



Strasbourg, 6 September 2021

THB-CP(2021)RAP28

# **COMMITTEE OF THE PARTIES COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONVENTION ON ACTION AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**

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**28th meeting of the Committee of the Parties**

(Strasbourg, 4 June 2021)

**MEETING REPORT**

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**Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting**

1. The Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (hereinafter referred to respectively as "the Committee" and "the Convention") held its 28th meeting on 4 June 2021 in Strasbourg. Due to the social distancing measures and travel restrictions in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak, the meeting was held in a hybrid format, with some members participating online via the platform KUDO.

**Agenda item 2: Adoption of the draft agenda**

2. The Chair of the Committee, Ambassador Corina Călugăru, invited the Committee to adopt the draft agenda of the meeting. The agenda, as adopted by the Committee, is set out in Appendix I. The list of participants is set out in Appendix II.

**Agenda item 3: State of signatures and ratifications of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings**

3. The Chair indicated that on 28 May 2021, Israel had submitted the instrument of accession to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, thus becoming the 48th State Party to the Convention and the first country outside Europe to join it. The Chair welcomed the decision of the Government of Israel to accede to the Convention, which provides a comprehensive framework for combating human trafficking. She noted that Israel had been invited to attend the meeting as a participant since the Convention would enter into force in respect of Israel on 1 September 2021.

4. Mr Yaron Gamburg, Deputy Chief of Mission, Secretary of the Israeli Parliament (Knesset) delegation to PACE, expressed his gratitude to Council of Europe Member States and the States Parties to the Convention for their support in the process of Israel's accession to the Convention. He noted that, despite the difficulties in forming a functional government in Israel in recent years, there is political consensus with regard to the fact that Israel's accession to the Convention represents an important step for the country, as it will enable it to better deal with the phenomenon of human trafficking.

5. The Chair noted that the Russian Federation was the only Council of Europe Member State which had not yet acceded to the Convention. She informed the Committee that, in a meeting with the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, attended by herself, the Vice-Chair of the Committee and the Executive Secretary of the Convention, the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation had stated that there were no legal or political obstacles to Russia's accession to the Convention, but that it was believed that its implementation would have important financial implications. The advantages of Russia joining the Convention were discussed and the Permanent Representative undertook to raise the issue at the next intergovernmental commission meeting concerning the Council of Europe.

6. In order to make it possible for the Russian Federation to get an impression of the way the Committee of the Parties works, the Chair proposed to invite the Russian authorities to send a representative to a future Committee of the Parties' meeting as an observer (pursuant to Rule 2.c. of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee of the Parties).

**Agenda item 4: Exchange of views with the President of GRETA**

7. The Chair invited Ms Helga Gayer, the newly elected President of the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA), to take the floor for the periodic exchange of views with the Committee.

8. Ms Gayer informed the Committee of the Parties about the conference on combating child trafficking organised under the German Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, on 4-5 May 2021, which was linked to the THB LIBERI project, led by the German Federal Criminal Police Office. The conference had addressed challenges and innovative approaches that can have a positive impact on combating child trafficking, and underscored the importance of multi-disciplinary and inter-agency structures to safeguard child victim's rights.
9. Further, GRETA's President referred to the Terms of Reference of the Drafting Committee on Trafficking for the Purpose of Labour Exploitation (DH-TET), which will prepare the CM recommendation on the issue. She recalled that GRETA had been given the status of "participant" in this committee, without the right to vote. Ms Gayer expressed the hope that experts with first-hand experience in the topic would be included in DH-TET, in particular labour inspectors, specialised prosecutors and civil society representatives.
10. The President of GRETA indicated that, since the last meeting of the Committee, GRETA had published final reports on Bulgaria, Denmark, Georgia, Montenegro and Romania, in the context of the third evaluation round of the Convention. Further, she informed the Committee that GRETA aimed to carry out 11 country visits in 2021, most of which had been postponed to the second half of the year due to the restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and noted that GRETA counted on the co-operation of States Parties to enable it to perform its monitoring work. Finally, GRETA's President underscored the importance of strengthening synergies and co-operation between Council of Europe monitoring bodies, highlighted at the recent Ministerial session in Hamburg, and informed the participants that an exchange with GREVIO was envisaged at GRETA's next plenary meeting in early July. Ms Gayer's statement is reproduced in full in Appendix III.
11. The Chair thanked GRETA's President for the informative account of GRETA's activities and for the initiative to organise the conference on child trafficking under the German presidency, as well as for GRETA's efforts resulting in the issuance of the Guidance Note on combating trafficking for labour exploitation, laying the ground for the new CM recommendation on this topic. She opened the floor to members and participants of the Committee for questions or comments concerning GRETA's work.
12. Mr Jan Austad of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security of Norway congratulated Ms Gayer on her election as President of GRETA and thanked her for the excellent co-operation between GRETA and States Parties. He further thanked the German presidency for organising the conference on child trafficking. Finally, he expressed his belief that there should be more co-ordination between Council of Europe monitoring bodies.
13. Ms Anouk Rooijers of the Ministry of Justice and Security of the Netherlands also congratulated Ms Gayer on her election and thanked her for the organisation of the conference on ending child trafficking. She said it was positive that attention was given to this phenomenon, as they had seen an increase in the vulnerability of children in the Netherlands. She further welcomed the attention paid to combating trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation, noting that the Netherlands hoped to have an expert involved in DH-TET.
14. Ms Cecylia Bernacka from the Permanent Representation of Poland thanked the President of GRETA for her presentation and congratulated Israel on acceding to the Convention. In relation to the process of drafting a new CM recommendation on trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation, she informed the Committee that a definition of forced labour had been introduced in Polish legislation. Ms Bernacka's statement is reproduced in full in Appendix IV.
15. Mr Andreas Bilgeri, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Austria, congratulated Ms Gayer on her election. Further, he welcomed the accession of Israel to the Convention and supported the proposal of the Chair to invite interested parties, including non-member States, to observe the work of the Committee of the Parties and witness how they would benefit from joining the Convention. He asked the President of GRETA for an assessment of the effects of COVID-19 related border closures on trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation.

16. Mr Rob Linham, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, congratulated Israel on its accession to the Convention and expressed hope that all 47 Council of Europe Member States would join the Convention. He expressed support to the proposal to invite the Russian Federation as an observer to future meetings of the Committee. Further, he asked about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the fight against human trafficking. Finally, he welcomed the fact that GRETA had continued to work effectively during the period of restrictions imposed by the pandemic.

