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

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STATISTICAL DATA ON VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS FOR 2025

In 2025, a total of 65 potential or identified victims of trafficking were registered in Bosnia and Herzegovina, of whom 44 were female and 21 were male; 15 victims were adults (9 male and 6 female) and 50 were minors (38 female and 12 male); the recorded forms of exploitation included 4 cases of forced begging, 7 of sexual exploitation, 10 of labour exploitation, 35 of other forms of exploitation, and 9 of unknown forms; with regards to nationality, 37 victims were citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, while 28 were foreign nationals, including 15 from Croatia, 2 from Slovenia, 2 from India, 2 from Spain, 1 from Belgium, 1 from France, and 5 with unknown nationality; during the reporting period, 59 trafficking victims stayed in safe houses.

Regarding the identification of victims by government institutions and non-governmental organizations, the statistics are as follows:

Government institutions identified a total of 63 victims, of whom 42 were female and 21 were male; 14 victims were adults (5 female) and 49 were minors (37 female and 12 male). The recorded forms of exploitation included 4 cases of forced begging, 10 of labour exploitation, 6 of sexual exploitation, 34 of other forms of exploitation, and 9 of unknown forms. Of these victims, 37 were citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Non-governmental organizations identified 2 victims, both female, including 1 minor and 1 adult. The recorded forms of exploitation were 1 case of sexual exploitation and 1 case of other forms of exploitation.

The statistics of victims by co-ordination teams/agencies are as follows¹: Una-Sana Canton – 8 victims; Posavina Canton – 0 victims; Tuzla Canton – 5 victims; Zenica-Doboj Canton – 4 victims; Central Bosnia Canton – 0 victims; Bosnia-Podrinje Canton Goražde – 0 victims; Herzegovina-Neretva Canton – 0 victims; West Herzegovina Canton – 0 victims; Sarajevo Canton – 0 victims; Canton 10 – 0 victims; Brčko District

¹ As per received data

BiH – 31 victims; SIPA – 10 victims; Service for Foreigners' Affairs – 2 victims; Social Work Centre – 3 victims.

The Council of Europe supported a campaign to raise awareness of child trafficking in the digital environment

In the period from April to November 2025, the Council of Europe, through a direct grant, supported MFS-EMMAUS in implementing the project “Awareness-Raising Campaign on Child Trafficking in the Digital Environment” across Bosnia and Herzegovina. The campaign aimed to raise awareness among children, young people, parents, teachers, and the wider public, with a special focus on women aged 25 to 44 and youth in high-risk digital environments. The activities included 40 visuals distributed *via* social media, generating more than 55,000 views in total; 11 educational video contents with over 3,200 views; four episodes of the podcast series “Digital Traps”; and the distribution of 1,020 promotional posters.

The campaign raised awareness on the risks of online trafficking in human beings, including grooming, sexual extortion, fake employment offers, and other forms of digital manipulation, while also promoting national reporting and support mechanisms. Through a combination of digital and offline activities, the campaign strengthened the engagement of young people and communities in preventing child trafficking in the digital environment.



European Anti-Trafficking Day marked by panel discussion on digital risks for children

On the occasion of European Anti-Trafficking Day, an interactive panel discussion titled: “Digital Traps: Preventing Human Trafficking Begins with Knowledge” was held on 18 October 2025 at the Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo. The event was organized in co-operation with the Council of Europe, the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and MFS-EMMAUS, bringing together 24 participants from civil society, youth organizations, academia, and relevant institutions.

The panel focused on the increasingly prevalent online risks faced by children, including grooming, sexual extortion (sextortion), deceptive recruitment, fake job advertisements, and the misuse of personal data in the digital environment. Particular emphasis was placed on reporting and protection mechanisms, including the Safer Internet Centre, SOS hotlines, helplines, as well as police and institutional reporting channels.

The panel discussion contributed to strengthening awareness, enhancing cross-sectoral co-operation, and promoting the active involvement of young people in the prevention of online child trafficking. As part of the campaign, a promotional video was also produced and published through the online platforms of the Council of Europe Office in Sarajevo, with the aim of ensuring a long-term impact and broader societal outreach of the prevention messages.



Enhanced capacities for financial investigations and asset confiscation in trafficking in human beings cases

In the period from May to December 2025, with the consultancy support of the Council of Europe, significant progress was made in strengthening financial investigations and asset confiscation mechanisms in trafficking cases in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through the consultancy engagement of Professor Eldan Mujanović, a manual and a multidisciplinary training curriculum on financial investigations and asset seizure were developed, based on an assessment of institutional needs, an analysis of domestic and regional case law, and the strengthening of interinstitutional co-operation. The development of additional practical and operational training materials is planned for 2026.

With the aim of applying the gained knowledge in practice, a two-day specialized workshop on financial investigations and the confiscation of assets acquired through criminal offences was held on 10 and 11 July 2025 in Jahorina. The workshop brought together 27 participants from police and security agencies, prosecutor's offices, tax and customs authorities, and relevant ministries at the state and entity levels. Through work on practical case studies and regional examples, participants enhanced their capacities to identify, temporarily freeze, and permanently confiscate assets, with a particular focus on compensation for victims of trafficking in human beings.

Additionally, during the same period, the document “Financial Aspects of Trafficking in Human Beings: General Trends, Typologies and Indicators of Money Laundering” was developed at the request of practitioners, in co-operation with the Prosecutor's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Financial Intelligence Department of SIPA (FID). The document serves as a practical tool for prosecutors, investigators, and financial intelligence analysts, and contributes to strengthening institutional preparedness and the more effective conduct of financial investigations related to human trafficking.



