

Strasbourg, 19 June 2025

T-THO (2025) LD2

Committee of the Parties Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs (Santiago de Compostela Committee)

LIST OF DECISIONS 6th Plenary meeting

Strasbourg and hybrid, 2-3 June 2025

Council of Europe
Agora building, room G04

The Committee of the Parties (hereinafter, CoP) to the Council of Europe Convention against trafficking in Human Organs (hereinafter, the Convention, the Santiago de Compostela Convention or THO Convention), meeting in Strasbourg, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Radovan Nikolić (Montenegro), took the following decisions:

1. Opening of the meeting

- **to take note** of the introductory and welcoming remarks by Mr Denis Huber, Head of the Health Department within the Directorate General Human Rights and Rule of Law and Executive Secretary of the Pompidou Group, who welcomed the representatives of the 13 State Parties present (out of 15) as well as the Chair of the Network of National Focal Points on Travel for Transplantation (NETTA). Mr Huber reiterated that trafficking in human organs is a criminal offence that violates the right to life guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights. He emphasized that an important objective of this meeting is the hearing that will be held on the theme "From online offers to organ trafficking: the need for coordinated action". He also explained the implementation of an internal task force within the Secretariat to develop a FAQ document on Trafficking in Human Organs (hereinafter, THO) to serve as a reference for media inquiries on these topics. He also noted that

this year marks the 10th anniversary of the opening for signature of the Santiago de Compostela Convention and that a celebration will be held in autumn to mark the occasion.

- to **take note** of the introductory and welcoming remarks by the Chair of the CoP, Mr Radovan Nikolić, who welcomed all Parties. He emphasised the importance of expanding the Convention by increasing the number of ratifications and signatures in order to combat organ trafficking even more effectively and raise awareness, in particular through the drafting of a 10Q&A brochure on the Santiago de Compostela Convention. He also introduced Ms Rachel van der Beek, who recently joined the Secretariat, to all participants.

2. Adoption of the draft agenda

- to **adopt** both the agenda and the order of business of the meeting without amendments (the list of participants and the agenda appear in Appendices I and II respectively)

3. Information by the Chair and the Secretariat

- to **acknowledge** the List of Decisions of the 5th Plenary meeting of the CoP THO (2-3 December 2024);
- to **instruct** the Secretariat to amend the List of Decisions from the last Plenary meeting following a comment by the Belgian representative on item 7.2. by removing the word 'abroad' in order to remove the inconsistency of the item with article 6 of the Convention;
- to **welcome** the information provided by the Chair on both the activities undertaken since the last Plenary meeting as well as on the outcomes of the last CoP Bureau meeting held online (24 April 2025);
- to **take note** of the information provided by Dr. Oscar Alarcón-Jiménez, Executive Secretary to the CoP, who reported on the Bureau meeting held online the 24 April 2025, and Parties' participation in key events. He highlighted the hearing as a central part of the CoP's meeting, mentioned the discussion to be held about the draft text of the publication "10 Q&A" and also on the upcoming events to celebrate in October: a) a conference devoted to health protection to be organised on 15 October 2025; b) the 10th anniversary of the opening for signatures of the THO Convention. He also noted progress on the country profile questionnaire report and informed that elections will be held at the end of the meeting as the current Chair will not seek a new mandate and to elect a Vice-Chair and three Bureau members;

4. Exchange of Information / Tour de table

- at the invitation of the Chair, to **hold** a *tour de table* during which state Parties exchanged views on recent developments, future perspectives, working methods, and ongoing activities, including available statistical data on detected cases of human organ trafficking and other issues within the CoP's scope of work. The Parties are instructed to provide the Secretariat their written contributions; they will be reflected in Annex 3.
- to **instruct** the Secretariat to share the video mentioned by the Belgian representative to all the State Parties

5. Accession of new countries

- to **take note** of the information provided by the Secretariat that currently 15 countries ratified the Convention including one country that is not a member of the Council of Europe (Costa Rica);

- to **inform** the CoP that official letters signed by the Chair and addressed to signatory countries inviting them to ratify the Convention will be sent in due course;
- to **invite** the Parties, both European and non-European, to actively promote the THO Convention in their neighbouring countries and encourage them to sign and ratify it;
- to **request** the support of Costa Rica in assisting with outreach and coordination efforts in the American region;
- to **request** the Parties to provide any relevant information that could facilitate connections with other countries and improve information dissemination;
- to **take note** of the information provided by the Czech representative that Slovakia is in the process of considering its accession to the Convention and of the information provided by the Norwegian representative that Finland is planning to ratify the Convention;
- to **remind** the Parties that an opportunity to sign or ratify the Convention will be available during the conference on Health Protection to be organised on 15 October 2025, though this does not preclude earlier accession.