17. The President of GRETA thanked the Committee for their welcoming words. In response to the question concerning the impact of COVID-19, she noted that countries had reported increased vulnerability to exploitation of different groups. Many people were not able to work and were thus more likely to be exploited in bad working conditions. Ms Gayer appealed to the authorities of States Parties to address the socio-economic factors which underly people's vulnerability to trafficking.

**Agenda item 5: Examination of GRETA's reports on the implementation of the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Bulgaria, Denmark, Georgia, Montenegro and Romania (third evaluation round) and adoption of recommendations in respect of these Parties**

18. The Chair noted that GRETA's final reports concerning Bulgaria, Denmark, Georgia, Montenegro and Romania had been made public and that the draft recommendations to be adopted by the Committee of the Parties concerning these countries followed the model of recommendations under the third evaluation round. The recommendations requested the authorities to report on measures taken to address a number of urgent issues within two years of the adoption of recommendations by the Committee of the Parties.

**5.1 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of Bulgaria**

19. The Chair invited the Committee to consider the draft recommendation concerning Bulgaria.

20. Ms Dobryana Petkova, Acting Executive Secretary of the Bulgarian National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (NCCTHB), who joined the meeting online, began by congratulating GRETA's President and the other members of GRETA's Bureau on their election. She noted that GRETA's recommendations regarding Bulgaria reflected to a great extent the challenges faced by the Bulgarian authorities. Ms Petkova further provided an update on the developments that had taken place after GRETA's visit to Bulgaria. A specialised anti-trafficking division had been established within the Supreme Prosecutor's Office of Cassation. Moreover, the Secretariat of the NCCTHB had secured funding for and reopened the specialised shelter for adult victims of trafficking in Sofia, as well as negotiating a strategic partnership with the Sofia Municipality to reopen the crisis centre for child victims. As regards upcoming activities in 2021, the NCCTHB was working with partners in the main countries of destination for Bulgarian victims of forced labour, namely Germany and France, to prevent trafficking for labour exploitation via new legislative measures, the involvement of different actors (trade unions, labour inspectorates and associations of employers/chambers of commerce) and the participation in Europol's campaign against forced labour. Further, NCCTHB had commenced an evaluation of Bulgaria's Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (2017-2021), with the aim of elaborating a new strategic document for the next five-year period, which will take into account GRETA's recommendations. Ms Petkova's statement is reproduced in full in Appendix V.

21. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of Bulgaria and decided to request that the Bulgarian Government to inform it of measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 4 June 2023.

### ***5.2 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of Denmark***

22. The Chair invited the Committee to consider the draft recommendation concerning Denmark.

23. Ambassador Erik Laursen, Permanent Representative of Denmark, congratulated Ms Gayer on her election and welcomed the accession of Israel to the Convention. He noted that Denmark recognised human trafficking as a serious problem and had taken note of GRETA's report and recommendations. He informed the Committee that the Danish Government had decided to establish a new national investigation unit which will be engaged in investigating the most complex areas of crime, including human trafficking committed by organised criminal groups, and that the Danish Centre for Combating Trafficking (CMM) had launched an initiative aimed at combating human trafficking online. One of the main purposes of the initiative was to expand cross-sectoral partnerships, through the mapping of knowledge and establishing a network which brings together the National Police of Denmark, the Danish Financial Investigations Unit, the Danish Tax Agency, as well as tech companies.

24. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of Denmark and decided to request that the Danish Government to inform it of measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 4 June 2023.

### ***5.3 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of Georgia***

25. The Chair invited the Committee to consider the draft recommendation concerning Georgia.

26. Ms Ketevan Sarajishvili from the Ministry of Justice of Georgia welcomed the constructive dialogue with GRETA and indicated that the recommendations contained in its report would be translated into future activities and reflected in strategies and action plans. The Georgian authorities had already started the implementation of some of the recommendations, for example the legal procedure for obtaining compensation by victims had been simplified. Ms Sarajishvili's statement is reproduced in full in Appendix VI.

27. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of Georgia and decided to request that the Georgian Government to inform it of measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 4 June 2023.

### ***5.4 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of Montenegro***

28. The Chair invited the Committee to consider the draft recommendation concerning Montenegro.

29. Ms Violeta Beriřaj, Deputy Permanent Representative of Montenegro, congratulated Ms Gayer on her election as President of GRETA and thanked GRETA for the constructive dialogue and an objective report which acknowledged progress made in certain areas, such as the setting up of a victim identification team and an operation team for investigation and prosecuting human trafficking offences. Ms Beriřaj's statement is reproduced in full in Appendix VII.

30. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of Montenegro and decided to request that the Montenegrin Government to inform it of measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 4 June 2023.

### ***5.5 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of Romania***

31. The Chair invited the Committee to consider the draft recommendation concerning Romania.

32. Mr Adrian Petrescu, Deputy Director of the National Agency against Trafficking in Persons of Romania, congratulated Ms Gayer on her election as President of GRETA and affirmed Romania's commitment to implementing the Convention. He indicated that the Romanian Senate had recently adopted a law removing the statute of limitations for the crime of child trafficking. Moreover, he referred to a public debate regarding

the Strategy of the National Agency for the Management of Seized Assets, one of whose objectives was to create a National Crime Prevention Fund that would provide funding for NGOs involved in preventing trafficking and assisting victims of trafficking. Mr Petrescu's statement is reproduced in full in Appendix VIII.

33. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of Romania and decided to request that the Romanian Government to inform it of measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 4 June 2023.

### **Agenda Item 6 – Additional information submitted in reply to Committee of the Parties recommendations (Andorra, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, and Switzerland)**

34. The Chair noted that, since the previous meeting of the Committee, the governments of a number of states had submitted reports with additional information in reply to the Committee of the Parties recommendations. She invited the representatives of the countries concerned to take the floor and briefly present the information submitted.

#### **6.1. Andorra**

35. Ambassador Joan Forner Rovira, Permanent Representative of Andorra to the Council of Europe, congratulated the President of GRETA on her election. He stated that although Andorra had never had a case of human trafficking, the authorities continued to work on implementing GRETA's recommendations. To this end an inter-governmental group was created and a strategic orientation document adopted. The authorities were further working on a national strategy on children, which would also tackle issues related to trafficking of children and online abuse of children. Further, the authorities had prepared amendments to the Criminal Code related to the aggravating circumstances. Other recommendations, such as those concerning the responsibility of legal persons, would be dealt with in the future.

