

# **Male victims of human trafficking in Austria**



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# Introduction

Austria is a destination and transit country for human trafficking, a crime that is primarily resulting in working conditions close to slavery. This includes begging, organized thievery, and prostitution, as well as exploitation in the agricultural or construction industries. Human trafficking not only affects women, children and young people, but also men.

In point III.7 the Third National Action Plan On Combating Human Trafficking provides for the „research and analysis of national and international players’ experiences regarding services and facilities/institutions for male victims of human trafficking“. Already in 2011 and in collaboration with LEFÖ-IBF, the Men’s Health Centre MEN (Männergesundheitszentrum), which was commissioned with this research project, created a concept for the development of a supportive programme focusing on male victims of human trafficking. This is in accordance with EU anti-trafficking strategies that provide for the establishment of effective victim protection facilities.

As a basis for our research we drew on data on male victims of human trafficking already gathered in other European countries. Additionally, data from international organizations and results of interviews with members of victim protection facilities and the UNODC (United Nations Office On Drugs And Crime) Department for Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling have been included.

Aside from that, media analysis and interviews with experts and practitioners have been undertaken to further outline the issue of male victims of human trafficking and labour exploitation – a topic that hasn’t really been brought into the spotlight so far.

This report aims to assist the Austrian Task Force on Combating Human Trafficking in planning further steps since improvement both in identification as well as protection of male trafficking victims is strongly required.

# Media Analysis

The following section summarizes the results and experiences regarding male victims of human trafficking in a European and Austrian context.

In a study on (less)documented migrant labour in Europe, Bettina Haidinger and Manfred Krenn point out that it is very difficult to draw a line between debt forced labour and labour obtained by other forms of coercion.<sup>1</sup> Yet, the present analysis mainly consists of documents concerning the issue of human trafficking<sup>2</sup>.

In their survey from the year 2011, Julia Planitzer and Helmut Sax from the Vienna-based Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human Rights deal with the subject of human trafficking for labour exploitation in Austria. Based on interviews with experts and the interpretation of already existing data Planitzer and Sax come to the following conclusion: „Mirroring the classical gender segregation of the labour market, men are largely assumed to be affected within the construction sector, whilst more women than men are exploited in the catering sector. At the same time, it has also been observed that more men are exploited in the catering sector, for example in respect of those men who must pay off their smuggling. With regard to cases on exploitation in households, women are mostly affected.”<sup>3</sup>

Planitzer and Sax further maintain that victims of human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation are usually not deceived regarding the form of promised work. However, they are left with false or no information about labour law and conditions in Austria and about the insensibility of their subsequent exploitation. In many cases victims are forced to exceed their working hours. They often earn less than promised since their income is used to pay overcharged services. Strong dependency, isolation and permanent control of the victims are used as a means of exerting pressure.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Manfred Krenn, Bettina Haidinger: Un(der)documented migrant labour – characteristics, conditions on labour market impacts. Thematic report prepared under the theme „Migration flows and labour market impacts“. Wien Forba Research Report 2/2009. Available: <http://www.forba.at> (2012, October 14)

<sup>2</sup> The present study focuses on how men are affected by trafficking. Thus, documents by the IOM were not included. We did, however, use data on Eastern European countries provided by the IOM. The Vienna based VIDC is researching on human trafficking in connection with cyber crimes. The ECPAT is an international network, fighting against trafficking in children. Due to their thematic priorities both organisations have not yet released any publications on the subject of trafficking in males.

<sup>3</sup> Julia Planitzer, Helmut Sax (2011): Combating THB for Labour Exploitation in Austria, in: Rijken C. (Ed.) Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for Labour Exploitation, Tilburg, p. 16

<sup>4</sup> Ibid p. 16ff

## Existing Figures on Male Victims

Data does hardly provide information about the extent of human trafficking and labour exploitation in Austria. Criminal and criminal court statistics show that the number of charges resulting from Criminal Code s. 217 (transnational prostitution trade) and Criminal Code s. 104a (sexual exploitation, the removal of organs and labour exploitation) is very small. However, the number of convictions is even smaller. Up till now, there has only been a single conviction according to Criminal Code s. 104a, concerning a Vorarlberg based restaurant owner who was convicted for exploiting men (and women).

The highest figures of alleged victims of human trafficking have been reported by various members of political parties. In Vienna alone, estimates point to at least 7000 victims, mainly in the sex industry, but also in other economic branches.<sup>5</sup> Yet, experts of the IOM and other organisations and research institutes have raised objections against these non-verified numbers.

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<sup>5</sup> For instance, MP Maier believes there are about 7000 victims of human trafficking.  
<http://oe2020.at/home/meinungsforum/161/Johann-Maier--Menschenhandel-Sklaverei-in-Europa>, abgerufen am (2013, January 14)

## Police Criminal Statistics

Figures regarding crimes and misdemeanors according to CC s. 104a (sexual exploitation, the removal of organs and labour exploitation) are collected in the police criminal statistics. Numbers show that there were only three male victims of *crimes* between 2004 and 2011: two in 2011 and one in 2004. As opposed to this, the number of male victims of *misdemeanors* over the same period was significantly higher: out of 73 cases reported between 2004 and 2011 29 were men.

Human Trafficking CC s.104a - MISDEMEANORS					
	Reported cases	Total no. of suspects Investigated	Male suspects investigated	Total no. of victims	Male Victims
2004	13	14	11	6	0
2005	5	8	8	8	0
2006	4	6	4	7	2
2007	8	8	7	7	1
2008	4	4	3	4	2
2009	16	15	11	15	11
2010	16	16	11	13	2
2011	14	15	10	16	4
2012	20	22	15	20	9
total	80	86	65	73	29

(Source: Police Criminal Statistics, Austrian Federal Ministry for the Interior)

Statistics on reported cases of transnational prostitution display a much higher number of female victims as well as 15 cases of male victims according to CC s.217.<sup>6</sup>

Transnational Prostitution CC s.217					
	Reported Cases	Total no. of suspects investigated	Male suspects investigated	Total no. of victims	Male Victims
2004	165	242	226	248	5
2005	76	93	71	63	1
2006	86	128	97	80	2
2007	70	207	176	166	2
2008	46	74	55	32	1
2009	43	99	68	87	0
2010	47	48	35	48	2
2011	52	47	39	47	1
2012	48	85	64	75	2
total	585	938	767	772	15

(Source: Police Criminal Statistics, Austrian Federal Ministry for the Interior)

<sup>6</sup> According to officials of Operational Unit 10 (EB 10) there has been an increase of transsexual or intersexual sex workers in recent years. With regard to the statistics mentioned above, it remains unclear whether they have been assigned to male or female gender.



## **Experiences and Study by LEFÖ-IBF**

In recent years, a number of affected men has turned to the intervention center for trafficked women for help. Subsequently, two cases were referred to the Männergesundheitszentrum in Vienna for psychological counseling.

A study<sup>7</sup> by Julia Planitzer, Evelyn Probst, et al. focuses on 76 Austrian court cases on the topic of human trafficking (CC s.104a, CC s.217), including among others a systematic analysis of case files. Results show that there were only six male victims in the sample, four from the EU, two from third countries. One half had been trafficked for purposes of sexual exploitation, the other half for labour exploitation. None of them had received victim assistance services. This was of particular importance since the study revealed that the outcome of court proceedings was depending on whether victims were able to receive assistance services.

## **The Problem of Identification**

In its report from the year 2012 the Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings of the Human Rights Advisory Board (Menschenrechtsbeirat) concludes that human trafficking is an offence of low reportability, thus victims are usually identified only as a result of inspections. Hence, the focus must be placed on the responsibilities and monitoring functions of the police. Yet, several other supervisory bodies and their employees (e.g. financial police, health and security executives, the Department of Control on Contributions from the Regional Health Insurance Fund, etc.) are often the first ones who have contact with victims of human trafficking. Therefore, these institutions have to be called upon to take up their responsibility for the successful identification of victims.

Julia Planitzer and Helmut Sax note that the identification of victims outside the sex industry, especially children and men, still poses a major problem for members of law enforcement: „Although numerous trainings are conducted for law enforcement, it is assumed that a large number of victims remain unidentified. The reasons why many remain unidentified are manifold.

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<sup>7</sup> Julia Planitzer, Evelyn Probst, Barbara Steiner, Barbara Unterlerchner: COMP.ACT AUSTRIA. Possibilities to Obtain Compensation for Trafficked Persons in Austria. <http://www.lefoe.at> (2012, October 7)

The above described situation of identification and usual way of referral is limited to the identification of women who are in most cases sexually exploited and – in fewer cases – of children. Other forms of THB or cases involving male victims of THB involve bigger obstacles in respect of THB

identification.<sup>8</sup> According to Planitzer and Sax this is due to a lack of skilled victim protection facilities and difficulties concerning the cooperation between police and male victims. Thus, the authors suggest that the system of identification should not be entirely based on identification by police, but new modalities of identification need to be found.<sup>9</sup> The fact that female victims are often referred to LEFÖ-IBF by other NGOs, hospitals or may even turn to LEFÖ-IBF by themselves, underlines the need for a similar support structure especially for male victims.

