

**Committee of the Parties to the
Council of Europe Convention against
Trafficking in Human Organs (CETS No. 216)
(SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA COMMITTEE)**

Questionnaire for the 1st thematic monitoring round:

**Prevention and awareness mechanisms to counter
trafficking in human organs (THO)¹**

As adopted by the Santiago de Compostela Committee on the 3rd December 2024

Replies should be addressed to the Santiago de Compostela Committee Secretariat
(organtrafficking@coe.int)

by **30 May 2025**

¹ Theme adopted by the Committee at its plenary meeting on 26 October 2023.

NAME OF THE COUNTRY	Albania
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Please specify which state bodies/authorities (and, at the discretion of the country, where relevant, civil society and external contributors) contributed to responding to this questionnaire.

➤ **Body/authority responsible for collecting the replies:**

- Ministry of Interior

➤ **State bodies/agencies (where relevant, civil society and external contributors) that contributed to responding to this questionnaire:**

- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Health and Social Protection
- Ministry of Justice
- State Police

Introduction

1. **The Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs** (the Convention) which entered into force on 1 March 2018, requires the criminalisation of offences set out in the Convention in Articles 4-8. It sets out that states, in Europe and beyond, shall adopt specific legislation to prevent and combat the trafficking in human organs by criminalising certain acts, protecting the rights of victims of the offences established under the Convention, and promoting national and international co-operation.
2. The Committee of the Parties to the Convention (also known as the “Santiago de Compostela Committee”), established to monitor whether Parties effectively implement the Convention (Rule 26 of the Committee’s Rules of Procedure), decided that:

“3. The monitoring round shall be initiated by addressing a questionnaire on the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Convention with respect to the selected theme. The Parties shall respond to the questionnaire within the time limit set by the Santiago de Compostela Committee.”

3. As prevention and awareness is key to preventing and combating the trafficking in human organs the Santiago de Compostela Committee decided that the first monitoring round would focus on the “Prevention and awareness mechanisms to counter trafficking in human organs”.²

² Committee of the Parties of the Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs (Santiago de Compostela Committee), *List of decisions*, 4th Plenary Meeting (25-26 October 2023), T-THO (2023) LD2, paragraph 6.2.

4. On 3rd December 2024, the Santiago de Compostela Committee adopted this thematic questionnaire. Its purpose is to collect specific information on how Parties implement the Santiago de Compostela Convention with respect to the prevention and awareness mechanisms to counter trafficking in human organs. The replies to the questionnaire will be assessed against the related background information provided by the Parties when answering the “General Overview” questionnaire on the implementation of the Santiago de Compostela Convention (hereinafter “Country Profile Questionnaire” or “CPQ”), and any other relevant information from reliable sources.
5. It is recalled that, in accordance with Rule 27 of the Committee’s Rules of Procedure:

*“(…) 2. The secretariat shall address such questionnaires to the Parties through the member in the Santiago de Compostela Committee representing the Party to be monitored and who will act as “contact point”.
3. Parties shall coordinate with their respective domestic authorities to collect replies, which shall be submitted to the secretariat in one of the official languages of the Council of Europe within the time limit set by the Santiago de Compostela Committee. The replies to the questionnaires shall be detailed, as comprehensive as possible, answer all questions and contain all relevant reference texts. The replies shall be made public, unless a Party makes a reasoned request to the Santiago de Compostela Committee to keep its reply confidential.
4. The Santiago de Compostela Committee may also receive information on the implementation of the Convention from non-governmental organisations and civil society involved in preventing and combating trafficking in human organs, in one of the official languages of the Council of Europe and within the time limit set by the Santiago de Compostela Committee. The secretariat transmits these comments to the Party or Parties concerned.
5. The secretariat may request additional information if it appears that the replies are not exhaustive or are unclear. Where warranted, with the consent of the Party or Parties concerned and within the limits of budgetary appropriations, the Bureau may decide to mandate an on-site visit to the Party or Parties concerned to clarify the situation. The Bureau shall establish guidance as to the procedure governing the on-site visits pending any official guidelines agreed by the Santiago de Compostela Committee.”*

