

Addressing the misuse of online platforms to combat human trafficking

www.osce.org/cthb

OSR/CTHB/1 November 2024

OSCE priorities Tech/THB

- Develop a response at the platform level
- Harness the positive use of technology
- Join efforts with and advise the private sector
- Constantly looking for new trends and developments

Choose a

Alabama
Auburn
Birmingham
Dothan
Gadsden
Huntsville
Mobile
Montgomery
Muscle Shoals
Tuscaloosa

Alaska
Anchorage
Fairbanks
Juneau
Kenai

Arizona
Flagstaff
Mohave
Phoenix
Prescott
Show Low
Sierra Vista
Tucson
Yuma

Arkansas
Fayetteville
Fort Smith
Jonesboro
Little Rock

California
Bakersfield
Chico
Fresno
Humboldt
Imperial
Inland Empire
Long Beach
Los Angeles
Mendocino
Merced



backpage.com and affiliated websites have been seized

as part of an enforcement action by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, with analytical assistance from the Joint Regional Intelligence Center.

Other agencies participating in and supporting the enforcement action include the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona, the U.S. Department of Justice's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of California, the office of the California Attorney General, and the office of the Texas Attorney General.

Backpage record certification requests should be sent to backpage_request.mbx@fbi.gov.

Please remember to attach the records you need certified and the certification document that you are requesting to be complete and returned to you. Please allow 2-3 days for your request to be processed. If you have a record certification request that requires urgent attention, indicate that by including the word "URGENT" in the subject line of your email.

April 6, 2018

Worcester

Harrisburg

ost ad

“For far too long, Backpage.com existed as the dominant marketplace for illicit commercial sex, a place where sex traffickers frequently advertised children and adults alike,” said Attorney General Sessions.



Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe



THIS SITE HAS BEEN SEIZED

Since 26/3/2019

This web page has been seized pursuant to a Spanish judicial warrant by Torrevejeja Investigating Court No. 4, by virtue of pre-trial proceeding 274/16 and executed by Cuerpo Nacional de Policía (Spain), in collaboration with Eurojust and Europol, due to an investigation combating Human Trafficking and Money Laundering.



In case you have been advertising on this web and believe to be victim of Human Trafficking, kindly contact via mail: trata@policia.es.

Kindly note that the information provided is handled as confidential by Cuerpo Nacional de Policía (Spain).



Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe

Sex buyers
DEMAND


adultwork.com

backpage.com.

city **X** guide

Euro
Girls
Escort.com

bedpage

VIVA street

Locanto

People in
prostitution

Supply

Victims
of THB

**Possible victim of
THB**

Online platforms



Online platforms

**Possible victim of
THB**

Mapping platforms with
high risks of THB



Analyze priority platforms
for instances of THB



Pro-active investigation of
cases

OSCE project on mapping websites

Mapped in 2021		Mapped in 2022	Mapped in 2024
Ukraine	Serbia	Canada	Andorra
Georgia	Romania	Ireland	Cyprus
Azerbaijan	North Macedonia	Norway	Hungary
Turkmenistan	Montenegro	Finland	Iceland
Uzbekistan	Greece	Denmark	Liechtenstein
Tajikistan	Croatia	The Netherlands	Luxembourg
Kyrgyzstan	Bulgaria	Germany	Malta
Kazakhstan	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Czech Republic	Mongolia
Estonia	Albania	Austria	Monaco
Latvia	Armenia	Belgium	San Marino
Lithuania		France	Slovenia
Russian Federation		Italy	Slovakia
Belarus		Portugal	Sweden
Moldova		Spain	Turkey
		Switzerland	United Kingdom
		Poland	United States

Online platforms analyzed

- sites advertising escort services,
- massage services,
- broader 'classifieds' advertising platforms,
- advertising aggregators,
- hobby boards,
- sugar daddy sites,
- dating and social networking websites,
- and other forums as appropriate to the local market.