#### **6.2. Italy**

36. Ms Cristiana Carletti of the Department of Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Italy welcomed the appointment of Ms Gayer as President of GRETA and thanked GRETA for the constructive dialogue with the Italian authorities. She noted that the authorities were paying special attention to the prevention of trafficking in human beings during the pandemic and were in the process of preparing a new anti-trafficking action plan. The authorities had partnered with the National Institute of Statistics to improve the collection of data, and with the NGO Save the Children Italy to raise awareness of child trafficking. Further, the National Commission on Asylum had expanded its co-operation with NGOs in order to strengthen the national asylum system and prevent human trafficking at sea. Ms Carletti's statement is reproduced in full in Appendix IX.

#### **6.3. Germany**

37. Ms Iris Muth of the German Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth congratulated Ms Gayer on her election as President of GRETA and thanked GRETA and the Council of Europe on behalf of the German government for organising the conference on child trafficking in May 2021. The German authorities were particularly happy to see the exchange and co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union. She stated that by the end of June Germany would adopt a legal framework on due diligence, which would require companies for the first time to review supply chains to determine whether human rights violations, including trafficking in human beings, are being committed. Ms Muth's statement is reproduced in full in Appendix X.

38. The Chair invited GRETA's President to provide comments on the information presented. Ms Gayer thanked the representatives of State Parties for their comments and said that it was very encouraging to hear about the next steps planned to implement GRETA's recommendation. From the information submitted

it was clear that the use of ICT to commit human trafficking was increasing, and therefore more efforts were needed to address the linkages between them.

**Agenda item 7: Preparation of a study on online and technology-facilitated human trafficking: interim report by Dr Paolo Campana, Institute of Criminology, Oxford University**

39. The Chair recalled the round table meeting organised in December 2019 on “Stepping up the Council of Europe action against trafficking in human beings in the digital age” and the subsequent decision of GRETA to carry out a study on the problems faced by States Parties in relation to the detection, investigation and prosecution of online and technology-facilitated human trafficking, international co-operation in this respect, and the existing legislative, operational tools and good practices that help prevent and combat ICT-enabled trafficking in human beings. The aim of the study was to strengthen the implementation of the Convention and address more effectively online and technology-enabled trafficking in human beings. The Chair gave the floor to Dr Paolo Campana, from the Institute of Criminology at Oxford University, to present the study in more details.

40. Dr Campana began by highlighting the three objectives of the study: exploring the problems faced by States Parties in relation to the detection, investigation and prosecution of online and technology-facilitated trafficking in human beings; exploring the existing legislative and operational tools, as well as good practices that help prevent and combat ICT-enabled trafficking; and exploring the complementarity between the Council of Europe Anti-trafficking Convention and the Budapest Convention and possible gaps in the legal framework for combating ICT-enabled human trafficking.

41. He then described the structure of the project, starting with a situation report, completed in December 2020. Building on this report, a questionnaire was produced in three versions – for States Parties, civil society organisations, and tech companies. The questionnaire was sent out in February/March 2021. As of 3 June, 34 replies had been received from States Parties, 13 from civil society organisations and one from a tech company. Dr Campana expressed confidence that more replies would arrive from States Parties and stated that an effort will be made to get more replies from tech companies.

42. Dr Campana explained that ICT mostly impact human trafficking during two stages: recruitment (online grooming and job advertisements) and exploitation. He listed a number of challenges faced by States Parties: difficulties in sorting genuine advertisements from trafficking-related ones; use of private channels and encrypted messages; rapid evolution of technology; and obstacles to cooperation between states and with private companies. Dr Campana’s presentation is reproduced in full in Appendix XI.

43. The Chair thanked Dr Campana for his presentation and opened the floor for any comments or questions.

44. Mr Rob Linham, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, thanked Dr Campana for his presentation and noted that the UK’s response to the questionnaire recognises many of the challenges stated in the situation report. Considering the low number of replies from tech companies, he stressed the need to reach out to them. Concerning the challenges posed by the use of encryption, he invited Dr Campana to weigh in on the balance between protecting privacy and enhancing law enforcement capabilities.

45. In his reply Dr Campana noted that encryption was a crucial issue, but there was no silver bullet to solve it. He emphasised that technology is a double-edge sword: we need to have the tools to cut off the traffickers and collect evidence to convict them, while maintaining a robust protection of human rights of the victims and the general population.



46. Ambassador Ragnhildur Arnjótisdóttir, Permanent Representative of Iceland to the Council of Europe, thanked Dr Campana for his presentation and stated that Iceland was taken steps to deal with the impact of technological developments. Further, she congratulated Ms Gayer on her election as GRETA President and noted that GRETA's reports had had a profound impact on Iceland's policymaking on anti-trafficking. Impacts included the 2019 Action Plan to Combat Trafficking and Exploitation of Human Beings, the adoption of legislative amendments which aim at ensuring effective and thorough investigations and prosecutions of trafficking offences, and the development and rollout of Iceland's National Referral Mechanism.

47. The Chair called on those States Parties which have not submitted replies to the questionnaire to do so and stressed the need to see how the participation of tech companies can be enhanced.

### **Agenda item 8: Election of a member of the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)**

48. The Chair recalled that, following the resignation of a member of GRETA on 3 February 2021, States Parties had been invited to propose candidates to fill the vacant seat. Out of 33 States Parties eligible to nominate candidates for the vacant seat, by the deadline of 4 April 2021, nominations had been received from eight countries. Serbia had submitted candidates after the deadline and had subsequently decided to withdraw them.

#### ***8.1. Admissibility of the candidatures (rule 8, rule 9, paragraph 1, and rule 11 of CM/Res(2013)28)***

49. Before proceeding with the election, the Chair invited the Committee to consider the admissibility of the candidatures for GRETA membership, taking into account Rules 10, 11 and 12 of the Rules on the election procedure of the members of GRETA. By the deadline of 4 April 2021, the following eight States Parties had proposed one candidate each: Denmark, Hungary, Iceland, Norway, Poland, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom. One of the candidates (proposed by Norway) had been nominated for a second term of office.

50. The Chair referred to the matrix prepared by the Secretariat, providing an overview of the professional expertise and educational background of the candidates for election, and a document with the full CVs of the candidates.

#### ***8.2. Assessment of whether the candidates nominated meet the requirements for membership of GRETA (rule 9, paragraph 4 of CM/Res(2013)28)***

51. The Chair recalled the requirements which should be taken into account when electing members of GRETA. She stressed that the cornerstone of an effective monitoring system is the competence, independence, integrity and professionalism of the experts to whom the task is entrusted.

