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USER-GENERATED CONTENT & TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

SYMPOSIUM

Senatssaal, University of Vienna

31 | OCTOBER | 2023

Registration link:
https://forms.gle/Xro1p2EkyuKAV7PS6

09:00-09:30 REGISTRATION

09:30-09:45 WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Michael Lysander Fremuth, University of Vienna; Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Fundamental and Human Rights, Vienna

Dominik Marxer, Embassy / Permanent Mission of Liechtenstein to the OSCE and to the UN in Vienna

Helmut Sax and **Konstantina Stavrou**, Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Fundamental and Human Rights

09:45-11:00 SESSION I

THE NEXUS BETWEEN USER-GENERATED CONTENT AND TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Promising, Effective Ways to Address Technology-facilitated Human Trafficking
Tatiana Kotlyarenko, ODIHR/OSCE

ICT-facilitated Human Trafficking – Concerns and Engagement of GRETA **(online)**
Antoaneta Vassileva, Council of Europe/Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)

*The Misuse of Online Platforms for Trafficking in Human Beings
– Manifestations and Responses* **(online)**
Radu Cucos, OSCE

Open Source Internet Investigation for ALL **(online)**
Martin Reeve and **Jon Blake**, UNODC, Global Action Against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (GLO.ACT)

Revisiting the Trafficking-Technology Nexus – Calling Quits or a New Agenda?
Sanja Milivojevic, Bristol Digital Futures Institute / School for Policy Studies, Bristol University

11:00-11:30 COFFEE BREAK

11:30-12:45   **SESSION II**

CASE STUDY: USER-GENERATED CONTENT AND TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN

*Child Victims of (Online) Sexual Violence and Exploitation
– Research by the National Rapporteur*
Madeleine van der Bruggen, Office of the Dutch National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children

Child Online Exploitation and Human Trafficking – An Insight into Digital Forensics
Dorothea Czarnecki, FORENSIK.IT

The EU CSAM Regulation and Its Potential to Prevent Child Trafficking
Astrid Winkler, Consultant/ECPAT Austria

Child Trafficking – A Failed Concept? Implications for Identification and Victim Protection
Helmut Sax, Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Fundamental and Human Rights

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12:45-13:45   **LUNCH**

13:45-15:15   **SESSION III**

USER-GENERATED CONTENT IN CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS

Digital Open Source Investigations into Human Rights Violations
Alexa Koenig, Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley School of Law

User-Generated Content in Criminal Investigations – European Perspective and Austrian Case Study
Kerstin Kreuzer and **Christian Jechoutek**, Austrian Ministry of the Interior/Austrian Europol EMPACT Coordinator

Legal Aspects of the Use of User-Generated Evidence in Criminal Proceedings **(online)**
Yvonne McDermott Rees, Swansea University

Reflections from an Austrian Court Case on How Technology Could Contribute to the Protection of Victims and Access to their Rights
Psychosocial Counsellor, LEFÖ – Intervention Center for Trafficked Women and Girls (LEFÖ-IBF, Austria)

15:15-15:30   **OUTLOOK and CLOSING**

Konstantina Stavrou, University of Vienna; Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Fundamental and Human Rights

Technological transformation and the proliferation of smartphones, cameras, the Internet and social media have enabled users to easily create and share their content online. Worldwide smartphone subscriptions are more than 6.5 billion,[1] while Internet users amount to 63.1 percent of the global population[2] and social media users to 59 percent of the world's population.[3] The increased accessibility of digital technologies has positively impacted individuals' lives and changed the avenues of communication but has also resulted in its misuse which in turn facilitates the commission of crimes.

Discussions on the nexus between technology and crime have been increasing – both at the academic and the practitioners' level – addressing both the benefits and the disadvantages of the reliance on digital technologies. Trafficking in human beings constitutes one of the crime areas in which the negative effects of digital technologies, and in particular social media and networking platforms, can be identified. For instance, such technologies have changed the *modus operandi* of criminal networks and the ways they identify, approach, and control their victims. At the same time, user-generated content,[4] as a result of such activities, can be used for preventive and accountability purposes, including in criminal investigations, and compensation proceedings.