6. Hearing “From Online Offers to Organ Trafficking: The Need for Coordinated Action”

- to **have an exchange of views** and **take note** of the information provided by Dr. Anna PSZENNY, Polish Transplant Coordinating Center and chair of the NETTA, who shared the network’s recent activities, including attention to the discussion on MedLead case reported by the Declaration of Istanbul Custodian Group (DICG) and other NETTA focal points. She highlighted that, with participation from 34 countries, NETTA’s main objective is to analyse the phenomenon of travel for transplantation;
- to **have an exchange of views** and **take note** of the information provided by Prof. Thomas MÜLLER, Co-Chair of the Declaration of Istanbul Custodian Group (hereinafter, The DICG) who highlighted the global urgency to combat organ trafficking and unethical transplant tourism through coordinated legal, medical, and policy measures. Emphasizing the principles of the Declaration of Istanbul, he called for ethic, financially neutral and transparent organ donation systems governed by national authorities. He noted that real-world cases expose how vulnerable individuals are exploited (often in low-income countries) while wealthier patients travel abroad for transplants. He stressed the need for international collaboration, enhanced enforcement, better detection and reporting and ongoing dialogue among stakeholders to ensure donor and recipient protection, public trust and eventual self-sufficiency in organ transplantation.
- to **have an exchange of views** and to **take note** of the information provided by Mr Andy OWEN, from the Metropolitan Police Service (United Kingdom), who presented *Operation Manoa*, a landmark case involving human trafficking for organ removal. He explained the regulatory role of the Human Tissue Authority (hereinafter, HTA) and the legal framework, including the Human Tissue Act (Section 32) and the Modern Slavery Act (Section 2). A new legal requirement from April 2024 obliges clinicians to report suspected cases to the HTA, following this case. The case involved high-ranking individuals in Nigeria and revealed exploitation of a vulnerable victim, recruited under false promises for organ trafficking. This was the first time such charges were brought in the United Kingdom, marking a legal milestone.
- to **have an exchange of views** and to **take note** of the information provided by Prof. Adnan SHARIF, consultant Nephrologist and Transplant Physician Honorary Professor, who addressed the role of websites and social media in facilitating illicit transplant tourism, citing examples such as TebMedTourism and JuspiterHospital. He emphasised the challenges posed by the deep web and the rapid evolution of digital platforms. Prof. SHARIF also highlighted the potential of Artificial Intelligence (hereinafter, AI) and machine learning in detecting trafficking content, with promising

results showing up to 92% accuracy for organ trafficking and discussed the use of agent-based models to support prevention efforts in the digital age;

- to **have an exchange of views** and to **take note** of the information provided by Dr Axel RAHMEL, German Organ Transplantation Foundation, who reported on the ongoing investigation into the MedLead case since 2024 in Germany. While no German doctors were involved, the case concerns German patients and legal action is being explored despite jurisdictional challenges. Dr RAHMEL noted cooperation with Israel and Poland, and that MedLead website is once again active online in Germany. He highlighted the legal gap when activities occur abroad and stressed the long average waiting time (six years) for organ transplantation in Germany, where advertising organ sales is a criminal offence.
- to **thank** the speakers for their time and their valuable presentations;
- to **invite** the Parties to take further action and encouraged participants (NETTA) and observers (the Declaration of Istanbul Custodian Group) to keep the CoP informed about these websites so that the CoP could consider on further actions and engagement with international bodies;
- to **encourage** a comprehensive response and to consider the drafting of a statement, with the support of the DICG and other observers, which may propose a multi-level strategy and the development of legal frameworks, by reinforcing a unified and ethical stance against transplant trafficking;
- to **take note** that further actions regarding this hearing will be discussed at the next Bureau meeting.

7. Exchange of information, experiences and good practices

- to **take note** that Slovenia's and Croatia's representatives are officially nominated to participate in the forthcoming CD-P-TO meeting on behalf of the Santiago de Compostela Committee. A letter, signed by the Chair of the THO convention, will be sent to the CD-P-TO informing about the CoP's willingness to participate in the CD-P-TO meetings to streamline synergies and further joint co-operation;
- to **instruct** the Secretariat to contact Ms Petya NESTOROVA, Executive Secretary of GRETA, and ask whether the CoP Secretariat participation would be possible in GRETA and/or THB CoP meetings;
- to **take note** that the Czech representative can represent the Santiago de Compostela CoP at meetings of the Committee of the Parties of GRETA;
- to **take note** that Switzerland's and Croatia's representatives participate in the NETTA meetings and **instruct** them to give a feedback to the CoP about the outcomes of NETTA meetings;
- to **take note** that the Secretariat will attend the NETTA annual meeting on 12-13 June 2025, following an invitation from NETTA;
- to **instruct** the CoP's members to provide the Secretariat with a feedback if they participate in a CoE meeting where they may represent the Santiago de Compostela Committee;
- to **instruct** the Secretariat to consider appointing a representative to represent the CoP in CD-BIO's meetings;

8. Priorities of the Committee of the Parties and organisation of its future work

8.1 Country Profile Questionnaire

a) State of play

- to **take note** of the latest state of play (on date of 23 May 2025) of the answers to the Country Profile Questionnaire (CPQ) and express appreciation as all State Parties provided their answers.

b) Call for request to other signatory countries

- to **invite** the Parties to encourage other countries, whether signatories or not, to voluntarily provide answers to the CPQ;

c) Presentation of a Draft Report

- to **note** of the preliminary draft Summary Report on the CPQ answers, presented by the independent experts (Mr. Hugo Bonar and Prof. Asier Urruela Mora), outlining the methodology, main focus areas (legal framework, prosecution, prevention, and combating of trafficking in human organs) and recommendations. The following suggestions were made:
 - to **recommend** that state Parties adopt a holistic approach, ensuring good organisation and public awareness to address facilitators and victims of trafficking;
 - to **invite** Parties to use the report as a tool for self-assessment, identifying gaps and learning from other countries' best practices;
 - to **recommend** the development of proactive systems rather than reactive responses;
 - to **emphasise** ongoing education and coordination among healthcare professionals and relevant officials to improve detection and response of THO;
 - to **invite** state Parties to implement public awareness campaigns to improve community support and recognition in countering organ trafficking issues;
 - to **highlight** the need for legislation specifically addressing organ trafficking, as it differs from human trafficking in general, thus ensuring a focused legal framework.
- to **congratulate** the experts on their excellent work and invited the state Parties to exchange on the report's content.
- to **invite** state Parties to carefully review the report (mainly pages 9 to 44) and submit any written comments to the Secretariat by 30 June 2025, and to **instruct** the Secretariat to send a reminder email to the state Parties prior to that deadline;
- to **invite** state Parties to use this report to observe what other countries do and what they can learn from it, noting that both pages 45 to 197 refer to all the different country reports and that Appendix 3 contains the answers received by the state Parties;
- to **decide** that the final version of this report will be adopted at the next Plenary meeting;
- to **instruct** the Secretariat to draft a summary of the report for a potential publication and presentation in future meetings;