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

6. The questions in this questionnaire are grouped around Article 21, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Santiago de Compostela Convention concerning issues of preventive actions, data collection and exchange of information, training to healthcare professionals and relevant officials, and promotion of awareness-raising campaigns addressed to the general public.
7. This thematic questionnaire does not seek to collect information on the general legislative and institutional framework established by Parties to implement the Convention. Article 21, paragraphs 1, and 2 are aimed at providing for transparency in domestic transplantation systems of human organs, equitable access to transplantation services for patients, and adequate collection, analysis and exchange of information related to the offences covered by this Convention in cooperation between relevant authorities. This article also aims at strengthening the training of healthcare professionals and relevant officials and at the promotion of awareness-raising campaigns addressed to the public. This questionnaire focuses more narrowly on practical measures taken to prevent and combat against trafficking in human organs and includes highlighting protocols to identify and report trafficking in human organs,

training programmes aimed at preventing this activity, and raising awareness for patients and other groups.

8. Responses to this thematic questionnaire will be understood against the background information submitted by Parties in reply to the CPQ. Whenever warranted, Parties are invited to refer to such information. Where questions overlap between the CPQ, and this questionnaire, the replies to the latter will be assessed by the Committee to prepare its implementation reports of the Convention concerning the monitoring theme.
9. If there are differences with the information provided in response to the CPQ and the 1st monitoring round, Parties are kindly requested to specify which State bodies/agencies and, where relevant, NGOs, contributed to responding to this questionnaire.
10. Parties are kindly requested to specify whether the measure in criminal law, administrative law, and/or whichever other measure is involved when responding to each question and each part of the question.
11. Parties are kindly requested to:
 - a. answer the questions regarding central, regional and local levels, to the extent possible. Federal states may, with respect to their sovereign entities, answer the questions in a summarised way;
 - b. provide the relevant text for the relevant provision (or a summary thereof), in English or French only, whenever questions/answers refer to legislation or other regulations.

Chapter V – Prevention measures

Article 21 – Measures at domestic level

1. Each Party shall take the necessary legislative and other measures to ensure:
 - a. the existence of a transparent domestic system for the transplantation of human organs;
 - b. equitable access to transplantation services for patients;
 - c. adequate collection, analysis and exchange of information related to the offences covered by this Convention in co-operation between all relevant authorities.
2. With the aim of preventing and combatting trafficking in human organs, each Party shall take measures, as appropriate:
 - a. to provide information or strengthen training for healthcare professionals and relevant officials in the prevention of and combat against trafficking in human organs;

- b. to promote awareness-raising campaigns addressed to the general public about the unlawfulness and dangers of trafficking in human organs.

Explanatory Report

Chapter V – Prevention measures

Article 21 – Measures at domestic level

125. The purpose of Article 21 is to prevent trafficking in human organs by obliging Parties to address some of its root causes. Hence Parties shall in accordance with paragraph 1 ensure the existence of a transparent domestic system for the transplantation organs; equitable access to transplantation services for patients, and finally, adequate collection, analysis and exchange of relevant information pertaining to trafficking in human organs between all relevant domestic authorities. Parties may wish to consider the provisions of Articles 3 – 8 of the Additional protocol to the Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine concerning Transplantation of Organs and Tissues of Human Origin, when reviewing their current transplantation systems in the light of this Article.

126. The issue of “transparency” is important, because it reduces the risk of illicitly removed organs being introduced into the legitimate domestic transplantation system. “Equitable access to transplantation services” means that Parties should ensure a “level playing field” in terms of the allocation of organs for all patients awaiting implantation. Ensuring a strong cooperation between the many different competent authorities involved in combatting trafficking in human organs is a prerequisite for achieving any measure of success. In this respect, the negotiators decided to put special emphasis on the collection, analysis and exchange of information between these authorities, thus enabling them to take timely action to prevent the crimes set out in the Convention.

127. Paragraph 2, letter a, obliges Parties to take measures, as appropriate, with regard to providing information and strengthening training, e. g. on how to detect indications of trafficking in human organs, for healthcare professionals and relevant officials. According to letter b, Parties are furthermore obliged to promote, as appropriate, awareness-raising campaigns addressed to the general public on the unlawfulness and dangers of trafficking in human organs.

Preventive Measures - Identifying and reporting of THO

This section aims to collect information on internal protocols to identify trafficking in human organs for purposes of transplantation and other purposes, and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation.

Question 1.

