


LITHUANIAN PRESIDENCY 2020-2021

# SAFE & SECURE REGION



 Dzūkija, Lithuania

# TASK FORCE AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

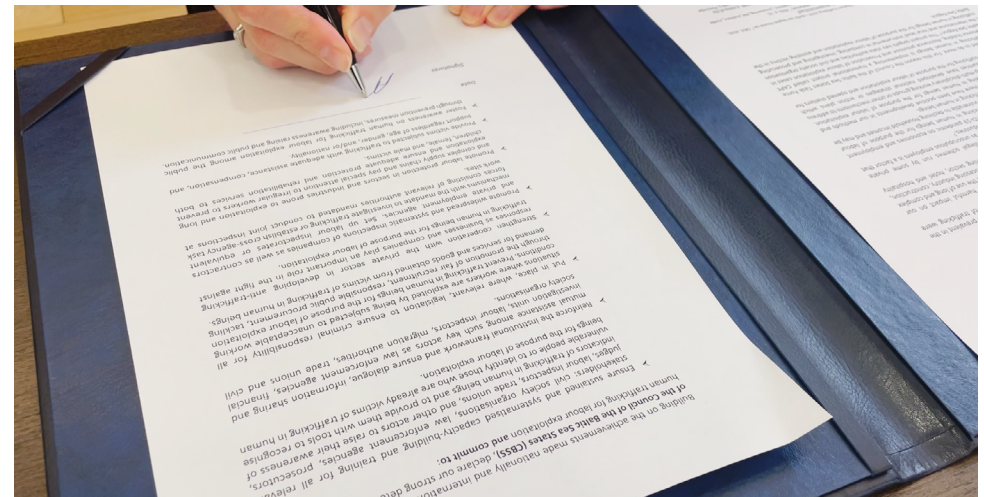
## Joint Statement to Combat Trafficking for Labour Exploitation

CBSS Member States reaffirmed their commitment to combat and prevent trafficking in human beings for labour exploitation by adopting a Joint Statement of Commitment. The Statement was launched at the CAPE project conference on the same topic.

The Baltic Sea Region, together as a team, is committed to build our economies and lives free from exploitation and based on fundamental values such as freedom, equality and dignity.

The Joint Statement incorporates main findings from research work, it is based on consultations with all relevant state authorities and civil society organisations in our Member States and it confirms that the priorities listed in the Joint Statement are in line with the national goals and actions plans to prevent and fight trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation.

We hope that the Joint Statement of Commitment will be a road map and enable our Member States to support each other, to learn from and encourage each other even more.



# Expert Group Meeting

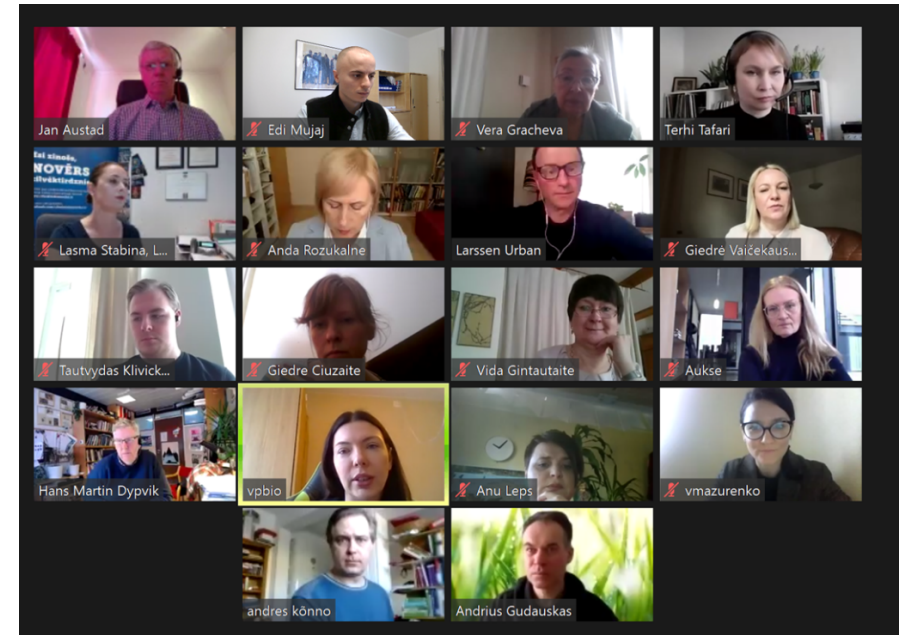
On 9 November 2020, the CBSS Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings (TF-THB) gathered for the first meeting of the Lithuanian CBSS Presidency. The meeting was opened by **Česlovas Mulma**, the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Interior of Lithuania, **Kornelija Jurgaitienė**, Ambassador-at-Large and chair of the Lithuanian Presidency of the CBSS and **Grzegorz Poznański**, Director General of the CBSS Secretariat.

