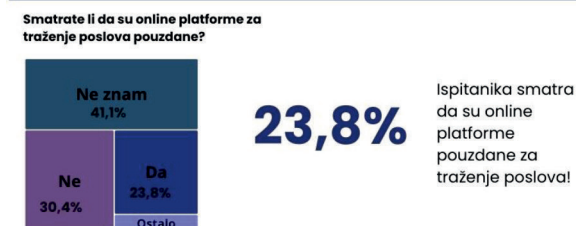
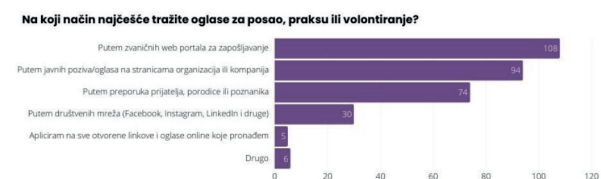
## EU ANTI-TRAFFICKING DAY LJUDIMA



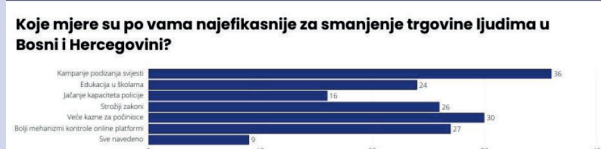
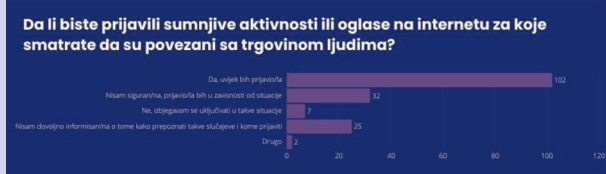
In October 2024, with special activities implemented on 18 October (the EU Anti-trafficking Day), MFS-EMMAUS, with the support of the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, implemented an innovative online







99 ispitanika je navelo da su ostavili svoje ime i prezime prilikom online traženja posla (59%), dok ih je 94 ostavilo svoj mail kontakt (56%). Također, 73 ispitanika su nekada ostavila svoju biografiju, koja sadrži veliki broj ličnih podataka (44%), dok je 44 ispitanika ostavilo svoju fotografiju (26%).



36 ispitanika smatra da su kampanje najefikasnije za smanjenje trgovine ljudima (21%), dok 24 ispitanika smatraju da bi bojom edukacijom u školama doprinijeli rješavanju ovog problema (14%). Veće kazne za počinioce su najefikasnije za 30 ispitanika, koji smatraju da bi većim kaznama, odnosno reformom zakonodavstva smanjili broj slučajeva vezanih za trgovinu ljudima (18%).

**UKOLIKO STE ŽRTVA TRGOVINE LJUDIMA ILI SUMNJATE NA TRGOVINU LJUDIMA, ANONIMNO PRIJAVLJIVANJE JE MOGUĆE PUTEV WEB PORTALA WWW.SIGURNODIJETESBA I WWW.EURCENTER.BA ILI PUTEV BESPLATNE LINIJE ZA SAVJETE I PODRŠKUNU: 0800 22 323**

## CO-ORDINATION MEETING OF THE KEY ACTORS OF THE CO-ORDINATION MECHANISM FOR COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN BiH

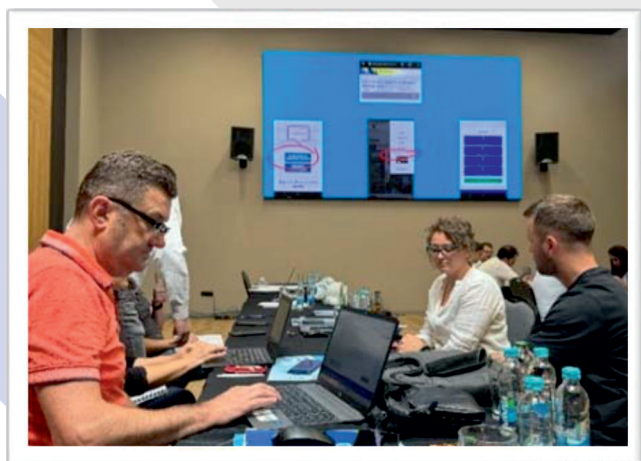
As part of the projects “BiH: Prevention and Protection-Sensitive Processing of Trafficking in Persons” and “Western Balkans Joint Actions against Migrant Smuggling and Human Trafficking” (WBJAST), IOM BiH organized a regular co-ordination meeting of local coordinators for combating human trafficking on Jahorina on 9 July 2024.