Training of trainers on victim-centred interviewing held in Bjelašnica, 14–15 July 2025

On 14 and 15 July 2025, the Council of Europe organized a Training of Trainers on Victim-Centred Interviewing at Hotel HAN in Bjelašnica, intended for providers of free legal aid, representatives of non-governmental organizations, and law enforcement officials in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The training brought together prosecutors, police officers, social workers, psychologists, and representatives of civil society, with the aim of strengthening both theoretical knowledge and practical skills for conducting ethical, effective, and non-traumatizing interviews with victims of trafficking. The programme was delivered through interactive sessions, simulations, and a mock trial, with particular emphasis on a trauma-informed approach, trust-building, and inter-institutional co-ordination.

As a result of the training, 14 anti-trafficking professionals were certified as trainers, equipped to transfer the acquired knowledge and methodologies within their respective institutions and professional networks. This further enhanced national capacities to protect victims' rights, improve the quality of collected evidence, and strengthen criminal prosecution efforts.



Grant awarded for the certification of professionals working with children in criminal proceedings

Within the framework of the Council of Europe project, during the period from 3 April to 30 September 2025, a direct grant was awarded to the Association “Zemlja djece u BiH” for the implementation of the project “Certification of Professionals Working with Children in Criminal Proceedings”, in co-operation with the Federal Ministry of Justice.

Through three certified training sessions held in Mostar (16-18 June), Bihać (23-25 June), and Zenica (24-25 September), a total of 89 practitioners from the police and social welfare centres were successfully trained and certified to work with children in criminal proceedings. The trainings ensured broad territorial coverage and contributed to strengthening multidisciplinary co-operation across three cantons.

As a result, professional standards in the areas of child-sensitive communication, forensic interviewing and trauma-informed approaches were enhanced, with long-term sustainability ensured through the application of standardized modules, official certification by the Federal Ministry of Justice and the engagement of certified local trainers.



Workshop within the annual conference of prosecutors – strengthening prosecutors' capacities on the rights of victims of trafficking in human beings

From 15 to 17 October 2025, the Annual Conference of Prosecutors was held in Neum, within which a three-day panel and workshop dedicated to strengthening the response to trafficking in human beings was organized. The activity was carried out in co-operation with the FBiH and RS judicial and prosecutorial training centres, the Association of Prosecutors of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the support of the OSCE Mission to BiH and EU4FAST. The workshop brought together 24 participants from prosecutor's offices, ministries of interior and justice, courts, academia, civil society organizations and international organizations. The focus was placed on early identification of victims, financial investigations, compensation mechanisms, legal remedies, and strengthening inter-institutional co-operation.

The activity contributed to enhancing the professional theoretical and practical knowledge of prosecutors and other relevant stakeholders, with the aim of ensuring more effective protection of the rights of victims of trafficking and a more efficient criminal justice response.



Enhanced regional co-operation in combating child trafficking – expert meeting on forced begging

Regional co-operation in the fight against trafficking in human beings was further strengthened through a bilateral expert meeting held in Sarajevo on 2 and 3 October, organized in co-operation with the Council of Europe's sister project in Serbia. The meeting brought together 17 representatives of institutions from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, including ministries of interior and security, courts, prosecutor's offices, victim protection and social welfare services, as well as civil society organizations.

During the meeting, participants engaged in a detailed exchange of experiences regarding cases of child trafficking for the purpose of forced begging, with a particular focus on challenges in identification, prosecution, and victim protection. The activity contributed to strengthening cross-border co-operation and improving co-ordinated responses to complex forms of trafficking in human beings in the region.



Compensation mechanism for victims of trafficking in human beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina developed and harmonized

In the period from 19 May to 9 December 2025, expert support was provided for the drafting and validation of the consolidated document “[-Compensation Mechanism for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina A Guide for Institutions and Organizations](#)”. The document was developed in line with the decentralized structure of the criminal justice system in Bosnia and Herzegovina (state level, the Federation of BiH, Republika Srpska, and Brčko District BiH) and includes updated legal and institutional analyses, international good practices, a victim-centred approach and recommendations for sustainable funding models, including the use of confiscated assets.

To ensure multi-level institutional ownership, six consultative and validation meetings were held in co-operation with anti-trafficking co-ordinators and teams at the state, entity and district levels, with the participation of 70 representatives of relevant institutions.

As a result of the consultations, consensus was reached on a proposed harmonized compensation mechanism applicable across all jurisdictions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, fully aligned with Council of Europe standards and the applicable national legislation. This established the foundations for a systemic and sustainable protection of the rights of victims of trafficking in human beings.



Study visit to the Netherlands – access to justice and compensation for victims of trafficking in human beings

From 6 to 9 October 2025, 12 legal professionals from Bosnia and Herzegovina, including providers of free legal aid and representatives of non-governmental organizations, participated in a study visit to The Hague and Amsterdam within the framework of the Council of Europe project, with the support of the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

During the visit, participants were introduced to Dutch models of legal aid and compensation for victims of trafficking, with a particular focus on coordinated support systems, inter-institutional cooperation, and effective legal remedies. The activity contributed to strengthening professional capacities and facilitating the transfer of international good practices to Bosnia and Herzegovina, thereby supporting the development of a functional and victim-centred framework for the protection of victims.



Support to survivors of trafficking in human beings through a direct Council of Europe grant

From 14 April to 15 November 2025, the Council of Europe supported the Association “Novi početak” through a direct grant for the implementation of the project “Strengthening Access to Justice and Effective Legal Remedies for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings” with a particular focus on victims of trafficking from the SerbAz case.

