



Adequate Support measures and improved capacities in countering THB

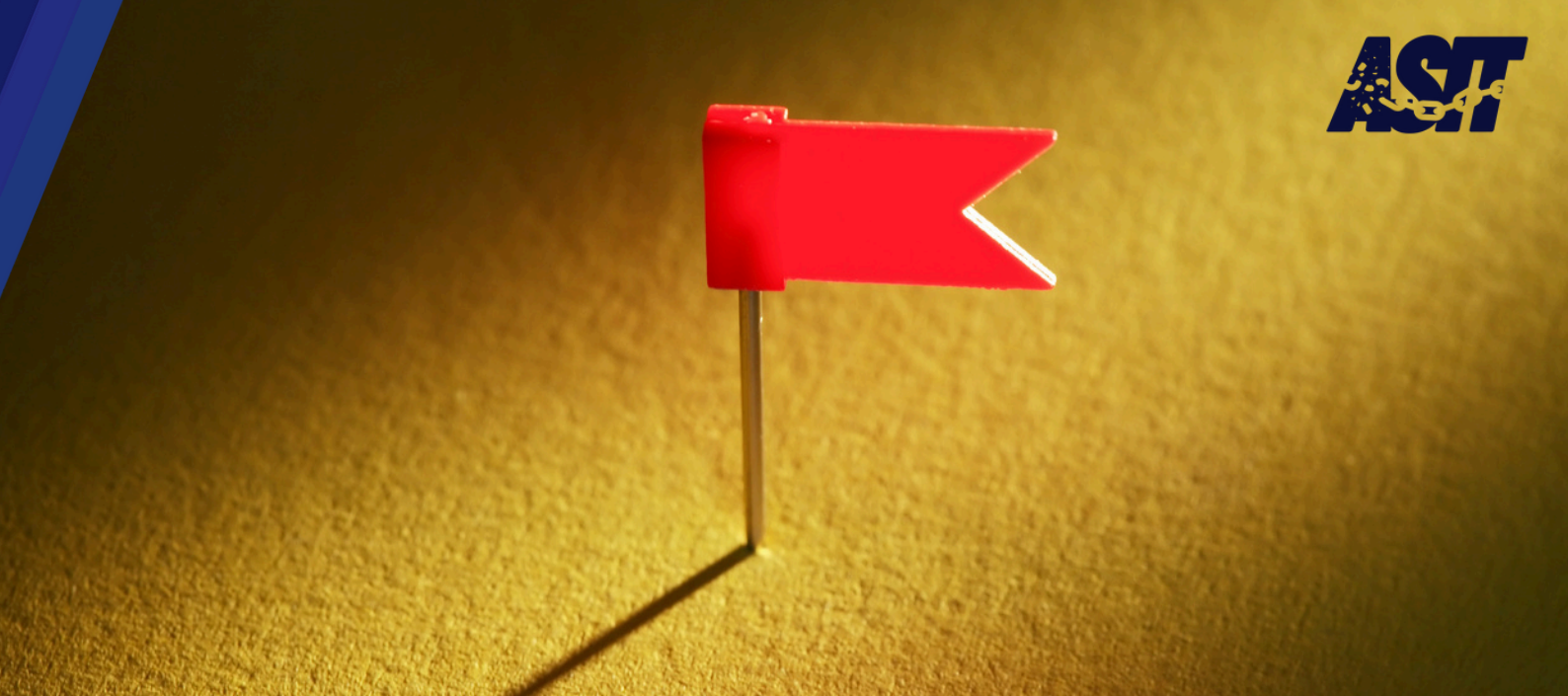


# Red Flags Compass

ASIT: Adequate Support measures  
and Improved capacities in countering THB



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# What is the ASIT Red Flags Compass?

ASIT is an initiative of police, academia, and civil society organisations from Spain, Bulgaria, Greece, Poland, Italy, and Slovakia. The ASIT team is advancing the curbing of trafficking in persons through the promotion of early action and identification of signs of victimisation at work, in the community, in public institutions, and on online platforms, websites, and e-business services.

We aim to equip frontline social, health, and community workers, staff from the leisure and seasonal labour-demanding sectors, and IT developers or businesses based on technology with the knowledge and resources needed to effectively identify, protect, and assist (presumed) victims of human trafficking.

## What is the ASIT Red Flags Compass?

### ASIT Red Flags Compass

1. A toolbox of signs that a person may be at risk of trafficking
2. A communication step-by-step navigator on what to pay attention to
3. A guide on the report, assist and protect chain

# What is the purpose of the ASIT Compass?

ASIT Compass is to support early action and alerts for the prevention and protection of modern forms of “slavery”.