Ms Jurgaitienė presented the goals of the Lithuanian CBSS Presidency and the main task to seek ways of turning regional challenges into opportunities. One of the priorities of the Lithuanian Presidency was finding ways to protect those most vulnerable in our societies, such as those at risk of human trafficking for labour exploitation and children at risk of violence.

## New Project: THALIA

In October 2020 new project *Towards thoughtful, informed, and compassionate journalism in covering human trafficking* (THALIA) was introduced. THALIA was created to establish a long-term cooperation with human trafficking stakeholders and universities in order to raise the competence of future journalists in the Baltic Sea Region on the topic of human trafficking. Participating countries include Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Norway, Russia, Sweden and Ukraine. THALIA is funded by the Swedish Institute (SI) and the CBSS Project Support Facility.

The first project meeting took place in March, when the TF-THB, in collaboration with the Södertörn University, gathered partners and teachers of journalism from universities in Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Russia, Sweden and Ukraine involved in the THALIA project. During the meeting, the universities stated the relevance of the project goals to focus on the role of mass media and journalism in framing Human Trafficking and underlined the need to apply journalistic theories on the topic and raise awareness on this form of organised crime among future journalists.

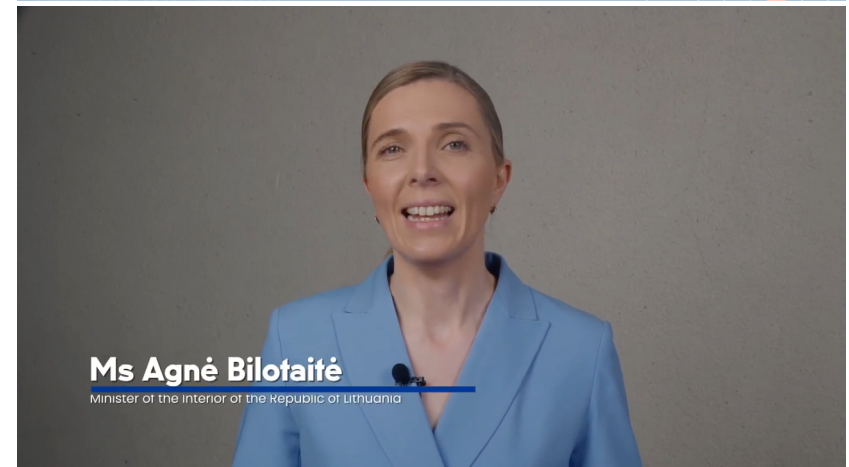


# CAPE Project

Apart from the final conference, a panel discussion and a webinar were also organised within the framework of “Competence building, Assistance provision and Prosecution of labour exploitation cases in the Baltic Sea Region” (CAPE) project. The aim of CAPE is to support relevant national and local authorities in the Baltic Sea Region in combating and prosecuting cases of forced labour and labour exploitation as well as assisting victims of this form of human trafficking.

The Panel Discussion *Hidden Truths: Recruitment Practices and Human Trafficking* was attended by approximately 50 professionals from the CBSS Member states, such as Police, Social services, NGOs and Migration agencies and four studies from Germany, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland were presented. These four studies focused on recruitment practices of labour migrants in countries of origin and examined different forms that human trafficking for labour exploitation takes in destination countries.

