

1ST THEMATIC MONITORING ROUND REPORT

PREVENTION AND AWARENESS MECHANISMS TO
COUNTER TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN ORGANS (THO)

Committee of the Parties
of the Santiago de Compostela Convention

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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June 2026

Council of Europe

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The first monitoring round of the Santiago de Compostela Convention focuses on **prevention and awareness mechanisms to counter trafficking in human organs**. The report covers this theme in 14 of the 15 States which were Parties to the Convention at the time the monitoring round was adopted.
2. The 1st report provides the general framework for the prevention and awareness mechanisms to counter trafficking in human organs addresses four sets of issues: i) Preventive Measures – identifying and reporting of THO; ii) Data Collection, Analysis, and Exchange of Information; iii) Prevention and Training; and iv) Awareness Raising.
3. With regard to the need for preventive measures to identify and report THO, the Santiago de Compostela Committee found that the vast majority of the Parties have different kinds of legislative, policy, strategic and other measures ensuring transparency and fairness in the domestic system for the transplantation of organs. The majority of the Parties have systems in place to control the donation and transplants either in the form of audits or of periodic inspections. The Santiago de Compostela Committee noted that the technical structure and form of these audits and inspections depend on the internal organization of each party. The Santiago de Compostela Committee found that the general characteristics of the audit systems are their independence from the entities being audited. Finally, the Santiago de Compostela Committee considers that these controls (whether in the form of audits or inspections) allow for the identification of weaknesses that hinder or do not facilitate the detection and reporting of the offences referred in articles 4-9 of the Convention.
4. Regarding data collection, analysis, and information sharing, the Santiago de Compostela Committee found that the vast majority of the Parties have either general or specific legislative, policy or other measures that mandate and support the collection, collation, analysis of data and the exchange of information between authorities in order to enable them to take timely actions to prevent crimes set out in the Santiago de Compostela Convention. The Santiago de Compostela Committee found that the determination of the authority primarily responsible for the collection, collation and analysis of data specific of offences covered by the Convention is a decision that depends on the internal organization of each Party. This authority may be the Ministry of Health in some Parties while in other it may be the Ministry of Justice, and in other Parties it may be the police. The Santiago de Compostela Committee found that the body responsible for the preparation and dissemination of reports in this area varies among the Parties, as this depends on the organizational structure of each Party. The Santiago de Compostela Committee verified that in general, in all Parties which collect data relating to offences covered by the Santiago de Compostela Convention, authorities share those data with other relevant public authorities involved in combating against trafficking in human organs.
5. With regard to the need for prevention and training measures for those whose responsibilities it is to prevent and combat trafficking in human organs for the purpose of transplantation and other purposes and other forms of illicit removal and transplantation, the Santiago de Compostela Committee found that the putting in place of such measures

was not a priority for the majority of the Parties. The Santiago de Compostela Committee regrets that, overall, more than half of the Parties did not recognise the need to have measures to have some structured or specific training in place on this issue. While a few Parties have significant work completed in this area, and others have put some measures in place, the majority did not. The Santiago de Compostela Committee noted that some Parties relied on prevention and training provided by programmes dedicated to the trafficking in human beings (THB), and to some extent on trafficking in human beings for the purpose of organ removal (THBOR), but that did not specifically address trafficking in organs as foreseen by this Convention. A limited number of Parties relied on not having detected any instance of trafficking in organs in recent times, or at all, as justification for not having measures for prevention and training. The Santiago de Compostela Committee is concerned that waiting for an instance of trafficking in human organs to be detected illustrates the failure of waiting without having sufficient measures in place to provide for training and prevention measures. The Santiago de Compostela Committee regrets that such deficiencies weaken the impact of other measures already in place by the Parties to combat trafficking in human organs.

6. In view of the relative absence of measures to provide for prevention and training to prevent and combat trafficking in human organs for the purpose of transplantation and other purpose and other forms of illicit removal and transplantation, the Santiago de Compostela Committee found that oversight programmes to assess the frequency and effectiveness of training could not and did not exist in the majority of Parties. The Santiago de Compostela Committee considers that not only is there a need for Parties to have measures to ensure prevention and training programmes, but oversight programmes are also required to ensure their effectiveness along with a programme for remedial actions for deficiencies identified.
7. Regarding the identification of measures for the education of the public and civil society on risks associated with and the unlawfulness and dangers of trafficking in human organs for human transplantation, the Santiago de Compostela Committee found that the majority of Parties had measures in place and conducted awareness-raising campaigns to provide this information to the public. The focus is on awareness-raising arises from both the health and criminal law perspectives. Evidence was lacking regarding encouragement by the Parties of civil society to become engaged in delivering awareness-raising campaigns to the public, as was the extent of encouragement of civil society to promote awareness-raising campaigns provided by public authorities. The Santiago de Compostela Committee considers that this provided missed opportunities to foster engagement and the active support of civil society to the detriment of the public and the overall efforts by the Parties to prevent and combat trafficking in organs.
8. No Party had measures, either planned or in place, to raise awareness of the media that facilitate information linking potential donors and recipients of human organs for transplantation of the illegality of illicit solicitation, recruitment, offering and requesting of undue advantage, including the making of a financial gain or other comparable advantage. The Santiago de Compostela Committee regrets that Parties may only consider the media as a mechanism through which to provide awareness to the public, rather than raising awareness of the media itself in this regard. The Santiago de Compostela Committee

considers that Parties should have strategies, policies or other measure to raise awareness of the media, including social media and e-commerce platforms, and other virtual sites on this issue.

9. While the majority of Parties had specific measures to raise awareness of the public on the unlawfulness and dangers of trafficking in human organs for human transplantation, few had in place national oversight measures to assess the effectiveness of such campaigns.
10. The main recommendations by the Santiago de Compostela Committee on steps to improve or reinforce **the prevention and awareness mechanisms to counter trafficking in human organs** in the areas covered by this report are provided at the end of the Introduction. Specific recommendations are at the end of each chapter. All chapters also highlight a number of promising practices. Cooperation between all relevant stakeholders, and civil society, is essential to ensure that effective measures on the prevention and awareness mechanisms to counter trafficking in human organs are enacted and implemented.

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INTRODUCTION

- The Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs (hereinafter “the Santiago de Compostela Convention”, or “the Convention”) provides that a specific monitoring mechanism be set up to ensure effective implementation of its provisions by Parties (Rule 26 §3 of the Committee’s Rules of Procedure).
- This report is the 1st implementation report developed by the Committee of the Parties to the Santiago de Compostela Convention (hereinafter “the Committee”). It contains the Committee’s evaluation of the implementation by Parties of a selected number of provisions of the Convention which are relevant to assess the situation in Parties with respect to “Prevention and awareness mechanisms to counter trafficking in human organs”.

THEMATIC MONITORING

- During 3rd meeting¹, meeting, the Santiago de Compostela Committee decided that its monitoring work (i.e. the assessment of the implementation of the Convention) would be based on a thematic approach.
- On 2nd December 2024, the Committee adopted this thematic questionnaire. Its purpose is to collect specific information on how Parties implement the Convention with respect to the **prevention and awareness mechanisms to counter trafficking in human organs**. The replies to the questionnaire will be assessed against the related background information provided by the Parties when answering the “General Overview” questionnaire on the implementation of the Convention (hereinafter “Country Profile Questionnaire” or “CPQ”), and any other relevant information from reliable sources.

It is recalled that, in accordance with Rule 27 of the Committee’s Rules of Procedure:

“(…) 2. The secretariat shall address such questionnaires to the Parties through the member in the Santiago de Compostela Committee representing the Party to be monitored and who will act as “contact point”.

3. Parties shall coordinate with their respective domestic authorities to collect replies, which shall be submitted to the secretariat in one of the official languages of the Council of Europe within the time limit set by the Santiago de Compostela Committee. The replies to the questionnaires shall be detailed, as comprehensive as possible, answer all questions and contain all relevant reference texts. The replies shall be made public, unless a Party makes a reasoned request to the Santiago de Compostela Committee to keep its reply confidential.