Which legislative, policy, strategic, and other measures have been taken to develop and implement protocols to facilitate the identification of trafficking in human organs and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation³:

By those involved in the supply, procurement and transplantation programmes (both public and private agents

In the Republic of Albania, this criminal activity is provided for in Article 89/a “Illegal Organ Trafficking” of the Criminal Code, which states “The trafficking of transplants, as well as any activity related to the illegal removal and implantation of organs, is punishable by imprisonment from 3 to 10 years. When these acts are committed for profit, they are punished by imprisonment from 10 to 20 years.”

Also, Article 110/a “Trafficking in Adult Persons” of the Criminal Code specifically provides:

*“The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons through the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, abuse of office or taking advantage of a social, physical or psychological position or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to obtain the consent of a person who controls another person, for the purpose of exploiting the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or forms similar to slavery, **the removal or transplantation of organs**, as well as other forms of exploitation, both within and outside the territory of the Republic of Albania, **are punishable by imprisonment from eight to fifteen years**”.*

Whereas, Article 128/b “Trafficking in Minors” of the Criminal Code provides for an increase in the penalty:

*The recruitment, sale, transportation, transfer, concealment or reception of minors for the purpose of exploitation of prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or forms similar to slavery, **the use or transplantation of organs**, as well as other forms of exploitation, **are punishable by imprisonment from ten to twenty years**.*

Law No. 10 454, dated 21.7.2011 “On the transplantation of tissues, cells and organs in the Republic of Albania” (amended by Law No. 60/2013, dated 14.2.2013; No. 99/2024, dated 12.9.2024), and the “Regulation on the procedures for import, export and export of tissues, cells and organs of human origin for transplantation purposes” No. 416, dated 11.10.2011 are in force. The Regulation and protocols are implemented by all actors involved in supply,

³ “other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation” has the meaning provided by paragraph 20 of the Explanatory Report and by Article 4, paragraph 4, and Article 6 of the Convention.

procurement and transplantation programs, including public and private agents, in order to identify and immediately report suspected cases of legal violations.

The Ministry of Health and Social Protection works closely with other competent authorities to ensure the implementation of these protocols and the exchange of information.

In order to harmonize domestic legislation with that of the European Union, Albania has undertaken legal initiatives, such as the revision of the Criminal Code.

The draft law “On the approval of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania” is currently in the drafting phase and aims to improve the legal framework of substantive criminal law, based on the development of judicial practice, the unification of the jurisprudence of the Supreme Court and the European Court of Human Rights, the guarantee of international standards, the approximation of the legislation of the implementation of the best practices of the European Union countries, as well as the best practices of the European Union countries.

The drafting of the new Criminal Code arose precisely as a result of the frequent changes and additions reflected in the content of the current Criminal Code, the lack of effectiveness of the changes made over the years as a result of changes in sanctions for criminal offenses, the reformulation of provisions, as well as the need to harmonize provisions between them. It also seeks to ensure the compatibility of the Criminal Code with international acts in force, as well as its approximation with European Union law, given that EU membership has been one of Albania's main aspirations in recent years.

Currently, the focus of criminal law, also due to global developments, is money laundering, the fight against terrorism, the protection of financial rights, the protection of the environment, the prohibition of drug trafficking, the prohibition of illicit trade and the circulation of edged or high-powered weapons. In this context and in implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement, all measures related to the exploitation and trafficking of human beings, especially minors, provided for in European Union acts, are part of the process of drafting the new Criminal Code.

The adoption of the new Criminal Code is part of the measures set out in the National Plan for European Integration through the approximation of this draft law with European Union acts. One of these directives is Directive 2011/36 “On preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims”. Consequently, inter-institutional working groups have been set up to prepare an analysis of the level of approximation and gaps in the current criminal legislation in relation to the content of the Directive, with the aim of reflecting these shortcomings in the draft law for the adoption of the new Criminal Code.

This is because, despite the importance given in Albania to the fight against trafficking in human beings, it is essential to include in domestic legislation the provisions of Directive 2011/36 “On preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims”, as this directive establishes a minimum standard of rules regarding the definition of criminal offences and sanctions in the field of trafficking in human beings. It also presents provisions related to the gender perspective to strengthen the prevention of this crime and the protection of its victims.

Sanctions in cases of trafficking in human beings must be effective, dissuasive and proportionate. When trafficking is carried out by public officials, this is considered an aggravating circumstance and additional penalties are foreseen when legal persons are involved

in criminal activities related to trafficking in human beings. The Directive sets out the obligations of the state to assist victims of trafficking, protect child victims of the crime of trafficking in human beings and provide compensation.

Question 2.