The "Guidelines for the Collection of Data on Trafficking in Human Beings" issued by the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior and IOM Vienna includes measures to close the gap between estimates made by ILO and the actual number of identified victims. The report emphasizes the role of NGOs as important actors with regard to the identification of victims and the strengthening of human rights and victim protection.<sup>10</sup>

## Victim Protection

As defined in the additional UN-protocol to the „UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime“, ratified by Austria in 2005, victim protection not only consists of taking measures to provide protection. Governments are also requested to institute appropriate medical assistance and accommodation, competent and comprehensive counseling, as well as possibilities of education and employment. In appropriate cases, this shall be guaranteed in cooperation with non governmental institutions.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Julia Planitzer, Helmut Sax (2011): Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for Labour Exploitation in Austria. In: Conny Rijken (Ed.): Combating Trafficking Human Beings for Labour Exploitation, Tilburg, p. 45

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. P. 47

<sup>10</sup> See IOM Vienna (2009): Die Richtlinien zur Datensammlung im Bereich Menschenhandel, inklusive komparativer Indikatoren. <http://www.iomvienna.at> (2012, October 23)

<sup>11</sup> See Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. <http://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/MTDSG/Volume%20II/Chapter%20XVIII/XVIII-12-a.en.pdf>, p. 3f (2012, September 9)

Even more, the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings which came into action in 2008 underlines the obligation of member states to protect the human rights of victims of trafficking.<sup>12</sup>

In order to improve victim protection in the member states, the EU adopted the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings (2012-2016) to support and complement the implementation of EU legislation on trafficking from 2011.<sup>13</sup> The Third National Action Plan On Combating Human Trafficking also addresses the need for increased measures for victim protection in Austria<sup>14</sup>, and thus was appreciated by the political and professional public likewise.

Nonetheless, various members of research institutes, political parties, charitable organizations and victim protection facilities call for a stronger protection of victims of human trafficking, particularly with respect to those groups that have not been reached so far.

Arguments for a stronger victim protection are widely divergent. From a crime combating perspective, the strengthening of victims' rights is perceived as a precondition for a better cooperation with victims who act as witnesses. As opposed to this, a human rights perspective demands an access of trafficked women, men and children to human rights regardless of their willingness to give testimony. Manfred Nowak from the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human Rights points out that restrictive residence regulations pose a major obstacle to the implementation of human rights for victims of trafficking. In the context of a meeting held by the Task Force on Combating Human Trafficking on October 5, 2012 and in line with the views of many experts, Nowak called for the granting of a residency permit for victims of human trafficking. Furthermore, Nowak suggested an out of court recognition process be set up.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> See Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

<http://www.conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Treaties/Html/197.htm> (2012, December 12)

<sup>13</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-12-619\\_de.htm?locale=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-619_de.htm?locale=en) (2012, December 6)

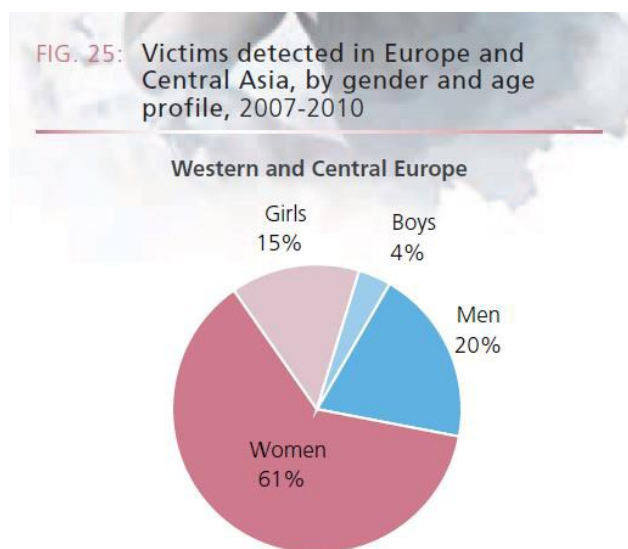
<sup>14</sup> [http://www.bmei.gv.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/bmeia/media/2-Aussenpolitik\\_Zentrale/...Menschenrechte/3.\\_Nationaler\\_Aktionsplan\\_2012-2014\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.bmei.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/bmeia/media/2-Aussenpolitik_Zentrale/...Menschenrechte/3._Nationaler_Aktionsplan_2012-2014_FINAL.pdf) (2012, December 6)

<sup>15</sup> See <http://bim.lbg.ac.at> (2013, January 9)

In its 2012 report<sup>16</sup> the Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings of the Human Rights Advisory Board recommends that victim protection be strengthened in several aspects. The report claims that victims' rights need to be respected irrespective of their role as witnesses, and criticises the lack of support structures, particularly for men and children.

## International Data and Experiences regarding Trafficking and Exploitation of Men

In 2005 and as part of a project involving four countries, international victim protection organization La Strada organised a survey on human trafficking for the purpose of exploitation in the Czech Republic. The study came to the conclusion that exploitation of men was typically found in the construction and agricultural industries and in the service sector (cleaning, restaurants).



Quelle: UNODC (2012) Global Report on Trafficking in Persons

Only a few years later, the „Tree Workers Case“ was revealed, shedding light on the extent to which even men can fall victim to human trafficking. According to estimates by La Strada, approximately 2,000 workers – men and women – had been exploited in a Czech State Forreests between 2009 and 2010, after being recruited by dubious employment agencies. Yet, despite the dimensions of this crime and a broad record of exploitative procedures and practices there has been no prosecution.

<sup>16</sup> Human Rights Advisory Board at the Austrian Federal Ministry for the Interior: Victim Identification and Protection. <http://www.menschenrechtsbeirat.at> (2012, August 23)

A similar case became public in Sweden in January 2005. Swedish forestry enterprises had used employment agencies to hire migrants from Cameroon. Their wage was far below average and they had to work twice as much per day as experienced forestry workers.

Based on data on 22,000 victims<sup>17</sup> from 32 countries the UNODC assumes that 20 percent of the victims in the entire region of Western and Middle Europe are male. An equal distribution of this number among all countries would result in 138 male victims of human trafficking in Austria (not counting youth).<sup>18</sup>

The report further indicates that 38,2 percent of the victims exploited in Central and Western Europe originated from an adjacent country, while 25,6 percent were exploited within their own home country.<sup>19</sup>

Already in the mid 90ies, IOM Kiev reported on a distinct increase of identified male victims in trafficking. From 2004 to 2006 the number of cases rose from 28 to 159 in Belarus, and 68 to 160 in Ukraine.<sup>20</sup>

TABLE 3: ASSISTED MALE BELARUSIAN & UKRAINIAN VICTIMS BY YEAR, 2004-2006

	2004	2005	2006	Total
Number of male Belarusian victims	28	157	159	344
Number of male Ukrainian victims	68	113	160	341

This trend continued until 2012, when IOM Kiev for the first time recorded more men than women (56 percent versus 44 percent) that turned to IOM or other facilities. A small part of the persons affected, most of them Moldavian citizens, were exploited in Ukraine. The majority of trafficking victims were trafficked to Russia, while Poland was the most significant EU-country in terms of numbers. Unlike previous years, no victims from Ukraine were recorded in Austria.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2012): Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2012. [http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/Trafficking\\_in\\_Persons\\_2012\\_web.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/Trafficking_in_Persons_2012_web.pdf) (2013, September 16)

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/Country\\_Profiles\\_Europe\\_Central\\_Asia.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/Country_Profiles_Europe_Central_Asia.pdf), p. 53 (2013, September 16)

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. P. 57f

<sup>20</sup> IOM: Trafficking of men. A trend less considered. The case of Belarus and Ukraine. Genf, 2008, p. 19

<sup>21</sup> IOM Ukraine: Combating Trafficking in Human Beings: Ukraine. Statistics last updated on 31 December 2012. <http://iom.org.ua> (2013, February 19)

## Country Case Studies

### Germany

Studies carried out in the years 1999 and 2003 by Norbert Cyrus, ethnologist at the German Institute for Social Research, show that „illegal immigrants who gain access to the labour market suffer from a wide range of problems, including worse positions on the labour market as well as ‚brutal exploitation‘“. A fact that is confirmed by the German Trade Union Confederation and various welfare, immigrant and church organizations. Even more, Norbert Cyrus was able to show that forced labour is not limited to the illegal employment of foreign migrant workers, but also causes „legal migrants (...) to suffer from a high degree of vulnerability and deprivation of their rights (...)“.<sup>22</sup> Breaches of minimum wage and working time regulations as well as other forms of noncompliance with laws and regulations are common forms of exploitation. Among the most frequently mentioned sectors where forced labour is widespread is the sex and entertainment industry. Whereas women mainly suffer from exploitation in the sex industry and household services, male exploitation primarily occurs in the agricultural, food and construction industries. Cases of male victims of human trafficking have also been monitored in the catering and hospitality sector and in transportation of goods and persons.

