

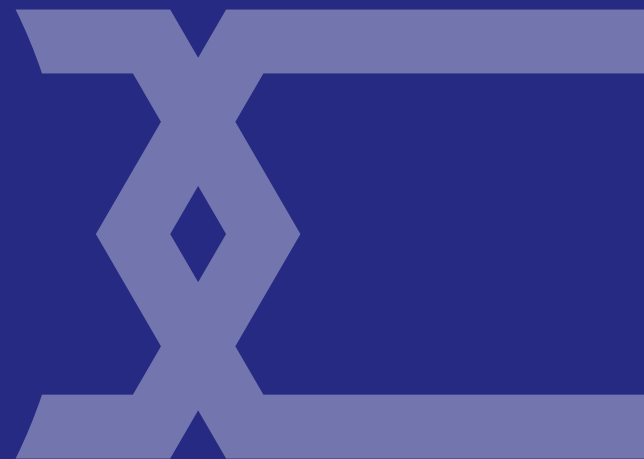


## Chapter 7. International cooperation

Unit-responsible partner: KWPG



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## 7. International cooperation

### 7.1 Introduction

International cooperation in the fight against trafficking in human beings is based on interaction between states, international organisations, law enforcement services and non-governmental organisations. The aim is to effectively combat human trafficking through:

- **Information sharing:** international cooperation between border services, police and agencies such as Europol, Interpol and Frontex enables the rapid sharing of information on criminal networks.
- **Coordination of activities:** organising joint police operations, prosecuting criminals and rescuing victims.
- **Training and support:** international education and training programmes help law enforcement agencies to identify victims and prosecute offenders more effectively.
- **Compliance with international standards:** countries adhere to UN and Council of Europe conventions that set standards against human trafficking, such as the Palermo Protocol.

Such cooperation increases efficiency in combating this crime, protecting victims and reducing the scale of trafficking at a global level.





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## 7.2 Learning objectives

The participant will ...

- Understand the role of governmental and international organisations in combating human trafficking.
- Be able to explain how information sharing and coordination of activities support investigations, prosecutions and victim protection.
- Recognise the importance of training, capacity building and compliance with international standards.
- Describe the specific roles of Europol, Frontex, Eurojust and other agencies in international cooperation.
- Evaluate the benefits and challenges of cooperation between states, agencies and NGOs in counter-trafficking efforts.

## 7.3 Definitions

### SIENA

The Secure Information Exchange Network Application (SIENA) is a state-of-the-art platform that meets the communication needs of EU law enforcement.

### Europol

European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation - is an agency of the European Union that aims to promote cooperation between the law enforcement services





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of EU Member States in the fight against international crime. Europol facilitates the exchange of information, analyses data and supports investigations into organised crime, terrorism, human trafficking, cybercrime and other serious security threats. The agency has its headquarters in The Hague, the Netherlands.

## Interpol

International Criminal Police Organisation - is an international police organisation which aims to promote cooperation between law enforcement agencies from different countries around the world in the fight against cross-border crime. Interpol does not carry out its own investigations or have the power to detain individuals but supports member states in exchanging information and coordinating action on international crime cases.

## Border Guard

in European countries are the institutions responsible for controlling national borders, preventing illegal border crossings, combating illegal migration, smuggling and other threats to national security. In Europe, each border guard operates at national level but also cooperates with other border services through international mechanisms such as Schengen or Europol. In some countries, border guards are not a separate formation, but they are part of the national police structures.

## Frontex

European Union Border and Coast Guard Agency - This is an EU agency that supports Member States in managing the external borders of the European Union by coordinating operations, supporting training and providing technical and human resources in the face of migration crises. Frontex works with national border guards to help them manage migration flows.



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## Labour control authorities

These are institutions responsible for monitoring, supervising and enforcing labour market, employment and labour rights legislation. Their main objective is to ensure that workers are employed in accordance with applicable laws and that employers comply with norms and standards on working conditions, wages, working hours, safety and health protection.

## 7.4 Theoretical / informative part

International cooperation between European Union (EU) countries on counter-trafficking in human beings is an important element of human rights protection and security policies in the region. Trafficking in human beings is a cross-border crime that requires coordinated multinational action, as perpetrators often operate in different countries and victims may be exploited in different economic sectors in different Member States. The EU takes a number of actions at regional and international level to prevent trafficking in human beings, prosecute perpetrators, and protect and support victims. Cooperation between Member States, as well as with European Union institutions and agencies, is fundamental in the fight against this practice. Legal basis for cooperation in the EU.