4. The Santiago de Compostela Committee may also receive information on the implementation of the Convention from non-governmental organisations and civil society involved in preventing and combating trafficking in human organs, in one of the official languages of the Council of Europe and within the time limit set by the Santiago de

¹ May 22, 2023

Compostela Committee. The secretariat transmits these comments to the Party or Parties concerned.

5. The secretariat may request additional information if it appears that the replies are not exhaustive or are unclear. Where warranted, with the consent of the Party or Parties concerned and within the limits of budgetary appropriations, the Bureau may decide to mandate an on-site visit to the Party or Parties concerned to clarify the situation. The Bureau shall establish guidance as to the procedure governing the onsite visits pending any official guidelines agreed by the Santiago de Compostela Committee."

PARTIES INVOLVED IN THE 1ST MONITORING ROUND

- The 1st monitoring round concerns the following 14 Parties² which ratified the Convention: **Albania, Belgium, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czechia, France, Latvia, Montenegro, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland.**
- The above 14 Parties were monitored within a timeframe to create momentum around specific aspects of the monitoring theme. It presents an overview of the trends which emerge from the comparison of the situation in all Parties.
- Article Rule 26§1 of the Committee's Rules of Procedure provides that the monitoring of the implementation of the Convention by the Parties shall be based on a procedure divided into rounds, each round concerning a theme chosen by the Santiago de Compostela Committee or any other approach deemed appropriate by the Santiago de Compostela Committee within the scope of the Convention. Accordingly, Rule 26 §3 and Rule 27§2 provide that:

"Rule 26§3 *The monitoring round shall be initiated by addressing a questionnaire on the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Convention with respect to the selected theme. The Parties shall respond to the questionnaire within the time limit set by the Santiago de Compostela Committee.*

"Rule 27§2 *The secretariat shall address such questionnaires to the Parties through the member in the Santiago de Compostela Committee representing the Party to be monitored and who will act as "contact point".*

The Committee appreciates that all the information submitted by Parties was made public and underlines that the replies to the questionnaire were its main source of information to prepare this report.³

² One Party (Malta) is not included in the report due to no response having been received from it by the extended deadline for reporting by that Party.

³ All replies to the questionnaire are online on the website of the Convention

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

- The provisions of the Santiago de Compostela Convention have been grouped under different sections in this report without automatically following the structure of the Convention. This methodological choice in no way intends to prioritise the various provisions of the Convention: equal importance is attached to all rights and principles therein.
- This report does not seek to collect information on the general legislative and institutional framework established by Parties to implement the Convention. It focuses only on specific legislative and other measures taken or envisaged to protect from trafficking in human organs.
- The report has four main chapters
 - The first chapter collects information on internal protocols to identify trafficking in human organs for purposes of transplantation and other purposes, and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation.
 - The second chapter concerns the effective collection, collation and analysis of data and exchange of information that can support the identification and prevention of trafficking in human organs.
 - The third chapter collects information on policies, strategies, plans and activities by focusing on those with responsibilities regarding procurement and supply of human organs and on those with responsibilities for prevention and combating trafficking in human organs.
 - The fourth chapter concerns awareness-raising programmes aimed at identifying measures for educating the general public, and civil society, on the risks and unlawfulness of trafficking in human organs.
- Each chapter
 - Provides a comparative overview of the situation in the 14 Parties monitored, whilst a country-specific summary of the information is appended to the report in the form of tables⁴;
 - Highlights promising practices, where identified, to effectively implement the Convention;
 - Identifies the shortcomings and recommends steps that the Parties should take to improve or reinforce the **Prevention and awareness mechanisms to counter trafficking in human organs**, using the Convention.

⁴ See Appendix 4

- Finally, in its recommendations to Parties, the Santiago de Compostela Committee decided to use the terms to “urge”, “consider” and “invite” to mark different levels of urgency as follows:
 - **“Urge”**: when the Santiago de Compostela Committee assesses that legislation or policies are not in compliance with the Convention, or when it finds that despite the existence of legal provisions and other measures, the implementation of a key obligation of the Convention is lacking;
 - **“Consider”**: when the Santiago de Compostela Committee agrees that further improvements are necessary for law or in practice to fully comply with the Convention;
 - **“Invite”**: when the Santiago de Compostela Committee believes Parties are on the right track and it wishes to point at one or several promising practices to reinforce the implementation of the Convention.

The report concludes with the Conclusions and Recommendations.

PREVENTION AND AWARENESS MECHANISMS TO COUNTER TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN ORGANS (THO)

Chapter V – Prevention measures

Article 21 – Measures at domestic level

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

Explanatory Report

Chapter V – Prevention measures

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

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

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

Explanatory Report

Chapter V – Prevention measures

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I. PREVENTION MEASURES – IDENTIFYING AND REPORTING OF THO

Article 21 – Measures at domestic level

1. Each Party shall take the necessary legislative and other measures to ensure:
 - a. the existence of a transparent domestic system for the transplantation of human organs;
 - b. equitable access to transplantation services for patients;

1. MEASURES TO IDENTIFY TRAFFICKING OF HUMAN ORGANS BY THOSE INVOLVED IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SUPPLY, PROCUREMENT AND TRANSPLANT PROGRAMMES

- All Parties have legislation in force that criminalises trafficking in human organs and provides an adequate regulatory basis for the identification and prosecution of such activities. As this regulation is of a criminal nature, it is applied generally and therefore particularly affects those persons involved in public and private supply, procurement and transplantation programmes.
- However, only some parties (**Belgium, Costa Rica, Latvia, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland**) have implemented protocols (or equivalent instruments) to facilitate the identification of trafficking in human organs and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation.

Promising Practices

- ▶ **Belgium** has drawn up guidelines for those involved in the organ transplant procurement process. The authorities involved in drafting these guidelines are Federal Public Service Justice, Federal Public Service Health Immigration Office, Police (DJSOC), Federal Public Prosecutor's Office, specialised magistrates from the Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Expertise Network, Immigration Office, Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Belgian Society of Transplantation (BTS), National Transplant Council and Medical Association. The guidelines comprise four parts: (a) a brief overview of the offences, the legal framework and the scope of professional secrecy, (b) a list of indicators, (c) points for healthcare professionals to bear in mind, and (d) a list of authorities to contact in case of doubt or questions.
- ▶ **Costa Rica** has developed protocols under the authority of the Ministry of Health and the Technical Executive Secretariat of Donation and Transplantation (SETDT) to ensure transparency in the donation and transplantation system, including the identification of illicit practices.
- ▶ In **Latvia**, National Focal Point (NFP) for transplant related crimes collects medical information about possible suspicious cases in transplantation (since 2019). NFP shall transfer the collected information (a report) to other institutions according to their competence (for example, the State Police) and send it to the network of National Focal Points on travel for transplantation (NETTA).
- ▶ In **Norway**, information concerning human trafficking, including organ trafficking (statistics, not case information) is reported to the Coordination Unit Against Human Trafficking (KOM). The KOM is administratively subordinate to the Police Directorate (POD) and has a separate mandate from the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (JD).
- ▶ In **Portugal**, the following promising practices can be mentioned:
 - a) the development of a protocol of conduct for health professionals (HPs) and healthcare authorities on how to prevent, detect and report trafficking in human organs (THO) and trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal (TIP for OR). The protocol of conduct provides HPs with guidance and practical tools on prevention, detection and report organ trafficking. Furthermore, highlight their duty to discourage and prevent any harm of patients, as well as the duty to protect the possible victim-donor.
 - b) the implementation of a reporting mechanism for health professionals and healthcare authorities to communicate information about suspected or confirmed cases to THO or TIP for OR to the appropriate national authorities, for criminal investigation.