There is the widely held opinion of a high number of unreported cases of labour exploitation. In 2012 the Berlin Alliance against Trafficking for Labour Exploitation sought to test whether this notion was accurate. Yet, the number of detected cases of trafficking for labour exploitation was too small to provide reliable estimates for the greater Berlin area.<sup>23</sup> In her contribution to a KOK-research project<sup>24</sup> Dita Vogel also comes to the conclusion that the known parameters are not sufficient to give reasonable dark figure estimates. Between 2005 and 2009 200 cases of human trafficking were reported to the police out of which 56 were brought to court. One reason for the difficulty in making estimates lies in the fact that human trafficking is hard to prove in the legal sense, thus in a non-estimable amount of cases prosecutors tend to switch to minor offences.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Norbert Cyrus (2006): Menschenhandel und Arbeitsausbeutung in Deutschland, Genf, p. 21

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.gegen-menschenhandel.de/Downloads/BBGM%20Studie.pdf> (2013, January 20)

<sup>24</sup> Dita Vogel (2011): Schätzung der Häufigkeiten und Vorkommensweise des Menschenhandels zur Arbeitsausbeutung – wie viele Betroffene gibt es in Deutschland? In: Entwicklung tragfähiger Unterstützungsstrukturen für die Betroffenen von Menschenhandel zur Arbeitsausbeutung. Published by KOK e. V. on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs, p. 309-325.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p. 316

Between 2005 and 2010 the 63 member organizations of the KOK – a German nationwide activist coordination group combating trafficking in women and violence against women in the process of migration – occasionally made contact with men who had been victims of trafficking for labour exploitation. Based on the number of trafficked women who are in need of special counseling, Dita Vogel reckons that there are about 240 men and as many women in Germany per year who require greater support.<sup>26</sup>

### ***Ireland***

In 2009 a total of 63 cases of human trafficking were recorded with the Garda Síochána, the responsible police unit in Ireland. In 52 cases the facts were clear and procedures had been prepared or initiated.<sup>27</sup> Apart from various aid organisations for victims of trafficking for prostitution the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland MRCI has become a special contact point for men and women who fell victim to labour exploitation. According to a member of MRCI, within a 7 year period the organisation provided care for 60 men.

### ***Belgium***

Similar to previous years, 72 male and 78 female cases of human trafficking were reported by Belgian support organisation PAYOKE in 2011, with the number of cases of labour exploitation (73) exceeding that of sexual exploitation (57).<sup>28</sup>

### ***England***

In July 2011, The *Salvation Army* was appointed by the British Federal Ministry of Justice to deliver support services to victims of human trafficking. In the first year of the contract 378 victims of human trafficking were reported by the service, 156 of them men (41 percent) who for the most part had been referred by the police.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid. p. 322

<sup>27</sup> Going beyond. Trafficking for Forced Labour in Ireland and the United Kingdom. Published by Migrant Rights Centre Ireland, 2010, p. 9.

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.payoke.be/index%20-%20english\\_htm\\_files/jaarverslag2011.pdf](http://www.payoke.be/index%20-%20english_htm_files/jaarverslag2011.pdf) , p. 8f (2013, January 20)

<sup>29</sup> [http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/uki/Anti\\_Human\\_Trafficking\\_One\\_Year\\_Report](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/uki/Anti_Human_Trafficking_One_Year_Report) (2013, January 8)

## **Poland**

Labour exploitation in Poland has to be examined from two perspectives. On the one side, Polish citizens are subject of exploitation in European or other countries. On the other side, there are non-Polish citizens who were/are being exploited in Poland. Poland has become a destination country for thousands of migrant workers from eastern neighbours and Asia, particularly Vietnam. Only few of them have a regular employment contract. According to Polish crime reports 4,300 migrants were identified as victims of labour exploitation in 2004. In 2009 records showed a total of 1,300 cases.<sup>30</sup>

Recent estimates from Polish NGOs assume that the dark figure is much higher. Data suggests that labour exploitation can be found in all industries.

# Interviews

## The Sample

Based on our prior knowledge the selection of interviewees was done with two perspectives in mind: On the one hand, the sampling aimed to include a substantial number of relevant institutions and stake holders. On the other hand, as being exploratory, interviews were held with members of institutions, public authorities and organizations whose experiences in the field of human trafficking or labour exploitation were not available in the form of publications or public statements. For further details about experiences from LEFÖ-IBF, IOM Vienna and several other institutions that explicitly work on the topic of human trafficking, please refer to chapters „Media Analysis“ and „ Summary and Final Recommendations“.

Furthermore, an important criterion was whether an organisation was dealing with potentially affected males within the context of inspections, counseling services or outreach work.

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<sup>30</sup> Jokinen A., Ollus N., Aromaa K. (eds) Trafficking for forced labour and labour exploitation in Finland, Poland and Estonia, Helsinki 2011, p. 172



Finally, it was possible to conduct interviews with three representatives of support organisations for victims of human trafficking from Moldavia, Ukraine and Ireland. Information and publicity work regarding human trafficking and labour exploitation are key prerequisites for the identification and support of male victims. Consequently, the survey comprised of a group of different experts who are working towards awareness raising among the public and key players.

The following is a list of all interviewees. For evaluation purposes interviews are listed by groups and positions. For more information please refer to chapter „Institutions and their work“ where a description of working methods and cooperations is given according to the structure below.

### ***Group Police***

- Head of the Central Unit for Combating Illegal Migrant Networks at the Austrian Federal Crime Police Office (Bundeskriminalamt/BKA)
- Chief Inspector and Inspector of the Operational Unit 10 (EB 10) at the Regional Office of Criminal Investigation in Vienna (Landeskriminalamt Wien/LKA Wien)
- Inspector of the EB 10 at the Regional Office of Criminal Investigation in Styria (Landeskriminalamt Steiermark/LKA Steiermark)

### ***Group Control Authorities***

- Chief of Financial Police of Korneuburg, Tulln and Hollabrunn
- Labour Inspector for the construction industry in Vienna/Lower Austria

### ***Group Care Facilities for Victims of Human Trafficking***

- Representative of La Strada, Moldavia
- Representative of La Strada, Belarus and Ukraine
- Representative of Migrants Right Centre, Ireland
- Head of Drehscheibe Augarten, Vienna
- Head of EXIT, Organization to Combat Human Trafficking from Africa, Vienna

### ***Group Basic Care***

- Head of Amber-Med, clinic for people without insurance, Vienna
- Head of SAM2, mobile social work for the second district of Vienna
- Head of Gruft2, return counseling service for homeless EU-Citizens in Vienna

### ***Group Advocacy***

- Head of Asylkoordination Austria, Vienna
- Managing Director of ECPAT Austria, international network against child prostitution, child pornography and the trafficking of children for sexual purposes.
- Staff member of Afro-Asian Institute, Salzburg
- Representative of „Fair und Sensibel – Polizei und AfrikanerInnen“, Vienna
- Lawyer and migration expert of the Chamber of Labour, Vienna
- Legal scholar at the Faculty of Law/University of Vienna
- Journalist and author on the subject of women trafficking
- Representatives of the UNODC (United Nations Office On Drugs And Crime) Department for Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling

# Men as Victims of Human Trafficking – Cases, Suspected Cases and Circumstances

## **International Experiences with Affected Men**

As already shown in the „Media Analysis“ chapter, support organisations in other European countries, both countries of origin and destination, already have a wide-ranging experience with male victims. This was also verified by three representatives of victim protection facilities from Moldavia, Belarus and Ireland.

In 2011, 44 men and 37 contacted La Strada Moldova via SOS-telephone and were subsequently identified as victims of human trafficking. A majority of men had experienced labour exploitation in industries other than sex work. They were mainly brought to Russia under false pretenses of work and exploited for labour in the construction industry. The representative of La Strada Ukraine also reported on numerous inquiries of men soon after the institution was established. The number of men who call the hotline and reach for support has been increasing since the mid 2000s. Most of these men are exploited in Russia.

In its seven years of experience, the Irish Migrant Rights Centre has dealt with a total number of 60 cases of male victims from African countries, the Indian subcontinent and China who came to the MRCI for assistance. According to MRCI's representative, they were exploited in a range of industries and economic sectors, including circuses, embassies, hospitality and agricultural industries.

## **Cases and Suspected Cases in Austria**

Several representatives of NGOs and counseling centres have already come into contact with affected men, providing assistance either independently or by contacting the Chamber of Labour or the EB 10. However, representatives of outreach work, various counseling centres or control authorities pointed to a lack of mandate or awareness on part of their co-workers and a low level of knowledge regarding the indicators of identification. Experts say that besides construction cleaning, agricultural, sex and hospitality are common high-risk industries for the trafficking of men. Levels of exploitation vary and a rise of human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation must be assumed.

### **Group Advocacy<sup>31</sup>**

Almost all interviewees from Austrian organizations have had no or little experience with identified male victims of human trafficking. In the course of the interviews it became apparent that women are more likely to ask for assistance than men.

When it comes to the topic of men as victims of human trafficking, the experts from the group Advocacy asserted that they were „well aware of the abuse of men“ (expert from Salzburg). Yet, none of them had any prior experiences with men affected.

Still, some of the experts were able to shine some light on their knowledge of and experiences with suspected cases.