The meeting aimed to provide an overview of the current situation, ongoing and planned activities within the coordination teams, with a special emphasis on the Strategy for Combating Human Trafficking (2024-2027) and the development of local action plans. Representatives from international organizations working to combat human trafficking also attended the meeting to coordinate future project activities and ensure their efficient implementation.

## **VALIDATION WORKSHOP FOR ADAPTATION OF DIGITAL APPLICATION FOR PROACTIVE IDENTIFICATION OF VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

Based on the findings and recommendations from the validation workshop held in Jahorina on 10 July 2024, the IOM will work on adapting the application for proactive identification of (potential) victims of human trafficking, which was previously developed in collaboration with BiH's Ministry of Security.



The workshop's goal was to gather feedback and recommendations from 24 key stakeholders involved in BiH's response to human trafficking on how to most effectively update the application to capture new observed trends (e.g., migrant labor exploitation and digitally enabled

human trafficking) and simplify its indicators, thereby increasing its use by practitioners and the general public. The workshop produced a set of recommendations that will serve as the foundation for future steps in adapting the application.

## **CHAINALYSIS - CHALLENGES AND TRENDS IN CRYPTOCURRENCY MONITORING**

IOM supported the organization of a workshop on cryptocurrency monitoring held by Chainalysis, a company specializing in cryptocurrency-related financial investigations.

The workshop was held on 1 August 2024 at the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MUP) of Republika Srpska (RS) in Banja Luka.

Twenty-four participants were trained on blockchain analysis, user interface navigation, and practical approaches to investigating cryptocurrency-related crimes, including generating leads, investigative tactics, as well as on digital asset forfeiture.

## **XVII PROSECUTORIAL SYMPOSIUM**

IOM participated in the organization of Panel II - "Combating Human Trafficking" within the XVII Prosecutorial Symposium, held in Neum (BiH) from 2 to 4 September 2024. The panel was co-organized with the support of the WBJAST project, the OSCE Mission to BiH, the Council of Europe, GIZ and the International Solidarity Forum – Emmaus. The panel encouraged the active participation of 31 participants, including prosecutors, judges, police and representatives of non-governmental organizations from Bosnia and Herzegovina.





Participants discussed real-life cases and exchanged views on modern investigative techniques, with a special emphasis on victim-sensitive approaches, supported by insights from law enforcement, legal and psychological experts.

## NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL TRAINING OF TRAINERS: “DIGITAL INVESTIGATIONS”

The “Empowering Professionals in Combating Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling: Digital Investigations” training for 30 participants (12 women, 18 men) took place in Banja Luka from 24 to 26 September 2024. This training was organized as a continuation of the regional trainer training, which resulted in the formation of a group of certified trainers who can now share their knowledge at the national level. It is worth noting that the state prosecutor, a SIPA investigator, and investigators from the Border Police (BP) and the Ministry of Interior RS all served as educators during this training. The training was organized in collaboration with the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska’s Centers for the Education of Judges and Prosecutors (JPTC FBiH and RS). The primary goal was to train prosecutors, police officers, and investigators to work with high-tech crime cases and digital investigation techniques in order to improve their ability to investigate and prosecute cases of human trafficking and smuggling where crimes are enabled by digital means.

