

**Committee of the Parties
to the Council of Europe Convention
on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings**



**Recommendation CP/Rec(2024)11
on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention
on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings
by Türkiye**

*adopted at the 35th meeting of the Committee of the Parties
on 29 November 2024*

The Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (hereinafter referred to as “the Convention”), acting under the terms of Article 38(7) of the Convention;

Having regard to the purposes of the Convention to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings, while guaranteeing gender equality, protect the human rights of victims of trafficking, design a comprehensive framework for the protection and assistance of victims and witnesses, ensure the effective investigation and prosecution of the offences related to trafficking in human beings, and promote international co-operation;

Bearing in mind the provisions of Article 36(1) of the Convention concerning the monitoring role of the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) in the implementation of the Convention;

Having regard to the Rules of Procedure of the Committee of the Parties;

Having regard to the instrument of ratification deposited by Türkiye on 2 May 2016;

Recalling Committee of the Parties’ Recommendation CP/Rec(2019)11 on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Türkiye and the report of the Turkish authorities on measures taken to comply with this recommendation, submitted on 17 November 2021;

Having examined the second round evaluation report concerning the implementation of the Convention by Türkiye, adopted by GRETA at its 51st meeting (1-5 July 2024), as well as the comments of the Turkish Government on GRETA’s report, submitted on 11 September 2024;

1. Welcomes the progress made since the first round of evaluation in the following areas:
 - the designation of the Human Rights and Equality Institution of Türkiye as the National Rapporteur on human trafficking;
 - the training on human trafficking provided to an increasing range of professional groups;
 - the steps to raise public awareness of the risks of human trafficking and the rights of victims of trafficking;

- the efforts made to prevent trafficking in children through the National Action Plan to Fight against Child Labour, the establishment of mobile teams for child protection and the programmes aimed at eliminating child labour and increasing refugee children's access to school;
- the improvement of the material conditions of the two state-run shelters for victims of human trafficking;
- the setting up of interview rooms for vulnerable victims and special victim support services in almost all courthouses.

2. Recommends that the Turkish authorities take measures to address the following issues for immediate action identified in GRETA's report:

- take further steps to ensure that national action to combat human trafficking is comprehensive, through the adoption, as a matter of priority, of a National Action Plan against Human Trafficking, in which objectives, activities and stakeholders responsible for their implementation are clearly defined and budgetary resources allocated. The action plan should be accompanied by a mechanism for monitoring its implementation and should aim to:
 - address all victims of trafficking, including Turkish nationals, for all forms of exploitation, including forced begging, forced criminality, forced marriages and the removal of organs, while taking into account the gender-dimension of trafficking and the particular vulnerability of children;
 - prioritise the identification of victims of human trafficking amongst refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons, particularly in the South-Eastern region;
 - strengthen action to combat trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation by reviewing the legislative framework, improving the identification of, and assistance to, victims of trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation in different sectors of the economy (in particular high-risk sectors such as agriculture, construction, restaurants, entertainment and domestic work), and involving civil society, trade unions, labour inspectorates and the private sector;
- intensify efforts to prevent human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation, in particular by:
 - training labour inspectors throughout the country, as well as other inspecting agencies, law enforcement officers, prosecutors and judges, on combating trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation and the rights of victims;
 - expanding the mandate of labour inspectors so that they can be actively engaged in the prevention of human trafficking, including in private households and in small businesses in the agricultural sector;
 - monitoring the frequency and effectiveness of labour inspections, especially in sectors considered at risk of human trafficking, and ensuring that the number of labour inspectors and their financial resources are sufficient to fulfil their mandate, including in remote locations at risk of human trafficking in the agricultural sector;
 - strengthening co-operation between law enforcement officers, labour inspectors, social security supervisors, tax authorities, trade unions and civil society organisations with a view to collecting the evidence necessary for successfully prosecuting cases of human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation;
 - reviewing Law No. 6735 on International Labour with a view to facilitating the process for foreign workers to change employers;
 - strengthening the monitoring of private employment agencies and reviewing the legislative framework for any gaps that may limit protection or preventive measures;

- raising awareness amongst the general public as well as, in a targeted manner, amongst migrant workers, about the risks of human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation;
- establishing effective mechanisms to enable irregularly present migrant workers to lodge complaints and obtain effective remedies without the risk of sharing of their personal data or other information with the immigration authorities for the purposes of immigration control and enforcement;
- take further measures to prevent trafficking in children, and in particular:
 - strengthen the role and capacity of the child protection services to protect children in street situations, prevent trafficking in children and alert other relevant stakeholders to possible cases of trafficking;
 - take all necessary actions, including amending legislation, to ensure the effective implementation of legal safeguards against child labour;
 - sensitise and train teachers, educational staff and child welfare professionals across the country about human trafficking and its different forms, and ensure that sensitisation programmes on the matter of human trafficking are put in place in schools;
 - strengthen their efforts to prevent trafficking in children for different types of exploitation by raising public awareness, especially amongst refugee and unaccompanied children, about the risks and different manifestations of child trafficking, including early, child and forced marriages, exploitation of begging, forced criminality, and child labour exploitation;
- strengthen their efforts to detect and prevent human trafficking through border control measures, in particular in the context of increased migration. This should include:
 - steps to build the capacity of all competent authorities to detect indicators of human trafficking among persons arriving in Türkiye;
 - the provision of information to foreign nationals arriving irregularly or seeking asylum, in a language that they can understand, about the risks of human trafficking, their rights and where to turn for advice and assistance;
 - the carrying out of individualised risk assessment prior to any forced removals and ensuring that it covers the risks of trafficking or re-trafficking on return, in compliance with the obligation of *non-refoulement*. In this context, full consideration should be given to the UNHCR's Guidelines on the application of the Refugees Convention to trafficked persons and GRETA's Guidance note on the entitlement of victims of trafficking, and persons at risk of being trafficked, to international protection;
- take further steps to improve the identification of victims of human trafficking, and in particular to:
 - promote a multi-agency approach in the identification of victims of trafficking by involving the expertise of all relevant organisations and entities, such as specialised NGOs, social workers, labour inspectors, child protection specialists and healthcare staff;
 - ensure an enabling environment for NGOs and sufficient resources to support their involvement in the identification of possible victims of trafficking, including in removal centres;
 - ensure that the authorities have sufficient staff to be able to manage the identification procedure, and to take measures to proactively identify victims of transnational and internal trafficking (i.e. taking place within Türkiye) for different purposes of exploitation;
 - strengthen the mandate and capacity of labour inspectors to enable them to proactively identify victims of trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation;
 - continue paying particular attention to the proactive detection of victims of trafficking among asylum seekers and persons placed in removal centres, and provide, in co-operation with civil society and lawyers, continuous training to all staff who come into contact with such persons;