The lawyer from the Chamber of Labour stated that not he but other consultants had come into contact with victims of exploitation repeatedly.

In some of these cases, men had been officially recruited by Italian fake companies and were only paid as little as two or three Euros per hour for work in the construction industries. In another interview, the legal scholar reported on her investigation of files regarding cases of benefit fraud in the construction

industries. Workers were employed by subcontractors for a few weeks with little or sometimes no pay at all. Elsewhere, fake registrations in the name of non-existing persons had been submitted. In addition to benefit fraud, there was an increased risk of continuous exploitation. Workers of EXIT have come into contact with African men, who had been recruited under religious pressure and with promises of a career in football but were shipped to Vienna for drug dealing. Presumably, churches play an ambiguous role in African communities: cases have been reported where religious rituals have been employed to exert pressure on victims of exploitation. Notwithstanding the above, churches in Vienna often offer support and social connection for African victims of exploitation and abuse.

#### **Case study:**

##### **From football talent to drug dealer**

A young Nigerian turned to EXIT, Vienna based Organization to Combat Human Trafficking. He and other young men had been brought to Austria with the promise to get a contract with a European football club. Instead, they were held in a flat in Vienna for three months and were „tought“ how to sell drugs. When he was forced to take up the drug selling he escaped and contacted EXIT and Caritas.

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<sup>31</sup> Group Advocacy comprises of experts whose main contribution to fighting human trafficking lies in research, training and advocacy. For further details see chapter „Institutions and Their Work“

Yet, they sometimes keep victims from turning to counseling centers or authorities. According to the lawyer from the Chamber of Labour, there is a high risk of human trafficking among Chinese men who are recruited to work in restaurants in Vienna. Amber-Med was repeatedly confronted with workers who had changing or no documents at all. Often, seasonal workers who were hired for harvest are at risk of being exploited way beyond the legal framework. In one case, asparagus harvesters from Eastern Europe were working under slavery conditions on a farm in Lower Austria.

All of the cases mentioned above related to work in construction industries, restaurant and hotel businesses, farm work, begging and peddling, the sex industry and drug dealing. The men originated from Middle and Eastern Europe, Nigeria and China.

#### **Case study:**

#### **Forced to sex labour by parents**

A 19 year old who was apprehended by police in Vienna had been forced to sex work by his Slovakian parents. Officials who were dealing with the case supplied private accomodation and provided further assistance. The parents were convicted in accordance with CC s. 217.

#### **Group Police**

According to officials of Operational Unit 10 (EB 10) in Styria and Vienna, suspicions are hardly ever sufficient to initiate investigations into cases of men presumably affected by human trafficking. This may be due to the fact that though there might be suspicions of human trafficking it is very difficult to gather enough evidence to press charges. Thus, experience shows that prosecutors are reluctant to file charges under CC s.104 (sexual exploitation, the removal of organs and labour exploitation) and CC s.217 (transnational prostitution trade) but rather prosecute cases using more provable offenses like illegal labour, illegal restraint or exploitation of a foreigner. In this context, officials of EB 10 pointed to a rising number of transsexual sex workers from Latin America, probably 90 percent of which are affected by human trafficking.<sup>32</sup> Yet, according to their own standards they make good money and thus do not perceive themselves as victims. In fact, there was just a single case of a transsexual sex worker who got in touch with EB 10 because she had been cheated.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> When asked, the officials stated that trans- or intersexual prostitutes primarily identify as women.

<sup>33</sup> She was supported and accompanied to the police by LEFÖ-IBF

The Head of the Central Unit for Combating Illegal Migrant Networks at the Austrian Federal Crime Police Office claimed that up till now there had only been two „100 percent“ cases of male human trafficking for labour exploitation: One involved a 19 year old male who had been shipped to Vienna for sex labour by his parents. Officials of the BKA supported the young man with clothes, temporary accomodation and other provided further assistance.

In the second case, several men and women were subjected to inhuman treatment and exploitation in a Vorarlberg located cleaning company leading to the first conviction ever under CC s. 104a. After the detection of the case, the victims were returned to their home country Romania because of investigations by financial police. It remains unclear whether they received any compensation for outstanding wages.

In 2010, 11 male Romanians were trafficked for begging in Vienna. The traffickers, Romanian „mafiosi“ were sentenced in Romania. This case was one of the major successes of EB 10 in its struggle against human trafficking in Austria.

In another instance, officials from EB 10 Vienna had to take care of a couple that had applied to the police for help. While the woman had already been forced into sex work, her partner was on the point of being coerced into forced labour. For lack of other possibilities, LEFÖ-IBF offered victim assistance to both. Subsequently, officials from the EB 10 criticised the absence of centers for male victims.

**Case study:  
Conviction of a  
cleaning company in  
Vorarlberg**

In 2010, a court was able to prove that a Vorarlberg located cleaning company had recruited men and women of eastern EU-countries on behalf of a catering business and for the purpose of exploitation. This was the first case of a conviction under CC s. 104a that involved male victims. It is not clear whether the victims received any form of compensation.

One suspected case of labour exploitation involved several men from former Yugoslavia and led to investigations under CC s. 104a. The men from former Yugoslavia had been detained in an apartment in the tenth district and were forced to work on various construction sites by an „employment agent“. However, according to the officials, the victims refused to stand witness so that accusations under C s. 104a had to be dropped. Final charges included illegal restraint and exploitation of a foreigner.

Furthermore, interviewees reported on the case of a Chinese man who had been picked up in a restaurant kitchen. Proceedings led to a conviction under C s. 116 (exploitation of a foreigner). One day after the interview with members of EB 10, four naturalised Chinese men and women were put on trial. Investigations had revealed that the defendants had established a company to recruit workers for purposes of labour exploitation in Viennese restaurant kitchens. Due to the absence of victims, it was not possible to file allegations under CC s. 104a.

According to the officials, there had been anonymous complaints against a Vienna based businessman from China, most probably filed by competitors to damage his business. In the previous year, concerted inspections had been undertaken in a similar case, but suspicions of human trafficking could not be confirmed.

In summary, police officials revealed dozens of cases and suspected cases where men had fallen victim to human trafficking in industries like construction, hospitality, agriculture, begging or sex work. Victims' or presumed victims' countries of origin included former Yugoslavia, China and – in the case of transsexual women – Latin America.

### **Case Study:**

#### **Locked-up construction workers**

In 2011, four construction workers were freed by police from an apartment in the Viennese district of Favoriten. The Balkan originating men had been locked-up in the apartment and brought to various construction sites in the area by an employment agent who also acted as their "landlord". Due to the unwillingness of the victims to testify police had to drop investigations according to CC s. 104a. Charges were filed for illegal restraint, exploitation of a foreigner and benefit fraud.

### **Group Basic Care**

Gruft2 is sponsored by the Vienna Social Fund and provides counseling services for homeless EU-citizens. Based on estimates, it is to be assumed that there are about 600 to 1000 homeless EU-Citizens in Vienna. Gruft2 is primarily offering support for repatriation candidates.

The head of the Gruft2 reported on informations he had received by clients about employment agencies in Romania and Bulgaria and was able to verify on a study trip through Romania: an increasing number of agencies in Romania tries to promote promises of work in Western European countries. Though there is a list of state approved and reliable agencies, agencies with a rather dubious reputation still manage to attract people – men and women – who are lured by false pretenses of jobs that actually do not exist. Victims are trafficked to work in various industries.

Counsellors at the Gruft2 have most probably had already contact with victims of human trafficking. Yet, the interviewee admitted to a lack of knowledge regarding the indicators of identification and thus was not able to give concrete figures. Most of the men who enter the Gruft2 already show a high degree of disillusionment and lack of perspectives reflecting the growing number of failed attempts to find work.

#### **Case study:**

##### **Forced to begging after death threats**

In 2010, a young man from Eastern Europe was lured to Austria by family connections and false job offers. He was threatened and forced to begging. After his escape he received several death threats from the perpetrators. He turned to LEFÖ-IBF and the Men's Health Centre MEN for support.



Hence, experience shows that they are no longer able to keep to their goals or fight for outstanding wages or compensation. However, Gruft2 is mainly perceived as a counseling center providing assistance with repatriation. Yet, it is worth mentioning that Gruft2 also conveys 50 shelters for so called non-beneficiaries.

According to the expert interviewed, many of the patients of Amber-Med, a clinic for people without insurance, had crossed borders to Austria with the help of smugglers. In case of illness or injuries the women and even more the men are rather reluctant to come for examination and treatment. Looking at the course of their diseases, the team of Amber-Med noted that they often would not allow for full recovery but rather returned to work too early, which suggests a high degree of working pressure. Even more, other forms of coercion can not be excluded. Evidently, men are less open in terms of their backgrounds and seem to be more ashamed than women. In recent years, Amber-Med encountered problems with Chinese patients who continuously presented different IDs or names. This became obvious when medical data did not fit the information documented in their files.

In one case, a rare disease was diagnosed twice because a men had repeatedly turned up with different documents. It is suspected that upon arrival the workers' passports are taken away and other documents are only handed out in case of a medical emergency. In order to provide good medical care, Chinese patients are now asked to come with consistent documents and names. This request, so the head of Amber-Med, is accepted by the Chinese community.