## REGIONAL CONFERENCE “LIBERALIZATION OF ACCESS TO THE LABOUR MARKET: POTENTIAL FOR REGULAR MIGRATION AND PREVENTION OF RISKS RELATED TO PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING”



On 14 and 15 October 2024 in Belgrade, IOM held a Regional Conference “*Liberalization of Access to the Labour Market: Potential for Regular Migration and Prevention of Risks related to Precarious Employment and Human Trafficking*”. The event was hosted by the Republic of Serbia’s Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs and the Centre for the Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking, with support from the German Development Cooperation’s Global Program “Shaping Development-Oriented Migration” (MEG) and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) in co-operation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The Conference was attended by 146 representatives from competent state institutions, prosecutor’s offices, courts, independent institutions, international organizations, civil society organizations, researchers, and academics from the Western Balkans region, including nine from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## **NGO NOVI POČETAK (NEW BEGINNING) - PROVIDING DIRECT AID**

As part of the WBJAST project, IOM provided direct support to the non-governmental organization “New Beginning” in 2024, with the goal of renewing the organization’s activities and mobilizing beneficiaries to actively participate in the prevention of human trafficking. Recognizing the critical role of survivors’ participation in national referral mechanisms (NRMs), particularly in shaping decision-making, policies, and reintegration processes, the project awarded a grant to New Beginnings, BiH’s only survivor-led organization, to equip office space and build internal capacity for members, with the goal of providing effective protection and support to survivors.

## **DIGITAL AWARENESS RAISING CAMPAIGN ON COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

The campaign used IOM social media to raise awareness, promote empathy, collective action, and encourage people to report suspicious activity, seek help, and participate in anti-trafficking efforts. The campaign emphasized key issues such as the risks of labor exploitation (targeting both local and foreign workers), including forced begging, the dangers of human trafficking in the digital space and sports, and the promotion of regular migration routes as a preventive measure. At the end of the activity, the campaign had reached 1,194,614 people (51.4% women, 700,181; 48.6% men, 662,547), with 8,976,439 views and 21,480 clicks on the fake job ad.

## **SUMMER POLICE SCHOOL, BRČKO DISTRIKT BiH**



IOM supported the annual Summer Police School in Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to raise community awareness of human trafficking. This initiative was held from 20 to 23 August 2024, for high school and college students in the District, with the goal of not only improving students’ understanding of police work, but also encouraging police officers to actively engage in crime prevention, strengthening young people’s resilience, and improving social cohesion.

## **THIRD MOOT COURT STATE COMPETITION**



A partnership was formed with the University of Mostar, which provided assistance in organizing the third annual state-level moot court competition “Ius Versus Iustitiam”.



This event, co-organized with the OSCE Mission to BiH and BiH's High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council, focused on human rights and human trafficking.

The competition was based on a specific case of human trafficking currently before the European Court of Human Rights. Sixteen law students from universities throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina took part, guided by their professors.

## **SPECIALIST TRAINING FOR POLICE OFFICERS: HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND LABOUR EXPLOITATION**

IOM organized a sectoral training for cantonal police officers and police agencies in Buna from 23 to 24 October 2024, with the goal of enabling participants to recognize key indicators and warning signs of potential victims of trafficking in persons (P/VoTs), as well as improving their knowledge and empowering them to combat human trafficking and labor exploitation.

The training consisted of a theoretical part focused on identifying indicators and applying a victim-sensitive approach, followed by practical exercises in which the participants used and deepened their understanding of the acquired knowledge.

## **"TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS - SIMULATION OF LABOUR EXPLOITATION TRIAL"**

In co-operation with the FBiH Judicial and Prosecutorial Training Centre, IOM organized an inter-sectoral training "*Human Trafficking—Simulation of Trials in Cases of Labour Exploitation*" for judicial officials and law enforcement agency

representatives in Konjic from 2 to 4 December 2024.