Through 19 collective, targeted, and field-based activities carried out across Bosnia and Herzegovina, the project included 75 persons who experienced trafficking, as well as relevant stakeholders. It provided support in collecting personal and legal documentation, offering legal information, raising awareness about labour exploitation, and strengthening mutual support among survivors.

Thanks to the project activities, the necessary documentation was successfully collected in approximately 75% of the cases covered by the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights, while the remaining cases are at an advanced stage of resolution. The project contributed to strengthening the role of survivors in processes aimed at exercising their rights and improving cooperation between civil society and relevant institutions.



STRENGTHENING PROACTIVE IDENTIFICATION AND CO-ORDINATION OF MOBILE IDENTIFICATION TEAMS

World Vision Bosnia and Herzegovina organized a workshop for members of multi-sectoral mobile identification teams operating in 11 municipalities/cities across BiH (Sarajevo, Mostar, Tuzla, Banja Luka, Bijeljina, Bihać, Visoko, Živinice, Bosanska Krupa, Cazin, and Zvornik). In order to ensure that the proactive, field-based work of

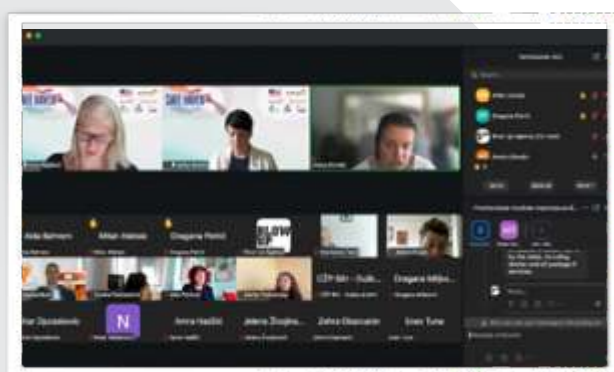
mobile teams is effective in preventing and early identifying victims of trafficking and children found begging or subjected to other forms of exploitation, the teams presented their results for the current year, as well as the challenges they face in their work and in applying a victim-centered approach. Through constructive discussion and with the support of the moderator – a member of the Anti-Trafficking Team of Tuzla Canton from the Association “Zemlja djece u BiH” – the workshop resulted in mapping key challenges and identifying possible solutions to overcome them, with the aim of making the work of mobile teams and support to potential victims more effective. The workshop was organized in November as part of the project “*Strengthening Proactive Identification, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for the Prevention of and Fight against Smuggling and Trafficking in Human Beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina (and the region)*,” funded under the GIZ regional project EU4FAST.



REGIONAL MAPPING OF SHELTER SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

As part of the regional project “*Safe Shelter: Expanding Shelter Resources for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings in the Western Balkans*,” funded by the U.S. Department of State, World Vision Bosnia and Herzegovina initiated a regional study aimed at mapping whether existing shelter services provide long-term, high-quality, and sustainable support to victims of human trafficking. The study presents findings on the extent to which accommodation services are available, integrated into victim-centred systems, and linked to effective referral mechanisms at both local and

national levels. It also examines the sustainability of funding models, recognizing that long-term sustainability cannot rely solely on donor contributions but must include predictable and sustained financing from national sources. The research covered five project countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia, with the support of local partners: Fondacija Lara (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Mary Ward Loreto (Albania), Association Atina (Serbia), and Otvorena vrata / La Strada (North Macedonia). The results of the study were presented by WVBiH through an online regional event that brought together 58 representatives of competent institutions, as well as local and international organizations from across the region. The study is available on the E-Resource Center of the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



SPECIALIZED TRAINING FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS WORKING WITH VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

As part of the regional project “*Safe Shelter: Expanding Shelter Resources for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings in the Western Balkans*,” funded by the U.S. Department of State, World Vision Bosnia and Herzegovina, in co-operation with project partner Fondacija Lara, supported and organized a two-day specialized capacity-building training for working with victims of trafficking. The training was held in Bijeljina in December 2025 and focused on psychosocial support and trauma-informed work. It was attended by 23 professionals from safe houses, social welfare centres, and civil society organizations. The training focused on understanding complex and developmental trauma, its neurobiological foundations and behavioural manifestations in victims, as well as on the practical application of a trauma-informed approach. Special emphasis was placed on creating

a safe environment when working with victims, preventing re-traumatization, and addressing the specificities of working with children and adolescents. Through practical exercises, case studies, and the exchange of experiences, participants strengthened their skills in identifying victims' needs and applying concrete interventions in their daily work.



Regular co-ordination meetings of local anti-trafficking co-ordinators

International Organization for Migration Bosnia and Herzegovina organized two regular co-ordination meetings of local co-ordinators for combating trafficking in human beings. The focus of the meetings was on reviewing the current situation, ongoing and planned activities of co-ordination teams, with particular reference to the new Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2024–2027), the development of local action plans, and the recommendations from the 2025 TIP Report.

Representatives of non-governmental and international organizations active in the field of anti-trafficking efforts also joined the October meeting, with the aim of strengthening co-ordination and ensuring more effective implementation of future project activities.



Introductory training on trafficking in human beings

On 9 July 2025, International Organization for Migration delivered a basic training for 20 frontline professionals involved in combating trafficking in human beings (14 men and 6 women). The training aimed to enhance knowledge of trafficking indicators, early identification procedures, the relevant legal framework, and the distinction between THB and migrant smuggling.