#### ***8.3. Election of a member of GRETA***

52. The Chair referred to the Explanatory note on the procedure to be followed to elect GRETA members, which had been prepared by the Secretariat (THB-CP(2021)05) and summarised the rules for the election of GRETA members contained in Resolution CM/Res(2013)28.

53. The Chair informed the Committee that the voting would take place with the use of KUDO as per the instructions provided ahead of the meeting. Members of the Committee then ran a test vote.

54. The Committee proceeded with the election of one member of GRETA by secret ballot. Following four rounds of voting, the Committee elected Ms Svala Ísfeld Ólafsdóttir (Icelandic) for a first term of office running until 31 December 2022.

55. The Committee congratulated the elected candidate and wished her success in her endeavours to monitor the implementation of the Convention.

**Agenda item 9: Information on activities aimed at strengthening the implementation of GRETA's conclusions and the Committee of the Parties' recommendations**

56. The Chair gave the floor to the Executive Secretary to update the Committee on co-operation activities.

57. The Executive Secretary referred to four ongoing co-operation projects in Serbia, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey, funded under the Horizontal Facility II, a joint programme of the Council of Europe and the European Union. She noted that a lot of work had been done in the area of addressing labour exploitation as part of these projects. She informed the Committee that on 22-23 June 2021 an online regional conference, managed from Bosnia and Herzegovina, would be held on the topic of child trafficking. The conference would take stock of trends and new challenges in child trafficking in the Western Balkans, identify positive initiatives, and discuss areas where improvements can be induced through capacity building, co-ordination and co-operation.

58. The Executive Secretary further stated that two multi-country project proposals had been put forth for funding. One of the projects focused on the prevention and combating of trafficking for labour exploitation, while the second one concerned strengthening access to justice for victims of human trafficking.

**Agenda item 10: Information on the anti-trafficking activities of other international organisations of interest to the Committee of the Parties**

59. The Chair invited the Executive Secretary to present information concerning activities of other international organisations in the area of combating trafficking in human beings.

60. The Executive Secretary informed the Committee that the EU had adopted a new Anti-trafficking Strategy for 2021-2025 and outlined the main aims and activities included in it. The Strategy referred to plans to evaluate the implementation of the EU Anti-Trafficking Directive and proposals for revising it. Particular attention was given to the criminal justice response and reducing impunity, as well as to discouraging demand for work and services provided by trafficked persons. Further, the Strategy referred to the setting up of a European referral mechanism and strengthened co-operation with non-European countries. It also stated that the European Commission would work closely with the Council of Europe and GRETA in line with the priorities of the new Strategy.

61. The Executive Secretary further informed the Committee about a conference recently organised by Portugal, which looked at the 10 years of the EU Anti-trafficking Directive and presented proposals with regard to addressing demand. Discouraging demand was also the theme of the high-level Alliance against Trafficking in Persons conference, organised by the OSCE on 14-16 June 2021, at which the President of GRETA was invited to speak.

**Agenda item 11: Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee of the Parties**

62. The Chair invited the Committee to hold elections for its new Chair and the Vice-Chair.

63. The Committee elected Ambassador Christian Meuwly (Switzerland) and Ambassador Marie Fontanel (France) as, respectively, its new Chair and Vice-Chair, for a first term of office of one year.

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64. Mr Meuwly thanked the outgoing Chair for the way in which she had managed the work of the Committee, in particular for her efforts to bring in new States Parties. He also congratulated Ms Fontanel on her election as Vice-Chair of the Committee and Ms Gayer on her election as President of GRETA.

65. Ms Fontanel, who joined the meeting online, thanked the Committee members for the confidence placed in her and congratulated Mr Meuwly on his election as Chair of the Committee.

**Agenda item 12: Dates of future meetings**

66. The Committee decided to hold its next meeting in December 2021. The exact dates will be fixed at a later date.

**Agenda item 13: Other business**

**Agenda item 14: Adoption of the list of decisions taken**

## **Appendix I**

### **Agenda**

- 1. Opening of the meeting**
- 2. Adoption of the draft agenda**
- 3. State of signatures and ratifications of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings**
- 4. Exchange of views with the President of GRETA**
- 5. Examination of GRETA's reports on the implementation of the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Bulgaria, Denmark, Georgia, Montenegro and Romania (third evaluation round) and adoption of recommendations in respect of these Parties**
  - 5.1 Bulgaria*
  - 5.2 Denmark*
  - 5.3 Georgia*
  - 5.4 Montenegro*
  - 5.5 Romania*
- 6. Additional information submitted in reply to Committee of the Parties recommendations**
- 7. Preparation of a study on online and technology-facilitated human trafficking: interim report by Dr Paolo Campana, Institute of Criminology, Oxford University**
- 8. Election of a member of the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)**
  - 8.1 Assessment of whether the candidates meet the requirements for membership of GRETA (rule 2, rule 3, rule 4, and rule 9, paragraph 4, of CM/Res(2013)28)*
  - 8.2 Election of a new member of GRETA*
- 9. Information on activities aimed at strengthening the implementation of GRETA's conclusions and the Committee of the Parties' recommendations**
- 10. Information on the anti-trafficking activities of other international organisations of interest to the Committee of the Parties**
- 11. Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee of the Parties**
- 12. Dates of future meetings**
- 13. Other business**
- 14. Adoption of the list of decisions taken**

## **Appendix II**

### **List of participants**

#### **Members of the Committee of the Parties**

#### **Membres du Comité des Parties**

##### **ALBANIA / ALBANIE**

Ms Albana Dautllari  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
Permanent Representative  
to the Council of Europe

Ms Sidita Gjipali  
Deputy to the Permanent Representative  
to the Council of Europe

##### **ANDORRA / ANDORRE**

M. Joan Forner Rovira  
Ambassadeur Extraordinaire et Plénipotentiaire  
Représentant Permanent  
auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

Mme Eva Garcia Lluelles  
Chef de la Section des Relations Internationales et  
Coopération juridique  
Département de la Justice et de l'interieur

##### **ARMENIA / ARMÉNIE**

Mr Paruyr Hovhannisyan  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative  
to the Council of Europe

Ms Lena Terzikyan  
Deputy to the Permanent Representative  
to the Council of Europe

Mr Davit Asoyan  
Deputy to the Permanent Representative  
to the Council of Europe

Ms Elen Arzumanyan  
Acting head of Cooperation with Monitoring Bodies  
Department of Human Rights and Humanitarian  
Issues  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia

##### **AUSTRIA / AUTRICHE**

Mr Andreas Bilgeri  
Deputy to the Permanent Representative  
to the Council of Europe

Ms Katharina Dirnbacher  
Directorate IV.2 – External Aspects of Migration, Asylum  
and Visa  
Unit IV.2b - Combating Trafficking in Human Beings,  
Appellate Proceedings, Border Issues  
Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs

##### **AZERBAIJAN / AZERBAÏDJAN**

Mr Tale Aliyev  
Deputy to the Permanent Representative  
to the Council of Europe

##### **BELARUS/ BÉLARUS**

Mr Nikita Belenchenko  
Representative of Belarus  
to the Council of Europe

##### **BELGIUM / BELGIQUE**

M. Jean-Cedric Janssens de Bisthoven  
Ambassadeur extraordinaire et plénipotentiaire  
Représentant Permanent  
auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

Mr Jean-Francois Minet  
Attaché  
Ministry of Justice  
General Directorate Legislation, Civil Liberties and  
Fundamental Rights  
Criminal Policy Service  
Organised Crime Unit  
Trafficking and smuggling in human beings

##### **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA/BOSNIE-HERZEGOVINE**

Ms Dragana Kremenović-Kusmuk  
Deputy Permanent Representative  
to the Council of Europe

**BULGARIA / BULGARIE**

Ms Maria Spassova  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative  
to the Council of Europe

Mr Emil Valev  
Deputy Permanent Representative  
to the Council of Europe

Ms Dobryana Petkova  
Acting Executive Secretary  
National Commission for Combating Trafficking in  
Human Beings

**CROATIA / CROATIE**

Ms Narcisa Bećirević  
Deputy to the Permanent Representative  
to the Council of Europe

**CYPRUS / CHYPRE**

Mr Kostas Psevdiotis  
Deputy Permanent Representative  
to the Council of Europe

Ms Tania Charalambidou  
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President of GRETA

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## **Appendix III**

### **Statement by Ms Helga GAYER, President of GRETA**

Madam Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is the first time that I have the honour to address the Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, following my election as President of GRETA in March, for a term of office of two years. I have already been a member of GRETA for four years before being re-elected by you for another four-year period, and I am genuinely committed to ensuring that GRETA continues to drive for legislative, policy and practical improvements in the fight against human trafficking.

Back in April, I had the opportunity to address the Ministers' Deputies and to present the 10th General report on GRETA's activities, which was published on 9 April 2021. Therefore, I will not speak again about the issues covered in that report, which contains substantive sections on the impact of Covid-19 on combating human trafficking, and on the identification of trafficked persons amongst asylum seekers and access to international protection by victims of trafficking.

The conference discussed challenges and innovative approaches which can have a positive impact on combating child trafficking. It enabled the sharing of practice-oriented, multi-disciplinary knowledge which can improve the detection of child victims, the investigation of cases and the protection of victims' rights. The THB LIBERI project, led by the German Federal Criminal Police Office, was reflected in the three main themes of the conference: exploitation of children and young persons through the Internet, exploitation of children and young persons by family structures, and strengthening child and young persons' testimonies.

In the course of the conference, we discussed ways to improve the detection and identification of child victims of trafficking, in particular those recruited and exploited online, victims of "loverboys", and children exploited by family structure. The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on human trafficking, in particular on increasing vulnerabilities and exploitation online, were underscored by participants.

Human trafficking is a dynamic crime with an ever-growing use of information and communication technologies (ICT). Recruiting victims through the Internet, via websites advertising jobs, dating sites or social media is a growing trend. Governments must take further steps to prevent online recruitment of children, including by co-operating with Internet service providers and raising the awareness of children, parents and education professionals of the risk of recruitment of children through the Internet. You will hear more later on today about the work-in-progress on the study on ICT-enabled trafficking in human beings from Dr Paolo Campana.

The conference underscored the importance of multi-disciplinary and inter-agency structures to safeguard child victim's rights. Inter-disciplinary training is essential for creating mutual trust and providing the basis for co-operation. Further, co-operation with civil society organisations running shelters and providing psycho-social support and other services for victims must be further developed. To take care of child victims, specialised shelters should be set up with a view to addressing their needs and offering a protected environment.

We must also consider the socio-economic factors behind THB and develop further prevention measures targeting children in the most vulnerable situations, such as children from disadvantaged communities, children in street situations, children placed in institutions, unaccompanied or separated children.

Madam Chair, the Committee of Ministers has recently adopted the Terms of Reference of the Drafting Committee on Trafficking for the Purpose of Labour Exploitation, placed under the authority of the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH). It is expected to start in September the preparation of a draft CM recommendation of this issue, based notably on the Compendium of Good Practices and the Guidance Note on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the Purpose of Labour Exploitation developed by GRETA. The Drafting Committee will be composed of 10 member States' representatives, designated by the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH), the Steering Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC) and the Governmental Committee of the European Social Charter and the European Code of Social Security, as well as 5 independent experts, appointed by the Secretary General. While current GRETA members cannot figure amongst these independent experts – given that GRETA has the status of “participant” in the Drafting Committee and will be sending its representative without the right to vote – former GRETA members with first-hand experience in the topic could be proposed for appointment by the Secretary General. It would be important to involve in the preparation of the new CM recommendation, for example, labour inspectors, specialised prosecutors and civil society representatives with established experience in the area of trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation.

Since the last meeting of the Committee of the Parties in December 2020, GRETA has published final reports on Bulgaria, Denmark, Georgia, Montenegro and Romania, in the context of the third evaluation round of the Anti-Trafficking Convention, which are the subject of draft recommendations that you will discuss and adopt today. Allow me to highlight the main findings of GRETA from these reports.

In all five countries, the number of victims of trafficking who have received compensation from the perpetrators or the State is low, and there are a number of barriers preventing victims of trafficking from effective access to compensation. Access to compensation is one of the important rights of victims of trafficking, under the Convention, and at the core of the third round of evaluation of the Convention. Compensation fulfils multiple purposes: payment of reparation for injury, loss or harm caused by the offender, access to justice, empowerment of victims, as well as being seen as a form of punishment and deterrence of traffickers. It should be possible to obtain a decision on compensation as part of the criminal trial, rather than the victims submitting claims through separate civil proceedings which are lengthy and costly. GRETA has identified several measures which the national authorities should take to facilitate and guarantee access to compensation for victims of trafficking, including by collecting evidence, as part of the criminal investigation, about the harm the victims have suffered and the financial gain from their exploitation, and reviewing the legislative framework for state compensation, including the eligibility criteria and other conditions. Access to legal aid is crucial in this respect, as is the provision of training to legal professionals.