8.2 Discussion about how the CoP should implement conventional obligations

- a) Organ transplantation outside national transplantation systems: the CoP's role under article 6 and its interaction with networks
- to **acknowledge** that Article 6 of the Convention addresses the implantation of organs outside of the domestic transplantation system or in breach of essential principles of national transplantation laws. Illegal transplant tourism should rather be addressed under article 10 of the Convention relating to jurisdiction rules;
 - to **instruct** the Parties to submit their written comments and observations on this issue ahead of the upcoming Bureau Meeting in September; a tour de table will be held at the forthcoming Plenary meeting to gather the Parties' views and explore how the CoP can contribute to addressing this matter.
- b) Collection, analysis and exchange of information
- to **note** that most Parties have agreed to share their contact details among each other to facilitate communication;
 - to **instruct** the Secretariat to prepare such a contact list to be shared among State Parties, after obtaining the written consent from the representatives of the following Parties (Malta, Slovenia and Montenegro);
 - to **instruct** the Parties to reflect and consider which data is to be collected and shared within the CoP to comply with article 25.2 of the Convention.

8.3 Activities to promote the Santiago de Compostela Convention

- a) Q&A Booklet on the Santiago de Compostela Convention
- to **take note** of the information provided by the Secretariat regarding the Q&A booklet;
 - to **instruct** the Secretariat: a) to add an additional question (11th question) to the Q&A brochure, in particular on the distinction between THO and THBOR (as already used in the FAQ document), b) to ask Parties to both provide comments and/or agree (by 20 June) with the text proposed by the Secretariat; c) to send the draft revised version to the Parties for approval by 27 June 2025;
 - to **invite** the Parties to indicate by Friday, 6 June 2025, whether they wish to propose the inclusion of any additional questions from the published FAQ document to the Q&A brochure;
 - to **invite** the Parties to translate the Q&A booklet document in their national languages as soon as it will be finalised to increase the visibility of the Convention and the Committee;
 - the Secretariat kindly **invites** francophone delegates to help fine-tuning the French version and improve the quality terminology used in the French version;
- b) International Day against organ trafficking
- to **remind** that the date of the opening of the signature of the Convention (25 March) was adopted by the CoP as the official day against organ trafficking;
 - to **note** that at the last CoP meeting the CoP agreed to celebrate the international Day in 2025 with a series of actions (see list of Decisions). The Secretariat informed that only Belgium informed the Secretariat of their planned activities prior to the celebration date. However, due to the lack of any information from any other state Party, the Secretariat decided to cancel the initial communication

plans and informed of this decision to all state Parties. The Secretariat also informed that on that Day, Montenegro informed the Secretariat of its efforts in raising awareness;

- to **thank** Belgium for their efforts and ideas related to the International Day, including their plans for a press release, including sentences from the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Health and dissemination of information;
- to **encourage** state Parties to implement any possible initiatives at the national level on that date in 2026 with a view to raising awareness of the Convention (press release, website, etc). Parties are requested to inform the Secretariat at the forthcoming Plenary meeting about their planned actions in 2026;
- to **instruct** the Secretariat to include in the agenda of the next Plenary meeting a discussion on the International Day Against Organ Trafficking.
- to **note** that the DICG showed an interest in both giving more visibility to this date and the Convention. Thus, the CoP decided to **instruct** the Secretariat to contact the DICG on the procedure to follow and inform the CoP at the forthcoming plenary meeting.

c) Curriculum on the Santiago de Compostela Training

- to **take note** that training on the Convention is a priority for the CoP;
- to **remind** the Parties to submit (before September) experts willing to contribute pro bono to the drafting of a multidisciplinary HELP training curriculum on the Convention and to **inform** the CoP that only two members have proposed names for the moment;
- to **instruct** the Secretariat to send a reminder to the state Parties regarding the expert request and indicating the target groups of this training;
- to **instruct** the Secretariat to continue this project if no experts are provided by the state Parties;
- to **instruct** the Secretariat to be in contact with the Barcelona center's training;
- based on the information received by state Parties, to **instruct** the Secretariat to organize a meeting with experts and the HELP Secretariat to discuss the curriculum structure, target recipients (legal, health, law enforcement) and drafting timeline;
- to **invite** NETTA to participate in the curriculum drafting process.

d) Additional activities

- to **take note** of the information provided by the Secretariat (CoP and NETTA), in particular about the multiple and regular requests received by different media on issues related to organ trafficking in Europe and beyond. To provide a consolidated institutional position, an internal task force (including Secretariat members from THO, NETTA, CD-P-TO, CD-BIO, THB, Communication) was established to draft a clear and concise FAQ document to respond to journalists' potential questions;
- to **take note** that a FAQ document was drafted and agreed among all members of the Task Force. The FAQ will be published officially in the CoP website, social media, etc;
- to **invite** state Parties to propose further activities related to the Convention and to contact the Secretariat accordingly.