Through expert lectures, case study analysis, and scenario-based practical exercises, participants strengthened both their theoretical and practical knowledge. The training evaluation showed that 88% of participants improved their basic understanding of the topic.



Summer police school - Brčko District BiH

Together with other international and national partners, the International Organization for Migration, in co-operation with the Police of Brčko District BiH, traditionally supported the organization of the 11th Summer Police School, with the aim of raising awareness about trafficking among young people.

A total of 57 high school and university students (23 young men and 34 young women) were informed about the risks of trafficking and available reporting mechanisms. The activity was carried out in co-operation with the local anti-trafficking co-ordinator, further strengthening prevention efforts and the early identification of this criminal offence.



Labour migration academy and simulation training on combating trafficking in human beings

The Faculty of Law of the University of Zenica and the International Organization for Migration signed a Memorandum of Understanding, further strengthening institutional co-operation in the field of education on trafficking in human beings and migration management. On this basis, the “Labour Migration Academy and Simulation Training on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings” was developed and implemented.

The training brought together 23 students (14 female and 9 male) from faculties of law, political science, and philosophy in Zenica, Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Bihać, Mostar, and Tuzla. The programme covered the theoretical foundations of labour migration, the dynamics of trafficking in human beings, the legal framework and migrants' rights, complemented by interactive case studies and a simulated court proceeding.

With mentoring support from experienced practitioners from the police, prosecutor's offices, and the judiciary, students gained hands-on experience in prosecuting trafficking cases, applying a victim-centered approach. Evaluations highlighted the trial simulation and mentoring component as the key added values of the training.



Mock trial simulation

International Organization for Migration (IOM), OSCE Mission to BiH and the respective Federation of BiH and Republika Srpska judicial and prosecutorial training centres (JPTCs) partnered together to deliver [a two-day mock trial training](#) on 16 and 17 September 2025. The training immersed judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officers (12 women and 14 men) in realistic courtroom scenarios, prompting critical examination of consent in the context of labour trafficking. The training focused on the legal aspects of consent in trafficking cases and the application of a victim-centered approach.



This hands-on approach strengthened the practical application of the law, enhanced accountability of perpetrators, and reinforced the protection of victims' rights.

Digital awareness-raising campaign: “By us, for us: stories that move”

With the support of the Ministry of Justice of Sweden, the International Organization for Migration implemented a digital campaign aimed at raising awareness about the risks of trafficking in human beings and promoting regular migration routes. The campaign targeted potential migrants from countries of origin, as well as the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina considering emigration.

Through IOM Bosnia and Herzegovina's social media channels, the campaign promoted empathy, collective responsibility, and informed decision-making on migration, using accessible and educational content based on real migration experiences. The achieved results significantly exceeded the planned scope, generating more than 8.5 million impressions, 7.3 million views, and reaching 3.2 million users across the Meta and YouTube platforms.



Development of the manual “Identification of victims of human trafficking in migration flows – a handbook for police officers”

In 2025, a manual was developed for police officers to strengthen their capacities in identifying and adequately protecting potential victims of trafficking within migration flows. The manual was prepared by experts in the field with the support of the International Organization for Migration, in response to needs identified during a series of trainings for field personnel.

Given the key role of the police in early identification, the manual represents an important tool for enhancing the institutional response and the protection of vulnerable groups.



Migration information points

Since December 2025, the International Organization for Migration has established Migration Information Points in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with physical locations in Sarajevo and the Una-Sana Canton, as well as an online platform. These points provide reliable information and tailored support to different categories of users, including migrant workers, irregular migrants, international students, returnees from the diaspora, and local residents considering migration.

Services include guidance on national legislation, rights and obligations, cultural orientation, support for integration, as well as referrals to relevant institutions and specialized services.

Strengthening access to justice and effective legal remedies for victims of trafficking in human beings

As part of the project “Strengthening Access to Justice and Effective Legal Remedies for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings,” implemented with the support of the Council of Europe, an online awareness-raising campaign was carried out to inform the public about the risks of trafficking. The campaign focused on modern forms of online recruitment, fake job advertisements, grooming, sextortion, and other types of digital manipulation, targeting children and youth at risk, parents, educators, professionals, and the general public in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



As part of the campaign, 30 July – the World Day against Trafficking in Persons – was observed with activities aimed at informing citizens about forms of trafficking in the digital space, as well as available reporting and support mechanisms.

On 18 October – the European Anti-Trafficking Day – MFS-EMMAUS, in co-operation with the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina and with support from the Council of Europe, organized a panel discussion titled “Digital Traps: Preventing Human Trafficking Starts with Knowledge.” The event brought together institutional representatives, police officials, experts, and youth to strengthen multi-sectoral dialogue on modern forms of trafficking in digital environment.

Additionally, the campaign produced and distributed an informational poster and developed

four podcasts titled “Digital Traps”, covering topics such as trafficking in digital contexts, the role of institutions, and the importance of prevention and psychosocial support, further reinforcing a comprehensive preventive approach to combating trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Activities of the Safe Internet Center in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Safe Internet Center in Bosnia and Herzegovina, managed by International Forum of Solidarity – EMMAUS, continued its work from July to December 2025 on protecting children and youth in digital environments through online campaigns, public awareness activities, and preventive messaging targeted at children, parents, educators, and the wider public.

During this period, in addition to educational activities, several campaigns were carried out focusing on recognizing digital risks, with particular emphasis on the increasing occurrence of human trafficking via the internet.

The summer campaign was particularly important, aimed at child protection, focusing on the risks of unwanted photography, sharing content from beaches and swimming pools, and the long-term consequences of posting children's photos online. The campaign emphasized the importance of protecting children's privacy and responsible adult behaviour, with the clear message that children are not online content.