Anybody can identify a potential /presumed victim of trafficking based on a list of indicators and their compliance with the knowledge about the criminal phenomenon of trafficking in human beings.

Identification is based on the recognition of signs of violation - a signal of behavioural and/or physical characteristics alerting the observer about the possibility that an individual may be a potential victim of human trafficking.

The indicators serve as guidelines or markers to help identify a presumed victim's appearance; For instance, instead of appearing withdrawn and closed off, a victim may display signs of aggression or erratic behaviour. In some cases, the individual might appear overly cheerful or even hysterical.

Pay attention to the **indicators which you can obtain from a short communication with a potential victim of human trafficking, from what happened to her/him.** Focus on general risk signs and indicators by form of exploitation.

In most cases, potential victims of human trafficking behave unnaturally, e.g. they are withdrawn, avoid communication with others, let others speak for them, avoid eye contact, are accompanied. They may also have signs of physical violence on their bodies. **It is very important to become familiar with and adopt all indicators that can be used in practice, not just those recommended for the given module and target group.**

# Indicators of Victim Identification

Identification begins with the assessment of the potential signs of violation before approaching a presumed victim of trafficking in human beings in the surroundings of your environment.

Victims' behaviours vary - they may appear withdrawn, aggressive, or overly cheerful. Key observations include:



**Behaviour and appearance: avoiding communication, limited eye contact, visible signs of violence.**

**Multiple indicators: a combination of different signs strengthens suspicion.**

Most often, a combination of signs for a person being at risk of his/her personal health and life

- **Coercion at work:** The victim is forced to engage in activities against their will.
- **Psychological and Physical Harm:** The trafficker uses these methods as a means of coercion.
- **Restriction of Movement:** The victim cannot move freely and is often controlled and guarded.
- **Isolation:** The victim is separated from others, which limits their freedom.
- **Confiscation of Personal Documents:** The trafficker may take the victim's passport or ID, instilling fear that they are in a foreign country illegally without these documents.



- **Prohibition of Communication:** Victims are often prevented from communicating with family, friends, or relatives, or their communication is severely limited and monitored by the trafficker.
- **Deprivation of Basic Needs:** Victims may suffer from hunger, lack of sleep, and no access to medical treatment.
- **Non-Payment of Wages:** The trafficker may pay the victim very little.
- **Debt Manipulation:** The trafficker may claim that the victim owes money for travel, accommodation, processing documents, or job placement, which further coerces them into involuntary labour.
- **Unexplained behaviour:** Victims may show signs of fear, anxiety, or hesitation when asked questions. They might appear overly submissive or distant and avoid direct communication.
- **Physical abuse:** victims often bear visible signs of physical abuse, such as bruises, scars, or burns, indicating mistreatment or exploitation.
- **Inhumane working conditions:** forced labour victims may experience poor working conditions, long hours, lack of rest, and unsafe environments, often without fair compensation.





## Red flags for seasonal workers

Watch for the victim's signs of exploitation and trafficking

- Are individuals possessing their legal documents, such as passports and identification, or are these controlled by someone else? Victims often resort to using false or counterfeit identity documents.
- Is there a group of workers whose wages are deposited into the same bank account? This could signal that an illegal gangmaster is seizing control of their earnings. Additionally, are workers facing deductions for supposedly provided accommodations and meals or to pay off fictitious debts?
- Observe if groups of workers are being dropped off or picked up at odd hours or if they consistently arrive at the same location.
- Do the individuals appear malnourished, unkempt, or manifest signs of withdrawal? Are there visible injuries or a lack of personal belongings, or do they wear inappropriate clothing for their work conditions?
- If accompanied by others, does a third party dominate the conversation?
- Have they hesitated to seek medical help? Are the descriptions of how injuries were sustained vague or inconsistent?
- Is there an evident fear of law enforcement or immigration services? Are they wary of the consequences for themselves or their families back home?
- Victims may feel trapped in a cycle of debt or dependence, believing they owe money to someone who exploits their situation.



Should a labour mediator offer some of the following services to your company, be aware and double-check the company and staff hired:



**Service Level Agreement:** Do they provide a clear and comprehensive Service Level Agreement? This should delineate responsibilities regarding the welfare of the workers.

**Unrealistic Promises:** Be wary of over-promising claims. Are they offering workers at significantly reduced rates or boasting about fulfilling productivity levels in an unreasonably short timeframe?