Specify legislative, policy, strategic, and other measures that have been taken to ensure transparency and fairness in the domestic system for the transplantation of organs:

- a. Please state if there is an audit of the donation and transplants, and the transplantation system.

Based on Law No. 10 454, dated 21.7.2011 “On the transplantation of tissues, cells and organs in the Republic of Albania”, as amended, it is provided that the Ministry of Health and Social Protection is the inspection authority of the transplantation health structures, which organizes the inspection and takes the relevant measures for the implementation of the requirements of the law. Inspection procedures are regulated by order of the Minister of Health and Social Protection. Representatives of the inspection authority have the right: a) to periodically inspect the centers where activities related to the transplantation of tissues, cells and organs are carried out. The interval between two inspections should not exceed two years; b) to evaluate and verify the procedures and activities carried out in the transplantation centers; c) to check any document or other data related to the object of the inspection.

- b. If so, is this an independent audit, whether internal or external to the organisation?
- c. Does the audit have as an aim the identification of weaknesses in systems that hinder or do not facilitate the detection and reporting of suspected offences contained in articles 4 to 8, and 9 in this Convention?

Yes, the audits aim to identify weaknesses in the system, to improve the identification and reporting of suspected cases of trafficking and exploitation of human organs, in accordance with legal requirements and the convention.

- d. Please state the frequency of such audits
- e. Are the audits mandatory or voluntary?

Audits are mandatory under applicable legislation.

Data Collection, Analysis, and Exchange of Information

This section concerns the effective collection, collation, and analysis of data, and exchange of information related to the offences covered by this Convention between all relevant authorities that support the identification and prevention of trafficking in

human organs for purposes of transplantation and other purposes, and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation.

STATISTICAL DATA ON CRIMINAL OFFENCES RELATED TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR THE YEAR 2024 FROM THE FIRST INSTANCE COURTS OF GENERAL JURISDICTION

Article	Cases		Total	Convicted	Punishment measures								TOTAL
	Completed cases	Unsolved cases			Punished with fine	Up to 2 years in prison	2 to 5 years in prison	5 to 10 years in prison	10 to 25 years in prison	25 to 35 years in prison	Life imprisonment sentence	Alternative sentences	
a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
109	3	1	4	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
109/b	7	3	10	11	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	7	11
110/a	2	1	3	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
110/b	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
110/c	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
128/b	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	13	7	20	17	0	4	2	2	1	0	0	8	17

The data presented in the table analyzes criminal cases based on specific articles of the Criminal Code related to trafficking in human beings. Specifically:

- Article 109 ("Kidnapping or illegal detention of a person"),
- Article 109/b ("Extortion by threat or violence for property"),
- Article 110/a ("Trafficking of adults"),
- Article 110/b ("Benefit or use of services provided by trafficked persons"),
- Article 110/c ("Acts facilitating trafficking"), and
- Article 128/b ("Trafficking of minors").

A total of 20 cases have been identified, of which 13 have been concluded and 7 remain unresolved. 17 people were convicted, with sentences including: 4 sentences of up to 2 years, 2 sentences of 2 to 5 years, 2 sentences of 5 to 10 years, 2 sentences of 10 to 25 years and 8 cases with alternative sentences.

The most frequent and serious cases are listed in Article 109/b, for extortion by threat or violence of property, with 10 cases and 11 sentences. For trafficking of adults (Article 110/a) there were 3 cases with 2 sentences, including sentences of up to 25 years of imprisonment. Meanwhile, for trafficking of minors (Article 128/b) 2 cases with 1 sentence were handled.

DATA ON VICTIMS AND POSSIBLE VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING, IDENTIFIED IN 2024:

178 PVoT	
Status	
VoT	PVoT
15	163
Age	
Adults	Children
82	96
Sex	
M	F
65	113
Nationality	
Albanian	Foreigners
126	52

Regarding the forms of exploitation:

- Sexual exploitation - 70 VoT / PVoT;
- Forced labor - 16 VoT / PVoT;
- Begging - 59 VoT / PVoT;
- Minor criminal activities - 33 VoT / PVoT.

As seen above, there is no identified case of VoT / PVoT for organ trafficking.