- ensure that qualified interpreters are available whenever presumed victims of trafficking are interviewed in the context of the victim identification procedure;
- enhance efforts to provide assistance to victims of trafficking by:
 - providing appropriate and secure accommodation to all victims of trafficking (women, men and children), including accommodation where victims can stay with their children (girls and boys), regardless of their age;
 - facilitating the social inclusion of victims of trafficking and preventing re-trafficking by providing them with long-term assistance, including vocational training and access to the labour market;
 - strengthening partnerships with specialised NGOs for the purpose of assisting victims of trafficking, including by delegating to NGOs the function of service providers, and providing adequate financing of the services delivered by NGOs;
 - providing regular training to all professionals responsible for implementing assistance measures for victims of trafficking, including the staff of the shelters for victims of violence;
- improve the identification and assistance of child victims of trafficking, in particular by:
 - introducing standard operating procedures defining the role to be played and the procedure to be followed by all the authorities and professionals who may come into direct contact with child victims of trafficking, including NGOs;
 - ensuring that relevant actors take a proactive approach and increase their outreach work to identify child victims of trafficking, by paying particular attention to unaccompanied and separated migrant and refugee children, children working in the agricultural sector, children in street situations as well as child marriage;
 - providing further training and resources to all the stakeholders who may come into contact with child victims of trafficking (including police, gendarme, labour inspectors, NGOs, child protection authorities, social workers, teachers and health-care professionals) as well as guidance on the identification of child victims of THB;
- increase efforts to facilitate access to compensation for victims of trafficking, and in particular to:
 - provide information to all victims of trafficking on their right to compensation and the ways to access it, in a language they can understand, and ensure that victims have effective access to free legal aid to claim compensation;
 - include victim compensation in training programmes for law enforcement officials, prosecutors, judges and lawyers;
 - ensure that claims for compensation by victims of THB are examined within the criminal proceedings while preserving the victims' right to seek compensation before a civil court;
 - establish a state compensation scheme accessible to victims of trafficking, regardless of their citizenship and residence status;
 - put in place a system to certify lawyers who are qualified to provide legal assistance to victims of trafficking, and ensure that trafficking victims are systematically appointed a lawyer from among the certified lawyers;
- take measures to:
 - include "servitude", "practices similar to slavery" and "other forms of sexual exploitation" in the list of forms of exploitation;
 - consider trafficking in all children, i.e. all persons under the age of 18, as an aggravating circumstance, in accordance with Article 24 of the Convention;
 - ensure that all the aggravating circumstances included in the Convention, including the offence committed by a civil servant in the performance of her/his duties and the offence deliberately or by gross negligence endangering the life of the victim, are appropriately taken into account;

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- ensure compliance with Article 26 of the Convention through the adoption of a specific provision on the non-punishment of victims of trafficking for their involvement in unlawful activities, to the extent that they were compelled to do so, and/or by developing training and relevant guidance for law enforcement officials and prosecutors on the scope of the non-punishment provision;
 - take measures to:
 - prioritise the identification of gaps in the investigation procedure, the collection of evidence and the prosecution of human trafficking cases for different purposes of exploitation, with a view to ensuring effective, proportionate and dissuasive convictions;
 - provide law enforcement units investigating THB offences with the necessary resources, guidance and tools to detect and investigate human trafficking cases for different purposes of exploitation, including on the use of information and communication technology to combat trafficking and the collection of digital evidence;
 - strengthen efforts to rescue Yazidi captives held in Türkiye and prosecute the perpetrators;
 - strengthen efforts to investigate and prosecute cases of human trafficking, focusing in particular on the forms of trafficking which are seldom investigated and/or prosecuted, such as trafficking for the purposes of forced criminality, forced begging, forced marriage, and organ removal;
 - build strategic partnerships with NGOs and other relevant civil society actors with the aim of achieving the purpose of the Convention (Article 35), and to ensure that NGOs engaged in anti-trafficking action have effective access to adequate funding, including from the State, and are enabled to participate in the prevention of human trafficking and victim protection and assistance.
3. Requests the Government of Türkiye to report to the Committee of the Parties on the measures taken to comply with this recommendation by **29 November 2025**.
4. Invites the Government of Türkiye to continue the dialogue in progress with GRETA and to keep GRETA regularly informed of the measures taken in response to GRETA's conclusions.