- ▶ In **Spain**, a National Board for the fight and prevention of organ trafficking was created (first meeting 27 November 2023). Its first aim was drawing up an action protocol to coordinate the actions of the Hospitals and doctors, with the State Security Forces and Corps, and the Administration of Justice, in the event that a suspected case of organ trafficking was detected. The title of the Protocol was agreed to be "Protocol of action to prevent and combat transplant tourism, organ trafficking and trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal for transplantation.
- ▶ In **Switzerland**, the Federal Office of Police (FEDPOL) has issued a document containing indicators to help detect and identify potential victims of human trafficking for the attention of services and organisations likely to come into contact with victims of human trafficking. Some hospitals have implemented specific screening protocols for donor-recipient pairs coming from abroad.

Recommendations

- ▶ Invites **Albania, Croatia, Czechia, France, Montenegro, Moldova and Slovenia** to implement protocols to facilitate the identification of trafficking in human organs and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation.

2. MEASURES TO ENSURE TRANSPARENCY AND FAIRNESS IN THE DOMESTIC SYSTEM FOR THE TRANSPLANTATION OF ORGANS

This section seeks to determine the existence of legislative, policy, strategic, and other measures in order to ensure transparency and fairness in the domestic system for the transplantation of organs.

- All but one Party (Montenegro) have different kinds of legislative, policy, strategic and other measures ensuring transparency and fairness in the domestic system for the transplantation of organs. In Montenegro organ transplantation system is not yet developed, but patients are referred at the expense of the Health Insurance Fund to countries with which an agreement exists. The law only allows transplants from living related and deceased donors. The state is currently trying to develop a donor program, and media campaigns are being conducted to encourage citizens to fill in a donor card.

a. Audit of the donation and transplants, and the transplantation system

With the exception mentioned (Montenegro), all States Parties have systems in place to control donations and transplants, and the transplantation system (in the form of periodic audits or inspections).

b. Independence of the audit, whether internal or external to the organisation

There is a wide variety in the way in which Parties structure audits and inspections in this area. In some Parties, these controls take the form of external and independent audits/inspections (Costa Rica, Croatia, Latvia, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland) while in others the control system is also independent but internal to the organisation (Belgium, Czechia, France, Republic of Moldova). In any case, when adopted this last option does not prevent rigour in data collection and in ensuring that transplants comply strictly with the law.

c. Audits oriented to the identification of weaknesses in systems that hinder or do not facilitate the detection and reporting of suspected offences contained in articles 4 to 8, and 9 of the Council of Europe Convention against trafficking in human organs

- Even when not basically oriented to this goal in the different Parties these audits or inspections allow to identify weaknesses that hinder or do not facilitate the detection and reporting of the offences referred in **articles 4-9** Council of Europe Convention against trafficking in Human Organs.

d. Frequency of audits

Audits are either carried out with a normatively fixed frequency (normally annually or every two years) or implemented on a regular basis.

e. Mandatory or voluntary nature of audits

- On a general basis the audits and inspections are mandatory.

Promising Practices

- ▶ In **Costa Rica**, the national transplantation system is subject to ongoing audits through regulatory oversight conducted by the Ministry of Health via the Technical Executive Secretariat of Donation and Transplantation (SETDT).
- ▶ In **Norway**, there is a double audit system and both audits mentioned above are from external organisations of the health trusts involved in organ donation- and transplantation.
- ▶ In **Portugal**, there are a) audits in hospitals; b) audits to transplant centres, and c) inspections on the services that carry out activities related to donation, procurement and transplantation, for the purposes of

authorising or renewing them, including the services involved in organ allocation.

- ▶ In **Spain**, audits are organized by the National Competent Authority (Spanish Organización Nacional de Trasplantes – ONT) but auditors are independent to the hospitals where audits are developed.

Recommendations

- ▶ Urges Montenegro to put in place legislative, policy, strategic, and other measures to ensure transparency and fairness in the domestic system for the transplantation of organs. Particularly relevant is the establishment of an audit of the donation and transplants, and the transplantation system that allow the identification of weaknesses in systems that hinder or do not facilitate the detection and reporting of suspected offences contained in **articles 4 to 8, and 9** Council of Europe Convention against trafficking in Human Organs.

II. DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

This part concerns the effective collection, collation, and analysis of data, and exchange of information related to the offences covered by this Convention between all relevant authorities that support the identification and prevention of trafficking in human organs for purposes of transplantation and other purposes, and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation.

Article 21 – Measures at domestic level

1. Each Party shall take the necessary legislative and other measures to ensure:
 - c. adequate collection, analysis and exchange of information related to the offences covered by this Convention in co-operation between all relevant authorities.

The Convention or the Explanatory Report do not directly deal with the issue of data collection. **Article 21. Paragraph 1, letter c** provides the direction required for the need to receive and collect information and data at all levels in cooperation with all relevant authorities, which include the sharing and exchange of data between the authorities, health authorities, transplantation agencies, customs/border agency, police and other competent authorities.

1. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

This part analyses the existence of legislative, policy or other measures of the State Parties that mandate and support the collection, collation, analysis of data and the exchange of information between authorities in order to enable them to take timely actions to prevent,

detect and respond the crimes set out in the Council of Europe Convention against trafficking in human organs, as well as the systems in place to collect, collate and analyse such data. Other institutional arrangements so as to ensure the effective process of collection, analysis and exchange of information are also considered under this part.

a. Legislative, policy or other measure that mandates and supports the collection, collation, analysis of data and the exchange of information

- 13 Parties (**Albania, Belgium, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czechia, France, Latvia, Norway, Portugal, Moldova, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland**) have (either general or specific) legislative, policy or other measures that mandate and support the collection, collation, analysis of data and the exchange of information between authorities in order to enable them to take timely actions to prevent the crimes set out in the Convention.

b. System in place to collect, collate and analyse data

- 12 Parties (**Albania, Belgium, Costa Rica, Czechia, France, Latvia, Norway, Portugal, Moldova, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland**) do have a system in place to collect, collate and analyse data relating to offences covered by the Council of Europe Convention against trafficking in Human Organs.

c. Authority responsible for the collection, collation and analysis of data

- In every Party that has such systems in place there is a concrete authority primarily responsible for the collection, collation and analysis of data specific of offences covered by the Council of Europe Convention against the Trafficking of Human Organs. In certain Parties this authority is dependent on the Ministry of Health, in others it depends on the Ministry of Justice and in other Parties the referred authority is a police unit.

2. SHARING AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

a. Authority responsible for the preparation and dissemination of reports

- The Authority responsible for the preparation and dissemination of reports depends on the model in place in each Party. In some cases, it is the state police or an agency of the Ministry of the Interior; in other cases, it is an agency under the Ministry of Justice; while in most Parties, it is the agency responsible for monitoring organ transplant activities.

b. Reports shared with all relevant authorities

- In 12 Parties (**Albania, Belgium, Costa Rica, Czechia, France, Latvia, Norway, Portugal, Moldova, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland**) the reports related to the collection, collation, analysis of data relating to offences covered by the Council of Europe Convention against trafficking in Human Organs are shared with all relevant authorities.

c. Authorities involved in the exchange of information and reports

- The determination of the authorities involved in the exchange of information and reports on the offences covered by the Council of Europe Convention against the Trafficking of Human Organs depends on the institutional structure of each Party.

d. Authorities that do not share data

- In general, in all Parties which collect data relating to offences covered by the Council of Europe Convention against trafficking in Human Organs authorities share those data with other public agencies implicated in the fight against trafficking in human organs.
- When limitations arise those are connected with data protection regulations or with legal restrictions established in the criminal procedure legislation (limited disclosure of information in the interest of ongoing investigations).

e. Exchange of information with relevant authorities in different countries

- In most Parties exchange of information with relevant authorities in different countries is carried out on the basis of the activity carried out by the National Focal Point.

