



‘Trafficking of human beings, of woman and girls, goes against our core European values and principles: the right to equality, to dignity, to living a life without fear. There is no place for trafficking in human beings either in our European societies or anywhere in this world.’

Dimitris Avramopoulos, European Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship

Online Module: Executive Summary

Trafficking of human beings (THB) involves the recruitment and transportation of victims to a place where they are exploited. The most common types of exploitation are sexual exploitation and forced labour, but other types include forced begging, forced marriage, organ removal, illegal adoption, domestic servitude and committing crimes for others.

Victims of THB find themselves forced to cooperate as a result of threats, violence, deception and/or abuse of power. This can cause them great emotional and/or physical harm.

THB affects virtually every country in every part of the world. All EU Member States are either a destination country for victims, a country of origin of victims, a transit country, or a combination of these. According to a 2016 report by the European Commission, there were 15,846 ‘registered victims’ of trafficking in the EU for the period 2013-2014.

THB generates huge profits for organised crime groups. In a 2014 report by the International Labour Organization, it is estimated that profits from THB reached about USD150 billion (EUR110 billion) per year. This makes it the world’s third most profitable criminal enterprise, after drug trafficking and money laundering.

This module aims to give users a broad understanding of THB as it affects EU Member States, including its characteristics and the approaches and strategies used to combat it by law enforcement officials and their partners. It is aimed at first-line police and border guards as well as law enforcement officers and judiciary staff who deal with THB at a national or cross-border cooperation level.

The module consists of an introduction, seven topic chapters and a glossary of THB-related terms and abbreviations. In the My Progress section, users can check their levels of understanding of each of the topics by considering a selection of true/false statements.

The individual chapters are:

1. **Introduction**
2. **Forms of THB:** This chapter describes five major forms of exploitation: sexual exploitation, labour exploitation, forced begging, the exploitation of criminal activities, and the removal of organs. It also covers child trafficking and the signs (indicators) that can alert us to a THB case.
3. **Victims:** Chapter 3 covers the identification of victims of THB. It also describes the mechanisms that need to be established to assist them, including a reflection period, a national referral mechanism (NRM) and an appropriate victim support network.
4. **Interviewing a Victim:** This chapter is concerned with different aspects of interviewing THB victims, including developing an interview strategy, the initial contact with the victim, the interview itself, and post-interview victim support and interviewer welfare.
5. **Investigation:** This chapter starts by covering the types, approach and strategy of THB investigations. It also summarises some specific aspects of a THB investigation: risk assessment and evidence collection strategy, the victims of THB and their role during the investigation, and the need to conduct parallel financial investigations on the criminal groups involved.
6. **Financial Investigation:** Financial investigation is a key way to successfully investigate and prosecute THB and to deny organised crime groups the large profits that they can make. This chapter covers money laundering, international cooperation and how a financial investigator can assist in a THB investigation.
7. **International Cooperation:** As THB is usually a transnational crime, combating it effectively requires transnational law enforcement cooperation. This chapter covers the necessity of international cooperation, the aspects of international cooperation, especially communication, as well as the channels available to establish effective cooperation.
8. **Prevention:** The need for preventing THB has become increasingly important. This chapter covers various aspects of prevention, including partnerships between public and private sector stakeholders, (self-)regulation and inspections, awareness-raising campaigns, and the 'barrier model' by which the opportunities for THB perpetrators are obstructed.