8.4 1st Thematic monitoring report: ***"Prevention and awareness mechanisms to counter trafficking in human organs"***

a) State of Play

- to **take note** of the latest State of Play (on date of 30 May 2025) of the answers received to the 1st thematic monitoring report;
- to **welcome** that 11 state Parties replied the 1st monitoring questionnaire and recall there are still 4 state Parties (Croatia, Malta, Republic of Moldova and Spain) missing to reply to such questionnaire;
- to **instruct** the Secretariat to contact these 4 remaining countries asking them to reply by the end of June, otherwise, their reply will not be analysed in this monitoring round but in a next one (whenever new countries will join the CoP);
- to **take note** of the Monitoring timeline available on the website, which will be regularly updated to help state Parties better understand and follow the monitoring procedure;
- to **instruct** the Secretariat to publish the national answers to this questionnaire on the website, as well as the answers to the CPQ;

b) Draft report

- to **take note** that once the largest number of remaining countries respond to the 1st monitoring round questionnaire, the analysis of all the countries response could begin;

c) Discussion on the situation of non-answering Parties

- to **proceed** with the analysis of the answers when receiving the larger number of remaining responses (by June 2025); after that period without any answer, the analysis will begin;
- to **adopt** the proposal of the establishment of two monitoring groups: Group A, comprising the 11 state Parties that have already submitted their answers to the Secretariat, and Group B, which will comprise the remaining countries not having submitted their answers to the Secretariat or the new state Parties;
- to **decide** that those remaining state Parties that have not responded to the 1st Monitoring questionnaire by the end of June will be excluded of this monitoring exercise and their answers will be analysed in a later stage when additional countries will join the CoP;
- to **instruct** the Secretariat to expressly contact both Malta and Republic of Moldova to clearly explain the situation.

8.5 On-site visits in State Parties and Signatories

- to **take note** that the topic of on-site visits was addressed during the Bureau meeting and of the information provided by the Secretariat regarding the purpose and framework of such visits;
- to **agree** to organise on-site visits in the framework of the monitoring procedure;
- to **take note** that the matter will be further discussed at the next Plenary meeting and **invite** state Parties, in the meantime, to reflect whether they would like to request such on-site visit and, if so, contact the Secretariat accordingly.

8.6 2nd Thematic monitoring round

- to **take note** of the proposed topics for the 2nd thematic monitoring round, with contributions from Norway, Czechia, Belgium and France;
- to **take note** that from all the topics proposed only one will be selected; it may include other related subtopics;
- to **invite** all state Parties to submit further detailed proposals for both discussion at the next Plenary meeting (October 2025) and adoption at the 2026 Spring Plenary meeting; to **instruct** the Secretariat to send a concrete template for submitting the proposals;
- to **take note** that “flash surveys” may also be considered by the CoP in order to obtain necessary information or additional input;
- to **thank** the DICG for proposing an additional topic: "prosecutability" and contributing to the discussion; to **instruct** the Secretariat to provide the DICG the template;
- to **take note** that Belgium highlighted the alignment with the CD-BIO in some themes and requested the Secretariat to liaise with them;
- to **encourage** the state Parties that did not still provide any theme for a monitoring round to consider possible suggestions;

8.7 National Platform

- to **take note** that this matter will be addressed at the next Plenary meeting and to **instruct** the Secretariat to add it to the draft agenda;

9. Observer status to the Santiago de Compostela Committee

- to **take note** that the CoP's Rules of Procedure (hereinafter, RoP) allow the figure of observers within the CoP. In particular, pursuant to paragraphs 4 and 5 of Article 24 of the Convention, representatives of relevant official bodies of the Parties and representatives of civil society, in particular of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), may be admitted as observers to the Santiago de Compostela Committee;
- to **take note** of the work carried out by both the World Medical Association (hereinafter, the WMA) and the Declaration of Istanbul Custodian Group (DICG) accordingly;
- to **instruct** both possible observers to leave the room, proceed with the voting and **grant** observer status to the WMA and the DICG;
- to **note** that another entity requested to be granted observer status to the CoP and it will be given a slot at the forthcoming plenary meeting;

10. 10th anniversary of the Santiago de Compostela Convention

- to **agree** that a half-day conference on occasion of the 10th anniversary of the opening for signature of the Santiago de Compostela Convention may be organised and **instruct** the Secretariat to invite the Secretary General of the CoE to the opening of such event as well as the President of the PACE (Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE) and the Chair of GR-J (Rapporteur Group Legal Co-operation) if this event finally takes place;
- to **agree** that, considering that the next Plenary meeting will take place on 16-17 October 2025, the celebration of such event may be held within that period;

- to **note** that both a preliminary draft agenda and a short preliminary concept note have been prepared and **instruct** the Parties to submit comments and suggestions to such documents in writing to the Secretariat before the end of June;
- to **inform** that other CoE entities will also be invited;
- to **invite** the Parties to record a 3-minute video of the relevant minister (e.g. Justice, Health and/or Interior) celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Santiago de Compostela Convention, preferably in English or French; if not possible in the CoP's official languages, videos may be submitted in the national languages with accompanying scripts for subtitling it by the Secretariat; the Secretariat will compile selected excerpts from the submissions received to produce a final video for publication in social media;
- to **instruct** the Secretariat to remind the **state Parties to submit this video** by 1 September.

11. Elections

- to **express** its warmest thanks to Mr Radovan Nikolić (Montenegro), current Chair of the CoP, for his outstanding contribution to the CoP's work since 2023 and his strong commitment to the fight against trafficking in human organs;
- to thank Ms Escarlata Gutiérrez Mayo (Spain), current Bureau member of the CoP, for her contribution to the CoP's work since 2024;
- given that the Chair both leaves the CoP for professional reasons and will not stand for a re-election, to **proceed** with the election of the Chair, Vice-Chair and 3 Bureau members of the Santiago de Compostela Committee following the end of their mandate:
 - o Ms Pavla BUREŠOVÁ (Czech Republic) was elected Chair for two years renewable once;
 - o Mr Manuel AIRES MAGRIÇO (Portugal) was re-elected Vice-Chair of the CoP for two years for a second mandate ;
 - o Ms Salome RYF (Switzerland) was re-elected Bureau member for two years for a second mandate ;
 - o Ms Claire HUBERTS (Belgium), and Ms Danica ASVEC (Slovenia) were elected Bureau members for two years.

12. Information Points

12.1 Events

- to **take note** of the information provided by different state Parties and observers on upcoming events where the presence of the CoP is welcome to raise awareness of the Convention such as: the ELPAT meeting in October in Sevilla, Spain, a bioethics event in Ljubljana, Slovenia (from 24 to 26 November 2025), and the event to be organised by UNODC in Vienna on 11 July 2025, to be addressed for francophone countries;
- to **remind** the CoP members to send information about various future events to the Secretariat so that it could properly disseminate the information to other CoP members.

