



## Tool 6.3 Guidelines on victim identification

### Overview

*This tool provides guidelines on identification of trafficked persons, as contained in the Recommended Principles of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.*

Correctly identifying victims of trafficking in persons is essential for their protection and the protection of their rights. The Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking developed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights contain a guideline on the identification of trafficked persons and traffickers that should be borne in mind while developing a national strategy.

## Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking (E/2002/68/Add.1)

### (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights)

#### **Recommended guidelines**

##### *Guideline 2*

##### *Identification of trafficked persons and traffickers*

Trafficking means much more than the organized movement of persons for profit. The critical additional factor that distinguishes trafficking from migrant smuggling is the presence of force, coercion and/or deception throughout or at some stage in the process—such deception, force or coercion being used for the purpose of exploitation. While the additional elements that distinguish trafficking from migrant smuggling may sometimes be obvious, in many cases they are difficult to prove without active investigation. A failure to identify a trafficked person correctly is likely to result in a further denial of that person's rights. States are therefore under an obligation to ensure that such identification can and does take place.

States are also obliged to exercise due diligence in identifying traffickers, including those who are involved in controlling and exploiting trafficked persons.

States and, where applicable, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, should consider:

1. Developing guidelines and procedures for relevant State authorities and officials such as police, border guards, immigration officials and others involved in the detection, detention, reception and processing of irregular migrants, to permit the rapid and accurate identification of trafficked persons.
2. Providing appropriate training to relevant State authorities and officials in the identification of trafficked persons and correct application of the guidelines and procedures referred to above.

3. Ensuring cooperation between relevant authorities, officials and non-governmental organizations to facilitate the identification and provision of assistance to trafficked persons. The organization and implementation of such cooperation should be formalized in order to maximize its effectiveness.
4. Identifying appropriate points of intervention to ensure that migrants and potential migrants are warned about possible dangers and consequences of trafficking and receive information that enables them to seek assistance if required.
5. Ensuring that trafficked persons are not prosecuted for violations of immigration laws or for the activities they are involved in as a direct consequence of their situation as trafficked persons.
6. Ensuring that trafficked persons are not, in any circumstances, held in immigration detention or other forms of custody.
7. Ensuring that procedures and processes are in place for receipt and consideration of asylum claims from both trafficked persons and smuggled asylum seekers and that the principle of non-refoulement is respected and upheld at all times.



The Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking are available at:  
[www.unhcr.bg/other/r\\_p\\_g\\_hr\\_ht\\_en.pdf](http://www.unhcr.bg/other/r_p_g_hr_ht_en.pdf)