Results

4,189 websites were identified in
these 56 countries

Information collected

- a. Name
- b. URL
- c. Size – number of advertisements, evidence of use (such as, recent and relatively high volume of new advertisements being added)
- d. Services – range, types available and prices when advertised
- e. Geographical scope:
International/national/regional/local - including regional prevalence (for example, to determine whether a site's popularity and use differs regionally)
- f. Denotation of Ethnicity/National Origin: whether advertised providers are primarily local or foreign
- g. Links to social media profiles (Instagram, Facebook etc.), or phone numbers
- h. Notes on the site
- i. Any connections between sites – some will look exactly the same but have different names
- j. Any company affiliation
- k. Language
- l. Category – e.g. hobby board, catalogue, brothel
- m. Particular lingo
- n. Whether advertising space is owned or rented

Results

- In one country, a website offered “*virginity auctions*” for club members only.
 - Navigating the “virgins” link: **observed a number of visibly very young girls**
- In some countries, buyers can “rent” a person in prostitution for 7, 14 or 21 days for sexual services, which indicates lack of freedom and movement of that person
 - On many sites, the involvement of third parties (pimps) was observed
 - Same persons involved in prostitution were advertised in different locations across the border of neighbouring countries, which shows frequent movement

Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator
for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

Mapping the online landscape of risks of trafficking in human beings on sexual services websites across the OSCE region



osce Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe

- ✓ The overarching goal of this report is to **respond to the threat of technology-facilitated THB** by building increased awareness about websites that facilitate sexual exploitation
- ✓ The report was designed to **identify — in selected OSCE participating States — the market-leading online sites and platforms** for the explicit and non-explicit selling of sexual services where victims of THB for sexual exploitation could be advertised

ExB Tech-Facilitated THB

1st phase

- Finalized 2023
- 4 regional workshops, 152 professionals from 40 OSCE pS
- 56 OSCE pS online landscape SSW mapped
- Knowledge tools developed

2nd phase

- Mapping of sexual marketplaces on social media
- Conducting research on safety measures undertaken by websites with high risks of THB
- Developing training materials and conducting trainings for prosecutors and judges on technology-facilitated THB
- Raising the awareness and knowledge of pS' institutions responsible for online safety and oversight of the Internet.

ExB Tech-Facilitated THB impact

Planned target 1 - At least 5 more OSCE pS adopt/develop legislation to combat technology-facilitated THB

- ✓ **Three** - initiated the amendment of the Criminal Code to include aspects related to technology-facilitated THB;
- ✓ **Two** - initiated the amendment of the Criminal Procedure Code to include aspects related to technology-facilitated THB;
- ✓ **Four** - initiated the drafting of policies and legislation to require online platforms to address technology-facilitated THB;
- ✓ **Nine** - initiated the drafting of policies and legislation to enable the use of technology tools to address technology-facilitated THB;
- ✓ **Twelve** - proposed to include the response to technology-facilitated THB in the National Action Plan to Combat THB.



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ExB Tech-Facilitated THB impact

Planned target 2 - At least 5 OSCE pS adopt the standard operating procedures on addressing technology-facilitated THB

- ✓ **Fourteen** (14) beneficiaries reported that they updated the existing or developed new standard operating procedures on addressing technology-facilitated THB;
- ✓ **Eleven** (11) beneficiaries reported that they established new partnerships with stakeholders involved in addressing technology-facilitated THB.

ExB Tech-Facilitated THB impact

Planned target 3 - At least 5 OSCE pS adopt the curriculum for police academies on technology facilitated THB

- **Eleven** (11) beneficiaries reported that they introduced or updated the existing training courses on technology-facilitated THB in the training/educational institutions.

ExB Tech-Facilitated THB impact

Planned target 4 - At least 20 OSCE pS use the mapping methodology and indicators at the national level

40 countries were trained on the mapping methodology during the four sub-regional workshops throughout 2023



Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

ExB Tech-Facilitated THB spill-over effect

- ✓ **OSCE-wide Report** - *"Mapping the online landscape of risks of trafficking in human beings on sexual services websites across the OSCE region."*
- ✓ **CEPOL** requested the project team develop an e-learning module
- ✓ **National workshops** - Kyrgyzstan

Donors – ExB project Responding to technology-facilitated trafficking in human beings

 Federal Ministry
Republic of Austria
European and International
Affairs



Thank you!