The training used a simulation approach, and participants had the opportunity to play various roles, including judges, prosecutors, and their associates, as well as defense, defendants, witnesses, and lawyers, while working on a labor exploitation case. The focus was also on improving victims' access to adequate protection during investigative and judicial proceedings.



## **ACTIVITIES OF THE WOMEN'S RIGHTS CENTRE**

From July to December 2024, the Women's Rights Centre continued to provide free legal and psychological support to victims of human trafficking, providing 74 legal services in total.



Continuous communication was maintained with the injured parties in which they were informed about the course of their proceedings, the basic rights they have during the proceedings, the concept of criminal proceedings, basic terms such as court, detention, investigation, prosecutor,

hearing in court, hearing in the investigation, interview with experts, the obligation to tell the truth, and the concept of a compensation claim, i.e. the rights they have as the injured party.

After receiving the findings and opinion of a medical expert, one injured party filed a motion for compensation claim with the court and the prosecutor's office. In order to exercise and protect victims' basic rights, the Women's Rights Centre maintained constant communication with the competent prosecutor's offices, social work centers, and courts, as well as the Safe Houses where minor victims are housed.

In the reporting period, the following activities were carried out:

- Signed Protocols on co-operation with 4 centres for social work, which laid the foundations for long-term co-operation and orientation towards strengthening capacities and resources in the work on cases of human trafficking.
- The campaign to inform institutional and non-institutional actors is aimed at all actors in the protection system chain with whom the contact was established when working on human trafficking cases. All actors were informed on the possibilities of using free legal assistance and psychological support service for victims of human trafficking.
- On 29 October 2024, Women's Rights Centre held an Expert Forum in Tuzla on the topic "The Role of Social Work Centres for Easier Access to Compensation for Victims of Human Trafficking", which brought together 26 social workers from the BD BiH, Tuzla and Posavina Cantons, as well as the Bijeljina Region and the Eastern Bosnia Region. The Forum represents a contribution to creating a more favourable environment and systemic support for a better status, more efficient representation of rights and interests, and protection of victims of human trafficking.
- The campaign "Voice of victims of human trafficking" "tells" the stories of victims of human trafficking and "awakens" the need to ensure that not a single person, not a single child, experiences similar forms of exploitation. A total of seven short videos have been published and can be found on the YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@CzppZZ/videos> as well as on individual links. The videos were used in all of the Centre's activities, but also as an awareness-

raising tool when publishing announcements on the occasion of the EU Anti-trafficking Day and the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery.

- AlJazeera published a text on experiences in working with trafficking victims: <https://balkans.aljazeera.net teme/2024/7/30/borba-protiv-trgovine-ljudim-iskustva-zrtava-i-pomagaca-u-regionu>.

## **PROJECT "STRENGTHENING PROACTIVE IDENTIFICATION, MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE PREVENTION AND FIGHT AGAINST HUMAN SMUGGLING AND TRAFFICKING IN BIH (AND THE REGION)"**

As part of the project "Strengthening proactive identification, mental health, and psychosocial support for the prevention and fight against smuggling and trafficking in human beings in BiH (and the region)", funded as part of the GIZ regional project EU4FAST, with the aim of strengthening the role and effectiveness of proactive/mobile identification measures and adequate response in providing protection and safety to children, potential victims of human trafficking, World In 2024, the City of Cazin established three Mobile Identification Teams in Una-Sana Canton (Bihać, Bosanska Krupa, and Cazin). Two trainings were organized for 55 members of multisector MITs, police, and social work centres from 11 locations (Sarajevo, Mostar, Tuzla, Banja Luka, Bijeljina, Bihać, Visoko, Živinice, Bosanska Krupa, Cazin and Zvornik) to improve their capacities and support for mobile identification teams.

## TRAINING FOR MEMBERS OF THE CENTRE FOR SOCIAL WORK



A one-day training for 24 members of the Banja Luka Social Work Centre was organized with the aim of supporting the strengthening of their knowledge and capacities in the field of human trafficking and recognizing potential cases and protecting potential victims.