STATISTICAL DATA REGARDING FREE LEGAL AID, FOR THE YEAR 2024:

- **130 victims** of human trafficking received free legal aid:
 - 127 cases were handled by licensed NGOs;
 - 3 cases were handled by Primary Legal Aid Service Centers.
- **Among the beneficiaries:**
 - 27 were minors, 103 were adults;
 - 111 were women and 19 were men;
 - 1 beneficiary belonged to the Roma/Egyptian minority.

Statistical data for 2025 (up to the reporting date):

- **24 victims** of trafficking received free legal aid;
- Among the beneficiaries:
 - 10 were minors, 14 were adults;
 - 20 were women and 4 were men.

Question 3.

- a. Which legislative, policy or other measure mandates and supports the collection, collation, analysis of data and the exchange of information between authorities in order to enable them to take timely actions to prevent the crimes set out in this Convention?
 - ✓ Joint Instruction No. 132, dated 08.09.2023 "On the establishment of the Responsible Authority for the identification, referral, protection and reintegration of victims and potential victims of trafficking" provides that: The Responsible Authority monitors the recording and periodic reporting of data on trafficking cases, identified and referred by state structures and organizations, in accordance with the standard operating procedures for the protection of victims and potential victims of trafficking (approved by Council of Ministers DCM no. 499, dated 29.08.2018).
 - ✓ Law No. 10454, dated 21.07.2011, as amended, on the transplantation of tissues and organs of human origin, provides for the monitoring and tracking of transplantation activity. Article 31 deals with tracking to ensure transparency and prevent abuse.
- b. Please indicate if there is a system in place to collect, collate and analyse data relating to offences covered by this Convention. When did this system begin to operate?

The Trafficking Investigation Sector of the State Police collects and processes statistics and analyzes data related to the criminal offense of organ trafficking. This information is also recorded and administered in the MEMEX system.

- c. Which authority has the primary responsibility for the collection, collation and analysis of data specific to offences covered by this Convention?

The Ministry of Health and Social Protection is the institution responsible for collecting and analyzing health data related to organ transplants, while the main authority responsible for collecting, organizing and analyzing data related to the criminal offense of organ trafficking is the Trafficking Investigation Sector of the State Police.

- d. Which authority is responsible for the preparation and dissemination of such reports?

The Ministry of Health and Social Protection prepares reports regarding transplants and healthcare activity, while law enforcement institutions prepare their reports on criminal activity, as well as the State Police prepares information and reports to the Ministry of Interior.

- e. Are reports shared with all relevant authorities? Please also include the frequency of such reporting.

The Ministry of Interior drafts periodic reports on the implementation of the measures of the National Action Plan for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons. Currently, the monitoring report of the National Action Plan for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons, for the period July-December 2024, has been published at the link: <https://mb.gov.al/raporte-monitorimi-dhe-strategji/>

f. Which authorities are involved in the exchange of information and reports?

All state institutions that have the obligation to implement the Plan (DCM no. 458, dated 10.07.2024 "On the approval of the National Action Plan for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons 2024 - 2025"), as well as national and international organizations operating in the anti-trafficking field, contribute to the drafting of reports in implementation of the National Action Plan for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons.

g. Do any relevant authorities not share data? If so, please specify the legal reason for not doing so.

In general, data is shared between institutions in accordance with the law. However, restrictions on data sharing may exist due to the protection of personal data or investigative secrecy.

h. Do the measures and systems permit the exchange of information with relevant authorities in different countries (at both the national and international levels)? If so, please indicate whether there is a designation of a single contact point for this exchange.

Yes, the Republic of Albania cooperates with other organizations and states within the framework of international conventions and bilateral agreements. The national point of contact for this purpose in the field of health is the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, while for criminal and investigative aspects it is the Ministry of Interior through the structures of the State Police, which exchanges information with other law enforcement agencies inside and outside the country, through Interpol, Europol and liaison officers.

Prevention and Training

This section aims to collect information on policies, strategies, plans and activities to prevent the trafficking in human organs for purposes of transplantation and other purposes, and other forms of illicit removal and transplantation. The questions concern all those whose responsibilities it is to procure and supply human organs for human transplantation and those whose responsibilities it is to prevent and combat the aforementioned activities.

Question 4

Which legislative, policy, strategic and other measures have been taken to provide training to prevent the trafficking in human organs for purposes of transplantation and other purposes, and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation to:

- a. those involved in all the stages included in the process of the procurement, supply, and transplantation programmes (both public and private agents)?

Trainings have been conducted for health professionals and other officials to identify and prevent organ trafficking. The aim of these trainings is to raise awareness and strengthen capacities to act in accordance with the law.