The European Union has a well-developed anti-trafficking legal base, and international cooperation in this area is based on several key documents:

- Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims: This is the main piece of EU anti-trafficking legislation. The Directive requires Member States to implement effective measures for prevention,





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protection of victims and prosecution of perpetrators. It contains provisions on, inter alia, the identification of victims of trafficking, witness protection, punishment of perpetrators and international cooperation.

- Integrated Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings 2021-2025: This is a strategic document that aims to coordinate the activities of Member States and EU bodies in the fight against trafficking in human beings, including prevention, education, and support for victims. The plan emphasises international cooperation, including with countries outside the EU.

### **Europol - European Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation**

Europol is a key institution in the international cooperation of EU Member States against trafficking in human beings. Its tasks include:

- Cooperation with law enforcement agencies: Europol supports national law enforcement agencies (police, border services, labour inspectorates) in exchanging information, analysing data and organising international operations against criminal groups involved in human trafficking. Europol is also responsible for collecting and sharing criminal analysis on trafficking in human beings.
- Coordination of operational activities: Europol organises international operations to combat trafficking in human beings, including, inter alia, operations to detect criminal networks involved in the exploitation of victims in slave labour or prostitution. These operations are carried out jointly with Member States and non-EU countries.





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- Database: Europol maintains databases, including a database on victims of trafficking and criminals, which allow for the rapid exchange of information between Member States.

### **Frontex - European Border and Coast Guard Agency**

Frontex has a key role in ensuring security at the EU's external borders, which is important in the context of preventing people smuggling and human trafficking.

Cooperation in this regard includes:

- Joint operations at the external borders: Frontex organises operations to combat irregular migration and human trafficking at the EU borders. It often cooperates with police and border guards of member states to detect victims of human trafficking trying to illegally cross the Union's borders.
- Training and support for border guards: Frontex provides training to Member States' border guards, helping them to identify victims of trafficking and also to provide them with adequate protection. The Agency also provides support on border monitoring technology.

### **Eurojust - European Judicial Cooperation Unit**

Eurojust supports cooperation between law enforcement authorities, courts and prosecutors of Member States in the fight against trafficking in human beings. Its tasks include:

- Coordination of judicial proceedings: Eurojust coordinates international investigations and judicial proceedings, including cooperation with prosecutors



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and courts in the implementation of trafficking cases. This cooperation enables criminal cases that have an international dimension to be handled more efficiently.

- Assistance in organising joint judicial operations: Eurojust organises meetings and coordinates operations to effectively prosecute perpetrators of human trafficking, both at national and international level.

### **Cooperation with international organisations**

The European Union also cooperates with international organisations that are involved in the fight against trafficking in human beings, such as:

- United Nations (UN): The EU cooperates with the UN in pursuit of the objectives contained in international conventions, such as the Palermo Protocols, which provide for action to combat trafficking in persons and other forms of organised crime.
- International Organisation for Migration (IOM): IOM works with EU countries to assist victims of human trafficking and also conducts outreach activities to raise awareness of the risks of human trafficking in the context of migration.

### **Joint education and prevention activities**

Cooperation on prevention plays an important role in the fight against trafficking in human beings. The European Union runs projects to raise awareness of the dangers of human trafficking among EU citizens as well as in countries outside the Union. These programmes include information and education campaigns and training for uniformed services, border guards, prosecutors, judges and others involved in the fight against human trafficking.





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## Cooperation with non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

As part of international cooperation, the EU also cooperates with NGOs that offer assistance to victims of trafficking. These organisations assist victims with medical, psychological and legal care, as well as with social and professional integration. The EU provides financial and organisational support to such NGOs, which facilitates their activities in the Member States.

## Monitoring and reporting

Within the European Union, there is an EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator who coordinates activities at EU level and monitors the progress of the anti-trafficking policy. Reports and analyses are published on a regular basis to closely follow the progress in the fight against trafficking in human beings in the Member States.