Through these activities, the Safe Internet Center continued to contribute to raising awareness about the link between digital safety and trafficking in human beings empowering children and youth to recognize risky situations, seek help, and protect themselves online.

Free hotline for advice and support: 0800 22 323
Anonymous reporting of inappropriate content, online violence, other forms of abuse, or human trafficking is available at: www.sigurnodijete.ba
From July to December 2025, online and offline campaigns achieved significant communication impact. Through these combined efforts, preventive messages reached over 700,000 views and shares, further strengthening the Center's visibility and contribution to combating digital risks, including trafficking in human beings.



Police operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the support of the EU4FAST project

Two recent police operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina illustrate how co-ordinated efforts contribute to dismantling organized crime and strengthening regional security. Both were carried out with the support of the regional EU4FAST project, aimed at combating trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling in the Western Balkans

The tangible results of these activities – dozens of arrested suspects, disrupted trafficking routes, and secured new investigative leads – demonstrate measurable progress in the fight against trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling. Even more importantly, they confirm that strategic EU support can directly lead to operational success and a safer environment for communities across Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Operation “NID” – combating trafficking in human beings in Sarajevo, Istočno Sarajevo, and Zavidovići

On 12 November 2025, the State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA) conducted early-morning searches of residential premises in Sarajevo, Istočno Sarajevo, and Zavidovići.

The operation targeted individuals suspected of involvement in organized crime, international trafficking in human beings, and money laundering.

The searches were carried out on the basis of court warrants and in co-ordination between SIPA and the Ministries of Interior of Republika Srpska, Sarajevo Canton, and Zenica-Doboj Canton.

Operation “ISTOK SWAT” – Dismantling Migrant Criminal Networks in Velika Kladuša
In late October 2025, in the municipality of Velika Kladuša, the Ministry of Interior of the Una-Sana Canton, in co-operation with several other law enforcement agencies and under the supervision of the Cantonal Prosecutor's Office, carried out a major operation under the code name “ISTOK SWAT.”

The targets were organized criminal groups composed of migrants of Afghan origin, reportedly involved in serious criminal offences, including kidnappings, extortion, human smuggling, and other forms of organized crime. In a parallel cross-border operation, co-operation was also established with the police of the Republic of Croatia in the neighbouring border area of Sisak-Moslavina County.

The complexity of these operations underscores the interconnectedness of migration flows, organized crime, and border security – issues with direct implications for governance, foreign investment, humanitarian protection, and regional stability. Each operation confirms strengthened institutional capacities, enhanced rule of law, and improved co-operation between jurisdictions – key elements in building a safer region.



18th annual prosecutorial conference held in Neum, Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Annual Prosecutorial Conference in Bosnia and Herzegovina was held from 14 to 17 October 2025 in Neum. The event brought together more than 120 prosecutors, legal experts, and representatives of international organizations to discuss concrete measures for improving criminal prosecution in trafficking cases and strengthening victim protection.

The conference was organized by the Association of Prosecutors of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with continuous support from the Council of Europe's project to combat trafficking, as well as significant contributions from the EU4FAST project and the OSCE Mission to BiH. For the seventh consecutive year, this partnership ensured that the event remained focused on results and tangible impact in the fight against trafficking in human beings.

This year's symposium included a panel on access to justice and effective legal remedies for victims of trafficking, supported by the EU4FAST project in co-operation with other partners. The panel was highly productive and informative, offering valuable insights into how prosecutors handle trafficking cases and emphasizing the importance of a victim-centred and trauma-informed approach. Discussions also covered referral mechanisms, access to justice, and interinstitutional co-operation – all key elements in ensuring adequate protection and support for victims.

Prosecutors, government representatives, and civil society experts shared practical experiences and explored ways to enhance the effectiveness of financial investigations, ensure compensation for victims, and improve the timely identification and protection of victims of trafficking in human beings. As a result of the discussions, participants adopted a set of conclusions and recommendations aimed at strengthening interinstitutional co-ordination, standardizing victim identification processes, and expanding access to justice and legal remedies for victims of trafficking and related criminal offences.

The continued engagement of the EU4FAST project has contributed to concrete progress in aligning prosecutorial and victim protection practices in Bosnia and Herzegovina with European standards, strengthening national capacities to deliver justice and security more effectively.



Meeting of the Western Balkans Task Force

The recent meeting of the Western Balkans Task Force in Tirana strengthened regional co-operation and set clear priorities for joint action against cross-border crime. The two-day meeting (14-15 October) brought together key representatives of Western Balkans institutions, EU Member States, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, and EU agencies – including Europol, Frontex, INTERPOL, and the EMPACT Coordinator – to address pressing cross-border security challenges.

Regional conference against forced begging and trafficking in human beings

The fight against forced child begging and trafficking in human beings is yielding results through stronger co-operation, improved co-ordination, and concrete joint actions across the Western Balkans. Within the framework of the EU4FAST project, the Regional Conference on Forced Child Begging and Trafficking in Human Beings brought together police, prosecutors, anti-trafficking institutions, non-governmental organizations, Europol, EMPACT, and international partners with the aim of turning shared responsibility into tangible progress. The conference was held in Tirana (AL) on 28 October, with the participation of regional stakeholders.

Participants enhanced dialogue on child protection, case investigations, referral mechanisms, and regional co-ordination, agreeing that while solid legal frameworks are in place, results ultimately depend on effective co-operation and mutual trust. The conference reaffirmed the collective determination to protect children from exploitation, transforming partnership into measurable impact.