- b. Specialist doctors who monitor and treat recipients whose transplant has been performed in another country outside their usual place of residence?
- c. Other immunology services that perform donor-recipient histocompatibility studies for human organ transplantation?
- d. other logistical services, including transportation, for human organs for transplantation?

The transport of organs is regulated by Law No. 10454, dated 21.07.2011 and the relevant by-laws. Employees are trained to respect technical and sanitary conditions, but there is no information on specific training against trafficking.

- e. allied healthcare professionals and officials, law enforcement, customs/border surveillance services, and the regulatory authorities providing oversight of the human organ transplantation authority?

Law enforcement, customs and health authorities are involved in joint training on the fight against human trafficking, which also includes the aspect of organ trafficking, in cooperation with local and international institutions.

- f. Specialised criminal investigation units/bodies in the investigation of offences covered by this Convention?

The National Action Plan for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons 2024 - 2025 (approved by Council of Ministers DCM no. 458, dated 10.07.2024) has foreseen, among other things, the development of a series of trainings with health workers, frontline professionals, and employees of law enforcement structures.

Question 5

Are there any oversight programmes to assess the frequency and effectiveness of the training provided? If so, are there revision programmes to ensure remedial actions for any deficiencies identified?

Yes, provided in articles 27–29 of law no. 10 454.

The Anti-Trafficking Sector conducts assessments and identifies training needs in the area of combating organ trafficking and other related criminal offenses. This process is carried out in cooperation with the Local Police Directorates, taking into account field experiences and challenges encountered during operations. Upon processing the requests and analyzing specific requirements, the Anti-Trafficking Sector collaborates with the Training Sector within the General Directorate of State Police to design and implement specialized training programs, with the objective of enhancing the operational capacities of police structures in this domain.

Awareness Raising

This section concerns awareness-raising programmes aimed at identifying measures for educating the general public, and civil society, on the risks and unlawfulness of trafficking in human organs.

Question 6

Please elaborate on the strategies, policies and other measures that have been planned or implemented:

- a. To educate the general public on risks associated with the trafficking in human organs.

The National Action Plan for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons 2024 - 2025 provides for Specific Objective 3.1: Implementation of awareness-raising campaigns with the involvement of central and local institutions, civil society, business, media and other actors for the prevention of organized crime, which foresees the development of priority measures and activities aimed at preventing trafficking in persons, including organ trafficking. One of the main activities is the development of the Anti-Trafficking month, within the framework of the European Day against Trafficking in Persons. During the month of October, awareness-raising activities are carried out in Albania, in cooperation with state institutions and partner organizations, in the 12 regions of the country to prevent trafficking in human beings. The activities aim to bring to the attention of all state and non-state structures the importance of undertaking a joint commitment in the fight against trafficking in persons, as well as to convey messages about the risks posed by trafficking, the ways and forms for raising public awareness, in particular of vulnerable groups.

In the framework of the European Day against Trafficking in Persons, the Ministry of Interior, in cooperation with the “URAT” Network and the main institutions at the central and local level, on October 18, 2024, organized in Shkodra a national awareness-raising event within the framework of the national campaign to prevent and combat trafficking in persons (*activity foreseen in the National Action Plan for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons 2024-2025*). The event, which took place under the auspices of the Minister of Interior, was attended by representatives from public institutions, members of the National Referral Mechanism, national and international organizations, diplomatic missions, civil society activists, high school students, representatives of the media, the private sector, as well as community members.

In order to promote the National Line 116006 during the Anti-Trafficking month, in addition to its announcement in activities, a minivan with the Line 116006 logo “traveled” through the main municipalities of the 12 regions, also going near schools, squares, visible places, etc. In order to promote the Line, a communication strategy is being built, targeted for social networks, with the slogan: NO TO TRAFFICKING: CALL THE CHANGE!, which will make the public aware of its importance, have confidence in its anonymity and see it as an effective tool to combat trafficking. All activities carried out during the Anti-Trafficking month are reflected in the Special Bulletin prepared by the Ministry of Interior. For more information, see the link: <https://mb.gov.al/raporte-monitorimi-dhe-strategji/>

The Directorate of Free Legal Aid has implemented a series of concrete measures aimed at raising public awareness regarding the rights of potential victims of human trafficking, including trafficking in human organs for human transplantation.