The webinar (in Swedish) was organized in October, where Associate Professor at Örebro Universitet, **Märta Johansson**, presented the findings of the report “Human Trafficking for forced labour and labour exploitation in the Swedish labour market: An overview of Swedish court cases”. The report provides an overview of existing court cases and how international law and Swedish law are interpreted in courts. The webinar was held in Swedish and was attended by approximately 30 Swedish stakeholders, such as the Migration Agency, Prosecution Authority, Police and Social services.



# CHILDREN AT RISK

## Conference “Trafficking in the Digital Era”

The purpose of the conference was to shed light on how technology facilitates trafficking in children, who the victims are, and what the impact is on children who are trafficked, and to learn more about identification, investigation, safe paths to recovery and justice for children.

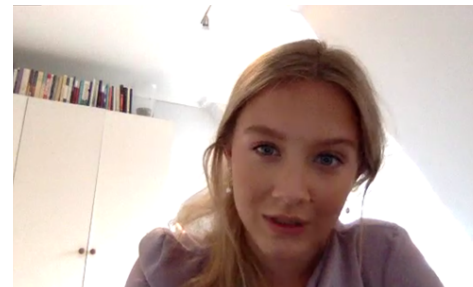
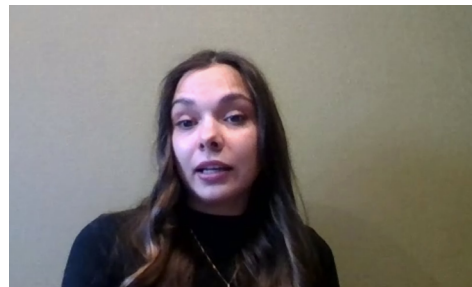
Speakers included Agnė Bilotaitė, Lithuanian Minister of Interior; Ylva Johansson, European Commissioner for Home Affairs; Petya Nestorova, Executive Secretary of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, Cathal Delaney, Head of Team Analysis Project Twins at Europol and a series of experienced researchers and practitioners.

In an ongoing CBSS effort to involve young people in all aspect of decision-making and problem-solving in the Baltic Sea Region, a youth panel shared their perspectives throughout the conference as well.



**“In the context of the recent pandemic, the digital space has become one of the main means of communication for children. <...> Human trafficking has once again revealed its unpredictable nature. It is our common responsibility to act appropriately and protect the minors”**

*Agnė Bilotaitė,  
Minister of Interior of Lithuania*



# Conference on Children's Emotional Health

The conference was opened by the Minister of Social Security and Labour Linas Kukuraitis and included speakers from the Lithuanian Pupil's Union, the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania.

The conference also marked the start of the first two-day meeting of the CBSS Expert Group on Children at Risk under the Lithuanian Presidency. The Expert Group shared updates and national data, lessons learnt, good practices on protecting children's emotional wellbeing and building resilient national child protection services, especially in times of crisis.



## New Projects

In November 2019, the Thematic Working groups of the project met at the CBSS Secretariat in Stockholm to launch the project's implementation phase. The event marked the beginning of the work for the two thematic working groups "Age Management and Working Conditions" and "Future Job Opportunities for an Ageing Work Force, including Entrepreneurship". The groups will identify good practices and assess ongoing initiatives to come up with actionable policy recommendations to better address the demographic challenges of ageing populations and lower fertility rates and their effects on the labour markets in the Baltic Sea Region. The groups will further focus on finding measures to strengthen synergies between education and employment for people aged 55+ in order to meet the skills requirements of the future labour market in the region.

**Children emotional health:**  
what achievements the countries  
can be proud of and what challenges  
remain unresolved