## MANUAL FOR IDENTIFICATION AND TREATMENT OF POTENTIAL VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR STAFF IN TEMPORARY RECEPTION CENTRES

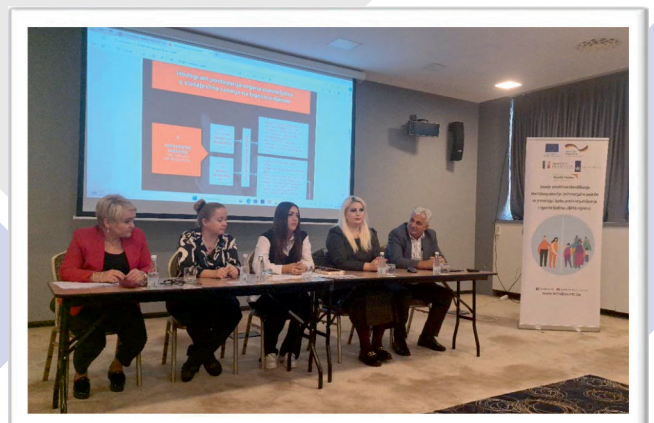
To ensure an efficient referral mechanism within temporary reception centres, World Vision BiH, in partnership with the Ministry of Security of BiH and the Service for Foreigners' Affairs, has developed a Manual for Identification and Treatment of Potential Victims of Human Trafficking for temporary reception centre staff. This manual

aims to standardize processes and strengthen institutional responses to human trafficking risks. The manual outlines procedures for promptly identifying and treating potential victims of human trafficking, with a focus on vulnerable groups such as migrants and asylum seekers.

## WORKSHOP FOR WORLD VISION EMPLOYEES IN TEMPORARY RECEPTION CENTRES

World Vision BiH organized a workshop for 24 employees in temporary reception centers in Ušivak, Blažuj, and Borići to strengthen their capacity to provide 24/7 support and protection to beneficiaries. The workshop focused on recognizing potential cases and applying the Manual's guidelines. Trained personnel became key players in the referral process, ensuring victims received timely assistance and the involvement of appropriate institutions.

## MARKING THE EU ANTI-TRAFFICKING DAY



To mark the EU Anti-trafficking Day, World Vision BiH, within the project "Strengthening proactive identification, mental health, and psychosocial support for the prevention and fight against



smuggling and trafficking in human beings in BiH (and the region)", funded as part of the GIZ regional project EU4FAST, supported a workshop on the topic "Strengthening the role of mobile identification teams". The event was organized in collaboration with the Sarajevo Canton's Coordination Team for Combating Human Trafficking with the goal of improving and better understanding the role and activities of the Mobile Team for Proactive Identification of Potential Victims of Human Trafficking at the cantonal level.

## THE DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE FOR PROVIDING FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE OF THE HERZEGOVINA-NERETVA CANTON APPOINTED

Following a hiatus of several years, the Director of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton Institute for the Provision of Free Legal Assistance was appointed. This important decision was a result of the Dignitet Association and NDC's intensive *Right to Legal Aid - Mostar* campaign, which was launched as part of the PRAGG project - Proactive Citizens. The campaign's goal was to ensure that marginalized groups of citizens, **including victims of human trafficking**, could finally exercise their legal right to free legal representation.

A large number of Mostar residents, legal experts, civil society organizations, religious representatives, media, and public figures supported the initiative. With the appointment of the Institute's Director, the process of providing free legal assistance in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton has finally begun after 11 years of waiting. This decision will directly benefit thousands of citizens, including women victims of violence, pensioners on low incomes, single parents, the unemployed, the disabled, and many others in need<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> More on: <https://startbih.ba/clanak/dignitet-i-ndc-pozdravili-odlu-ku-vlade-o-odabiru-direktorice-zavoda-za-besplatnu-pravnu-pomoc-hnz-a/257273>

Although the Institute was formally established 11 years ago, it has only recently become operational due to a lack of management appointments. Now that this issue has been resolved, the Dignitet Association faces a new challenge: ensuring that citizens in all canton municipalities receive timely information about the availability of free legal services. Co-operation with civil society organizations and local communities will continue to ensure that everyone who needs help knows where and how to get it.