In 2024, the Free Legal Aid specialists organized 76 information and awareness-raising activities throughout Albania, in cooperation with public institutions and other relevant stakeholders. These activities are designed to raise awareness among the general public, at-risk groups and vulnerable communities.

For 2025, a series of additional awareness-raising activities have been carried out and are planned by legal aid providers, in cooperation with public and private institutions, to strengthen public awareness of the phenomenon of trafficking.

The main topics addressed include:

- Raising awareness of the various forms of trafficking, including organ trafficking;
- Legal rights of victims and access to protection mechanisms;
- Ways to obtain free legal aid and early legal aid during the criminal process.

In its entirety, the National Strategy for the Protection of Victims of Crime (NSPVC) 2024 - 2030 consists of four main strategic goals, which include specific objectives that reflect the need to expand new dimensions in the approach to each victim in an effective, professional criminal justice system, which guarantees and protects the rights of victims in the form of these victims of discrimination, without direct impact on the discrimination process.

A significant innovation in this strategy - presented for the first time - is the reparation of victims of criminal offenses and the guarantee of fair and adequate compensation for victims, whether by the perpetrator of the crime or by the state. This includes the use of a dedicated and needs-based fund for the compensation of victims of trafficking, monitoring and evaluating the compensation process, and preparing evaluation reports.

The vision of the National Strategy for the Protection of Victims of Crime 2024 – 2030 is: "An effective criminal justice system that guarantees the rights of victims at all stages of the criminal process without discrimination and takes into account their specific needs".

The mission of the National Strategy for the Protection of Victims of Crime 2024 – 2030 is: "All institutions at the central and local level, in cooperation with civil society, will work together to strengthen the position of victims in the criminal justice system, enabling the implementation of the rights of victims of crime, especially those with special needs, by ensuring access to an efficient and professional justice system, which provides information, support, as well as services for improving cooperation, protection, victim protection from crime, compensation of victims at the national, regional and international levels".

The National Strategy for the Protection of Victims of Crime 2024 - 2030 aims to harmonize the domestic legal framework with European Union directives and other international instruments. Therefore, this strategy addresses specific objectives divided into concrete measures to strengthen institutions working with and for victims within the criminal justice system, strengthen the capacities of professionals to provide effective support and protection during the criminal process, and ensure fair access to a national compensation scheme for victims.

The National Strategy for the Protection of Victims of Crime 2024 - 2030 aims to empower victims of crime, organize awareness-raising campaigns to raise awareness of victims' rights,

and create safe environments for reporting crime and participating in criminal proceedings – especially for vulnerable groups and marginalized communities that have limited access to justice.

The National Strategy for the Protection of Victims of Crime 2024 - 2030 aims to ensure that every victim is guaranteed the right to information, support, participation and protection in the criminal justice system, which, in order to protect these rights, must be efficient, professional and effective, while recognizing the needs of victims with specific vulnerabilities.

The National Strategy for the Protection of Victims of Crime 2024 - 2030 also aims to guarantee and strengthen access to justice for victims of crime at the national, regional and international levels, through inter-institutional cooperation and coordination with institutions working with and for victims of criminal offences in general, and in particular those with specific protection needs.

- b. To encourage civil society, including patients' associations, academia, publishers, media, online platforms, industry, and other relevant organisations, to engage in
 - a. raising public awareness campaigns, and, or

The Ministry of Interior has a close cooperation with civil society not only in identifying victims and potential victims of trafficking, but also in organizing national campaigns for public awareness. Specifically, in cooperation with national and international organizations operating in the anti-trafficking field, activities have been developed with schoolchildren, students, and the Roma and Egyptian communities. For more information, see the monitoring report and special bulletin at the link: <https://mb.gov.al/raporte-monitorimi-dhe-strategji/>

The Directorate of Free Legal Aid has developed close and sustainable cooperation with various actors from civil society and the public sphere, including:

- Non-profit organizations licensed to provide legal aid to victims of trafficking;
- National Center for Trafficking in Persons;
- Private educational institutions and universities;
- Local media and community-based actors.

These collaborations have enabled the organization of joint activities on international days and weeks dedicated to awareness, such as:

- European Day Against Trafficking in Human Beings;
- July 30 – World Day Against Trafficking in Human Beings;
- National Week of Victims of Crime.

Through these initiatives, the Free Legal Aid Office has aimed to increase the visibility of victims' legal rights and promote the availability of institutional support, including specialized legal assistance.