GRETA is also concerned by the low number of convictions for human trafficking, and has urged the national authorities to take additional measures to ensure that human trafficking cases are investigated proactively, that they are not re-qualified as other offences which carry lighter penalties, and that they lead to effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions.

The reports also examine progress made on the implementation of previous GRETA recommendations on selected topics and note a range of positive legislative and policy developments.

As regards GRETA's plans for 2020, we are aiming to carry out 11 country visits, but due to the restrictions related to the coronavirus, most of them have been postponed to the second half of the year. We count very much on the co-operation of State Parties to enable GRETA to perform its monitoring work.

As you know, the number of parties to the Convention has increased with the recent accession of Israel. The first evaluation of Israel by GRETA can take place, according to the rules of the evaluation procedure, at the earliest one year after the entry into force of the Convention in respect of this country, i.e. as of 1 September 2022.

Madam Chair, the recent Ministerial session in Hamburg highlighted the importance of strengthening synergies and co-ordination between Council of Europe monitoring bodies. I would like to note that GRETA has been particularly attentive to this and has held periodic exchanges with other monitoring bodies. Such an exchange is envisaged with GREVIO at our next plenary meeting in early July. We shall continue to explore ways for co-ordinating and mutually reinforcing the impact of our work, while avoiding duplication.

Thank you for your kind attention.

## **Appendix IV**

### **Statement by Ms Cecylia BERNACKA, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Poland to the Council of Europe**

Poland supports the Council of Europe efforts, in particular GRETA input, to develop new CM recommendations on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation by the new Drafting Committee on Trafficking for the Purpose of Labour Exploitation (DH-TET).

Parallel to these developments, in 2020 Polish Ministry of Justice conducted analyses to determine the grounds for defining "forced labour" in the Criminal Code as one of the premises of the crime of trafficking in human beings, or alternatively – to explore whether to introduce a new type of crime constituting an intermediate category between violation of labour rights and trafficking in human beings.

The basis for this work was a draft definition of "forced labour" developed by the Working Group on cooperation with Employers, which is part of the inter-ministerial Team for Sustainable Development and Corporate Social Responsibility (of the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Development Funds and Regional Policy), involving multi-stakeholder group of legal experts, representatives of the scientific community, entrepreneurs, trade unions and civil society organisations. The definition was also consulted with practitioners - prosecutors, judges, the police and border guard.

In reference to the conference "Ending Trafficking in Children and Young Persons" under the German presidency in the CM, from our national experience and practice, when dealing with children, minors as victims of THB, the Police and Border Guard officers use the "Algorithm of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officers in the Event of Identification of a Minor Victim of a Crime of Human Trafficking" (the so-called "Algorithm for Children"). Also another instrument "Algorithm for Adults", has now been updated as part of the work of the victim support working group, operating within the Team for Counteracting THB (a subsidiary body of the Ministry of Interior and Administration, with full participation of representatives of non-governmental organisations), and in accordance with the provisions of the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings.



## **Appendix V**

### **Statement by Dobryana PETKOVA, Acting Executive Secretary of the Bulgarian National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings**

Madame Chair,

Let me begin by congratulating Ms Helga Gayer on her election as President of GRETA, as well as the other members of the newly elected Bureau and wish all of them every success in their future work.

I would like to thank GRETA for the country visit to Bulgaria at the end of 2019 which facilitated further the government's resolve to combat human trafficking and support the victims of this crime. The recommendations to a great extent reflect the challenges we face. Bulgarian authorities' detailed comments on GRETA's 3<sup>rd</sup> report were duly communicated to the Secretariat of the Convention and annexed to the Report.

Let me update you on some of the developments in my country after GRETA's visit:

- The main issues, outlined in the report were discussed in advance at the Bulgarian annual national anti-THB forum in December 2020.
- In March this year we cooperated for the BG-UK anti-trafficking forum which focused on investigative authorities. The main topics related to further measures to strengthen the criminal justice response and coordination of the NRM.
- The National anti-trafficking Commission hosted and is part of the series of UNODC workshops (with the Network of the Anti-THB coordinators in SEE), targeting in particular criminal practitioners and underlying the importance of the victim-centered approach through the implementation of the NRM.
- Based on the intensive exchange with GRETA, the Bulgarian Prosecution established a specialized anti-trafficking division within the Supreme Prosecutor's Office of Cassation, focusing, among others, on capacity building of prosecutors and their better understanding of issues relating to trafficking and victims.
- The Secretariat of the National anti-trafficking Commission secured project funding and re-opened the specialized services for adults in Sofia and negotiated a strategic partnership with Sofia Municipality for re-opening a crisis centre for children.
- Upcoming events in 2021, specifically tackling prevention of trafficking for labour exploitation and demand include:
  - The NCCTHB's Secretariat has ongoing prevention measures with partners from main countries of destination for Bulgarian victims of forced labour (Germany and France) – main included actions - finding means to tackle demand via new legislative measures in Germany; involving trade unions, labour inspectorates in the activities, as well as employers' associations / commerce chambers; joined action days against THB for forced labour (Europol campaign) with the Labour Inspection and Combating of organized crime directorate/ THB sector
  - In partnership with the Combating of Organized Crime Directorate/ THB Sector, the NCCTHB is working on tackling demand for sexual exploitation under the EMPACT programme – in mid of June video spots are to be produced, within a synchronized campaign between countries of origin and destination.
- The Bulgarian anti-trafficking Commission has started working on the evaluation of the Bulgarian Strategy for Combating THB (2017-2021). This evaluation is aimed at elaborating a new strategic document for the next 5-year period. The evaluation and the new strategic document will fully take into account GRETA's upgrading recommendations throughout the three evaluations of Bulgaria.

In conclusion, let me assure you that the fight against human trafficking is a strategic priority for Bulgaria and GRETA can count on our cooperation and full support.

Thank you.

## **Appendix VI**

### **Statement by Ms Ketevan SARAJISHVILI, Head of Public International Law Department of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia**

The Government of Georgia would like to extend its sincere appreciation to GRETA and the Secretariat for evaluation of Georgian efforts against trafficking in human beings and development of the third round report concerning the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. The third evaluation report and the recommendations of GRETA served as a basis when Georgia drafted and approved Georgia's National Action Plan on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings for 2021-2022.