Promising Practices

- ▶ In **Albania**, the Trafficking Investigation Sector of the State Police collects and processes statistics and analyses data related to the criminal offense of organ trafficking. This information is also recorded and administered in the MEMEX system.
- ▶ In **Belgium**, on 16 January 2025, the Bureau of the Interdepartmental Unit for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Migrant Smuggling created a new working group responsible for coordinating actions relating to trafficking for the purpose of organ or body material removal and organ trafficking (for removal or research purposes), and ensuring the exchange of information between the competent authorities and actors in the field.
- ▶ In **Latvia**, since 2019, the National Focal Point (NFP) for transplantation has been collecting medical information regarding potentially suspicious cases in organ transplantation.
- ▶ In **Portugal**, in the event of suspected or confirmed cases of organ trafficking, health professionals and/or health authorities should report them to the law enforcement authorities, in accordance with the existing protocol of conduct, which provide Indicators to identify signals of suspicious cases of illicit transplants.

Recommendations

- Urges **Montenegro** to set out legislative, policy or other measure in order to mandate and support the collection, collation, analysis of data and the exchange of information between authorities in order to enable them to take timely actions to prevent the crimes set out in the Council of Europe Convention against trafficking in Human Organs.

III. PREVENTION AND TRAINING

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

1. PREVENTION AND TRAINING

Measures to provide training to those involved in all stages included in the process of the procurement, supply and transplantation programmes (both public and private) (**Article 21, paragraph 2, letter a**).

- While considering the specific wording chosen by domestic legislation to implement **Article 21, paragraph 2, letter a**, this should appreciate the intention of the Convention that measures are put in place to ensure that prevention and training are effective and not limited to actions enumerated in **Article 21** and that these actions are not considered to be an exhaustive list.

Article 21 – Measures at domestic level

2. With the aim of preventing and combatting trafficking in human organs, each Party shall take measures, as appropriate:

- a. to provide information or strengthen training for healthcare professionals and relevant officials in the prevention of and combat against trafficking in human organs

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

- The Convention does not intend that prevention and training matters be provided and implemented by the Criminal Law alone, or at all. Matters of healthcare and scientific standards are more appropriately dealt with by regulations under administrative frameworks. Eight Parties (**Albania, Costa Rica, Latvia, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Spain, and Switzerland**) have some measures in place to provide training to

those involved in all stages included in the process of procurement, supply and transplantation programmes, both public and private.

- **Costa Rica, Norway, Portugal** and **Spain** provide specific training for this purpose.
- **Albania** and **Republic of Moldova** provide the training obligation by law without clarifying whether and by whom this training is conducted.
- **Latvia** provides lectures to professional organisations by the National Focal Point (NFP) upon request. The extent of this type of training is unclear as to whether it fully includes all those with responsibilities in the process of procurement, supply and transplantation programmes, both public and private agents.
- One Party (**Switzerland**) provides information and an e-learning programme as specific training for all professionals at the National Organ Procurement organization (Swisstransplant) and local transplant coordinators who are involved in organ donation and allocation. The information includes detection and prevention of organ trafficking.
- Six Parties (**Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, France, Montenegro**, and **Slovenia**) have no specific training for those with responsibilities in the process of procurement, supply and transplantation programmes, both public and private agents. One Party (**Belgium**) has provided information sessions and brochures to the health sector. One Party (**Croatia**) relies on education and training being included in basic training provided by medical school, law school, police academy, and through special courses and workshops within EU bodies and competent ministries. One Party (**Slovenia**) has complex training in preparation on this topic.

Promising Practices

- ▶ In **Costa Rica**, all individuals involved in the procurement, supply, and transplantation process, from both public and private sectors, receive training under the framework of CONATT. This training emphasizes the legal framework, detection of trafficking indicators, ethical standards, and mandatory reporting obligations.
- ▶ In **Norway**, the health services involved in the procurement, supply and transplantation programmes are included in the provision of regular training programmes about the risks and signs in human trafficking, including trafficking in human organs.

Recommendations

- ▶ Urges **Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, France, Montenegro** and **Slovenia** to ensure that policies, strategies and measures are provided for the training

those with responsibilities in the process of procurement, supply and transplantation programmes, both public and private agents.

b. to specialist doctors who monitor and treat recipients whose transplant has been performed in another country outside their usual place of residence

- It is unclear if any Party, other than one (**Costa Rica**) provides specific training to specialist doctors who monitor and treat recipients whose transplant has been performed in another country outside their usual place of residence. **Costa Rica** includes the specialist physicians, who are responsible for follow-up care of patients who have received organ transplants abroad, are included in awareness and training efforts.
- 13 Parties (**Albania, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, France, Latvia, Montenegro, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Spain, and Switzerland**) do not provide this type of training to specialist doctors in this field.

Some of the Parties provide less structured or more general training to healthcare professionals, and their associations, that may include elements of the type of training or information relevant to specialist doctors who monitor and treat recipients whose transplant has been performed in another country outside their usual place of residence. **Belgium** provides awareness training for the medical sector, including an FPS Justice webpage dedicated to organ trafficking and human trafficking/organ. **Latvia** provides, through the National Focal Point (NFP), lectures to professional organisations and associations. In **Norway**, the specialist in nephrology and specialist doctors in transplant medicine receive specialised training as part of the specialist training. This does not appear to be specific to the issues raised regarding patients whose transplant have been performed in another country outside their usual place of residence but may include it generally. **Portugal** provides awareness-raising and training events for healthcare professionals through participation in scientific congresses. The aims of such events include the understanding of the dimension of organ trafficking, health consequences for patients and donors, and means to prevent and address such crimes. The **Republic of Moldova** has a legal requirement arising from Article 4 paragraph (3) letter j) of Law No.42/2008 on the transplant of human organ, tissue and cells, Transplant Agency is responsible for training medical personnel. It is unclear the extent to which this has been implemented for the training of specialist doctors in this issue. **Slovenia** proposes to focus on this area, but under the Code of Ethics, rather than as an item for specific training. **Spain** subsidises training course for health professionals, and others, on how to detect and act in possible cases of organ trafficking, transplant tourism and human trade for the purpose of organ removal for transplantation. In **Switzerland**, the FOPH informs every year the transplant centres and nephrologists about their duty to report anonymised data on patients who travelled abroad for a transplantation. The data is published on the FOPH website.

Promising Practices

- ▶ **Costa Rica** includes the specialist physicians, who are responsible for follow-up care of patients who have received organ transplants abroad, are included in awareness and training programmes.

Recommendations

- ▶ Urges all Parties to ensure that strategies, policies or other measures to provide training to medical specialists who follow and treat recipients whose transplant was carried out in a country other than their usual place of residence to prevent trafficking in human organs for transplantation and other purposes, as well as other forms of illicit removal and transplantation.

c. to other immunology services that perform donor-recipient histocompatibility studies for human organ transplantation

- It is unclear if any Party, other than one (**Costa Rica**) provides specific training to other immunology services that perform donor-recipient histocompatibility studies for human organ transplantation. In **Costa Rica**, immunology laboratories and services conducting donor-recipient compatibility testing are required to comply with technical standards set by SETDT and receive orientation to ensure traceability and transparency in all test processes.
- 13 Parties (**Albania, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, France, Latvia, Montenegro, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Spain, and Switzerland**) do not provide this type of training to other immunology services that perform donor-recipient histocompatibility studies for human organ transplantation.
- Some of the Parties provide less structured or more general training to healthcare professionals, and their associations, that may include elements of the type of training or information relevant to other immunology services that perform donor-recipient histocompatibility studies for human organ transplantation. However, this is unclear from available information the extent to which this requirement has been implemented. **Latvia** provides, through the National Focal Point (NFP), lectures to professional organizations and associations. **Portugal** provides awareness-raising and training events for healthcare professionals through participation in scientific congresses. The aims of such events include the understanding of the dimension of organ trafficking, health consequences for patients and donors, and means to prevent and address such crimes. The **Republic of Moldova** has a legal requirement arising from Government Decision no. 386/2010, point 8, subparagraph 1) letter i), on the establishment of the Transplant Agency to train medical workers within the Center for Professional Training of Medical Personnel in the Field of Transplantation. **Spain** subsidises training courses for health professionals, and others, on how to detect and act in possible cases of organ trafficking,

transplant tourism and human trade for the purpose of organ removal for transplantation.