12.2 Website information

- to **take note** of the latest updates on the website, noting more updates are to come;
- to **remind** Parties to submit their relevant national legislation related to organ trafficking and the Convention translated into their national language to complete the website.

13. Financing of the Committee of the Parties

13.1 Financial obligations

- to **take note** of both Article 23.5 of the Santiago de Compostela Convention and Rule 23 of the RoP;
- to **take note** that Costa Rica has regularised its financial situation with regard to the CoP;
- to **take note** of the proposed amendment to Rule 23 RoP, pursuant to the last Bureau meeting discussions;
- to **invite** state Parties to reflect on this amendment ahead of the next Plenary meeting and to **instruct** the Secretariat to add the voting of this amendment to the agenda of the next Plenary meeting;

13.2 Call for voluntary contributions

- to **take note** that the CoE welcomes voluntary contributions to support the implementation of the CoP's activities, from CoE member and observer States, the EU, international organisations, observers, foundations and other entities sharing the Organisation's values;
- to **encourage** State Parties to actively promote the Santiago de Compostela Convention and the activities of the CoP to potentially interested donors, such as international organisations, foundations, cooperation agencies or regional actors;
- to **invite** the Parties to liaise with their respective Permanent Representations to promote the Santiago de Compostela Convention's work within relevant diplomatic and institutional circles, and to enhance its visibility, including through the identification of potential funding opportunities for related projects.
- to **remind** all those interested in providing any voluntary contribution to contact the Secretariat;

14. Any other business

- to **encourage** the state Parties to inform the Secretariat of any issues, suggestions for new initiatives or topics they may wish to raise during the Plenary meeting for potential inclusion and debate within the Bureau;
- to **take note** of the Slovenian representative's request to add an item to the agenda of the next Plenary meeting on how to enhance public awareness on organ trafficking without refraining donations.

15. Dates of the next meetings

- to **inform** that the Plenary meeting will take place on 16 and 17 October 2025, with an arrival planned for 14 October as the Parties are invited to attend a conference devoted to health protection to be organised on 15 October 2025;
- to **agree** that the first day of the next Plenary meeting (16 October 2025) may include a half-day commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the Convention.

*
* *

➤ Appendix I – List of Participants	See below
➤ Appendix II- Agenda of the meeting	 T-THO (2025) OJ1.pdf
➤ Appendix III- Tour de table - Presentation of the Parties	See below

APPENDIX I

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 4 June 2025

THO (2025) LP

Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs /

Comité des Parties à la Convention du Conseil de l'Europe contre le trafic d'organes humains

.....

**List of participants /
Liste des participants**

6th meeting of the Committee of Parties to the THO Convention /
6^{ème} réunion du Comité des Parties à la Convention TOH

Room G04, Strasbourg, France, 2 - 3 June 2025 /
Salle G04, Strasbourg, France, 2 - 3 juin 2025

1. MEMBERS / MEMBRES (STATE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION / ETATS PARTIES A LA CONVENTION)**ALBANIA / ALBANIE**

Ms Mimoza QYRA, Head of anti-trafficking sector, Ministry of Interior (Apologised, Excusé)

BELGIUM / BELGIQUE

Ms Claire HUBERTS, Conseillère au sein du Service public fédéral Justice, Direction générale Législation, Libertés et Droits fondamentaux, Service des principes de droit pénal et de procédure pénale

Ms Régine WILMOTTE, Legal Officer in the Federal Public Service Public Health, Directorate-General for Health Care, Legal Service (Apologised, Excusé)

COSTA RICA / COSTA RICA

Dr. Roselyn SERRANO Vargas, Technical Executive Secretary of Donation and Transplantation

CROATIA / CROATIE

Ms Marina PREMUŽIĆ, National Transplantation Coordinator, Ministry of Health

CZECH REPUBLIC / RÉPUBLIQUE TCHÈQUE

Ms Pavla BUREŠOVÁ, Senior Ministerial Counsellor, Ministry of Justice of the Czech Republic

FRANCE

Mr. Pierre LECHARTE, Magistrate, Directorate of Criminal Affairs and Pardons, French Ministry of Justice

LATVIA / LETTONIE

Mr Andris GINDRA, Lawyer, Department of Criminal Justice, Ministry of Justice (Apologised, Excusé)

Ms Kristīna DOMBROVSKA Lawyer of the Criminal Law department of the Ministry of Justice of Latvia,

MALTA / MALTE

Dr. Lynn CHIRCOP FAURE, Senior Manager (Human Rights Directorate), Ministry for Home Affairs, Security, Reforms and Equality (online)

Prof Neville CALLEJA, Director Health Information and Research, Department for Policy in Health, Ministry for Health and Active Aging (online)

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA / RÉPUBLIQUE DE MOLDAVIE

Dr Grigore ROMANCIUC, Director of the Transplant Agency of the Republic of Moldova (Apologised, Excusé)

MONTENEGRO / MONTENEGRO**Chair/Président**

Mr Radovan NIKOLIĆ, Head of the Directorate for Health Care, Pharmacology and Regulated Professions, Ministry of Health

Ms Mirjana VLAHOVIĆ ANDRIJAŠEVIĆ, State Secretary in the Ministry of Health of Montenegro (online)

NORWAY / NORVEGE

Ms Sigrid BEITLAND, Senior Medical Advisor for the Specialised Health Care Services at the Norwegian Directorate of Health

PORTUGAL / PORTUGAL**Vice - Chair / Vice- Président**

Mr Manuel AIRES MAGRIÇO, Public Prosecutor, Administrative Court of Lisbon

Dr. Ana PIRES DA SILVA, Portuguese Institute of Blood and Transplantation, I.P. of Portugal (online)