**Worker Identification:** Do they possess proper identification for their workers?

**Mass Transportation:** Are workers being transported in large groups? This is often indicative of exploitative practices.



# Red Flags for a hotel environment

## Watch for the victim's signs

- Showing visible signs of physical abuse, such as unexplained bruises or injuries.
- Preventing individuals from coming and going freely indicates a controlling and abusive environment.
- Exhibiting fearful or anxious behaviour, reflecting the psychological repercussions of their circumstances.
- Possessing few or no personal items suggests a lack of stability or reliance on their trafficker.
- Please pay attention to guests lacking control over their finances or personal identification.
- Notice if individuals wear clothing that seems inappropriate for their age or context.

## Watch for suspicious behaviour of perpetrators in a hotel, guest house, parlour, etc:

- Checking in for merely a few hours rather than an overnight stay
- Suspicious Payment and Booking Patterns
- Refusing cleaning services for multiple consecutive days
- Leaving minors unattended in a room for extended periods
- Engaging with a minor at hotel bars or restaurants
- Requesting multiple rooms or refusing entry to cleaning staff
- Using an excessive number of electronic devices such as computers, cell phones, or credit card machines, which may indicate trafficking operations





# Indicators and Presumed Minors Victims

If the victim of human trafficking is a child, he/she may show the following signs:

- the child is shy, repressed
- the child avoids eye contact, looks at the ground
- the child looks scared
- the child is shocked and does not know how to behave
- the child is living with a larger group of children, possibly even traffickers - people who accompany the child and seek eye contact with someone from this group
- the child is usually not accompanied by parents
- the child is not relaxed, cannot speak freely and shows fear in the presence of these people.

# Digital alerts for trafficking

- **Trust Building & Grooming:** Through messaging apps and dating sites, traffickers form deceptive relationships, offering emotional support or romantic interest to create dependency and normalise inappropriate behaviour.
- **Isolation & Control:** Traffickers monitor victims' communication, demand constant online availability, and use spyware to isolate victims from their support networks. They gather digital evidence for blackmail through compromising content.
- **Exploitation & Coercion:** Victims are coerced into exploitation via digital platforms, including advertising services on specialised websites and using apps for communications and payment schemes that leave them financially dependent.
- **Control Mechanisms via the Smartphone Communication:** Continuous contact is maintained through messaging apps, exerting psychological pressure on victims.
- **GPS Tracking:** GPS features allow real-time monitoring of victims, creating a sense of complete control and hindering escape.
- **Age-Inconsistent Online Activity:** Minors with adult-oriented profiles or discussions that do not align with their age.
- **Encrypted Messaging Applications:** Conversations shifting to encrypted channels, scripted language, and rapid progression to requests for compromising content are warning signs.
- **Unusual Digital Location Patterns:** Frequent check-ins at trafficking-related locations can indicate exploitation.
- **Behavioural Indicators:** Digital footprints may reveal coercion through changes in social media activity, such as sudden displays of luxury items or restricted commenting, indicating isolation and loss of autonomy. Physical signs, such as bruises or inappropriate attire, can also provide clues.





# What to do if a presumed victim is at the workplace?

If the victim is detected at the workplace, it is necessary to find out sensitively what happened.

- Ensure that no people from the victim's working environment are present with the victim and you at the interview. Ensure that people from the victim's working environment do not see you communicating with him/her.
- Tell the victim who you are and try to reassure them that they do not need to be afraid because you want to help them.
- Listen and ask questions, but avoid questions starting with "why".
- Identify whether they may be a victim of human trafficking based on basic indicators. Act on suspicion of human trafficking, as it is a serious crime.



## When communicating with a person who is victim of trafficking

- The person in front of you is a victim of a crime. Not a perpetrator of the crime of human trafficking
- the crime of human trafficking violates the basic rights and freedoms of the victim, which is also The in the victim's behavior and appearance
- a victim of human trafficking is a particularly vulnerable victim and requires special protection and assistance
- there are many reasons why trafficked persons are not considered victims of trafficking or do not ask for help. Victims of trafficking are psychologically and physically abused and constantly controlled; they fear retribution, revenge against themselves and their families, or they feel responsible for their situation. They also don't even know that different forms of help are available.
- Be mindful of ethical standards, i.e. Respect the rights, freedoms, and dignity of the victim. Be aware that the person did not become a victim voluntarily. Do not judge the victim for their appearance, nationality, health status, or the activity they were forced to perform.



## How to help a victim

You may encounter a victim of human trafficking in a public place or in the community where you work.