**Case study:**

**Medical supply with false documents**

In the last few years Chinese patients repeatedly presented false identities when turning to Amber-Med for examination. In one case, a man using false IDs was referred to an external specialist twice to be treated for a rare disease. Members of Amber-Med assume that Chinese workers' passports are taken away upon arrival and false IDs are handed out in case of a medical emergency.

Furthermore, the interviewee reported on the case of two Bulgarian sex workers who had been traded to Vienna and subjected to forced labour. Other suspected cases related two Chinese men who were working in the catering and cleaning sector. However, these men were rather tight-lipped and opportunities to inquire into their backgrounds were limited. Similarly, there was a case of eight Eastern European construction workers who had spent a week working shifts, but never received their exploitatively low wage of 100 Euros per person.

In recent years, two suspected cases were reported to EB 10 by street workers of SAM2. In both cases, investigations for human trafficking could not be initiated, since suspicion moments were considered to be too vague. In the first case, a Polish father and his two sons had been brought to Vienna by a Polish cleaning company. They had been pressurised and had faced threats against their family back home. Only after they had received no wages at all for several months, they finally confided in the SAM2 street worker. At the suggestion of the then contacted Chamber of Labour and with the help of the street worker they were able to obtain an unknown amount of compensation. The workers were then transferred to another state so that contact to SAM2 could not be maintained. In the second suspected case, SAM2 was not able to intervene, because after a few contacts the person involved no longer sought counseling and would not show up at the Praterstern anymore.

**Case study:**

**No payment even after debt was paid**

In the course of an inspection, a worker from Albania was picked up by immigration and financial police. The man who had no residence permit had crossed borders with the help of smugglers who had promised him large earnings. While working, he had received little or no payment even after his debt was discharged. He was handed over to immigration police for deportation.

In summary, the institutions combined in group basic care have a lot of experience with suspected cases of trafficking in men in the construction industry, catering and cleaning services. Several interviewees voiced the assumption that men's work in the sex industry was rather based on voluntary labour migration and human trafficking was only an exception.

The affected men came from Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Poland and other Eastern European countries, as well as China.

### ***Group Control Authorities***

As was already explained in the description of the sample we were able to conduct interviews with a financial policeman and a labour inspector. In the interview, the latter remarked that his and other control authorities were mainly perceived as controlling and punitive organs and thus workers would not confide in them. The language barrier also prevented workers from addressing their problems. Furthermore, both representatives agreed upon the fact that in their teams knowledge regarding risk situations or suspected cases was not very widespread. Only one tax office employee had registered for a voluntary training on the topic which was offered by the Federal Academy of Finance. Given the lack of training, it comes as no surprise that both interviewees stated that they were not aware of any cases of human trafficking in their course of work.

### **Case study:**

#### **Grey areas of exploitation**

In summer 2012, a Bavarian temporary employment agency went bankrupt. After the bankruptcy it became known that workers at a slaughterhouse who had been placed by the Bavarian agency had to work up to 19 hours a day. They were paid by the piece and not by the hour and received no overtime payment. According to unions, there is a substantial risk of wage-dumping and noncompliance with labour law related standards in similar companies. It appears that the transition to human trafficking is rather fluid.

Very much the same opinion was expressed by the labour inspector in the context of a networking event of the Task Force on Combating Human Trafficking. However, his staff repeatedly reported on certain suspicions that might be indicative of possible exploitation.

According to the labour inspector, half of these construction sites could be considered reportable, yet labour inspectorates were under clear instructions to only report to the prosecutor if they had strong reasons. Additionally, the lack of specific powers made it impossible to substantiate suspicions. Based on his knowledge of the industry and his own experiences with inspections, the financial policeman named drylining, interior construction and iron bending as common sectors where unskilled work is mainly performed by migrant workers. Obscure subcontractors accepted orders at prices that made it impossible to offer regular employment. Thus, the risk of severe exploitation in this sectors was particularly high. It is common practice that workers at construction sites are instructed to lie about their wages when asked about their hourly rate by financial controllers. In some cases, iron benders stated that they earned 10.63 Euros per hour, an amount that corresponds to standard wages. In reality they only got 3 Euros per hour and had to work off exorbitant fees to pay the smugglers who had arranged the passage. Often workers were provided with nothing more than board and lodging.

Tax officers will only report to EB 10 in the event of urgent suspicions. To date however, this has not been the case. Yet, it was common practice until recently to carry out inspections together with an officer of the regionally responsible immigration authority.

#### **Case study:**

##### **Polish father and his sons**

A man from Poland and his two sons had been brought to Vienna by a Polish cleaning company. After several months of no payment they told their story to a social worker from SAM2. Among others, they were faced with threats against their family in Poland. With the help of the social worker and the Chamber of Labour they were able to obtain an unknown amount of compensation.

Subsequently, the workers were transferred to another state so that contact to SAM2 could not be maintained.

In a suspected case of human trafficking an Albanian construction worker reported that he had been locked in a room and wouldn't receive any payment even after his wages had already been withheld to pay off his debt. The question arises whether this can be considered trafficking. However, in the absence of a residence permit the man was brought to a detention center.

In another case, a Chinese man was apprehended while cutting meat in the basement of a restaurant. He denied knowing his employer or having worked at the restaurant. The man who claimed asylum was sent to a detention center.

Unacceptable working conditions were also found in the agricultural industries. Financial police revealed the case of a farm in Lower Austria where men and women from Bosnia and Bulgaria had to work excessive working hours cutting poppy in a hangar without so much as a toilet. Since there were also children involved, the farmer was reported and convicted for child abuse and violations of the Alien Employment Act.

In summary, suspected cases involved men from China, Albania, Bosnia and Bulgaria who were working in kitchens, on construction sites and as harvest helpers. Given the detentions mentioned above, it comes as no surprise that the presence of the police was not perceived as a potential support but rather as a threat.

**Case study:**

**Austria as a transit country**

Citizens from Aserbaidshjan had entered Italy on a tourist visa and were then transferred to Poland with Austria being used as a transit country. They received no payment for their exploitation. The case was revealed by a Polish immigration officer who at first regarded them as perpetrators. Only after interference on part of OSCE their status as victims of trafficking was recognized. (Source: Norbert Cyrus 2011)

### ***Group Care Facilities for Victims of Human Trafficking***

La Strada Moldavia, La Strada Belarus/Ukraine and the Migrants Rights Centre have extensive experience in working with men who are affected by human trafficking.

La Strada was launched in the 90ies to provide assistance for trafficked women. The number of men who applied for help has been constantly rising in the last 15 years, both in absolute terms and in relation to females seeking support.

In 2011, the majority of trafficking victims who called La Strada Moldavia's helpline was male. All 44 men were classified as victims of labour exploitation, while the 37 women had been exploited in different industries, mainly in the sex industry. However, the experts voiced the problem that national regulations are not consistent when it comes to defining labour exploitation or similar crimes. Thus, it is rather difficult to determine whether a man who had been exploited on a Russian construction site had any legal opportunities under Russian law.

The expert of the Irish Migrant Rights Centre reported on more than 60 men who had sought assistance within the last 7 years. The men who originated from Marokko, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, China and Russia had been exploited in various fields like circuses, restaurants, construction sites or agriculture. Some of them had worked in embassies.

#### **Case study:**

##### **From forced sex work to graduation**

A social worker with the adult education center in Vienna reported on the case of a young migrant who had been forced to sex work. He was handed over to a so called employment agency by his parents and forced to work in Austria. Subsequently, the young man was able to slowly break out of these circumstances and build a future for himself. Though he did give a confidential account of his exploitation experiences he had no further intentions to report the perpetrators or demand compensation.

By contrast, interviewees from EXIT and Drehscheibe Augarten declared that they had no prior experience with male victims of exploitation in Austria. As mentioned in the media part, Vienna based victim protection facility LEFÖ-IBF had been contacted by a couple of men who were then referred to the Männergesundheitszentrum in Vienna for psychological counseling.

After he had been lured to Vienna under false pretenses a young Nigerian was forced into drug dealing. He was able to escape and turned to EXIT for help. He and several other young men had been promised a contract with a local football club. However, they refused to fulfill their forced employment and got in touch with Caritas and EXIT.

The head of Drehscheibe Augarten, a facility of the Youth Welfare Office, which serves as a crisis intervention centre for unaccompanied foreign minors, some of whom are trafficked for begging or theft, stated that she had no prior experience with affected men. However, the determination of her clients' age is often hampered due to the absence of IDs.

In summary, experts of Drehscheibe and EXIT agreed that trafficking of men primarily occurs in industries like construction, cleaning, agriculture, catering and the sex industry. Experience reveals that these industries are particularly prone to varying degrees of labour exploitation and thus some actors show an increased willingness to engage in human trafficking for labour exploitation. As opposed to this, many of the underaged victims of trafficking are forced to drug dealing, burglary and theft .