SLOVENIA / SLOVÉNIE

Ms Danica AVSEC, Deputy director of the Institute of Organ and Tissue Transplantation Slovenia-transplant

SPAIN / ESPAGNE

Ms Escarlata GUTIÉRREZ MAYO, Prosecutor. Advisor to the General Directorate for Public Justice Service, Ministry of the Presidency, Justice, and Relations with the Courts

SWITZERLAND / SUISSE

Ms Salome RYF, Deputy head of Unit / Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA / Federal Office of Public Health FOPH / Biomedicine Division / Transplantation Unit

2. OBSERVERS TO THE SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA CONVENTION/ OBSERVATEURS DE LA CONVENTION DE SAINT-JACQUES-DE-COMPOSTELLE

Declaration of Istanbul Custodian Group

Prof. Thomas Mueller, Co-Chair of the Declaration of Istanbul Custodian Group (DICG)

Eurotransplant

Dr André Matera, General Director (Apologised, Excusé)

World Medical Association

Dr Otmar Kloiber, Secretary General of the World Medical Association

3. EXPERTS / CONSULTANTS

Independent experts / Experts indépendants

Ms Frederike AMBAGTSHEER, Vice-Chair of ELPAT (Apologised, Excusé)

Mr Hugo BONAR, Consultant

Prof. Andrea PERIN, Assistant professor in Criminal Law, Department of Law, University of Brescia (Apologised, Excusé)

Dr. iur. Asier URRUELA MORA, Professor of Criminal Law, University of Zaragoza

4. HEARING / AUDITION

Speakers / Intervenants

Mr Andrew OWEN, Detective Sergeant, Metropolitan Police Service (online)

Dr Axel RAHMEL, M. D., German Organ Transplantation Foundation (online)

Prof. Adnan SHARIF, Consultant Nephrologist and Transplant Physician, Honorary Professor, United Kingdom (online)

5. COUNCIL OF EUROPE SECRETARIAT / SECRÉTARIAT DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

DGI - HUMAN RIGHTS AND RULE OF LAW / DGI - DROITS HUMAINS ET ÉTAT DE DROIT

Directorate of Social Rights, Health and Environment / Direction des droits sociaux, de la santé et de l'environnement

Mr Denis HUBER, Head of Department of Health, Executive Secretary of the Council of Europe International Cooperation Group on Drug and addictions (Pompidou Group)

Ms Laurence LWOFF, Head of Human Rights and Biomedicine Division / *Cheffe de Division Droits de l'Homme et Biomédecine* (Apologised, Excusé)

Dr. iur. Óscar ALARCÓN-JIMÉNEZ, **Executive Secretary to the Committee of the Parties to the Trafficking in Human Organs Convention / Secrétaire Exécutif du Comité des Parties de la Convention contre le trafic d'organes humains**

Mr Henrique SOARES, Project Officer / *Chargé de Projet*

Ms Rachel VAN DER BEEK, Project Officer / *Chargée de Projet*

Ms Emma JEANNOEL, Trainee / *Stagiaire*

**EUROPEAN DIRECTORATE FOR THE QUALITY OF MEDICINES AND HEALTHCARE (EDQM) /
DIRECTION EUROPEENNE DE LA QUALITE DU MEDICAMENT ET SOINS DE SANTE (DEQM)**

Dr. Anna PSZENNY, Chair of the Network of National Focal Points on Travel for Transplantation (NETTA)

Mr Jaime MARCO, Scientific Programme Manager, Transplantation & Blood Transfusion Steering Committees

Interpreters :

Ms Sara WEBSTER
Ms Marie DELUMEAU
Ms Celia MONCOQ

APPENDIX III**TOUR DE TABLE - PRESENTATION OF THE PARTIES****1. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM THE PARTIES (Following the 6th CoP Plenary Meeting)**

	COUNTRY	TOUR DE TABLE PRESENTATION IN WRITTEN
1	ALBANIA	
2	BELGIUM	5 June 2025
3	COSTA RICA	
4	CROATIA	
5	CZECH REPUBLIC	18 June 2025
6	FRANCE	18 June 2025
7	LATVIA	
8	MALTA	
9	MONTENEGRO	
10	NORWAY	12 June 2025
11	PORTUGAL	
12	REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA	
13	SLOVENIA	19 June 2025
14	SPAIN	
15	SWITZERLAND	16 June 2025