Recommendations

- ▶ Urges all Parties to ensure that strategies, policies or other measures to provide training to other immunology services that perform donor-recipient histocompatibility studies for human organ transplantation to prevent trafficking in human organs for transplantation and other purposes, as well as other forms of illicit removal and transplantation.

d. to other logistical services, including transportation, for human organs for transplantation

- One Party (**Costa Rica**) provides specific training to other logistical services, including transportation, for human organs for transplantation. In **Costa Rica**, Law No. 9222 establishes detailed technical requirements for the transportation of organs and tissues. Training is provided to logistics personnel to ensure compliance with biosecurity, documentation, and traceability protocols.
- Three Parties (**Portugal, Spain**) provide less structured or more general training to other logistical services, including transportation, for human organs for transplantation. **Portugal** and **Spain** provide multi-discipline awareness-raising and training events for healthcare professionals and others regarding the prevention and detection of trafficking in organs. Clarification on the inclusion of other logistical services, including transportation, for human organs for transplantation in training provided is not available. **Switzerland** places such training for other logistical services, including transportation, for human organs for transplantation, on Swisstransplant. It is unclear the extent to which this implements strategies, policies and other measures for the training of other logistical services to prevent the trafficking in human organs for purposes of transplantation and other purposes, and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation.
- 10 Parties (**Albania, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, France, Latvia, Montenegro, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia**) do not have legislative, policy, strategic and other measures to provide training to prevent the trafficking in human organs for purposes of transplantation and other purposes, and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation to other logistical services, including transportation, for human organs for transplantation.

Promising Practices

- ▶ In **Costa Rica**, Law No. 9222 establishes detailed technical requirements for the transportation of organs and tissues. For cases involving the importation of human tissues, SETDT verifies compliance with entry requirements and grants the necessary authorizations. Training is provided

to logistics personnel to ensure compliance with biosecurity, documentation, and traceability protocols.

Recommendations

- Urges all Parties, except **Costa Rica**, to ensure that strategies, policies or other measures to provide training to other logistical services, including transportation, for human organs for transplantation to prevent trafficking in human organs for transplantation and other purposes, as well as other forms of illicit removal and transplantation.

- e. to allied healthcare professionals and officials, law enforcement, customs/border surveillance services, and the regulatory authorities providing oversight of the human organ transplantation authority.
- Four Parties (**Costa Rica, Latvia, Portugal, and Spain**) provide specific training on trafficking of human organs to allied healthcare professionals and officials, law enforcement, customs/border surveillance services, and the regulatory authorities providing oversight of the human organ transplantation authority.
- In **Costa Rica**, allied healthcare workers, police officers, migration and customs agents, and officials from regulatory bodies are incorporated into national training strategies. In **Latvia**, joint training workshops, sharing best practices, and facilitating information exchange between healthcare providers, law enforcement, customs, and regulatory bodies are provided. Legislative and strategic measures support this targeted training and capacity building. Allied healthcare professionals involved in transplantation procedures, organ procurement and patient care receive specific training on recognising indicators of trafficking and illicit transplantation. In **Portugal**, a multi-agency approach has been adopted to the relevant services and personnel together for training for this purpose. This includes law enforcement, healthcare professionals, judges and prosecutors. **Spain** provides annual training for health professionals, public prosecutor's office, law enforcement and the judiciary. Other personnel who have relevant responsibilities relating to trafficking in human organs for transplantation and illicit removal, are included in training provided.
- Five Parties (**Albania, Belgium, Croatia, Slovenija, Switzerland**) provide training on some aspects of organ trafficking, either generally or in the context of trafficking in human beings.
- **Albania** provides joint training on combating human trafficking, which includes aspects organ trafficking, to law enforcement, customs, and health authorities. **Belgium** provided coordinated awareness-raising information meetings for the medical sector, judiciary, police, and Ministries. In **Croatia**, healthcare workers, police personnel and judicial personnel are involved in the fight against trafficking in human organs and receive their training in basic training and subsequently through specialised courses and

workshops within EU bodies and relevant ministries. It is unclear whether the training is general in nature or specifically on trafficking in human organs. **Slovenija** provides training on the prevention and combating of trafficking in organs to various authorities. It is unclear the extent to which this training is specific or general and whether all of the personnel requiring this training are included. **Switzerland**'s law enforcement conducts a health campaign to raise awareness among healthcare workers of trafficking in human beings, also addressing trafficking in human beings for the purpose of organ removal. No training to prevent the trafficking in human organs for purposes of transplantation and other purposes, and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation is provided to other officials, or to customs.

- Five Parties (**Czechia, France, Montenegro, Norway, Republic of Moldova**) do not provide any measures for the training to allied healthcare professionals and officials, law enforcement, customs/border surveillance services, and the regulatory authorities providing oversight of the human organ transplantation authority. The five Parties may include some training within programmes on trafficking in human beings and for the purpose of organ removal, but this is unclear.

Promising practices

- In **Latvia**, joint training workshops, sharing best practices, and facilitating information exchange between healthcare providers, law enforcement, customs, and regulatory bodies is provided. Legislative and strategic measures support this targeted training and capacity building aimed at preventing trafficking in human organs and other illicit activities related to organ transplantation. Allied healthcare professionals involved in transplantation procedures, organ procurement and patient care receive specific training on recognising indicators of trafficking and illicit transplantation.

Recommendations

- Urges **Czechia, France, Montenegro, Norway, and Republic of Moldova** to review their strategies, policies or other measures to ensure that training is provided to allied healthcare professionals and officials, law enforcement, customs/border surveillance services, and the regulatory authorities providing oversight of the human organ transplantation authority to prevent trafficking in human organs for transplantation and other purposes, as well as other forms of illicit removal and transplantation, with a view to improving the quality of life of those concerned.
- Urges **Albania, Belgium, Croatia, Slovenija, and Switzerland** to review their strategies, policies or other measures to ensure that specific training is provided to prevent trafficking in human organs for transplantation and other purposes, as well as other forms of illicit removal and transplantation

and beyond those included more generally in training on trafficking in human beings.

- ▶ Invite all Parties to ensure that customs/border surveillance services are included in training to prevent the trafficking in human organs for purposes of transplantation and other purposes, and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation.

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

- Two Parties (**Costa Rica, Latvia**) have measures in place to provide training to specialised criminal investigation units/bodies in the investigation of offences covered by the Santiago de Compostela Convention.
- In **Costa Rica**, specialised criminal investigation units receive focused training to investigate offences related to organ trafficking, in coordination with the Public Ministry and judicial police (OIJ), particularly under Article 377 bis of the Penal Code. This multidisciplinary approach aims to ensure adequate response capacity at both the health and justice levels. In **Latvia**, specialised investigators receive dedicated training on the legal framework pertaining to organ trafficking, relevant investigative techniques, and international cooperation mechanisms.
- Twelve Parties (**Albania, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, France, Montenegro, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Spain, and Switzerland**) do not have specific training for specialised criminal investigation units/bodies in the investigation of offences covered by this Convention.
- **Albania** has planned a series of training programmes in the context of trafficking in human beings for a range of personnel, including law enforcement. This training is intended to apply to specialised criminal investigation units/bodies in the investigation of offences covered by this Convention. **Belgium** has developed a training module for investigators specialising in THB, as well as basic training. There is no specific training for specialised criminal investigation units/bodies in the investigation of offences covered by this Convention. **Czechia** provides the specialised investigation of trafficking, in general, within the field of organised crime. Judges and prosecutors dealing with cases trafficking in human organs and trafficking for the purpose of organ removal receive training by the Judicial Academy. No information is available on specific training for specialised investigation units in the investigation of offences covered by this Convention. **Norway** and **Portugal** have specialised units dealing with trafficking, including trafficking in human organs and related crimes. The provision of specialised training for these specialised units in the investigation of trafficking in human organs and related offences is not apparent and would be expected to be provided due to the existence of the specialised units. **Switzerland** has specialised training courses on trafficking in human beings organised annually at the Swiss Police Institute (PSI); they are intended for the judicial authorities. No information is available on the extent to

which any of the training is specific to the investigation of offences covered by the Santiago de Compostela Convention or on the existence of specialised criminal investigation units/bodies for of these offences.