The meeting was hosted by the Albanian State Police and jointly organized by the EU4FAST project and the Austrian Criminal Intelligence Service (Federal Ministry of the Interior). Discussions focused on:

- enhancing EMPACT Operational Action Plans (OAPs) for the 2026–2027 period,
- strengthening real-time intelligence exchange,
- improving operational co-ordination in the fight against migrant smuggling and organized crime.

Neritan Nallbati, Director of the Criminal Police Department of the Albanian State Police, confirmed Albania's readiness to assume a leading operational role within the Western Balkans Task Force activities. He emphasized that timely information exchange and international co-ordination remain key factors in dismantling criminal networks operating across borders.

Key outcomes include:

- agreement on priority operational areas for 2026,
- commitment to launching joint actions at the beginning of 2026,
- strengthened mechanisms for cross-border information exchange and regional co-ordination.

The meeting represents a concrete step forward in aligning regional efforts and ensuring that partnerships translate into effective action on the ground.



The Association “Vaša prava BiH” provided comprehensive free legal assistance and counselling aimed at protecting migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, and victims of trafficking in human beings in need of protection, across multiple locations, including temporary reception centers (Ušivak, Lipa, Borići, and Blažuj) as well as border areas. Its activities focused on the early identification of risks related to trafficking, legal counselling on asylum and residence procedures, individual case management, and legal representation in complex and high-risk cases. Through individual counselling, awareness-raising activities, and legal interventions, the organization supported beneficiaries in navigating administrative and judicial procedures, ensuring respect for their rights and strengthening co-operation with relevant institutions. The particular value of its work lies in its long-standing experience in handling complex cases and its close co-operation with judicial and administrative authorities, which contributes to building trust between beneficiaries and institutions.

World Vision focused on strengthening proactive identification and protection mechanisms, particularly through supporting and operationalizing Mobile Identification Teams (MITs), as well as providing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services in Temporary Reception Centers (Borići, Blažuj, and Ušivak). The interventions were aimed at enhancing co-operation with local institutions and social welfare services, improving early identification of at-risk children, and strengthening referral mechanisms and community-level protection responses. World Vision's engagement was particularly significant in linking preventive activities with broader child protection systems, ensuring that responses to risks of trafficking in human beings were integrated into existing social protection and community support frameworks.

The **Centar za razvoj omladinskog aktivizma (CROA)** (Centre for development of youth activism) implemented preventive activities focused on cyber trafficking and online exploitation, with particular emphasis on children, families, and education professionals. Between June and December 2025, CROA conducted eight training sessions for parents, ten school-based awareness sessions for students, and seven capacity-building trainings for school pedagogues. These activities contributed to strengthening digital literacy, early risk recognition, and protective capacities within schools and families, highlighting the key role of the education system in preventing risks related to trafficking in human

beings in the online environment. To ensure sustainability beyond the completion of the trainings, CROA also developed and distributed handbooks for teachers, students, and parents, further reinforcing long-term preventive efforts.

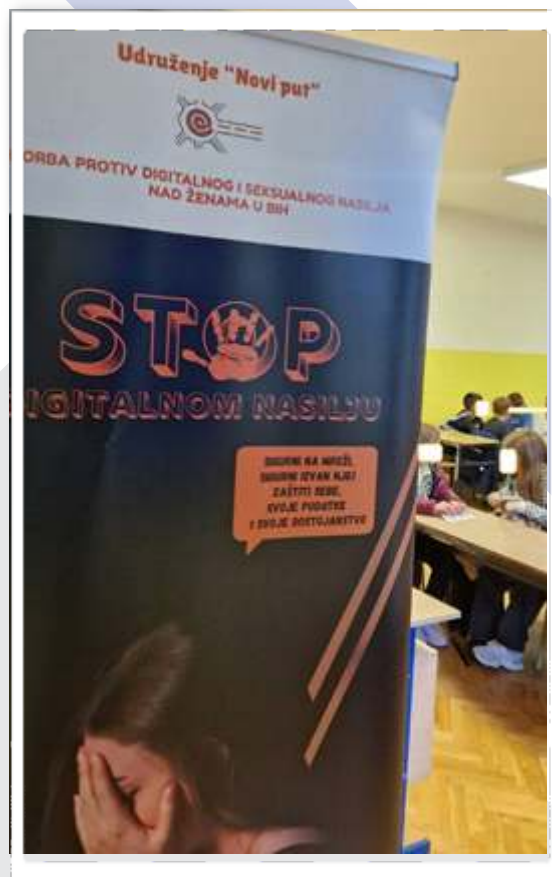
18 OCTOBER – EUROPEAN ANTI- TRAFFICKING DAY

The Association “Novi put”, in co-operation with the Co-ordination Team of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton (HNC) Government for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and with the support of the Thomson Reuters Foundation, marked 18 October – European Anti-Trafficking Day – through a media and public awareness campaign aimed at informing the wider public. In the period from July to December 2025, Association “Novi put”, with the support of the Thomson Reuters Foundation, implemented six street awareness-raising campaigns focused on the latest forms of trafficking in human beings, recruitment methods, and prevention strategies. During these campaigns, approximately 1,100 informational materials were distributed to around 2,000 members of the general public in Herzegovina-Neretva Canton (HNC) and West Herzegovina Canton (WHC). The campaigns were also conducted in Roma communities. Children and parents in Roma settlements were provided with information on ways to protect children from forced begging, labour exploitation, child forced marriages, and other possible forms of child exploitation within the chain of trafficking in human beings.