ALBANIA/ ALBANIE	Not present
-------------------------	--------------------

BELGIUM / BELGIQUE	Contribution received on 05/06/2025
1. Pas de cas détecté en Belgique. Il n'y a pas de cas détecté en Belgique, ou d'enquête ouverte à l'encontre de ressortissant belge ou de résident. Les chiffres transmis par les auditorats du travail et publiés dans le récent rapport de Myria (le Centre fédéral Migration) au regard de la traite à des fins de prélèvement d'organes sont erronés (il s'agit d'erreurs d'encodage). 2. Initiatives menées ou lancées en Belgique depuis le mois de décembre 2024 : a) Guidelines pour les prestataires de soins, site internet du SPF Justice, plan d'action Les guidelines à destination des personnes impliquées dans le processus de prélèvement de transplantation d'organes ont été finalisées le 19 mai. Les autorités qui ont été impliquées dans leur rédaction sont les suivantes : SPF Justice, SPF Santé (service juridique et coordinateurs de transplantation), Office des étrangers (OE), Police (DJSOC), Parquet fédéral, magistrats spécialisés du réseau d'expertise Traite des êtres humains et Trafic de migrants, Office des étrangers, SPF Affaires étrangères, Belgian Society of Transplantation (BTS), Conseil national de la transplantation et Ordre des médecins. Les guidelines comprennent notamment une liste d'indicateurs, la liste des instances à contacter en cas de doute ou de question. Elles comportent des renvois à de la documentation utile. Elles ont été communiquées le 23 mai par le SPF Santé publique à la BTS (Belgian Transplantation Society), pour une diffusion à l'ensemble de ses membres (médecins et coordinateurs de transplantation) ainsi qu'aux centres de transplantations. Les guidelines ont déjà été placées sur le site web de la BTS, sur la page de garde (rubrique Fast links). Par ailleurs, le SPF Justice a récemment mis en ligne des informations générales sur son site web Trafic d'organes Service public fédéral Justice. On la trouve dès qu'on effectue une recherche avec les mots « trafic d'organes Belgique » ou « orgaanhandel België ». L'attention y est attirée sur la gravité des infractions de traite et de trafic d'organes, sur les peines fortes prévues par le Code pénal, et sur le fait que les juridictions belges sont compétentes pour juger des infractions commises à l'étranger, à certaines conditions. Le site fournit de la documentation utile, et il renvoie notamment à la brochure de la Déclaration d'Istanbul destinée aux patients. Enfin, le SPF Justice s'est attelé à la préparation d'un nouveau Plan d'action de lutte contre la traite. Il comportera une rubrique sur le trafic d'organes. b) Au niveau de la coordination Le 16 janvier 2025, sur proposition du SPF Justice, le Bureau de la Cellule interdépartementale de lutte contre la traite des êtres humains et le trafic de migrants a créé un nouveau groupe de travail chargé :	

(1) de coordonner les actions en matière de traite à des fins de prélèvement d'organes ou de matériel corporel et de trafic d'organes (à des fins de prélèvement comme de recherche), et (2) d'assurer l'échange d'informations entre les autorités compétentes et les acteurs de terrain.

En pratique, le but de la coordination est de s'informer mutuellement et périodiquement sur les données/évolutions récentes des deux problématiques, les bonnes pratiques étrangères, les difficultés de mise en œuvre, les besoins ou corrections éventuelles à apporter au niveau législatif, etc.

Les réunions sont organisées en format hybride pour faciliter la participation.

Concrètement, le 20 février 2025, le SPF Justice a invité les autorités et associations impliquées à une première réunion de coordination.

Les institutions et associations suivantes qui y ont participé, étaient :

- SPF Justice (Service de la politique criminelle et Service des Principes de droit pénal),
- SPF Santé (Service juridique),
- Agence fédérale des médicaments et des produits de santé,
- Magistrature (réseau d'expertise TEH et trafic, Parquet fédéral),
- Police,
- Office des étrangers,
- SPF Affaires étrangères,
- Myria (le Centre fédéral Migration qui lutte contre la traite et le trafic des êtres humains),
- les trois centres d'accueil et d'accompagnement des victimes de traite,
- Conseil national de la transplantation,
- la Belgian Transplantation Society (BTS).

Le Professeur Kristof Van Assche (Professeur à la Faculté de droit de l'Université d'Anvers), qui avait participé à la rédaction de la loi de 2019 et qui est membre du Custodian Group de la Déclaration d'Istanbul, fait aussi partie du groupe.

Les objectifs de la 1^{ère} réunion étaient de :

- faire connaissance ;
- faire le point sur la problématique et sur les activités menées aux niveaux national, international et européen;
- identifier les besoins ou initiatives utiles en Belgique (pour alimenter en particulier le prochain plan d'action de lutte contre la traite, en cours d'élaboration au SPF Justice) ;

Lors de la 2^{ème} réunion de coordination, le 15 mai 2025, un exposé d'une heure sur des affaires médiatisées de trafic d'organes a été donné par un agent du SPF Justice. Malheureusement, en raison du mouvement de grève des magistrats, les magistrats spécialisés n'y ont pas assisté. Les documents dont le power point seront cependant transmis prochainement à tous les membres.

La troisième réunion de coordination est prévue le 29 septembre. En 2026, deux ou trois réunions de coordinations seront programmées.

c) Initiative du SPF Affaires étrangères

Une présentation intitulée « Traite et trafic d'êtres humains : le cas du trafic d'organes » a été donnée à Lima (Pérou) en mars 2025, en présence du Directeur-général des Affaires consulaires,

du Risk Security Officer (RSO) AMSUD et des consuls de Belgique des capitales et villes suivantes : Lima, Santiago, Buenos Aires, Brasilia, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Bogota et Panama. Il s'agissait de donner aux consuls une formation sur les notions de traite d'êtres humains à des fins de prélèvement. Il s'agit d'une problématique d'actualité pour le Brésil. Les indices pouvant amener à suspecter une pratique de traite d'êtres humains ont été présentés dans ce cadre. Les participants se sont montrés intéressés.

Des initiatives similaires devraient suivre dans d'autres régions d'Amérique latine.

d) Au niveau des assurances

Des mails avec des informations générales sur la problématique du trafic d'organes et sur l'impact possible des compagnies d'assurances, ont été adressés par le SPF Justice à ASSURALIA (l'Union professionnelle des entreprises d'assurances) en décembre 2024 et février 2025. ASSURALIA a répondu avoir transmis les informations à leurs membres et les avoir également sensibilisés à ce sujet. Elle leur a recommandé de prévoir une exclusion spécifique dans les contrats d'assurance.

e) Questionnaire pour les praticiens (en préparation)

Un questionnaire anonyme et volontaire, destiné aux praticiens, est actuellement en préparation, avec le concours de la BTS (Belgian transplantation Society). Il est prévu d'y placer une question sur la prise de connaissance des guidelines et des indicateurs.

COSTA RICA /COSTA RICA

Contribution received on:

CROATIA / CROATIE

Contribution received on:

CZECH REPUBLIC / RÉPUBLIQUE TCHÈQUE

Contribution received on 18/06/2025

The Czech Republic is taking significant steps forward in combating organ trafficking and strengthening its legal framework.

