



OSCE/Graham Patterson

## OSCE Factsheet

Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

# Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in the OSCE Region

The OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings:

- Raises the public and political profile of combating trafficking in human beings;
- Assists participating States, at their request, in the implementation of OSCE commitments;
- Co-operates, in a co-ordinating role, with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and other OSCE Institutions, relevant structures of the Secretariat and the OSCE field operations;
- Co-operates with international organizations and relevant actors from civil society.

## MODERN-DAY SLAVERY

According to recent minimum estimates by the International Labour Organization, 2.5 million people are trafficked worldwide, of which approximately 500,000 are within the OSCE region. Globally, children represent between 40 per cent and 50 per cent of victims.

The essential element of trafficking is the exploitation of people in conditions amounting to slavery. Trafficked persons are held in unfamiliar and isolated environments where they are forced to work under violence, threat or subtle means of coercion, often to pay back an insurmountable debt.

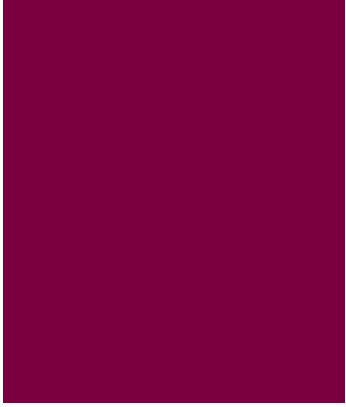
These people often do not speak the language, are unaware of their rights, are deprived of their documents, and depend heavily on their exploiters for food and lodging, as well as for making contact with the outside world. They are not free to leave, as they have no real and acceptable alternative but to submit to exploitation.

People are trafficked for:

- Sexual exploitation;
- Labour exploitation, including domestic servitude;
- Other purposes, including forced begging, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Trafficking in human beings still remains greatly misunderstood and is insufficiently addressed in both policy and practice.

Although significant progress has been made during the past ten years, there is still much work to be done in the areas of prevention, prosecution and protection of victims' rights.



Kalyaan/Lili Sadeh



Jorge León



The number of arrests, prosecutions and convictions of traffickers remains low, in stark contrast to the estimated number of victims. Too often, such victims remain unidentified, and many are deported or even prosecuted for criminal activities in which they have been involved as a direct result of having been trafficked.

Trafficking in human beings is a gross violation of human rights, fundamental freedoms and human dignity, and is often a form of violence against women.

Trafficking in human beings is also largely a business of organized crime, which has reached a massive scale and generates huge profits. Trafficking therefore thrives upon and feeds corruption, and undermines the rule of law and economic stability. It constitutes a real threat to the lives and well-being of citizens and society at large. As a consequence, trafficking is nowadays a serious transnational threat to security in the OSCE region and beyond.

## THE OSCE COMMITMENTS

Trafficking cuts across all three dimensions of the OSCE's work – politico-military, economic and environmental, and human dimension – and therefore requires a multi-disciplinary and comprehensive approach. The OSCE's political commitments constitute a comprehensive framework for preventing and combating trafficking in human beings for the 56 OSCE participating States.

In 2000, the OSCE participating States adopted their first Ministerial Council Decision specifically addressing trafficking in human beings. Since then, the OSCE has set the fight against this form of modern-day slavery as a priority and has dedicated numerous Ministerial Council Decisions to trafficking in human beings.

In 2003, the OSCE Ministerial Council endorsed the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings and established the position of the OSCE Special Representative.

## THE OSCE ACTION PLAN

The OSCE Action Plan is the key document providing the approach and framework for the anti-trafficking efforts of the OSCE participating States. Its full and effective implementation remains a strategic OSCE goal.

The Action Plan contains recommendations for action at the national level in the areas of:

- **PREVENTION**, including awareness raising and addressing root causes;
- **PROSECUTION**, including investigation and law enforcement international co-operation;
- **PROTECTION** of victims' rights, including assistance and compensation.

These recommendations draw on the best practices and guidelines elaborated by leading international organizations and NGOs, and build upon the experience gained by the OSCE, in particular the ODIHR and field operations.

The Action Plan envisages the strategic involvement of a broad array of actors, and calls for strong co-operation with NGOs that play a strategic and pioneering role in the broad scope of anti-trafficking action.