Promising Practices

- ▶ In **Latvia**, specialised investigators receive dedicated training on the legal framework pertaining to organ trafficking, relevant investigative techniques, and international cooperation mechanisms. Training covers identification of trafficking indicators, evidence collection, and victim protection. Regular interdisciplinary workshops involving healthcare experts, legal professionals, and investigators foster knowledge sharing and improve coordinated responses to organ trafficking cases. Training includes guidance on cooperation with international networks such as the Council of Europe's NETTA, enabling effective cross-border investigation and intelligence exchange. Specialised units have access to expert advice from the NFP for transplantation crimes and other regulatory authorities, ensuring informed decision-making.

Recommendations

- ▶ Urges **Albania, Croatia, Czechia, France, Montenegro, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Spain, and Switzerland** to review their strategies, policies or other measures to ensure that training is provided to specialised criminal investigation units/bodies in the investigation of offences covered by this Convention.

2. OVERSIGHT PROGRAMMES

This section aims to collect information on oversight programmes to assess the frequency and effectiveness of the training provided. It also seeks to ascertain if there are revision programmes to ensure remedial actions for any deficiencies identified.

The Convention does not make mention of review programmes in relation to training. The Santiago de Compostela Committee decided that this is an important aspect for Parties to consider on the basis that review programmes are necessary to check the effectiveness of these mechanisms. Their absence challenges the effective and efficient use of resources and the aim to be achieved by the selected training programmes.

- Two Parties (**Costa Rica**, and **Switzerland**) have oversight programmes to assess the effectiveness of training provided.
- In **Costa Rica**, training oversight mechanisms exist and are conducted under the Ministry of Health, which is a member of the National Coalition against Migrant Smuggling and Human Trafficking (CONATT). In **Switzerland**, individuals involved in the transplantation process are asked about their knowledge of processes and standard operating

procedures. In addition, the centres are required to carry out an internal audit and to introduce corrective measures in the event of shortcomings or deviations. It is unclear whether all other relevant services are subject to review mechanisms concerning training to prevent and combat against trafficking in human organs for purposes of transplantation and other purposes, and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation.

In neither case is it clear that there are revision programmes to ensure that remedial actions for any deficiencies identified are taken.

- Two Parties (**Belgium, France**) have partial oversight arrangements for training regarding trafficking in human organs for purposes of transplantation and other purposes, and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation. This involves the training courses for the judiciary which are the subject of evaluation questionnaires at the end of the training sessions, which are to be completed by the participants in the training. The data collected in this way allows training managers to adapt the educational content on a regular basis. No information is available on review programmes for training other authorities and services in this area.
- Ten Parties (**Albania, Croatia, Czechia, Latvia, Montenegro, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain**) do not have review programmes.
- **Albania's** law, Article 27-29 of law No. 10-454, provides for the assessment of training needs to combat trafficking in human organs and related criminal offences. It is unclear whether this includes, and if it has implemented review programmes to check on the effectiveness of such training. In **Portugal**, effectiveness of the training provided is measured by the number of cases detected and reported by health professionals to the competent authorities, and by the number of candidates for living donation who are refused due to suspicion of financial compensation.

Recommendations

- Urges **Albania, Croatia, Czechia, Latvia, Montenegro, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain** to review their training systems, where they exist, to provide for oversight programmes to assess the frequency and effectiveness of the training provided and to provide for revision programmes to ensure remedial actions for any deficiencies identified.

IV. AWARENESS RAISING

This section concerns awareness-raising programmes aimed at identifying measures for educating the general public, and with the support of civil society on the risks and unlawfulness of trafficking in human organs. The focus is on risk awareness, both from the health and criminal law perspectives. This, firstly, addresses awareness raising measures regarding the public in general, and the media through which that may be carried out. Civil society is

considered an important resource that can engage in raising public awareness campaigns or in promoting such campaigns conducted by public authorities. Secondly, while the media, including social media, e-platforms and other virtual sites, may be used by public authorities for their legitimate campaigns, others may also use the same facilities to facilitate online connectivity between potential donors and recipients of human organs for transplantation for financial gain or comparable advantage. This part of the report has the focus on the raising of awareness of the media of the illegality of illicit solicitation, recruitment, offering and requesting of undue advantage, including the making of a financial gain or other comparable advantage.

Article 21- Measures at domestic level

2. With the aim of preventing and combatting trafficking in human organs, each Party shall take measures, as appropriate:

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

1. AWARENESS RAISING – THE GENERAL PUBLIC, CIVIL SOCIETY, AND THE MEDIA

- a. Measures implemented or planned to educate the public on risks associated with trafficking in human organs (Article 21, paragraph 2, letter b)
- The Convention does not lay down when or how awareness-raising campaigns to educate the general public on risks associated with the trafficking in human organs are conducted, or which authorities should conduct the campaigns, or whether to involve civil society to support it. This is left to the Parties to arrange among according to its internal arrangements. The Convention is clear in **Article 21, paragraph 2** that the aim is to prevent and combat trafficking in human organs. Therefore, the requirement on the Parties is to be proactive and not await for the discovery of an incident of trafficking in human organs before raising awareness. Prevention is equally important to combating in order to protect public and individual health as well as the maintenance of law and order.
- Nine Parties (**Albania, Belgium, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Latvia, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, and Spain**) have specific measures in place to educate the general public on risks associated with the trafficking in human organs. This is provided through different means. One Party (**Belgium**) relies on information provided by public authorities on the website. Four Parties (**Albania, Costa Rica, Latvia, Portugal**) have specific campaigns that include outreach programmes).
- Parties, generally, engage in some type of awareness-raising as part of the public health promotion of organ donation and that this, in some manner either directly or indirectly, raises the risks arising from organ trafficking. Three Parties (**Belgium, Croatia, France**)

place the focus on ethics and legal principles of organ donation, and this emphasises consent and altruism in donation. One Party (**Norway**) places the focus on the patients on the organ transplantation list and on living kidney donors rather than on the wider public, which targets the most vulnerable of the public in this regard. One Party (**Switzerland**) relies on the Federal Office of Public Health website explanatory page on Switzerland's commitment against organ trafficking, in particular, it contains information arising from the obligation to declare transplants carried out abroad.

- One Party (**Slovenia**) have measures in preparation focused on the key ethical and legal principles of organ donation that must be followed in promoting organ donation and preventing trafficking in human organs.
- Two Parties (**Czechia, Montenegro**) do not have proactive public awareness campaigns based on not yet having discovered any such trafficking incidents involving human organs.

Promising Practices

- ▶ **Albania's** National Action Plan for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons 2024 - 2025 includes provisions on the trafficking in organs. It contains a specific objective on the implementation of awareness-raising campaigns with the involvement of central and local institutions, civil society, business, media and other actors for the prevention of organized crime, which foresees the development of priority measures and activities aimed at preventing trafficking in persons, including organ trafficking.
- ▶ **Costa Rica** integrates measures to raise-awareness on the risks associated with trafficking in human organs into the annual National Donation Week. During this week, there is a nationwide campaign that includes educational, and outreach activities designed to inform the public about the dangers and illegality of organ trafficking and to promote ethical and voluntary organ donation practices.
- ▶ **Latvia** provides information campaigns focused on the legal prohibitions and health risks of trafficking in human organs. The information is disseminated through public service announcements, printed material, official websites, and community outreach.
- ▶ **Portugal** has a legal requirement to have information programmes on organ donation and includes information on organ trafficking and the phenomenon of transplant tourism. Awareness-raising is also provided in schools. The Portuguese Institute of Blood and Transplantation produced a video and information leaflet for the public on the risks associated with organ trafficking.