**Case study:  
Smuggling or  
trafficking?**

On January 16, 2013 four Chinese restaurant owners were sentenced to 27 and 36 months in Klagenfurt. They had formed a company to bring in workers for the purpose of labour exploitation. Among others, they were convicted for creation of a criminal community, exploitation of foreigners and the non-payment of social security contributions. According to police, crimes investigated in Wiener Neustadt revolved around suspicions of severe labour exploitation in catering and housekeeping. The trial is still pending.

## **Estimates on the Scope of Trafficking of Men in Austria**

Based on their own experiences and due to a lack of reports and convictions none of the interviewees wanted to make any estimates as to the number of men who are affected by human trafficking in Austria.

Opinions expressed in terms of the possible extent of trafficking in men were far apart: In the opinion of the staff of the Asylkoordination it is a matter of a „few hundred“. Similarly, the head of Gruft2 believed that many of the 600 to 1000 homeless EU citizens had been subjected to labour exploitation or even trafficking.

When asked, members of the police also refused to give estimates. Yet, investigators of the EB 10 pointed out that in the few suspected cases they had to deal with, cooperation with affected males had been insufficient so that it was impossible to further pursue investigations or reach an indictment under CC s.104a. Drawing on their own experiences, officials tend to assume that there are only a few identifiable and trackable cases of trafficking in males. Accordingly, the head of EB 10 considered it unlikely that the establishment of a male-specific support offer would lead to a higher number of reported cases at least within the first few years.

Representatives of victim protection facilities deliberately avoided making any narrowing estimates, but with reference to their data and to international experience consented to the existence of human trafficking in males in Austria.

## **Different Impact on Men and Women**

Several experts claimed that other than the well known facts about gender segregation by sector were relevant for the different degree to which men or women are affected. This corresponds with observations of LEFÖ-IBF that men in Austria are mostly exploited in the construction industries, agriculture, catering and cleaning and only to a lesser extent in the sex industry. Similar experiences have been made by the head of Drehscheibe Augarten: boys were forced to committing criminal acts more often than girls, while both sexes were equally represented regarding begging. However, more girls are trafficked for sex labour.

Some interviewees ventured the guess that a certain kind of „ shame“ left male victims unable to share their social backgrounds, conditions of work or experiences of exploitation and violence.



The representatives of Asylkoordination argued that in terms of governmental care grown up males were a rather disadvantaged target group. They were often accommodated in remote places and were hardly ever offered opportunities for integration. Poor conditions and exclusion from the labour market rather increased the risk of falling victim to exploitation. Men who failed in their goal to earn enough money to support their family members often suffered from severe self-doubt.

According to interviewees from Gruft2 and SAM2, male clients were more vulnerable to alcohol dependence or other health and psychological problems and showed more signs of waywardness than women. Furthermore, men were rather concerned with questions regarding social or labour issues, because of which the Chamber of Labour would be contacted. However, for lack of perspectives most men would not try to take up their rights, but rather tended to trivialize and minimize their own experiences of exploitation. The head of SAM2 believed the reason for this could be found in the fact that many affected men were afraid of being perceived as „unmanly“ and thus would not talk about rumors of imprisonment or beating.

The Irish expert believed that male victims have proven to be every bit as traumatized as females.

Investigators with the police in Vienna expressed the experience that cooperation with male witnesses was often more difficult than with female ones. Thus, investigations according to CC s. 104a were often dropped in favor of more provable offenses.

On the basis of her research into the subject the legal scholar found that there was a significant gender gap in terms of awareness as well as the severity of persecution on part of authorities. Gender-related differences were primarily revealed in the handling of regulations: crimes against women under CC s. 217 are easier to prove and carry higher penalties than crimes against men under CC s. 104a.

In public opinion, trafficking in women for prostitution is rather condemned as a moral crime whereas trafficking in and exploitation of men is not really considered a crime. In terms of illegal work, men are more viewed as accomplices than as victims.

This overlooks the fact that a considerable number of them has been cheated and forced into disgraceful working conditions.

All the more, as the journalist explained, since previous campaigns in Austria had been mainly tailored for identifying female victims of trafficking. However, as according to the representative of La Strada/Moldavia, a poster campaign on behalf of the SOS-telephone<sup>34</sup> did have a positive effect on affected males and their relatives. As a result, in 2007, for the first time the majority of identified victims of trafficking was male.

## Necessary steps to identify male victims of human trafficking

### Forming Public Opinion

Thanks to many years of work from victim protection facilities, NGOs, researchers, feminist politicians and human rights experts, public opinion on trafficking in women and labour exploitation has changed. There is a growing awareness that sex work is not the only industry where potential exploitation or trafficking in women can occur.

Men, however, are only occasionally identified as victims. Lack of action is often driven by a lack of awareness not only in the general public but also in police and other control authorities. Thus, almost all experts acknowledged the importance of spreading awareness in order to combat trafficking and exploitation of men.

Even more since, in the words of the representative from Salzburg, awareness for male victims has yet to be raised. In line with this, measures proposed by the head of EPCAT included stakeholder trainings and awareness campaigns. According to the member of finance police, trainings on the topic of human trafficking offered by the Federal Academy of Finance are only rare and need to be expanded.

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<sup>34</sup> Please refer to chapter „Institutions and Their Work“

The member of Asylkoordination remarked that migrant labour and crime had to be looked at from a different angle. The proliferation of trafficking and labour exploitation was fostered by asylum seekers' lack of access to the labour market. Due to the fact that male victims of trafficking were often forced to criminal activities, such as drug dealing, they were hardly ever regarded as victims. It would seem that only a distinct change in discourse would bring about a change in practice. Similar arguments were raised by the journalist though with a different focus. She argued that the discourse on human trafficking was generally focused on migration whereas labour exploitation was hardly an issue. This imbalance was mirrored by media representations and the fact that compensation payments to victims were rare and rather insignificant. Hence, it was of particular importance to put a focus on the illegal exploitation of labour, the crimes involved and the protection needs of the victims.

The AK expert therefore advocated networking and public education as a means to raise awareness while other interviewees also stressed the potential of religious institutions as cooperation partners.

As opposed to this, the official of EB 10 called on political leaders to take up responsibilities in raising awareness for male victims and enhancing legal means of combating human trafficking as well as improving protection for victims.

The expert from UNODC also believed that measures to increase awareness among authorities and organisations should be adopted at an early stage.

Though La Strada Moldavia has had good experiences with a poster campaign intended to reach out to affected males, victims' confidence in being taken seriously has yet to be built. As a precondition for this, a good cooperation between authorities and NGOs is required.

## **Information for Victims**

Apart from awareness raising, it was considered important to reach out to male victims and draw their attention to offers of support. As for the rural areas, information could be disseminated through putting up posters in taverns or on bus stops. In cities, so called „Arbeiterstriche“, a term that refers to certain spots where people, mostly men, are waiting for an employer, and institutions of health care for persons with no insurance would be suitable to spread the word.

Appropriate information material should be provided in different languages and should only include essential information and contact details so that it could be printed small in size and hidden if necessary.

The head of EB 10 advocated that, when encountering a potential victim, police investigators should be able to call a 24-hour emergency number to get in touch with one of the victim protection facilities immediately. The representative of SAM2 agreed upon the fact that written information was good but could not replace taking care of victims by referring them to appropriate counseling centres.

## **Raising Awareness among Key Workers**

There was unanimous agreement among all interviewees on the urgent need of a particular training for key personnel in the judiciary and executive branch, for labour inspectorates, auditing departments of social security and representatives of various counseling centers. All experts promoted the distribution of knowledge and competencies in order to help identifying victims of trafficking.

The journalist interviewed criticised that previously offered trainings usually disregarded that men can also fall victim to trafficking and labour exploitation. Other interviewees pointed to the fact that affected men were often considered as perpetrators and not as victims. This corresponds to lessons learned from various men's groups insofar as their members' lives often combine perpetrator and victim aspects. Therefore it is vital to employ an integrated view on the topic, yet facilities dealing with marginalized male groups often lack this kind of understanding.

Furthermore, the EPCAT representative underlined the value of multi-stakeholder trainings in which key personnel of various authorities and NGOs could be trained together. Broader experience and networking would lead to improved cooperation.

## **Improving Investigations**

The legal scholar and other experts stressed that efforts should be made by the police to obtain evidence other than the victim's statement. When questioned on this point, the interviewee from EB 10 Vienna replied that convictions in cases of human trafficking were heavily relying on testimonies by victims. In the absence of witnesses, evidence seized at least allowed for convictions other than human trafficking.

Interviewees from the EB 10, the financial police and the labour inspectorate did not want to judge whether an increased collaboration of police and control authorities would have a greater impact on the combat of human trafficking. However, whenever necessary joint controls were already common practice.

As mentioned in the presentation of the sample, one social security agency declined the interview, arguing that in case they suspected a withhold of contributions employees had no competences for further investigations. The same argument was also brought forward by the labour inspector interviewed, saying that the limitations of powers made it difficult to further substantiate suspicions of possible cases of human trafficking. In view of this, a low threshold procedure would be appropriate.