AWARENESS RAISING CAMPAIGN

With the support of the Council of Europe, the Association “Novi put” carried out 25 awareness-raising campaigns in Herzegovina-Neretva Canton (HNC) and West Herzegovina Canton (WHC) between July and December 2025, focusing on sexual and online violence. In addition to street campaigns, Association “Novi put” conducted online awareness campaigns through its social media channels, addressing the risks of trafficking in human beings and promoting prevention of trafficking and violence in the digital environment.



PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR CHILD VICTIMS

The Association “Novi put”, with the support of the UNHCR, continuously provided direct psychological and social support to children who are victims of all forms of modern slavery during the reporting period, while also working on their empowerment. Additionally, with support from the Diplomatic Winter Bazaar, Association “Novi put” offered individual and group psychosocial support to children who had survived or were at risk of various forms of exploitation.

SCHOOL WORKSHOPS IN WHC AND HNC

With the support of the Council of Europe, Association “Novi put” conducted eight interactive school workshops in WHC and HNC, reaching 182 students from primary and secondary schools. The workshops aimed to raise awareness about sexual and online violence, reporting suspicious activities, and online safety.



CAPACITY-BUILDING TRAININGS FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF RELEVANT INSTITUTIONS IN HNC AND WHC

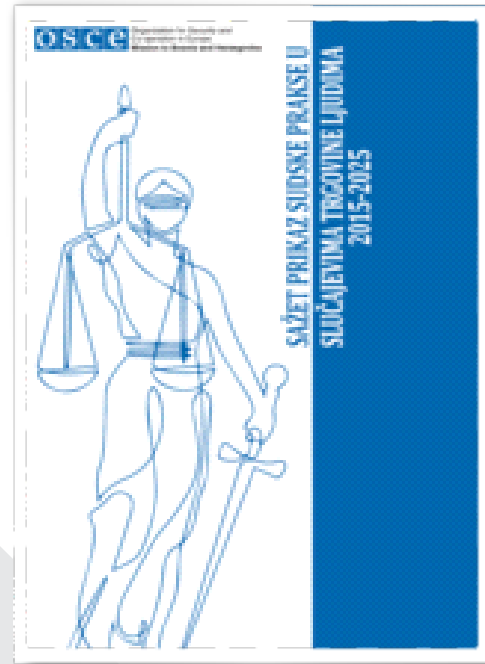
The Association “Novi put”, with the support of the Council of Europe, organized three capacity-building trainings in 2025 for representatives of relevant institutions from Herzegovina-Neretva Canton (HNC) and West Herzegovina Canton (WHC), including ministries of interior, justice, education, and social welfare, social work centres, schools, police departments, municipal courts, cantonal prosecutor's offices, as well as non-governmental organizations. The trainings focused on handling cases of sexual and online violence. Additionally, a roundtable was held for institutional and organizational representatives, during which recommendations were defined to improve interinstitutional co-operation and referral mechanisms in cases of sexual and online violence.



THE OSCE MISSION TO BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Compendium on jurisprudence in THB cases

To strengthen the capacity of judiciary to identify the elements of the criminal offence of THB and to improve the response of the criminal justice system to human trafficking, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (the Mission) supported the development of a [Compendium of Jurisprudence in THB Cases](#). The publication includes a selection of excerpts from judgments



Moot court for law students in Mostar

Recognizing the importance of educating future legal professionals, the Mission, in co-operation with the HJPC and international partners, supported two events for law students in 2025. From 8 to 10 October 2025, the Forth State University [Moot Court Competition](#) in Mostar brought together 24 law students (20 female, 4 male), their mentors from the law faculties of Zenica, Sarajevo, Tuzla, Bihać, and Mostar, and 11 professionals acting as judges on the panel. The students argued a case based on the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).



Panel discussion at the annual prosecutorial symposium

The Mission also contributed to the Annual Prosecutorial Symposium, held in Neum from 14 to 17 October 2025, by supporting – together with international and national partners – a [panel](#) discussion on prosecuting trafficking cases.



Facilitating International co-operation

In addition, with the Mission's support, a BiH representative took part in the OSCE and Council of Europe joint meeting of National Anti-Trafficking Co-ordinators and Rapporteurs, held in Strasbourg, France on 11 and 12 September 2025. The meeting focused on the role of the private sector in preventing trafficking, including responsible supply chains, co-operation with transport and digital sectors, crisis preparedness in national action plans, and the links between trafficking, drugs, and forced criminality. Through its support, the Mission enabled active BiH engagement and meaningful exchange of good practices at the international level.

Social media campaign to mark World Day against Trafficking in Persons

On 30 July 2025, the Mission conducted a social media campaign to mark World Day against Trafficking in Persons.



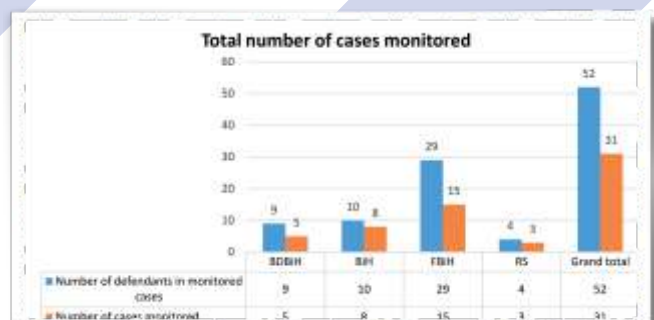
Conference to raise awareness and strengthen action against trafficking and labour exploitation in supply chains

On 18 October 2025, marking European Anti-Trafficking Day, the Mission, in co-operation with the OSR/CTHB, organized [a conference](#) in Sarajevo to raise awareness and strengthen action against human trafficking. The conference brought together representatives from the private sector, labour inspectorates, law enforcement, civil society, international organizations and the diplomatic community, highlighting shared responsibility and the need for co-ordinated action to apply human rights due diligence and prevent trafficking and labour exploitation in supply chains.