Recommendations

- ▶ Urges **Czechia, and Montenegro**, to put in place specific measures to educate the general public on risks associated with the trafficking in human organs.
- ▶ Urges **Slovenia** to complete its planned measures ensuring that they are proactive in the prevention of trafficking **in** human organs as well as promoting organ donation.
- ▶ Invite **Norway** to expand its measures to include the wider public in raising awareness concerning trafficking in organs.

- b. Strategies, policies and other measures implemented or planned to encourage civil society to engage in raising public awareness, and or the promotion of awareness-raising measures provided by the public (Article 21, paragraph 2, letter b)

The Convention does not mention the use of, or in what manner civil society could be harnessed to support its aims to promote awareness-raising campaigns addressed to the public in general about the unlawfulness and dangers of trafficking in human organs. The Santiago de Compostela Committee decided that civil society involvement is important to achieving these aims.

This part seeks to determine the strategies, policies and other measures that have been planned or implemented, with a view to encouraging civil society, including patients' associations, academia, publishers, media, online platforms, industry, and other relevant organisations, through engagement to do so itself, and, or in support of those measures provided by public authorities.

- Five Parties (**Albania, Belgium, Costa Rica, Latvia, and Norway**) have measures to encourage civil society to engage in raising public awareness. In **Albania**, collaboration with non-profit organisations, private educational institutions and universities, and media outlets encourages the provision of awareness-raising concerning different aspects of trafficking in human beings and including trafficking in human organs. In **Belgium**, FPS Justice has encouraged partners in its coordination group to adapt their websites to link with the PFS Justice website on transplantation. In **Costa Rica**, civil society organizations, including patient associations, academic institutions and other stakeholders, are encouraged to actively contribute to the National Donation Week and other outreach events. **Latvia** supports engagement with civil society actors through collaboration platforms established under the Action Plan for Combating Human Trafficking, which includes trafficking in human organs. This enables cooperation in joint initiatives, including seminars, educational projects and awareness-raising campaigns promoting the illegality and dangers of organ trafficking. **Norway**, through its Coordination Unit against Human Trafficking (KOM), provides for the improvement of structural coordination with NGOs. It has published guidelines which facilitates the

engagement of civil society in the promotion of awareness-raising on human trafficking, including trafficking in human organs.

- Nine Parties (**Croatia, Czechia, France, Montenegro, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Spain, and Switzerland**) do not have information on measures in place to involve civil society in supporting or providing awareness-raising campaigns on the unlawfulness and dangers of trafficking in human organs for human transplantation.
- One Party (**Slovenia**) indicates that various partners are invited to participate in activities to raise public awareness on issues of human trafficking and includes cooperation with Slovenija Transplant regarding trafficking in human organs. As Slovenia is in the planning phase on the provision of awareness-raising campaigns on raising public awareness on the unlawfulness and dangers of trafficking in organs for human transplantation, it is unclear whether the various partners will include civil society.

Promising practices

- ▶ In **Albania**, collaboration with non-profit organisations, private educational institutions and **universities**, and media outlets encourages the provision of awareness-raising concerning trafficking in human organs.
- ▶ **Costa Rica** includes civil society to actively contribute to the National Donation Week and other outreach events. They help disseminate information provided by public authorities regarding the illegality and dangers of trafficking in human organs.
- ▶ **Latvia** supports engagement with civil society actors through a collaboration platform. This enables cooperation in joint initiatives, including seminars, educational projects and awareness-raising campaigns promoting the illegality and dangers of organ trafficking.

Recommendations

- ▶ Urges **Croatia, Czechia, France, Montenegro, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Spain, and Switzerland** to put in place strategies, policies and other measures to engage with civil society in raising public awareness campaigns, and, or the promotion of awareness-raising measures provided by public authorities on the unlawfulness and dangers of trafficking in human organs for human transplantation.

- c. 4.1.3. Strategies, policies and other measures implemented or planned to raise awareness of media about virtual platforms facilitating information linking potential donors and recipients of human organs for transplantation with a view to making a financial gain or comparable advantage. (Article 21, paragraph 3)

This part aims to ascertain what strategies, policies and other measures the Parties have taken or planned to take on the issue of virtual platforms facilitating information linking potential donors and recipients of human organs for transplantation. This specifically concerns the illegality of illicit solicitation, recruitment, and offering with a view to making a financial gain or comparable advantage. Online platforms include social media and e-commerce platforms, and other virtual sites.

The Convention does not make specific reference to online platforms. Online platforms are one mechanism used to advertise the need for, or availability of human organs. This, according to the Explanatory Report to the Convention, a paragraph 128, is intended to target brokers in human organs between donors and recipients.

The focus of this part is on the raising of awareness of the media and not raising awareness of the general public through the media.

- No Party has, or plans to have a strategy, policy, or other measure to raise awareness of media, including social media and e-commerce platforms, and other virtual sites that facilitate information linking potential donors and recipients of human organs for transplantation of the illegality of illicit solicitation, recruitment, offering and requesting of undue advantage, including the making of a financial gain or other comparable advantage.
- One Party (**Slovenia**) holds discussion with the media about organ donation and transplantation. Slovenija Transplant provides data on human organ trafficking to the media as well as being available to assist it having the up-to-date on possible criminal offences in this area. It is unclear if the focus of this support to the media is to raise the awareness of the media or to use the media as a means to communicate with the general public concerning the illegality involved on the advertising of the need for, or availability of human organs, with a view to offering or seeking financial gain or comparable advantage, or more generally about trafficking in human organs.

Recommendations

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

2. AWARENESS RAISING – MONITORING MEASURES

This part concerns the adoption of monitoring measures by the Parties on the effectiveness of awareness-raising campaigns carried out by institutions/organisations, whether public or private. The Convention does not mandate that such monitoring take place by Parties of their internal affairs regarding the Convention. The Santiago de Compostela Committee decide that this is an important aspect for Parties to consider on the basis that it would not be possible to know how effective any such awareness-raising campaign would be in the absence of some review.

- Four Parties (**Albania, Costa Rica, France, Latvia, and Republic of Moldova**) have some structured system to assess the effectiveness of awareness-raising campaigns carried out.
- One Party (**Albania**) conducts effectiveness checks through feedback and institutional reports.
- One Party (**Costa Rica**) conducts post-campaign reviews, activity reports and coordination meetings among actors form part of the effectiveness monitoring measures undertaken. These reviews assess the campaign reach, engagement, and message consistency of the campaign.
- One Party (**Latvia**) has established an oversight mechanism to monitor and evaluate the impact of awareness campaigns. This is required by law. Periodic reports on such evaluations are made.
- One Party (**France**) measures media coverage on the public awareness campaigns that are conducted by the Biomedicine Agency. The Agency conducts the review.
- One Party (**Republic of Moldova**) conducts effectiveness of awareness campaigns through the Transplant Agency.
- Nine Parties (**Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, Montenegro, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, and Switzerland**) do not have any awareness-raising monitoring and assessment mechanisms related to trafficking in human organs. This has been explained in some cases due to not having any awareness-raising campaigns on the risks associated with and unlawfulness and dangers of trafficking in human organs.

Promising practices

- In **Costa Rica**, post-campaign reviews, activity reports and coordination meetings among actors form part of the effectiveness monitoring measures undertaken. These reviews assess the campaign reach, engagement, and message consistency of the campaign.

- ▶ **Latvia** has established oversight mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the impact of awareness campaigns, as required by the Public Health Law and related regulatory frameworks. The Ministry of Health and the State Agency of Medicines are responsible for preparing periodic reports on the effectiveness of campaigns, including analysis of reach, public engagement, and changes in awareness levels. These reports also consider feedback collected through surveys among healthcare professionals, patients, and the general public.