The Free Legal Aid Office has effectively used both traditional media and digital platforms to disseminate targeted awareness-raising messages, through:

- Information programs with legal content on local radio and television;

- Educational campaigns on social networks, carried out by the official channels of the legal aid centers;
- Collaborate with journalists and online content creators to identify and report any form of illegal advertising or solicitation involving the sale or donation of human organs.

Particular attention has been paid to equipping media actors with accurate legal knowledge and ethical guidelines to ensure responsible and accurate reporting on issues related to organ trafficking.

- b. the promotion of awareness-raising measures provided by public authorities on the unlawfulness and dangers of trafficking in human organs for human transplantation.

In 2024, the Ministry of Interior, in collaboration with UNICEF, launched a national awareness campaign “E VERTETA N'DRIT”. The communication strategy included a conceptual framework that includes elements of Social Behaviour Change that aims to raise awareness, influence and change behaviours towards human trafficking in Albania. On the other hand, numerous awareness-raising activities were carried out throughout the year, focusing on:

- o Distributing leaflets and key messages on social media that promoted ethical and appropriate messages to the public and online at local and national levels. As a result, the application reached 950,000 followers through social media campaigns (Facebook) on trafficking-related topics;
- o Domain: www.ndrit.al aimed at a dedicated audience, organized into: i) information section; ii) Opportunities; and iii) Success Stories.
- o More than 12,000 individuals have visited the website since its launch in January 2024.
- o Regular information sessions were held in schools and local communities in 17 municipalities in 4 regions (Tirana, Shkodra, Dibra and Kukës) with more than 5,500 individuals;
- o National and local influencers joined the anti-trafficking cause, using their channels to raise awareness on trafficking issues.

In addition, several communication strategies have been developed by the Albanian authorities with the support of UNICEF, which include: face-to-face activities, community meetings, awareness-raising activities during the anti-trafficking month, outreach on social media through tailored messages, use of visual tools including videos to raise awareness, involvement of influencers to tell survivors' stories and reach different audiences, etc. These strategies and related tools have addressed gender issues and have attempted to break the belief that only girls can be trafficked for sexual or other forms of exploitation and that only men are traffickers. The messages have also sought to address the sometimes blurred distinction between a victim and a trafficker and how the victim can sometimes also be forced to identify and recruit other victims for trafficking. These campaigns have also raised community awareness of early marriage as one of the covers used for trafficking.

An important component of the awareness and public information was the social media campaign for the free National Helpline 116 006, which aimed to raise awareness and provide relevant information about the helpline. The campaign was developed through popular platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, and focused on: the use of clear and positive messages, the use of images and videos that promoted humanity, interactivity and community involvement. During the design of the campaigns, victim support groups were involved to ensure that the messages reflected their real experiences and needs.

To raise public awareness about the prevention of human trafficking, state and non-state institutions have provided detailed online information and printed materials on the services provided to victims of trafficking, information on the protection of victims' rights, and have organized workshops, meetings and focus groups with members of local mechanisms that promote a victim-centered approach.

- c. To raise awareness of media, including social media and e-commerce platforms, and other virtual sites that facilitate information linking potential donors and recipients of human organs for transplantation of the illegality of illicit solicitation, recruitment, offering and requesting of undue advantage, including the making of a financial gain or other comparable advantage.

The Directorate of Free Legal Aid has implemented a series of concrete measures aimed at raising public awareness regarding the rights of potential victims of human trafficking, including trafficking in human organs for human transplantation.

In 2024, the Free Legal Aid specialists organized **76 information and awareness-raising activities** throughout Albania, in cooperation with public institutions and other relevant stakeholders. These activities are designed to raise awareness among the general public, at-risk groups and vulnerable communities.

For 2025, a series of additional awareness-raising activities have been carried out and are planned by legal aid providers, in cooperation with public and private institutions, to strengthen public awareness of the phenomenon of trafficking.

The main topics addressed include:

- Raising awareness about the various forms of trafficking, including organ trafficking;
- Victims' legal rights and access to protection mechanisms;
- Ways to obtain free legal aid and early legal aid during criminal proceedings.

Question 7

Are there national oversight measures adopted to assess the effectiveness of awareness campaigns carried out by the institutions/organisations, whether public or private? If so, please specify.

Awareness campaigns have been conducted through television spots, brochures and public activities. The effectiveness has been assessed through feedback and institutional reports.