A major milestone has been reached with the amendment to the Criminal Code, which has successfully passed all three readings in the Chamber of Deputies and is now on its way to the Senate for final approval.

Among the most impactful changes is the introduction of the possibility to impose fines for all criminal offences, a move aimed at modernizing the penal system and aligning it more closely with European standards. Additionally, the conditions for cumulative penalties are being revised, which will allow for more proportionate and effective sentencing.

In parallel with legislative reform, the Czech Republic is exploring the creation of a National Round Table on Organ Trafficking, inspired by the successful model implemented in Spain. This initiative would foster inter-agency cooperation and strategic dialogue, enhancing national capacity to prevent and respond to trafficking in human organs.

Furthermore, the 2024 Status Report on Trafficking in Human Beings in the Czech Republic, which includes information on trafficking in human organs (THO), is currently being finalized. This report will soon be available to the public, including an English version on the website of the Ministry of the Interior, ensuring transparency and accessibility for international partners and stakeholders.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all those who contributed to the preparation of the Czech responses to the 1st monitoring round. In particular, we acknowledge the immense help and support of the Coordination Centre for Transplantation, which played an active and invaluable role in this process.

Together, these efforts represent a comprehensive and forward-looking approach to tackling organ trafficking and strengthening human rights protections in the Czech Republic.

FRANCE	Contribution received on 18/06/2025
1) Toujours pas de procédures identifiées en matière de trafic d'organes au niveau judiciaire en France. 2) Sollicité en ce sens, le membre national français à EUROJUST a indiqué que l'institution avaient été saisie de 3 demandes de coopération internationale relatives à des procédures visant notamment des faits en lien avec le trafic d'organes humains depuis 2016. 3) L'enquête 2024 relative aux malades greffés d'un rein à l'étranger réalisée par l'Agence de la biomédecine a été finalisée sur la base des questionnaires adressés au centre de dialyse et de greffes rénales. Il en ressort : - Des taux de réponse faibles : 95 réponses sur 431 centres sollicités (22%) ; - Peu de cas de greffes à l'étranger rapportés : 13 cas sur les 95 répondants, dont seulement 6 réalisées sur la période 2021-2023 ; - Un accès au dossier médical dans seulement 3 cas sur les 13.	

LATVIA / LETTONIE	Contribution received on:

MALTA / MALTE	Contribution received on:

MONTENEGRO / MONTÉNÉGRO	Contribution received on:

NORWAY/ NORVEGE	Contribution received on 12/06/2025
Below is an update on what has happened since the last meeting. • National work The Norwegian Directorate of Health has in March 2025 arranged a network meeting in Norway including representatives from the health authorities and the hospitals performing donation and transplantation. During the meeting, the Convention was presented. We received updated information from the national registries on the number of Norwegian patients on organ waiting lists who has received suspicious transplantations abroad. This was a handful of patients the last two years. There are still no persons in Norway that has been prosecuted or convicted for organ trafficking. • International work In our meeting in Strasbourg in December 2024 I informed about raising awareness about this convention in the Nordic countries during a meeting in Scandiatransplant in September 2024. The meeting has national representatives from Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, and Estonia. Since	

then, I have been in contact with the competent authority in Finland, and they are planning to sign the convention. I have also been in contact with the national representative from Denmark, who are considering signing the convention.

PORTUGAL	Contribution received on:

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA / REPUBLIQUE DE MOLDOVA	Not present

SLOVENIA / SLOVENIE	Contribution received on 19/06/2025
In Slovenia, we have not received/detected any reports of illegal activities in the field of transplantation in the current period. Slovenija transplant is mainly concerned with the implementation of the Convention on Action against Trafficking with Human organs (Santiago de Compostella Convention). Our focus is on raising awareness of various illegal activities taking place around the world, including in Europe. Defining appropriate content and a comprehensive awareness-raising strategy is very important and is at the centre of our daily work. We have been working intensively for more than 25 years to motivate people to donate organs. With regard to organ trafficking and undesirable practises, we do not want to frighten people, but to warn them appropriately that there is also the possibility of illegal activities and that it is necessary to develop a programme to protect against this, in the interests of both donors and recipients. Co-operation with the members of the Committee of the Parties to the Convention is very welcome. We all know that the referral of suspected cases is essential. In order to urge doctors to report all suspected cases, we have presented the aspects of prevention of organ trafficking to the Ethics Committee of the Slovenian Medical Association and the Slovenian Medical Chamber. We are planning to amend the Code of Ethics for Doctors to include the obligation for doctors to report suspected cases in the article on transplants. To raise awareness of illegal activities, we are also organising lectures for medical students on the ethical aspects of transplant medicine. Analysing the country profile report provides us with a good basis for further implementation activities, as it allows us to add missing points or simply clarify some aspects. Besides, we are in the process of finalising the national platform. As it is interdisciplinary in nature, we are making slow progress. After hearing the NETTA report at the CD-P-TO group meeting in April 2025 and presenting the data among Slovenian transplant experts, we are very concerned about the current situation regarding sending patients for transplantation abroad from highly developed parts of Europe. In our opinion, the situation is very complex and therefore we suggest that the definition of illegal travelling abroad for transplantation in the Istanbul Custodial Group statement should be followed up and discussed in the THO group. So from this point of view, they are harmful and as such illegal. However, it is understandable that there are also journeys that are completely legal but should be supported by legal documents issued between the sending and receiving countries. We are also very keen to see more countries join the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.	

SPAIN / ESPAGNE	Contribution received on:
------------------------	----------------------------------

--

SWITZERLAND /SUISSE	Contribution received on 16/06/2025
In recent weeks, we have also been dealing with the MedLead case in Switzerland. A specific MedLead page for Switzerland is currently under construction. We are considering whether to file a criminal complaint. We had different contacts with journalist, but so far there was no article was published in the Swiss press.	