



Digital Technology: An unprecedented opportunity for the prevention of trafficking

Conference on the EU Anti-Trafficking Day – 18th October 2018

Maison de la Paix Meeting Centre, Geneva



Die Schweiz gegen Menschenhandel
La Suisse contre la traite des êtres humains
La Svizzera contro la tratta di esseri umani

Policy context

Digital technology is at the core of the current global policy agenda. In July 2018, the UN Secretary General announced the creation of a High-level Panel on digital cooperation to launch a worldwide consultation about the trends, potential and impact of digitalisation¹. Switzerland is part of this initiative, with the Swiss Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard being one of the 20 experts sitting on the panel. Whilst digitalisation is not one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it plays a major role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

When it comes to Trafficking in Human Beings (THB), the dual use of technology lies at the heart of the debate. Digital technology, through mobile phones, social media platforms or internet recruitment portals, can be a means of facilitating human trafficking. At the same time, digitalisation can provide powerful tools to prevent THB and uphold human rights, for instance, through the creation of hotlines and digital reporting Apps to facilitate early identification.

Modern technological tools are also needed to leverage data to combat human trafficking. Data on this hidden, transnational crime is scarce and too often isolated in silos, leading to fragmented knowledge. Increased access to reliable, high quality data is essential to develop evidence-based policy responses and strengthen counter-trafficking institutions worldwide.

This is why today more than ever, interactions between private technology companies and counter-trafficking stakeholders are key to ensure the positive use of ICT and the maximisation of their potential to prevent trafficking in human beings.

Recent initiatives have tried to tackle the relevance of ICT for trafficking in persons. For instance, a coalition of global technology companies, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and civil society organisations have come together to launch “Tech Against Trafficking” (TAT), a collaborative effort to support the eradication of human trafficking and forced labour. TAT founding members British Telecommunications, Microsoft, and Nokia are now advancing a conversation initiated at a [Wilton Park event](#) in June 2017 to understand how technology facilitates THB, as well as to brainstorm potential technological solutions to disrupt trafficking networks, prevent migrants from becoming victims, and provide support to survivors.

For this specific event, the aim is to narrow down the debate to one area of counter-trafficking: prevention. Practical tools specifically designed to raise awareness, report suspicions and improve the gathering, use and sharing of data will be presented. The main goal is to highlight the potential of ICT in helping to prevent human trafficking, as well as to set up a platform for multidisciplinary exchange and networking between key counter-trafficking stakeholders and private technology companies based in Switzerland or in other countries.

¹ UN Press release, 12 July 2018: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sga1817.doc.htm>



Main themes

1. **Relevance of digitalisation for THB:** this first part will highlight the importance of considering digitalisation as well as reflect on its impact before, during and after the trafficking process.
2. **Existing digital tools:** two presentations will then provide an insight into the landscape of tech-initiatives developed to contribute to the 4 pillars of the counter-trafficking strategy (4Ps: Prevention, Protection, Prosecution, Partnership). Good practices – mainly focusing on prevention – derived from existing private-public partnerships in the US will be presented.
3. **ICT for prevention:** a multidisciplinary panel of experts will discuss opportunities that come hand in hand with technology and consider innovative way of using digital tools to facilitate identification and awareness-raising, as well as to make data and information available and so to ensure an evidence-based counter-trafficking response.

The event will also be the occasion to present the results of the information bus on human trafficking touring around Switzerland in an interactive way, thus shedding light on a Swiss-wide preventive activity.

Participants

The conference will bring together state and non-state stakeholders involved in counter-trafficking in Switzerland and abroad, as well as representatives of the private economy/technology sector, international organizations and permanent missions to the UN based in Geneva. International experts will be invited to present their work and promising practices in trying to include digitalisation in counter-trafficking efforts.

The conference is organised by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Bern in cooperation with the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) on the occasion of the EU Anti-Trafficking Day, on the 18th of October.

Registration

To register, please send an email including your name, job title and company/institution name to Ms. Emilie Ballestraz (eballestraz@iom.int, +41 (0)31 350 82 22), who is also available to answer any questions. Registrations are on a first-come, first-served basis and must be received no later than the 11th of October 2018.

The presentations and discussions will be held in English and French with simultaneous translation.



8:30 – 9:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration <i>Maison de la Paix Meeting Centre, 2E chemin Eugène-Rigot, 1202 Geneva</i> Visit of the information bus on human trafficking (itinerant exhibition) from 8.30 until 16.00 <i>More information on http://www.18oktober.ch/en/bus</i> 	
9:00 – 9:10	Welcome	Barbara Schedler Fischer Deputy Head of Human Security Division, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, FDFA
9:10 – 9:20	Opening Address: The importance of considering digitalisation	Jovan Kurbalija Executive Director and Co-Lead, Secretariat of the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Digital Cooperation
9:20 – 9:40	Using technology to fight human trafficking – turning liability into an asset	Radu Cucos Assistant Officer on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, OSCE
9:40 – 9:50	Tech4Good: hackathon “Bluehack Free Steps Against Human Trafficking”	Carlos Andrés Pérez (video) GLO.ACT Project Officer, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Colombia
9:50 – 10:15	Questions and Answers	Moderator: Philipp Zahn (SRF)
10:15 – 10:45	Coffee break	
10:45 – 11:10	ICT Tools Addressing Human Trafficking in North America	Sara Crowe Data Analysis Program Director, Polaris, USA
11:10 – 12:30	<p>Panel Discussion: How can digitalisation contribute to the prevention of human trafficking?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>How can ICT help prevent THB, be it through awareness-raising, facilitating identification or data gathering and sharing?</i> <i>What types of data are useful for counter-trafficking? How can the private sector be involved?</i> <i>What can telecom companies and other ICT specialists do to support prevention efforts?</i> <i>Can we apply some of the existing ICT tools to the Swiss context?</i> <i>How can legal and institutional obstacles to sharing sensitive data be overcome through the use of new technology and de-identification techniques? How can sensitive data be better used for counter-trafficking interventions?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eric Anderson, Head of Modern Slavery Programme, British Telecommunications Anh Nguyen, Head of Migrant Protection Assistance Division, IOM Headquarters Jean-Yves Art, Senior Director Strategic Partnerships, Microsoft Sébastien Kulling, Head of Suisse romande and Deputy Managing Director, digitalswitzerland <p>Moderator: Philipp Zahn (SRF)</p>	
12:30 – 12:45	Concluding remarks	Pier Rossi-Longhi Chief of Mission, International Organization for Migration, IOM Bern
12:45 – 14.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cocktail lunch Visit of the information bus on human trafficking (itinerant exhibition) and presentation of results and achievements in an interactive way. <i>More information on www.18oktober.ch/en/bus</i> 	