## FIRST MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ACTION PLAN TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR THE INSTITUTIONS OF BiH 2024-2027

Following the adoption of Bosnia and Herzegovina's new Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking for 2024-2027, a state-level Working Group was formed to develop an Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking for BiH institutions. The working group's first meeting was held on 16 December 2024, on the premises of BiH's Ministry of Security. The International Organization for Migration in Bosnia and Herzegovina (IOM BiH), in collaboration with the Crime Policy Research Centre (CPRC), provides expert and logistical support for this process.

The methodology for developing the action plan was presented at the first meeting, while working group members were given working materials such as the report on monitoring and evaluating the Strategy's implementation and action plans for combating human trafficking from 2020 to 2023. The meeting was also used to agree on next steps, working methods, deadlines, and the date and location for the working group's second meeting.



# THE OSCE MISSION TO BIH'S EFFORTS IN COMBATING HUMAN RIGHTS TRAFFICKING IN BIH

## Capacity-Building Activities

The OSCE Mission to BiH's activities in the second half of 2024 focused heavily on capacity-building initiatives.

In its broader efforts to improve the identification and assistance of victims of trafficking in mixed migration contexts, the Mission worked with international and national partners to deliver capacity-building events. To clarify the differences between smuggling and trafficking, the Mission collaborated with UNHCR to hold training sessions on 15 and 17 October in Banja Luka and Sarajevo, respectively. The sessions were attended by 54 senior police officers (42 men and 12 women).



On 26 September, the Mission hosted a victim-centered training on child begging as trafficking in Zenica. This event brought together 33 professionals (25 men and eight women), including police officers and social workers, to discuss challenges in the national referral mechanism for child begging.

The Mission in co-operation with partners supported a panel discussion on prosecuting trafficking cases at the Annual Prosecutorial Symposium, held in Neum from 1 to 4 September, in collaboration with international and national partners. This event brought together 31 professionals, including prosecutors, law enforcement officials, academics, and members of international and non-governmental organizations.

Recognizing the importance of educating future legal professionals, the Mission, in collaboration with international partners, sponsored two events for law students in 2024. The Third State University Moot Court Competition in Mostar, held from 2 to 4 October, brought together law students from Zenica, Tuzla, Bihać, and Mostar to argue a human trafficking case based on ECHR jurisprudence. On 9 December the Mission also organized a workshop on combating THB for students at the Banja Luka Law Faculty.

## Translation of the OSR/CTHB's publication Invisible Victims: The Nexus Between Disabilities and Trafficking in Human Beings



To raise awareness about the intersection of disability and trafficking, the OSCE Mission to BiH translated the OSR/CTHB's publication [Invisible Victims: The Nexus Between Disabilities and Trafficking in Human Beings](#).

This report highlights how persons with disabilities are impacted by trafficking and offers recommendations for integrating disability-related concerns into anti-trafficking policies and measures.

## International Co-operation



On 12 and 13 September 2024 in Vienna, Austria, the Mission provided an opportunity to the RS Coordinator for Combating THB to present subnational efforts to include survivors and minority representatives in anti-trafficking action plans at Meeting of National Anti-Trafficking

Co-ordinators and Rapporteurs or equivalent mechanisms.

Furthermore, from 16 to 17 September, the Mission supported BiH's participation at a [regional conference](#) on ethical supply chains held in Budva, Montenegro. The regional conference was organized by the OSCE.

This event focused on strategies to combat trafficking for labor exploitation.