**Vaikų emocinė gerovė:**  
kokiais pasiekimais šalys gali didžiuotis  
ir kokie iššūkiai lieka neišspręsti

**November 5th, 2020**, starts at 10.00 GMT +2  
**2020 m. lapkričio 5 d.**, pradžia 10 val.

Lithuanian Republic  
socialinė apsauga  
ir darbo ministerija

BALTIC SEA REGION

Children  
at Risk

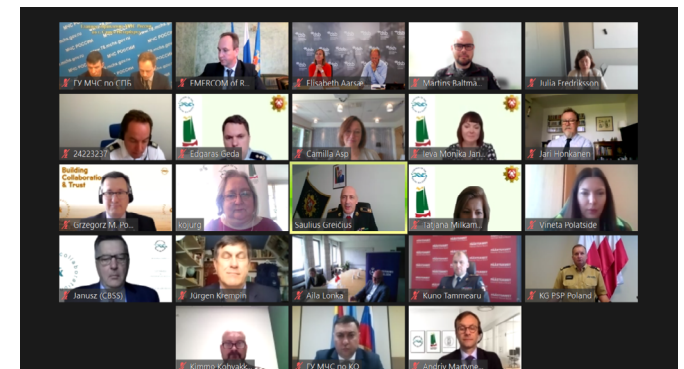
# CIVIL SECURITY

## Civil Protection Network Meets Online to Discuss COVID-19 Challenges

On 17 March 2021, the CBSS Civil Protection Network (CPN) Senior Experts Meeting was organised and led by the Lithuanian Presidency and the chair of the Civil Protection Network. The theme of the meeting was 'Covid-19 outbreak: challenges for civil protection and lessons learned'. Welcoming words were presented by the Director of the Lithuanian Fire and Rescue Service, Mr. **Saulius Greičius** and opening address was given by The Director General of the CBSS Secretariat, Ambassador **Grzegorz Poznański**. Many of the participants agreed that the pandemic has highlighted the need for increased cooperation – both between different national agencies and between the public and private sector – as well as between neighbouring countries.

# 19th Meeting of the Directors General for Civil Protection in the BSR

On 2 June 2021, the Lithuanian chairmanship of the CBSS Civil Protection Network (CPN) hosted the 19th Meeting of the Directors General for Civil Protection in the Baltic Sea Region. This online gathering concluded the yearlong Lithuanian chairmanship, which was dedicated to preparedness and prevention actions against nuclear risk as well as the lessons learned from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Welcoming words were delivered by the Director of the Lithuanian Fire and Rescue Service, Mr. **Saulius Greičius**, who highlighted the continuous need for cooperation across the region. Ambassador **Grzegorz Poznański**, Director General of the CBSS, gave an opening address in which he also stressed the importance of cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region.





## Lithuanian Chairmanship Seminar on Nuclear Risk

The seminar *Baltic Sea Region: Acting Together Against Nuclear Risk* focused on Information Management (presented by **Edgaras Geda**, Chief of the Civil Protection Board, Fire and Rescue Department under the Lithuanian Ministry of Interior), Decision making and protective measures (by **Ernestas Trunovas**, Chief of the Population Protection Division, Fire and Rescue Department under the Lithuanian Ministry of Interior), and Recommendations to the public (Ieva Gatelytė, Chief Specialist of the Population Protection Division, Fire and Rescue Department under the Lithuanian Ministry of Interior).

Overall conclusions for the Baltic Sea Region included working on practical arrangements, having a common approach to information sharing and coordination, better communication to the public in the CBSS area and re-establishing CBSS Expert Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety.

## New Project on Protecting Society from Hazardous Substances

CBSS Secretariat joined a new project **NET-CBRN-REAC**, funded by the **European Union Civil Protection**. Led by the International Centre for Chemical Safety and Security (Poland), the project aims to bring together experts from **Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, Germany, Lithuania, Moldova and Latvia** to develop a Knowledge Network: an inclusive platform for shared expertise, good practices and contacts in order to establish common understanding and shared culture of prevention, preparedness and response in civil protection and CBRN disaster risk management.





# CASCADE Final Conference

Final conference on CASCADE project, conducted between 2019 and 2021, was held on 8 June 2021. CBSS Secretariat was a partner in the project, responsible for organising a region-wide policy dialogue on the UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction – the global plan to prevent new risks and reduce existing risks of hazards such as droughts, wildfires and floods. The Climate Risk Preparedness Toolbox launched during the final conference summarises the results of the project and consists of simple, easy-to-use checklists, templates, and useful examples for climate-related risk assessment.



**“I cannot emphasise enough the importance of the work the CBSS does in the Baltic Sea Region regionalising the Sendai Framework... We would like to encourage the CBSS to continue regional cooperation around local resilience!”**

*Andrew Bower,  
UN DRR Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia,  
Keynote Speech at the CASCADE final conference*