

Conference

ENGAGING BUSINESSES IN COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN  
BEINGS FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION

Organised by the Council of Europe in co-operation with the Ministry of the  
Interior and Administration of Poland

Warsaw, Poland, 13 October 2016

Concept Note and Agenda

## Background

Recent years have seen an increased interest in addressing the role of the businesses in reducing demand for trafficking in human beings and respecting human rights. While companies generally bring benefits to society by creating employment, producing goods, rendering services and generating tax revenues, they may sometimes have an adverse impact on the enjoyment of human rights, in particular when transnational or multinational corporations are concerned. The demand for services and goods of trafficked people and related human rights violations of businesses has triggered a vigorous debate on accountability of businesses and states to prevent such violations from happening.

A number of initiatives have taken place internationally and at national level to highlight the responsibility of the state and the private sector to ensure that human trafficking does not occur in business activities, whether in the workplace, supply chains or in purchasing decisions. At national level, laws, guidelines and codes of conduct have been adopted to increase transparency and accountability of business operations with a view to respecting human rights. Public awareness campaigns have been conducted to raise consumer awareness on the products and services and the conditions under which eventually trafficked persons may have produced them.

The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, which entered into force on 1 February 2008 and has been ratified by 46 countries, aims to prevent trafficking in human beings, protect victims of trafficking, prosecute traffickers, and promote co-ordination of national actions and international co-operation. The Convention places a positive obligation on states parties to adopt and reinforce measures, including through legislation, for discouraging demand which fosters different forms of exploitation leading to human trafficking. The Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human beings (GRETA) monitors the compliance of states parties to the Convention. In its first evaluation report on Poland, as well as in other country evaluation reports, GRETA has stressed that efforts to discourage demand for services of victims of trafficking must be stepped up.

Similarly, the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings (2012-2016) encourages member states to increase their efforts to reduce demand by taking measures that target consumers and users of services as well as engage the private sector to eliminate human trafficking from the supply chains of businesses.

The broader context of business and human rights has been addressed in the Guiding Principles<sup>1</sup> for the implementation of the UN "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework for Business and Human Rights, which is the first globally agreed standard of its kind. The Principles aim at enhancing corporate respect for human rights and accountability for adverse human rights impacts. Endorsing the UN Guiding Principles, on 2 March 2016 the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers adopted Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)3 to member States on human rights and business.

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<sup>1</sup> Guiding principles on business and human rights, Implementing the United Nations "Protect, respect and Remedy" Framework, HR/PUB/11/04, United Nations, 2011.

## Objectives of the Conference

The objective of the conference - which is organised in co-operation between the Ministry of the Interior and Administration of Poland and the Council of Europe - is to take stock of international and national measures to combat human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation through engagement with the private sector. To this end, the conference will showcase emerging good practices and measures by state authorities, the business community and civil society to prevent trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation, including in supply chains. The conference will also raise awareness of the general public and consumers of goods and services that are potentially linked to human trafficking and labour exploitation. The conference should serve as a catalyst for debate and action with a view to promoting a culture of corporate social responsibility in Poland. The longer-term objective of the conference is to encourage relevant Polish stakeholders, public and private, to take action to develop effective measures to reduce demand for trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation.

## Participants

Participants will include representatives from:

The Polish Government – Ministry of the Interior and Administration, Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Development, Ministry of Science and Higher Education, National Labour Inspectorate

Members of the Interministerial Committee for Combating and Preventing Human Trafficking

Trade unions

Businesses and consulting agencies

Employment agencies

Non-governmental organisations

Academia

International/foreign entities

## Agenda

13 October 2016

- 9:30 Welcome coffee and registration
- 10:00 Welcome addresses
- Mr Adam Knych, Deputy Director of the Department for Migration Policy and Studies, Ministry of the Interior and Administration
- Ms Petya Nestorova, Executive Secretary of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings
- 10:20 Presentation of the results of the project "Improving Poland's Capacity to Prevent Trafficking in Human Beings" funded by the Norway Grants Mechanism and implemented together with the Council of Europe
- 10:20 – 10:40 Mr Zbigniew Lasocik
- Trends and framework for combating human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation in Poland
- 10:40 – 11:00 Mr Mike Dottridge
- Emerging good practice by state authorities, the business community and civil society in the area of reducing demand for human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation
- 11:00 - 11:20 Questions and discussion
- 11.20 Coffee break
- 11.35 Business initiatives in Poland to reduce demand for goods and services which use trafficking victims and forced labour
- Code of Conduct for protection of children from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism* – Ms Gabriela Kühn, Empowering Children Foundation, and Ms Katarzyna Nowak, Orbis Hotel Group
- Questions and discussion
- 12:30 Lunch
- 13:30 Ms Colleen Theron
- Business and human trafficking: risk management and due diligence solutions
- Questions and discussion

14.15 Mr Ryszard Piotrowicz

Monitoring of action against human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation: good practices identified and recommendations made by the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)

Questions and discussion

14.45 Summing up and recommendations for Poland

15.00 End of the conference