The examination of the impact of digital technologies, including social media, on prevention, victimisation, detection, and accountability is still at an early stage. Understanding the potential role of technology as one of the facilitators as well as the disruptors of trafficking requires coordinated cooperation between academic research and practitioners on the international and national levels.

The aim of the symposium 'User-Generated Content and Trafficking in Human Beings' is to present and discuss current and future research in this field, and engage in a dialogue about the practical implications of these findings. The contributions will address the topic from different angles, such as the types and role of user-generated content in cases of trafficking in human beings, including in light of the ongoing war in Ukraine, the case of user-generated content and child trafficking, detection and identification of victims as well as the potential opportunities and challenges from using user-generated content as evidence in criminal proceedings.

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[1] Statista, 'Number of Smartphone Subscriptions Worldwide from 2016 to 2021, with Forecasts from 2022 to 2027' <www.statista.com/statistics/330695/number-of-smartphone-users-worldwide/> accessed 1 November 2022

[2] Statista, 'Number of Internet and Social Media Users Worldwide as of July 2022' <www.statista.com/statistics/617136/digital-population-worldwide/> accessed 1 November 2022

[3] ibid.

[4] User-generated content is defined as '*information generated by ordinary users through their personal digital devices, which is available on the Internet, including on social media. This information may be either open or closed source*'.

Recommended literature

Europol, 'The Challenges of Countering Human Trafficking in the Digital Era' (6 December 2021) <www.europol.europa.eu/publications-events/publications/challenges-of-countering-human-trafficking-in-digital-era> accessed 3 March 2023

Europol and European Migrant Smuggling Centre, '6th Annual Report' (2022) <www.europol.europa.eu/publications-events/publications/european-migrant-smuggling-centre-6th-annual-report-%E2%80%93-2022> accessed 3 March 2023

GRETA, 'Online and Technology-facilitated Trafficking in Human Beings' (Council of Europe, 2022) <https://rm.coe.int/online-and-technology-facilitated-trafficking-in-human-beings-summary-/1680a5e10c> accessed 3 March 2023

Milivojevic S, 'Freeing the Modern Slaves, One Click at a Time: Theorising Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery, and Technology' (2020) 14 Anti-Trafficking Review 16

Murray D, McDermott Rees Y, and Koenig A, 'Mapping the Use of Open Source Research in UN Human Rights Investigations' (2022) 14(2) Journal of Human Rights Practice 554

OSCE and Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime, 'Leveraging Innovation to Fight Trafficking in Human Beings: A Comprehensive Analysis of Technology Tools' (24 June 2020) <www.osce.org/secretariat/455458> accessed 3 March 2023

OSCE, 'Policy Responses to Technology-facilitated Trafficking in Human Beings: Analysis of Current Approaches and Considerations for Moving Forward' (17 March 2022) <www.osce.org/cthb/514141> accessed 3 March 2023

OSCE, 'Recommendations on Enhancing Efforts to Identify and Mitigate Risks of Trafficking in Human Beings Online as a Result of the Humanitarian Crisis in Ukraine' (22 April 2022) <www.osce.org/cthb/516423> accessed 3 March 2023

ICAT, 'Human Trafficking and Technology: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities' (2019) Issue 07/2019

UN OHCHR and Human Rights Centre at UC Berkeley School of Law, Berkeley Protocol on Digital Open Source Investigations: A Practical Guide on the Effective Use of Digital Open Source Information in Investigating Violations of International Criminal, Human Rights and Humanitarian Law <www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/OHCHR_BerkeleyProtocol.pdf> accessed 3 March 2023

UNODC – Working Group on Trafficking in Persons, 'Successful Strategies for Addressing the Use of Technology to Facilitate Trafficking in Persons and to Prevent and Investigate Trafficking in Persons' (23 July 2021) CTOC/COP/WG.4/2021/2

UNODC, 'Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2022' <www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2022/GLOTiP_2022_web.pdf> accessed 3 March 2023