Two representatives from BiH joined 43 participants (23 women and 20 men) from the region's anti-trafficking and business sectors. The Mission also facilitated the participation of a BiH Ministry of Security representative at a [workshop](#) held in Vienna on 30 October, where he delivered a presentation on combating discrimination against minority groups and improving access to justice for trafficking victims.

### Awareness-raising Activities

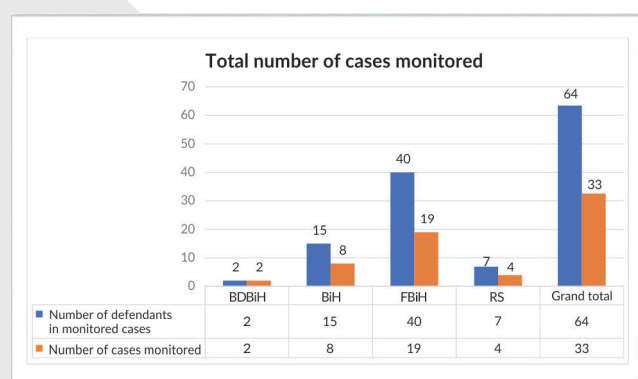
On 30 July, the OSCE Mission to BiH, together with OSR/CTHB, hosted a [workshop](#) on vulnerabilities and human trafficking at its HO premises to mark the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons.

This event brought together 30 professionals (13 men and 17 women) from ministries, prosecution offices, civil society, and international organizations to discuss vulnerabilities among minorities, children, and persons with disabilities. On 18 October, the Mission conducted a social media campaign to mark European Anti-Trafficking Day.

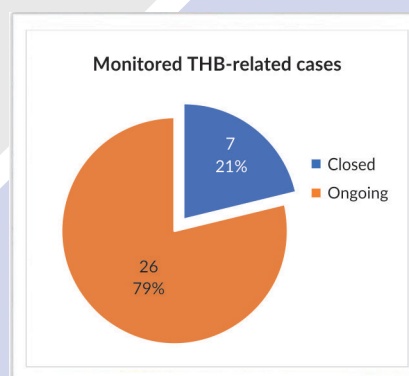


## MONITORING FINDINGS

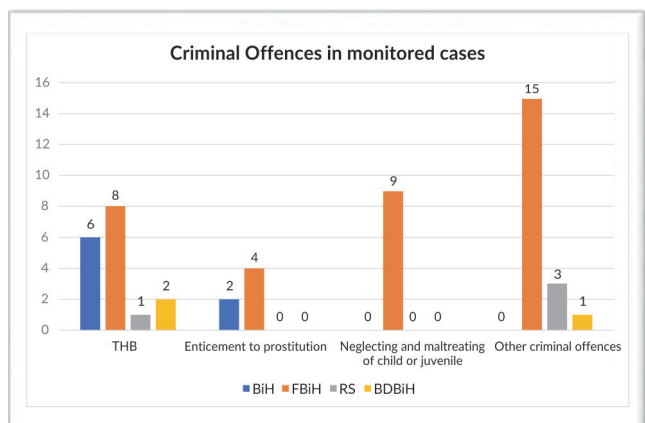
The OSCE Mission to BiH monitors THB and trafficking-related cases to identify best practices and weaknesses in prosecutorial and judicial responses to human trafficking. Between 1 January 2024 and 31 December 2024, the Mission monitored 33 cases that were either legally qualified as criminal offences of human trafficking (THB) under BiH's applicable criminal legislation, or, regardless of legal qualification, cases where the salient facts indicated the existence of the required elements of THB criminal offences.



Monitored cases included 26 ongoing and 7 cases that were finalized in the period 1 January 2024 – 31 December 2024.



