

OSCE States need to strengthen anti-trafficking prevention measures amid humanitarian crisis in Ukraine

VIENNA, 10 March 2022 – Unprecedented numbers of people seeking refuge from armed violence in Ukraine are arriving in many OSCE participating States. These people, mostly women and children, face risks of human trafficking, including sexual and labour exploitation, during their journey or upon arrival in a destination country. In light of the vulnerabilities of these people, the Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings today issued a [set of concrete recommendations for countries to prevent trafficking](#).

The recommendations contain guidance to address the needs of people seeking refuge, as well as policy measures to prevent and mitigate their vulnerabilities. They also look at longer-term challenges like integration into host communities from the perspective of preventing exploitation.

Recommendations include:

- Providing housing and immediate assistance like food and clothing;
- Establishing information centres and hotlines that can give clear official information on registration, residence, and rights in a language refugees understand;
- Introducing immediate measures to inform people seeking refuge of the risks of human trafficking, including “too good to be true” transportation, housing and job offers along migration routes and in vicinity of reception facilities and online.
- Disseminating official information broadly and monitoring for misleading information on housing and employment opportunities to prevent trafficking and fraud;

Furthermore, States are recommended to grant temporary residence permits, access to the job market, education for children, and ensure family preservation and reunification by not separating children from their parents. Reception facilities should be distributed across countries to avoid overburdening assistance and support systems in certain areas. Finally, States should also establish clear procedures for exchanging information on people seeking refuge to prevent people, especially children, from going missing.

“We need to prevent the current humanitarian crisis from turning into a human trafficking crisis,” said the OSCE Special Representative for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Valiant Richey.

“Establishing prevention measures and addressing vulnerabilities of people seeking refuge should be a priority right now and is the focus of our recommendations.”

The complete set of recommendations is available on the OSCE website: www.osce.org/cthb/513784

The Special Representative continues to monitor the humanitarian situation and will be traveling to the border areas of the neighbouring countries to assess the situation on the ground and assist OSCE participating States on issues related to trafficking in human beings.

For PDF attachments or links to sources of further information, please visit: <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/513913>

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