



Statement of the Global Protection Cluster Task Team on Anti-Trafficking and the Ukraine Protection Cluster on the human trafficking response in Ukraine

20 May 2022

The [Global Protection Cluster Task Team on Anti-Trafficking](#) is a group of UN agencies, international organisations, and non-government organisations working on up-scaling anti-trafficking efforts in the humanitarian protection response in internal displacement contexts. They have published an [Introductory Guide to Anti-Trafficking in Internal Displacement Contexts](#) and conduct trainings with protection actors in countries affected by crises and displacement. For more information or to contribute your expertise in the Task Team, contact the Global Protection Cluster: gpc@unhcr.org

The [Global Protection Cluster](#) Task Team on Anti-Trafficking, in cooperation with the [Ukraine Protection Cluster](#), expresses our concern at the heightened risk of trafficking in persons facing people within Ukraine, particularly those internally displaced by the hostilities.

We acknowledge the [protection concerns raised](#) by the UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, Siobhán Mullally, the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Reem Alsalem, and the UN Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten, and echo the call for all humanitarians to be alert to the risks of trafficking, and take effective prevention and protection measures, in particular ensuring the rights and best interests of children.

We welcome the recent [signing of the agreement](#) between the Government of Ukraine and the United Nations, through the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, to address, among others, conflict-related trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation.

The Ukraine Protection Cluster, including the Child Protection and the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Areas of Responsibility (AoRs), and their partner organizations, are increasing anti-trafficking prevention and preparedness activities.

A timebound Anti-Trafficking Task Force is now active under the Protection Cluster with the aim of integrating anti-trafficking action in the overall protection response. Preventing people from being trafficked and protecting those who are is a collective humanitarian responsibility. The Task Force will identify anti-trafficking trends/gaps/priorities, build the capacity of humanitarians who may come into contact with people at risk of, or who have been, trafficked, and ensure coordination of efforts among partners for comprehensive, victim-centred support. The Task Force is co-chaired by IOM Ukraine and La Strada-Ukraine, and is supported by the Child Protection and GBV AoRs – the terms of reference available [here](#).

Alongside this dedicated Anti-Trafficking Task Force, anti-trafficking efforts are being incorporated into several initiatives. The Task Force of Unaccompanied and Separated Children, established under the Child Protection AoR, is supporting efforts to prevent family separation and provide adequate care to unaccompanied children as a key preventive measure to protect them from trafficking. The GBV AoR is also incorporating anti-trafficking messaging into GBV prevention materials and flyers that are being distributed to internally displaced people (IDPs).



The GBV AoR, together with Cash Working Group, launched a Task Force to ensure a Do No Harm Approach and that information on both GBV and anti-trafficking, including referrals, as part of risk-mitigation, is available at registration sites. Protection Cluster members are also raising the awareness of displaced communities and people on the move against the risks of trafficking. Banners with anti-trafficking messages, elaborated jointly by UNHCR and IOM, are posted at border points along the western border of Ukraine. Information on the anti-trafficking hotline of the national police of Ukraine, information on safe movement and other anti-trafficking services are also disseminated through diverse channels.

Three months into the war, vulnerabilities to exploitation are rising. As restrictions of movements due to ongoing hostilities reduce safe pathways to leave affected areas, coupled with people's loss of income-generating activities, depletion of resources, dwindling access to goods, limited access to affordable accommodation, loss of documentation, and family separation, trafficking for multiple exploitative purposes is anticipated to increase.

The Protection Cluster is mapping remaining available services for the anticipated rise in cases. As partner organisations providing support to victims of trafficking urgently relocate from conflict hotspots, with some re-establishing services, the Protection Cluster will make available this information to the many thousands of people calling hotlines. Three hotlines with counselling and information available on anti-trafficking remain functional:

- IOM: National Migrant Advice and Counter-Trafficking Hotline: 527 (free from mobile phones), 0800505501 (free from landline phones) as well as electronic consultations at <https://www.527.org.ua/>
- La Strada-Ukraine: National Toll-Free Hot Line on prevention domestic violence, human trafficking and gender discrimination 116 123 (free from mobile phones) or 0 800 500 335 (free from landline phones). Online consultations are available via Telegram: @NHL116123, Facebook: @lastradaukraine, Skype: @lastrada-ukraine, email: hotline@la-strada.org.ua
- State Call Center on anti-human trafficking, domestic violence, gender-based violence and violence against children: 1547 or <https://1547.ukc.gov.ua/>

The Protection Cluster is ensuring that all partners are aware of referral mechanisms in case of detection of people at risk of trafficking, or presumed trafficking cases.

As anti-trafficking action scales up, more information will be forthcoming.

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