## **Providing Special Support for Male Victims**

There was consensus among the experts that the establishment of a male-specific support structure was highly significant. This would, on the one hand, support the self-identification of affected males who refuse to go to the police. On the other hand, a wider knowledge of support facilities on part of police and counseling centers would eventually lead to more cases being transferred there. All groups of the interview sample reported on cases in their practice in which only little or no help could be offered due to a lack of appropriate support structures.

## **„24-Hour Helpline“**

The head of EB 10 called for the establishment of a „24-hour helpline“, a central hotline that would provide around the clock assistance for authorities and police. Similar cooperation already exists, for instance, with LEFÖ-IBF and state facilities of the Youth Welfare Office. As was noted by some experts with regard to the latter, international standards concerning the protection of victims in trafficking were often hampered by national regulations on youth protection. Among others, these standards include protection from traffickers and the granting of a reflection period of several months. Some experts argued that the establishment of an appropriate support structure cannot be successful without ensuring that these standards, particularly those mentioned above, be fulfilled right from the start.

## **Native-Language Consultation by Men**

Several experts agreed upon the need to provide specific services for male victims, especially by employing male social workers. According to representatives of EPCAT, Amber-Med, EXIT and EB 10, victim-centered, culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate services were vital to ensure best possible treatment. The representative of UNODC outlined the main tasks as follows: psychological and medical care, board and lodging, legal advice, assistance with authorities, court issues and financial emergencies.

However, the head of EB 10 believed that cooperations between male-specific facilities and the police were depending on whether procedures for the identification of male victims could be improved. He expected a rather small number of actual cases within the next few years and suggested to set up advice- and support offers in cooperation with LEFÖ-IBF and other already existing male specific counseling centers. If required, a special office could be set, yet board and lodging for affected males should be arranged in assistance with existing accomodation facilities.

## **Medical Assistance**

In addition to psychological care, victims of human trafficking need to be afforded access to medical care. Often, victims experience health problems that are linked to their exploitation and have not been cured. The head of Amber-Med, the clinic for persons without insurance, pointed out that people who had been held captive needed to be allowed to gain access to appropriate medical care. Even more, clinics and outpatient treatments may provide an opportunity to get in touch with victims and offer comprehensive support and assistance.

## **Legal Advice**

Similar to the expertise of LEFÖ-IBF, various experts stressed the importance of access to legal assistance. Thus, care facilities should dispose of basic knowledge regarding legal issues and be linked up with other counseling centers and lawyers, e.g. the Counseling Center for Migrants in Vienna or various refugee advice centers. A couple of organisations, including the Chamber of Labour, LEFÖ-IBF, several unions and NGOs, have teamed up to create a center for the initial support of un(der)documented workers in Austria. The new authority is planned to take up work by fall 2013 and will provide assistance regarding issues of labour and social law. It will play a vital role in the legal assistance of male victims of trafficking.

# **Institutions and Their Work**

The 22 interviews were divided into five groups for analysis. The classification was based on different approaches and roles concerning human trafficking.

## **Group Police**

This group is the most homogenous one and consists of three interviews with a total of four officials from EB 10 (Operational Unit for Combating Human Trafficking), the police, the Central Unit for Combating Illegal Migrant Networks in Vienna and the Regional Office for Criminal Investigation in Graz.

The development of human trafficking as a social problem and as a bundle of crimes that need to be investigated and punished is mirrored by the development of EB 10. Whereas similar departments had already existed in other states, the EB 10 in Vienna was established only five years ago. Today, EB 10s in all states are equally responsible for combating human trafficking and play a major role in the context of migration control.

With regard to the internal organisation of the EB 10, the main focus lies on the fight against transnational prostitution trade. Cases of human trafficking in other work areas than sex work are rarely subject of investigations, particularly in terms of offenses under CC s.214 (transnational prostitution trade) and CC s. 104a (sexual exploitation, the removal of organs and labour exploitation).

While all EB 10s are subordinate and report to the Austrian Federal Crime Police Office (BKA), the head of the BKA is responsible for the coordination of nationwide or cross-country investigations.

EB 10 works to identify victims of human trafficking, collaborates with victim protection facilities and carries out further investigations in consultation with the prosecutor. Victims from third countries who cannot be identified properly are handed over to immigration police. They are either placed in detention or urged to leave within 24 hours.

### ***Cooperation Partners of Group Police***

While other police units are only rarely involved, forces of EB 10 occasionally cooperate with other control authorities such as the financial police or labour inspectorates. According to officials at EB 10, women who report to the police often received prior assistance and counseling from LEFÖ-IBF. Not for nothing, LEFÖ-IBF is considered a prime partner in the support of trafficked women who have been picked up by police. Consequently, the head of the central unit at the BKA stressed the good cooperation with LEFÖ-IBF for the benefit of affected women but also from a police point of view. In the case of affected children, local Youth Welfare Services are notified and victims are referred to local crisis intervention centers like the Drehscheibe Augarten in Vienna. When asked, members of EB 10 could only remember a single case of a male victim who was in need of psychosocial support. EB 10 turned to LEFÖ-IBF for assistance in the search for a suitable accommodation.



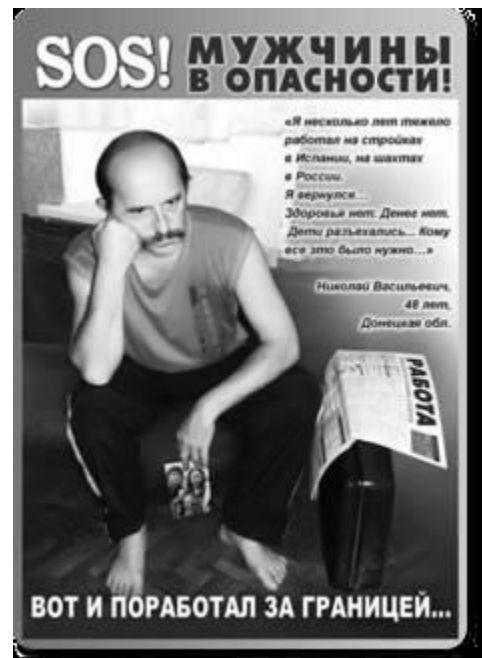
Having said that, women protection organisations like LEFÖ-IBF are not considered appropriate to assist transsexual women who want to get out of sex work. Contrary to their own self-identification as women, transsexual sex workers are classified as men by officials. As one interviewee stated, there was a sharp increase of transsexual sex workers in Vienna in recent years. Out of 108 „men“ officially registered as sex workers, 90 percent needed to be regarded as victims of trafficking.

As for the rare cases of males who had been exploited in other industries than sex work, victim protection support was only required occasionally.

### **Group Care Facilities for Victims of Human Trafficking**

In the course of our survey, five interviews were conducted with representatives of organisations whose major task was the support and counseling of victims of trafficking. For reasons mentioned above, interviews with both LEFÖ-IBF and IOM Vienna have been dispensed.

Yet, both organisation’s knowledge and viewpoints obtained in the course of several networking- and training-talks were taken into account in chapters „Media Analysis“ and „Summary and Final Recommendations“.



*Picture: A poster campaign in 2007 led to a sudden increase in men who called La Strada Moldova's helpline.*

One interview was held with the head of EXIT, a center that offers support, assistance and training for African women with particular focus on victims of trafficking from Nigeria who live in Vienna. In another interview, the head of Drehscheibe Augarten gave insight into his work with children who are trafficked to Vienna for begging or theft. The Migrant Rights Centre in Ireland, a country comparable in terms of size, has already had seven years of experience with trafficked males. Fortunately, we were able to interview a representative of MRCI on the sidelines of a conference.

The interviews with members of La Strada Moldavia and La Strada Belarus/Ukraine were made possible by an invitation from LEFÖ-IBF to a conference on the topic of compensation in Summer 2012.

Both La Strada representatives gave an account on how their organisations had at first only dealt with the support of women from Russia and other Eastern European countries who had become victims of trafficking. Yet, after a few years and due to numerous requests by men they felt the need to extend their support. The support that is offered can be rather diverse. In cooperation with IMO and other organisations, La Strada is helping trafficked persons to return to their home countries. Local facilities of La Strada offer psychological and social counseling and assistance with court proceedings. Furthermore, La Strada aims to ensure access to medical care and legal advice as well as professional education in cooperation with local initiatives.

Children and minors who have been reported according to the Youth Welfare Act are referred to Drehscheibe Augarten that aims to provide necessary medical or legal advice and adopts measures to facilitate their repatriation. In addition, Drehscheibe Augarten is working with partners in Romania and Bulgaria to build up further education and reintegration services. Among children and adolescents both genders are represented equally.

Experience of members of EXIT has shown that psychological and social support for trafficked women is best achieved through educational training and German language courses. EXIT also engages in prevention programs in Nigeria.

The MRCI in Ireland may serve as a good practice model for other victim protection facilities. As a major national contact point for victims of human trafficking and labour exploitation MRCI's work involves the identification and support of victims. This includes an „emergency package“ (mobile phone, clothes, money, vouchers for food and medical care), legal representation and help with job search. Part of their modus operandi is to set up working groups for raising awareness and strengthening identification. These action groups are often formed by past and present victims.