Following the adoption of the Action Plan, subsequent OSCE Ministerial Council Decisions have advanced the OSCE response to trafficking in human beings by addressing specific aspects of the problem. Such aspects include child trafficking, trafficking for labour exploitation and enhancing criminal justice responses.

The OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings is a unique high-level mechanism; its leading role is internationally recognized, especially in the field of promoting human rights-based approaches to preventing and combating trafficking in human beings.



OSCE/Alberto Andreani



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## THE OSCE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Maria Grazia Giammarinaro is the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, and represents the OSCE at the political level in anti-trafficking issues.

The Special Representative promotes a human rights-based approach in all anti-trafficking activities and calls for strong co-operation with social actors and grass-roots NGOs. She further calls for adopting a gender perspective on, and a child-sensitive approach to all aspects of anti-trafficking policies and action.

The Special Representative has set four strategic priorities upon which her Office will work during the coming years.

### Enhancing strategies and action to better prevent trafficking in human beings

- Enhancing prevention of trafficking for labour exploitation, including domestic servitude
- Enhancing prevention of child trafficking by strengthening child protection systems
- Promoting women's empowerment and gender-sensitive migration policies
- Raising awareness to promote an anti-slavery movement in the OSCE area

### Raising the profile and quality of the criminal justice response

- Encouraging use of advanced investigative techniques, including financial investigation
- Promoting international networking of police and prosecutorial specialized units
- Facilitating international law enforcement and judicial co-operation
- Supporting capacity building

### Promoting protection of victims' rights

- Promoting accurate victim identification
- Promoting immediate and appropriate assistance to victims
- Supporting victims' access to justice and remedies, including compensation
- Promoting systematic risk assessment to ensure safe return and diminish risk of re-trafficking

### Strengthening partnership in the *Alliance against Trafficking in Persons*

- Developing a shared strategic approach and setting a common agenda
- Promoting and engaging in joint advocacy initiatives
- Providing participating States with harmonized approaches and decision-making aids
- Broadening the *Alliance* partnership

The *Alliance against Trafficking in Persons* is a broad international platform for co-operation initiated by the OSCE in 2004. It is composed of over forty international organizations, including UNODC, UNICEF, UNHCHR, UNHCR, UNIFEM, ILO, IOM, IFRC, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, ICMPD, the Council of Baltic Sea States, Interpol, Europol and NATO, as well as key international and regional NGOs, such as Anti-Slavery International, ECPAT, La Strada International, Save the Children and Terre des Hommes International Federation.



## THE OSCE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE, MARIA GRAZIA GIAMMARINARO

Maria Grazia Giammarinaro took office as the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in March 2010.

She has been a judge at the Criminal Court of Rome since 1991. During this time, she has held various important positions on several national committees and has served various international organizations as a legal expert.

From 2006 to 2009, Maria Grazia Giammarinaro served in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Justice, Freedom and Security in Brussels, where she was responsible for work to combat human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children, as well as for penal aspects of illegal immigration within the unit dealing with the fight against organized crime. During this time she co-ordinated the Group of Experts on Trafficking in Human Beings of the European Commission.

From 2001 to 2006, she was a judge for preliminary investigation in the Criminal Court of Rome. Prior to that, she was Head of the Legislative Office and Adviser to the Minister for Equal Opportunities of the Italian Government.

She has a degree in Italian literature and worked for several years as a high school teacher before graduating in law from the University of Palermo in 1986.

“Why is trafficking a priority? The answer is clear in my view. Trafficking not only involves so much human suffering, but it is the new slavery, no longer legitimized by the law but implying the same heinous subjugation. Trafficked people, including children, are forced to work for no wages, are sexually exploited, are beaten and even killed if they try to leave, and are constantly threatened, violated and traumatized. This is the widespread reality of labour exploitation, in which the loss of freedom combined with violence and unsafe, degrading and humiliating living conditions often lead to permanent physical and psychological damage. It is also the reality of sexual exploitation, which implies violation of the body and the dignity of people involved. To eradicate this crime, the same level of commitment as witnessed in the case of historical slavery is needed, because freedom is at the core of our deepest and shared common values.”

- Maria Grazia Giammarinaro

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and Co-ordinator for Combating  
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The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) works for **stability, prosperity** and **democracy** in 56 States through political dialogue about shared values and through practical work that makes a lasting difference.