## 7.5 Suggested activity for the chapter

Table 12. Exercise: 'International network against human trafficking'

Activity Name	Exercise: 'International network against human trafficking'.
Type of Activity	Simulation
Duration	60-90 minutes
Learning Objectives	The aim of the exercise is to understand the role of international cooperation in counter-trafficking, to raise awareness of the

	challenges of trafficking and to develop skills for effective interaction between different countries, organisations and institutions.
<b>Materials Needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whiteboard or flipchart</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Sticky notes</li> <li>• Role cards (for each participant or group)</li> </ul>
<b>Guidelines for the facilitator</b>	<p><b>Introduction to the topic</b> (10 minutes):</p> <p>The trainer explains what human trafficking is, its scales and forms, and the effects it has on victims. He/she then presents the role of international cooperation in counteracting this phenomenon, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information sharing between services (police, immigration services, intelligence agencies).</li> <li>• Compliance in international legislation (e.g. UN Convention, protocols).</li> <li>• Cooperation with non-governmental organisations (NGOs).</li> <li>• Action for victims of trafficking in different countries.</li> </ul> <p><b>Division into groups</b> (5 minutes):</p> <p>Participants are divided into 4-6 groups in which they take on the role of representatives of different organisations, countries and</p>

institutions. Each group is given a role that they will play during the exercise:

- Group 1: Police from country A (e.g. source country for victims).
- Group 2: Border services from country B (e.g. transit country).
- Group 3: An international organisation working against human trafficking (e.g. UNODC).
- Group 4: A victim support NGO (e.g. a refugee support organisation).
- Group 5: National authorities of country C (e.g. destination country for victims).

#### **Preparation for the task (5 minutes):**

The trainer distributes cards to the groups with role descriptions and questions/challenges that they will have to solve during the exercise. Each group has 5 minutes to familiarise themselves with the role and plan their strategy of action.

#### **Simulation of international cooperation (30-40 minutes):**

Groups must simulate international cooperation in the fight against human trafficking. Each group has to plan activities to:

- Recognise and share information on the transportation of victims.
- Stopping the trafficking network.

- Assist victims who have been exploited.
- Cooperation with other countries and international organisations.

During the simulation, groups must exchange information, cooperate and make decisions in the context of international cooperation. Care should be taken to ensure that each group has its own unique task to play, which cannot be done without cooperation with others.

#### **Reflection and discussion (15-20 minutes):**

After the simulation, each group presents their activities and describes the challenges they faced. Participants discuss:

- What were the biggest difficulties in communication and cooperation between countries and organisations?
- What tools and procedures proved most effective?
- What are the differences in approaches to counter-trafficking in different countries?
- What are the benefits of international cooperation in the fight against trafficking?

#### **Summary (5 minutes):**

The trainer summarises the exercise, highlighting the key aspects of international cooperation: information sharing, coordination of activities and common goals. He also highlights the role of each participant in the global fight against human trafficking.



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<b>Debriefing</b>	<p><b>Information exchange:</b></p> <p>What information was key to the success of international cooperation? Which communication channels proved to be the most effective? What obstacles to information exchange emerged (e.g. language, legal)?</p> <p><b>Coordination of activities:</b></p> <p>What procedures were necessary for effective coordination between international organisations, countries and NGOs? What roles did the different parties play during the action (e.g. leadership role, negotiator)?</p> <p>Differences in approach: What differences in approach to counter-trafficking did you notice between countries and organisations? What were the implications of these differences in terms of effectiveness of action?</p>
<b>Tips for facilitator</b>	<p>Competitive elements can be added, where each group earns points for completing tasks effectively.</p> <p>Advanced version: introduce more complex scenarios such as going undercover, pursuing international traffickers, organising rescue operations.</p>
<b>Handouts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guide to international protocols and conventions on trafficking in persons.</li> </ul>



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	<p>Content: a document containing key information on international anti-trafficking agreements, conventions and protocols.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map of international cooperation in the fight against trafficking in human beings</li> </ul> <p>Content: Graphic map illustrating the structures of international cooperation.</p>
<b>Variations for online implementation</b>	<p>The 'International Anti-Trafficking Network' exercise can be conducted online by dividing participants into virtual rooms (breakout rooms) in a video conferencing platform, where each group will play an assigned role. Participants can collaborate through chats, video and shared documents to exchange information, make decisions and coordinate actions. After the simulation, the groups present their actions and discuss the results via a main video session, with the trainer moderating the discussion and summarising the findings.</p>

## 7.6 Reflections

After the training, participants should reflect on several key questions:

- The effectiveness of international cooperation: What challenges to international cooperation in counter-trafficking have been noted and how can they be overcome? What cooperation mechanisms have proven to be most effective?



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- Importance of communication and information exchange - What difficulties have emerged in the exchange of information between organisations and countries, and what tools can improve this communication to make it more effective?
- The role of different agencies in the fight against trafficking: What were the differences in approaches to countering trafficking in different roles (e.g. police, NGOs, LEA's)? What lessons can be drawn from these differences to better coordinate actions in real-life situations?