Recommendations

- ▶ Urges **Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, Montenegro, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, and Switzerland** to put in place national oversight measures to assess the effectiveness of awareness campaigns carried out by the institutions/organisations, whether public or private, where such awareness-raising campaigns are conducted.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. CONCLUSIONS

- The majority of the Parties have implemented parts of the Convention regarding **Article 21, paragraphs 1 and 2**, using different combinations of legislative, policy, strategic and other measures, and doing so differently depending on the Party concerned.
- The independent nature of auditing systems in place, together with routine inspections, by the majority of Parties support the effectiveness and robustness to control the donation and transplantation of organs and this, in turn, supports the identification and reporting of incidences of suspected trafficking in human organs.
- The existence of data collection, analysis and information sharing is a strength that will assist the ability of policymakers to assess the emergence or extent of incidences of trafficking and to effectively support both national and international efforts to combat this type of crime and address the needs of victims.
- The divarication of State authorities in the Parties that compile this data may create a risk of gaps arising in sharing, both nationally and internationally, notwithstanding that Parties report that they share this data with other relevant State authorities.
- A gap is evident between awareness-raising campaigns to the public by public authorities of the Parties and measures by the Parties to encourage the engagement and support of civil society in relation to public awareness-raising measures. Civil Society engagement appears to be lacking in most Parties.
- Having regard to the growing phenomenon of the online promotion of transplant tourism and digital platforms being used to facilitate information linking potential donors and recipients of human organs for transplantation, it may have been expected that Parties already engage in awareness-raising of the media, including social media and e-commerce platforms, and other virtual sites, of the illegality of illicit solicitation, recruitment, offering and requesting of undue advantage, including the making of a financial gain or other comparable advantage. This expectation was not realised. The Santiago de Compostela Committee notes that this gap raises significant challenges for Parties and requires immediate addressing.
- The Santiago de Compostela Committee is concerned that measures in place to prevent and raise awareness to counter trafficking in human organs may be hampered by the absence of monitoring and review programmes to address gaps in current measures in relation to the implementation of **Article 21, paragraphs 1 and 2** of the Santiago de Compostela Convention.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Main Recommendations emerging from the report concerning the majority of Parties:

As to the policies, strategies, plans and activities to prevent and report trafficking in human organs

The Santiago de Compostela Committee:

- ▶ Invites Parties that have not already done so to implement protocols to facilitate the identification of trafficking in human organs and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation.
- ▶ Urges Parties that have not already done so to put in place legislative, policy, strategic, and other measures to ensure transparency and fairness in the domestic system for the transplantation of organs. Particularly relevant is the establishment of an audit of the donation and transplants, and the transplantation system that allow the identification of weaknesses in systems that hinder or do not facilitate the detection and reporting of suspected offences contained in **articles 4 to 8, and 9** of the Council of Europe Convention against trafficking in Human Organs.

As to the effective collection, collation, and analysis of data, and exchange of information related to the offences covered by this Convention between all relevant authorities that support the identification and prevention of trafficking in human organs for purposes of transplantation and other purposes, and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation

The Santiago de Compostela Committee:

- ▶ Urges Parties that have not already done so to set out legislative, policy or other measure in order to mandate and support the collection, collation, analysis of data and the exchange of information between authorities in order to enable them to take timely actions to prevent the crimes set out in the Council of Europe Convention against trafficking in Human Organs.

As to the collection of information on policies, strategies, plans and activities to prevent the trafficking in human organs for purposes of transplantation and other purposes, and other forms of illicit removal and transplantation:

- ▶ Urges Parties that have not already done so to ensure that policies, strategies and measure are provided for the training those with responsibilities in the process of procurement, supply and transplantation programmes, both public and private agents.

- ▶ Urges Parties to ensure that strategies, policies or other measures to provide training to medical specialists who follow and treat recipients whose transplant was carried out in a country other than their usual place of residence to prevent trafficking in human organs for transplantation and other purposes, as well as other forms of illicit removal and transplantation, with a view to improving the quality of life of those concerned.
- ▶ Urges Parties to ensure that strategies, policies or other measures to provide training to other logistical services, including transportation, for human organs for transplantation to prevent trafficking in human organs for transplantation and other purposes, as well as other forms of illicit removal and transplantation, with a view to improving the quality of life of those concerned.
- ▶ Urges Parties to review their strategies, policies or other measures to ensure that training is provided to allied healthcare professionals and officials, law enforcement, customs/border surveillance services, and the regulatory authorities providing oversight of the human organ transplantation authority to prevent trafficking in human organs for transplantation and other purposes, as well as other forms of illicit removal and transplantation, with a view to improving the quality of life of those concerned.
- ▶ Urges Parties to review their strategies, policies or other measures to ensure that specific training is provided to prevent trafficking in human organs for transplantation and other purposes, as well as other forms of illicit removal and transplantation, with a view to improving the quality of life of those concerned, and beyond those included more generally in training on trafficking in human beings.
- ▶ Invite Parties to ensure that customs/border surveillance services are included in training to prevent the trafficking in human organs for purposes of transplantation and other purposes, and other forms of illicit removal and illicit transplantation.
- ▶ Urges Parties to review their strategies, policies or other measures to ensure that training is provided to specialised criminal investigation units/bodies in the investigation of offences covered by this Convention.
- ▶ Urges Parties to review their training systems, where they exist, to provide for oversight programmes to assess the frequency and effectiveness of the training provided and to provide for revision programmes to ensure remedial actions for any deficiencies identified.

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

The Santiago de Compostela Committee:

- ▶ Urges Parties that have not already done so to put in place specific measures to educate the general public on risks associated with the trafficking in human organs.
- ▶ Urges Parties that have not already done so to complete its planned measures ensuring that they are proactive in the prevention of trafficking in human organs as well as promoting organ donation
- ▶ Invites Parties that have not already done so to provide proactive measures on awareness-raising beyond website information provision.
- ▶ Invite Parties that have not already done so to expand its measures to include the wider public in raising awareness concerning trafficking in organs.
- ▶ Urges Parties to put in place strategies, policies and other measures to engage with civil society in raising public awareness campaigns, and, or the promotion of awareness-raising measures provided by public authorities on the unlawfulness and dangers of trafficking in human organs for human transplantation.
- ▶ Urges Parties to raise awareness of media, including social media and e-commerce platforms, and other virtual sites that facilitate information linking potential donors and recipients of human organs for transplantation of the illegality of illicit solicitation, recruitment, offering and requesting of undue advantage, including the making of a financial gain or other comparable advantage.
- ▶ Urges Parties to put in place national oversight measures to assess the effectiveness of awareness campaigns carried out by the institutions/organisations, whether public or private, where such awareness-raising campaigns are conducted.

APPENDIX 1- STATE OF SIGNATURES AND RATIFICATIONS OF THE SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA CONVENTION

Follow the [link](#)

APPENDIX 2 – QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE 1ST THEMATIC MONITORING ROUND

Follow the [link](#)

APPENDIX 3 - STATUS OF PLAY OF REPLIES TO THE 1ST MONITORING ROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

(as on 27 June 2025)

PARTY	QUESTIONNAIRE SENT	ANSWER RECEIVED
Albania / Albanie	03/01/2025	28/05/2025
Belgium / Belgique	03/01/2025	27/05/2025
Costa Rica / Costa Rica	03/01/2025	29/05/2025
Croatia / Croatie	03/01/2025	25/06/2025
Czechia / Tchéquie	03/01/2025	16/05/2025
France / France	03/01/2025	15/05/2025
Latvia / Lettonie	03/01/2025	26/05/2025
Malta / Malte	03/01/2025	
Montenegro/ Monténégro	03/01/2025	29/05/2025
Norway / Norvège	03/01/2025	30/05/2025
Portugal / Portugal	03/01/2025	26/05/2025
Republic of Moldova / République de Moldova	03/01/2025	27/06/2025
Slovenia / Slovénie	03/01/2025	27/05/2025
Spain / Espagne	03/01/2025	16/06/2025
Switzerland / Suisse	03/01/2025	09/05/2025