Georgia has already started implementation of GRETA recommendations and achieved important developments since we received these recommendations in March, 2021. For example, since 13 April, 2021 the legislative amendments simplifying the procedures to grant one-off state compensation to victims and statutory victims of human trafficking were adopted in the Law of Georgia on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings. In particular, the one-off state compensation is no longer dependent on whether a victim/statutory victim will claim compensation for physical, moral and material damage through the civil proceedings.

Legislative changes have also been extended to those victims and statutory victims who have been granted the status of victim/statutory victim prior to the enactment of these changes.

Based on the legal amendments on 28 April, 2021, the Inter-Agency Coordination Council on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings approved updated rules for granting the one-off state compensation on 28 April, 2021.

The Government of Georgia truly believes that the assessment and recommendations provided by GRETA will be highly worthwhile and beneficial for further developing Georgian counter-trafficking policy.

We will continue our work in the field of fighting against this crime and we are looking forward to continuing our cooperation with GRETA.

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## Appendix VII

### **Statement by Ms Violeta BERIŠAJ, Deputy Permanent Representative of Montenegro to the Council of Europe**

Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like to congratulate Ms Gayer for the election as the president of GRETA.

We would like to thank GRETA for producing its Third Report on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Montenegro. We appreciate that there was a constructive dialogue between Montenegrin authorities and GRETA throughout this process. And, we would like to thank experts as well as the Secretariat for good cooperation.

Given the expertise and the assistance GRETA provides to all parties of the Convention, Montenegro attaches great importance to its work and its recommendations.

We consider the Third Evaluation Report very objective. We appreciate that progress has been noted in several areas, such as the adoption of Standard Operating Procedures and the establishment of multidisciplinary teams particularly Team for the formal identification of victims of THB and the Operational Team for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings that resulted in an increase in the number of identified victims, as well as in processed criminal cases for human trafficking.

In the coming period, Montenegro will pay special attention to efficient implementation of GRETA recommendations, which correlate with the implementation of the national anti-trafficking policy, with the aim to further improve the results in the field of anti-trafficking in Montenegro.

Furthermore, we will continue to implement activities to meet necessary standards through joint efforts of all Montenegrin institutions involved in the fight against trafficking in human beings.

## **Appendix VIII**

### **Statement by Mr Adrian PETRESCU, Deputy Director of the Romanian National Agency against Trafficking in Persons**

Thank you, Madame Chair, Madame President of GRETA.

Dear representatives,

Allow me to take the opportunity to reaffirm once again Romania's commitment to the values promoted by the Convention. Romanian Government has taken note of the Committee of the Parties recommendations regarding its future actions in the fight against THB.

Furthermore, many of the recommendations tackled issues and topics of great interests for various Romanian anti-trafficking actors, both governmental and civil society, that constantly cooperate and are engaged in joint actions aiming and ensuring the more realistic response to the challenges brought by trafficking as a phenomenon or by particular cases of this crime.

I take the chance to mention that, just yesterday, the Senate of the Romanian Parliament approved, and in the next weeks it will be enacted by the President, several amendments to the Criminal code, one of it regarding the statute of limitation for trafficking in minors that now is imprescriptible.

Regarding the funding of the anti-trafficking efforts - an issue that was mentioned by the GRETA experts in the Report - I would also like to bring to your attention the fact that in the context of the public debate regarding the Strategy of the National Agency for the Management of Seized Assets this topic is a central one, following the proposed objective of creating a National Crime Prevention Fund. This approach will offer us a good opportunity to generate the resources to finance the NGOs and the other actors involved in preventing THB and assisting its victims.

Considering this, while maintaining a high interest for a transparent and objective dialog on this topic with the Council of Europe, Romania will welcome any future efforts of GRETA in ensuring a better balance of various perspectives on anti-trafficking response by the signatory parties providing therefore a more accurate understanding of what can and should be done for the practical implementation of a such comprehensive response.

Thank you for your attention.

## Appendix IX

### Statement by Ms Cristiana CARLETTI of the Department of Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Italy

Thank you, Madam Chair.

On a political level, the Italian Government, through the Control Room (*Cabina di Regia*) on Trafficking in Persons and Serious Exploitation, continued to direct high-level attention and resources to trafficking in person throughout the pandemic. The Control Room, which has been re-established in March 2020, counts on broad Ministerial level representation from relevant institutions and is led by the Department of Equal Opportunity. This body met virtually during the pandemic: on 17 December 2020, the preliminary background of the forthcoming National Anti-Trafficking Plan has been defined, empowering the governance yet in place as well as partnerships with all concerned stakeholders in a multi-agency perspective.

Furthermore, within the Technical Committee in charge for the implementation of the NAP on Trafficking in Persons and Serious Exploitation the Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Family recalled the efforts made by the Department for Equal Opportunities and other administrations in the revision of Decree-Laws No. 113/2018 and 53/2019, which resulted in the approval of Decree-Law No. 130 of 21 October 2020, by which urgent provisions on immigration and international protection were introduced.

With regard to the identification, assistance and social integration programmes for victims of trafficking (as defined by Art. 18, par. 3-bis of Legislative Decree No. 196/2003, then amended by Legislative Decree No. 24/2014), financed for a total amount of € 24 million for the period 1 March 2019 - 31 May 2020, as this deadline approached and due to the pandemic persistence the Department for Equal Opportunities at the Prime Minister's Office took note of new needs of public and private operators and deemed it appropriate to ensure projects' extended timeline until 31 December 2020 (also by expanding available resources over € 11 million). This option has been further reiterated until 30 June 2021, while providing additional funding of approximately € 10 million.

Several actions have been carried out and extended for 2021 throughout the country for assistance, protection and informational orientation for accompanied and unaccompanied migrant minors.

Thank you.

## Appendix X

### **Statement by Ms Iris MUTH, Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth of Germany**

Thank you, Madam Chair.

First of all, I would like to congratulate Ms Helga Gayer for her election as President of GRETA.

I am happy to inform you that Germany had the chance to strengthen co-operation between the EU and the CoE in the field of human trafficking during the German Presidency of the EU (second half of 2020) and the German Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the CoE (November 2020 – May 2021).

In this context I would like to highlight the international conference „Ending trafficking in children and young persons: together, towards a future without child trafficking in Europe“, 4-5 May 2021, which was mainly organised by GRETA and the German Federal Police Office within the German CoE Presidency. I would like to express my gratitude in particular to Helga Gayer and Petya Nestorova for organising such an important and impactful event.