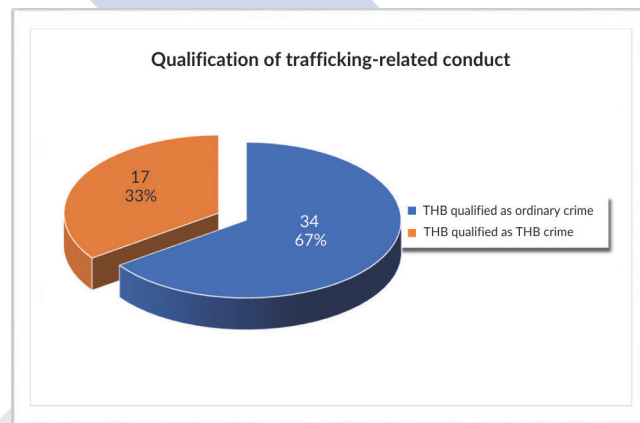
The monitored cases included 64 defendants (55 men and 9 women). As shown in the chart below the monitored cases refer to the criminal offence of THB under Article 186 of the Criminal Code of BiH (CC BiH) in 6 cases; Article 146 of the CC RS in 1 case; the criminal offence of THB under Article 210a CC FBiH in 5 cases and 3 cases under Article 210b CC FBiH; and the criminal offence of THB under Article 207a CC BDBiH in 2 cases.



In 2 monitored cases court decisions refer to the criminal offence of international enticement to prostitution prescribed under Article 187 CC BiH; in 4 cases court decisions refer to the criminal offence of enticement to prostitution under Article 210 CC FBiH.

In 9 cases charges refer to the criminal offence of neglecting and maltreating of a child or juvenile (CC FBiH, Art. 219 - 9 cases, CC RS, Art. 207 - 0 cases, 2017 CC RS, Art. 187 - 0 cases, and CC BDBiH, Art. 216 - 0 cases).

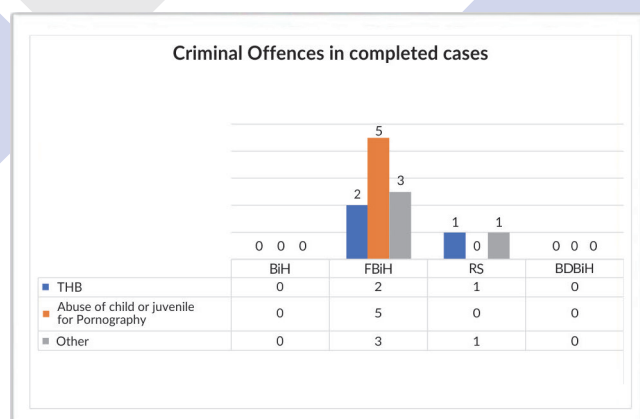
Other charges in the monitored cases included criminal offences such as the Satisfying Lust in Front of a Child or Juvenile (FBiH CC Art. 209 - 3 cases); Abuse of Child for Pornography (FBiH CC Art. 211 - 3 cases and RS CC Art. 175 - 1 case); Introducing a child to pornography (FBiH CC Art. 212 - 2 cases); Sexual Intercourse with a Child (FBiH CC Art. 207 - 2 case); Illegal production of drugs (FBiH CC Art. 238 - 2 cases); Abduction of a Child or Juvenile (FBiH CC Art. 217 - 1 case); Unlawful Deprivation of Freedom (FBiH CC Art. 179 - 1 case); Rape (FBiH CC Art. 203 - 1 case); Lechery (FBiH CC Art. 208 - 1 case); Extramarital union with a child or juvenile (RS CC Art. 184 - 1 case); Domestic Violence (BDBiH CC Art. 218 - 1 case).



In 7 cases in the reporting period (January 2024 - December 2024), the courts found ten defendants guilty and acquitted two defendants. Five defendants were given suspended sentences, four defendants were sentenced to imprisonment, one defendant was fined; the lowest sentence imposed was 3 months in prison suspended, and fine of 300 BAM, while the harshest pronounced sentence was 10 years in prison.



In the completed cases in the period January 2024 - December 2024 the court decisions referred to the following criminal offences







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