They may be running away from their perpetrator and in poor physical and mental condition. To determine if he/she is a victim of human trafficking, you need to find out what happened sensitively.

- Ask your colleagues for assistance to ensure that the victim's basic needs are met. This includes ensuring the situation is safe and reporting the incident to the police.
- Depending on your abilities and available resources, contact the police or any national helpline to obtain contact information for organisations that provide shelter, food, drinks, rest, or access to other basic needs.
- Contact the police immediately or call existing national helplines to report any suspicion of a criminal act.
- Given the current mood and situation, the victim may be reluctant to engage with the support and assistance system or the police.
- If the victim does not wish to contact a human trafficking support organisation, respect their decision. Please provide them with the helplines in your country.
- You must contact the police immediately if there is an imminent threat to the victim's life or health.
- Remember that it is ultimately the victim's decision to report the incident to the police.
- Be mindful that various forms of assistance are available in each country without requiring the victim to report or cooperate with the police.

# Can individuals report suspected human trafficking anonymously?

Yes, individuals can often report suspected human trafficking anonymously via various channels, including 112 from all European countries, hotlines, and direct contact with law enforcement agencies or designated social and health community workers.

Discretion is essential for whistleblowers or those who fear retaliation regarding their reports.



**Immediate Response:** Prioritise the safety of potential victims and other guests. Contact law enforcement without delay. Refrain from confronting suspected traffickers directly to avoid escalating the situation and compromising safety.



**Document and Report:** Keep meticulous records of all relevant details, including dates, times, physical descriptions of individuals involved, and actions taken.



**Cooperate with Authorities:** Provide law enforcement with all pertinent information, including guest records, security footage, and any observations or suspicions you have gathered.



When human trafficking is suspected or detected on business premises, **swift and decisive action is of the utmost importance.**



# Contacts

**LinkedIn:**

[linkedin.com/showcase/asitproject](https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/asitproject)

**Contact Information:**

[ool@minv.sk](mailto:ool@minv.sk)

**Access**

Digital resources  
and training materials:

[asit-project.kemea-research.gr](http://asit-project.kemea-research.gr)

**Bulgaria:**

National Helpline: 0800 20 100, 0800 1 86 76, +359 2 807 80 50

National Helpline for Children: 116 111

**Greece:**

Resource Line for Human Trafficking: 1109

SOS Hotline on Violence Against Women: 159 00

Emergency Social Helpline: 197

Hellenic Police: 100

**Italy:**

National Anti-Trafficking Helpline: 800 290 290

**Poland:**

National Information and Consultation Centre hotline: +48 22 628 01 20

National Information and Consultation Centre hotline: +48 47 72 56 502

Anti-Human Trafficking National Police Headquarters hotline: +48 664 974 934

Office for Foreigners hotline: +48 47 721 7575

**Slovakia**

National anti-trafficking units across the country – 24/7 immediate contact via email  
[ool@minv.sk](mailto:ool@minv.sk)

National helpline to assist Victims of trafficking in persons: 0800 800 818

National Police Force: 158

Helpline for missing children (nonstop): 116 000

National helpline for women experiencing violence: 0800 212 212

Child Safety Helpline: 116 111

**Spain**

The National Police Force: 900 10 50 90

Email: [trata@policia.es](mailto:trata@policia.es)

Social media: Twitter @policia

Hashtag: #contralatrata

# Partners

## *Coordinator*

**Ministry of Interior / Slovak Republic**

[www.minv.sk/?ministry-of-interior](http://www.minv.sk/?ministry-of-interior)

**Academy of the Ministry of Interior / Bulgaria**

[www.mvr.bg/academy/en/homepage](http://www.mvr.bg/academy/en/homepage)

**Departament d'Interior – Generalitat de Catalunya / Spain**

[web.gencat.cat/en/inici](http://web.gencat.cat/en/inici)

**Hellenic Police / Greece**

[www.astynomia.gr](http://www.astynomia.gr)

**KEMEA - KENTRO MELETON ASFALEIAS - Center for Security Studies / Greece**

[kemea.gr/en](http://kemea.gr/en)

**KWP - Komenda Wojewodzka Policji W Krakowie / Poland**

[malopolska.policja.gov.pl](http://malopolska.policja.gov.pl)

**CESIE ETS / Italy**

[www.cesie.org](http://www.cesie.org)



**mossos d'esquadra**



**Generalitat  
de Catalunya**



**ASIT: Digital tools and capacity building to challenges new forms of human trafficking**

Internal Security Fund - ISF-2022-TF1-AG-THB (Call for proposals on actions against trafficking in human beings)

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