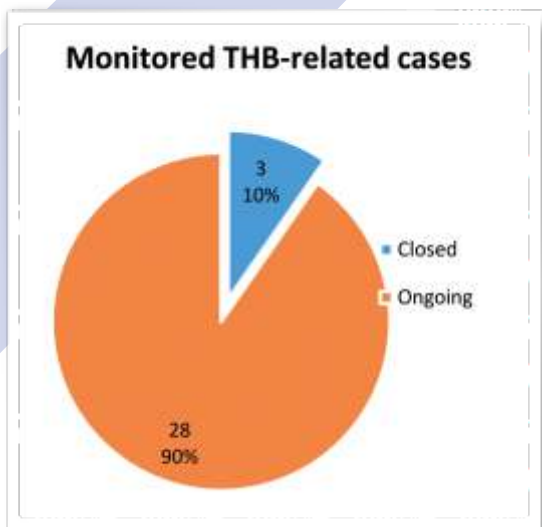


OSCE MISSION TO BIH: MONITORING FINDINGS

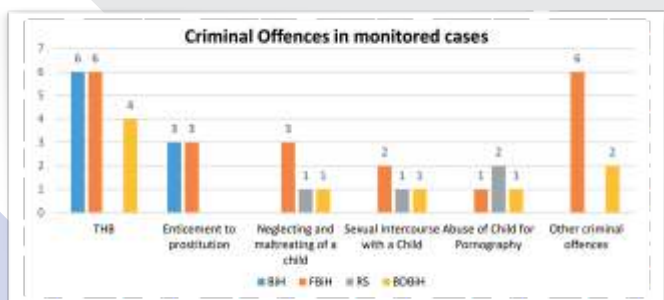
The Mission monitors THB and trafficking-related cases in order to identify the best practices and shortcomings in prosecutorial and judicial responses to human trafficking. Between 1 January 2025 - 31 December 2025, the Mission monitored 31 cases that have been either legally qualified as criminal offences 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 28 ongoing and 3 cases that was finalized in the period 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2025.



The monitored cases included 52 defendants (43 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; the criminal offence of THB under Article 210a CC FBiH in 5 cases and 1 case under Article 210b CC FBiH; and the criminal offence of THB under Article 207a CC BDBiH in 4 cases.



In 3 monitored cases court decisions refer to the criminal offence of international enticement to prostitution prescribed under Article 187 CC BiH; in 3 cases court decisions refer to the criminal offence of enticement to prostitution under Article 210 CC FBiH.

In 5 cases charges refer to the criminal offence of neglecting and maltreating of a child (CC FBiH, Art. 219 – 3 cases, CC RS, Art. 207 – 1 case, CC BDBiH, Art. 216 – 1).

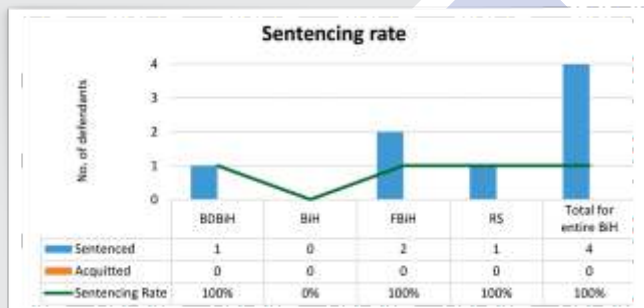
In 4 cases charges refer to the criminal offence of sexual intercourse with a child (FBiH CC Art. 207 – 2 case, RS CC Art. 172 – 1 case and CC BDBiH, Art. 207d – 1);

In 4 cases charges refer to the criminal offence of abuse of child for pornography (FBiH CC Art. 211 – 1 case, RS CC Art. 175 – 2 cases and CC BDBiH, Art. 207i – 1);

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 – 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 and BDBiH CC Art. 205 – 1 case); Domestic Violence (BDBiH CC Art. 218 – 1 case).



In one case in the reporting period (1 January 2025 – 31 December 2025), the courts found four defendants guilty and sentenced to imprisonment. The lowest sentence imposed was two years in prison, while the harshest pronounced sentence was fifteen years in prison.



In the completed cases in the period (1 January 2025 – 31 December 2025) the court decisions referred to the following criminal offences:



During the reporting period, a total of 117 victims were identified in monitored THB cases, including 21 men and 96 women. Among them, 83 victims were subjected to gender-related offenses. In terms of ethnic representation, 79 victims were Bosniak, 18 were Serb, 17 belonged to other

ethnic groups, and the ethnicity of 3 victims remained unknown. In terms of citizenship, 84 are citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 13 of Serbia, 1 of Afghanistan, for 19 victims the citizenship is unknown.

During the reporting period, in one finalized case in which a property claim had been submitted, the court referred the injured party to civil proceedings. In the ongoing cases, three additional compensation claims were filed; one of these was decided at first instance by referring the injured party to civil proceedings, while the remaining two have not yet been decided as the first-instance criminal proceedings are still pending before the court.

In the monitored cases, two requests by prosecutors for the confiscation of unlawfully acquired proceeds were recorded. However, in both the adjudicated cases during the reporting period and those still pending, no court decisions confiscating unlawfully obtained property were recorded.



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