It was insightful and enriching to exchange experience with experts from all over Europe. We were particularly happy to see the exchange and cooperation between the Council of Europe and the EU – represented on that day by the acting EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, Olivier Onidi. I am convinced that this event has brought us a step closer to our goal to combat all forms of trafficking and trafficking in children in particular.

I can assure you that Germany stands ready to contribute further in the process of identifying and using synergies between these two important European actors in the future throughout Europe and worldwide.

Thank you.

## Appendix XI

Presentation by Dr Paolo Campana

# Online and Technology-facilitated Trafficking in Human Beings (THB)

Dr Paolo Campana

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CoE Committee of the Parties | 4 June 2021

## Objectives of the study

- Exploring the problems faced by States Parties in relation to the detection, investigation and prosecution of online and technology-facilitated THB.
- Exploring the existing legislative and operational tools, as well as good practices that help prevent and combat ICT-enabled trafficking in human beings.
- Exploring the complementarity between the CoE Anti-Trafficking and the Budapest Conventions and possible gaps in the legal framework for combating ICT-enabled human trafficking.

## Project structure

- **Situation Report** [December 2020]
  - State of the Art covering a variety of sources: international organisations; academia; NGOs and charities; private sector.
- **Questionnaire** produced in three versions [February / March 2021]
  - State Parties
  - Civil Society Organisations
  - Tech Companies
- Questionnaires received as of yesterday:
  - 34 State Parties (a few more expected...)
  - 13 Civil Society Organisations
  - 1 Tech Company



## Situation Report: ICTs Impact

- ICTs mostly impact THB during two stages of the process: **recruitment** and **exploitation**.
- **Recruitment** of victims
  - Sexual exploitation: “boyfriend” model/online grooming and job advertisements
  - Labour exploitation: job advertisements
  - However, the **extent** of the impact of technology on recruitment **is unclear** from the literature
- **Exploitation** of victims
  - Sexual exploitation: control over victims (mobile devices) and sales of sexual services (online advertisements)
  - Labour exploitation: no evidence of a noticeable role of technology was found in the review (might be changing → ‘gig economy’)
- Little evidence on **financial flows** and use of **cryptocurrencies**

## Situation Report: SPs Challenges

- **Difficulties in sorting** genuine advertisements from trafficking-related ones, despite the efforts put into developing **indicators of potential risk**
- Online grooming taking place via **private channels** and **encrypted messages**
- Use of **encryption** and **volume** of electronic evidence
- **Rapid evolution** of technological and behavioural landscape
- Obstacles **to international cooperation** and **cooperation with private companies**

## Situation Report: Further Issues

- Technology-heavy policies to combat human trafficking need to be **designed with consideration for human rights**
- Issues related to **data privacy, ethics, transparency, accountability and informed consent**
- Little recognition in the literature about **gender-based sensitivities**
- Placing the **best interest of victims** at the centre of any action, including the importance of **not cutting victims out of technology**

## Situation Report

- Evidence base continues to remain very limited and patchy.
- Very few studies offer first-hand evidence of how technology impacts human trafficking *in practice*.
- The best evidence available comes from a handful of studies often based on a small number of interviews and limited to a few countries

## Questionnaire for State Parties

Part 1. Impact of ICTs on THB

Part 2. Key challenges faced by State Parties

(Detection; Investigation; Prosecution; International cooperation)

Part 3. Domestic and International legal instruments to combat ICT-facilitated THB

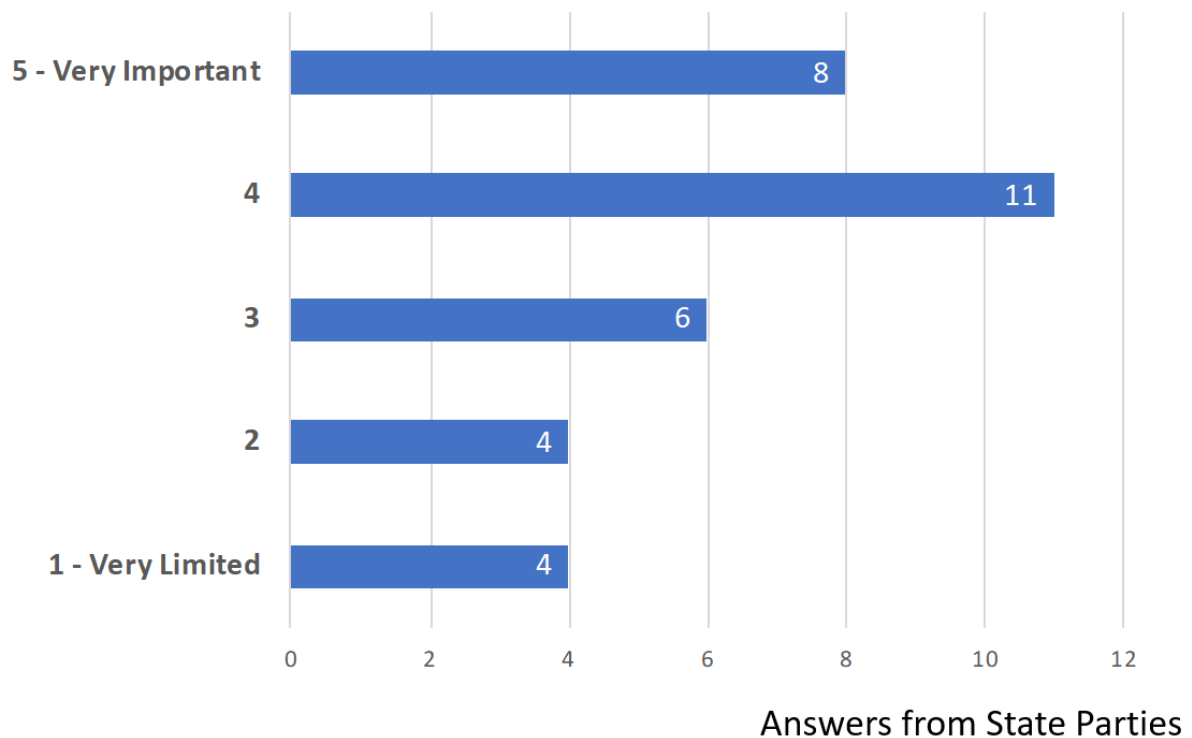
Part 4. Leveraging on technology (tech tools)

Part 5. Cooperation with private companies

Part 6. Cybercrime Convention

Part 7. Protection of human rights

On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you judge the impact of ICTs on THB in your country?



... more to come!