### ***Cooperations of Victim Protection Facilities***

Though to varying degrees, all institutions of this group are part of cooperations with governmental authorities, public offices and supranational and/or non-governmental organisations. The IOM, though not mentioned by MRCI's representative, is a prominent co-partner for prevention work in many countries and offers logistical and financial help for the repatriation of foreign victims.

### **Group Control Authorities**

As part of our research a financial policeman and a labour inspector were interviewed. The former is responsible for the monitoring of compliance with laws in the area of Tulln, Hollabrunn and Korneuburg, while the latter is in charge of inspections in the construction industry in Vienna and Lower Austria. Both interviewees reported that they were aware of various form of labour exploitation within their areas of competence. The labour inspector pointed to the limited powers of his authority that, for instance, was not allowed to gain insight into employment contracts. Therefore, it was hardly possible to corroborate suspected cases of human trafficking.

Despite better equipment and further reaching powers, the financial policeman expressed similar difficulties regarding the identification of victims of human trafficking. The persecution of illegal employment, tax fraud, wage and social dumping is in the center of about 800 to 1000 inspections per year. The identity of workers and their registration with the statutory health insurance is determined on site via mobile inquiry. Yet, although the disclosure of illegal work only provides for penalties against employers, workers do not seem to trust in financial police as a source of help.

As part of our research we also tried to get an interview with an official of the contributions department of a regional health insurance. Unfortunately, the responsible head of department would not agree to an interview with members of the staff for the reason that in the course of inspections human trafficking was not an issue. Given the limited powers of his department, it was hard to detect potential cases of trafficking. However, so far none of his co-workers had reported any suspected cases. In a telephone conversation he basically agreed to awareness trainings as a welcome means to draw attention to the subject.

### ***Cooperations of Group Control Authorities***

In general, compliance visits by labour inspectorates and financial police are carried out independently of each other. However, in cases of large companies or suspicions of serious crimes in either jurisdiction both departments pursue joint procedures for operational coordination. The Chief of Financial Police reported that until recently inspections were accompanied by a member of the immigration police. On another occasion, he mentioned that information was often passed on to the Centre of Competence at the regional health insurance. Besides being responsible for contribution payments, the Centre of Competence is entitled to carry out compliance visits. Joint inspections by financial police, criminal police and other authorities are rather rare.

### **Group Basic Care**

As for group basic care, we conducted three interviews with members of SAM2, Grufft2 and Amber-Med. Amber-Med is a medical practice, run by Diaconia Vienna. In collaboration with the Red Cross Amber-Med aims to provide access to health care and medicine for people without health insurance. The clinic offers treatment by a wide range of specialists. The clientel of Amber-Med is rather mixed, part of the patients are third country nationals without valid work permits or persons without legal residence status. Some of the patients are uninsured EU-citizens or Austrian citizens who engage in undeclared work. In addition to medical treatment and the prescription of drugs, Amber-Med provides for social work help and, currently only available for women, topic-specific groups in different languages. According to Amber-Med's head, „some men are actually envious“ on the support offered by Amber-Med. Grufft2 was launched by Caritas and is sponsored by Vienna Social Fund (Fonds Soziales Wien). It aims to provide support, counseling and overnight shelters for the estimated 600 to 1000 homeless EU-citizens in Vienna.

As part of the Addiction Treatment Center Vienna (Suchthilfe Wien), SAM offers mobile social work in public spaces. SAM2's area of work is the Praterstern. Though by definition a contact point for all users of public space, SAM2 primarily engages in supporting the estimated 30 to 120 homeless and addicted people in this area.

Despite their social work approach, SAM2 members are often perceived as security people. Thus, they are challenged to build confidence in order to help homeless people either by rendering assistance or referring them to appropriate facilities.

### ***Cooperations of Basic Care Facilities***

Amber-Med is set up in the premises of the Red Cross and is working closely with LEFÖ-IBF. Frequently, women who receive counseling from LEFÖ-IBF attend Amber-Med for medical examination and treatment. On the other side, Amber-Med patients potentially affected by trafficking in women are referred to LEFÖ-IBF for further support. As part of SAM2's work, homeless EU-citizens who want to return to their home country are put in contact with GRUFT2 for repatriation assistance. Depending on the situation and problem, people are sometimes referred to Sophie, a counseling center for sex workers, or brought to the Chamber of Labour for consultation. The Counseling Center for Immigrants and the Chamber of Labour were cited as main network partners by all basic care representatives.

### **Group Advocacy**

Group Advocacy is the largest group, focusing on awareness training for key personnel, lobbying and increasing public awareness for the problem of human trafficking. A lawyer with the Chamber of Labour stated that the chamber's consultation centers were often contacted by employees who were working without work permits or had no or just legally untenable contracts. Thus, the Chamber of Labour is seeking to build up a state-wide network to tackle the issue of un(der)documented work and is currently working together with LEFÖ-IBF, unions and NGOs to establish a support center for undocumented workers. In 2012, a booklet about undocumented work was developed that is meant to be a practical tool for key workers and provides information concerning labour law and other legal issues. Asylkoordination was founded as a coordinating body bringing together anti-racist organisations and counseling centers across Austria. As such, it is able to provide a comprehensive overview on the situation of refugees as well as on political organisations and counseling centers. Asylkoordination offers trainings in matters of immigration law, helps finding appropriate counseling centers and provides information on anti-racist public education.

ECPAT is a global network of organisations working together for the elimination of child prostitution, child pornography and the trafficking of children for sexual purposes. ECPAT does not offer counselling or other forms of direct support but engages in campaigning, lobbying and training on the subject of trafficking in children.

From her experience with working with trafficked women the representative now former employee of the Afro-Asian Institute learned that victims are often being treated as perpetrators. While she still provides individual care and support to female victims of trafficking, her focus is now on the organisation of events and public education on the topic of human trafficking.

Additional interviews were arranged with a journalist who tries to raise awareness for combating human trafficking in her writings, and the member of an organisation that deals with humanitarian issues regarding the treatment of refugees and immigrants by police.

Our interview with a legal scholar revealed patterns of fraud in the construction industries that carry a high risk of potential labour exploitation.

As part of the United Nations Organisation the UNODC (United Nations Office On Drugs And Crime) is also responsible for the initiation and coordination of measures to fight human trafficking. The representative of UNODC gave insight into the knowledge and networks of his department.

### ***Cooperations of Group Advocacy***

Universities play an important role not only in research, teaching and journalistic investigation but also in the coordination and organisation of events for both expert and public audiences. LEFÖ-IBF is also perceived as an outstanding cooperation partner in the public thematisation of human trafficking and the training of key workers. Together with the Chamber of Labour, LEFÖ-IBF was able to win the support of several unions for their joint efforts to supply assistance to victims of exploitation.

Further cooperations also include authorities, especially the police, and NGOs working in the field of refugee and migrant care. In order to adopt campaigns and fight trafficking, the UNODC cooperates with a network of international governmental and non-governmental organisations (ILO, IOM, OSZE, UNHCR, et al).

# Summary and Final Recommendations

## Uncovering the Victims

From 2004 to 2012, 44 male victims of trafficking were recorded with police criminal statistics. Of these, 15 were affected by exploitation in sex work, while 28 faced exploitation in industries like agriculture, cleaning, construction and catering.

Partly because crimes according to CCC s. 104a (sexual exploitation, the removal of organs and labour exploitation)<sup>35</sup> are hard to prove, prosecutors tend to switch to offenses like illegal restraint, exploitation of a foreigner and benefit fraud. A systematic study on court cases by Julia Planitzer, Evelyn Probst and Barbara Steiner reviewed 76 cases of human trafficking out of which 6 were male. The study revealed that the fulfillment of compensation claims for work performed and the inhuman treatment experienced by victims was significantly depending on whether trafficked persons received victim assistance services. None of the 6 men mentioned above had been represented by a victim protection facility.

Current efforts of the Task Force on Combating Human Trafficking<sup>36</sup> will contribute to the visibility of males as victims of human trafficking. The same is true for the center for undocumented workers, an initiative by the Chamber of Labour and NGOs.

## Establishment of Drop-in Centers for Male Victims of Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is an offense of low reportability and thus has to be detected and dealt with by police, financial police and other authorities. Even more importantly, cooperation between potentially affected males and the police is rather poor. As a result, these victims are often not recognised or dealt with in the appropriate manner. Most of our interviewees shared the opinion that the establishment of a support center for affected males would lead to better ways of identification. In this effect, the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland can be held up as a good practice model.

However, estimates on the speed of improvement in terms of identifying male victims vary. Yet, all expertes agreed that a lot of cases remain unreported.

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<sup>35</sup> An amendment to CC s. 104a comes into force in May 2013. It is to be hoped that innovations bring better provability and hence a more frequent consideration of CC s. 104a

<sup>36</sup> The current Third National Action Plan, the establishment of a working group in 2012 and the present report will enhance the discursive perception of both genders and raise question of the appropriate support.

As for the establishment of a support center, the representative of the BKA believed that in the first couple of years only a small number of cases would seek help with male-specific offers. On the contrary, experts of victim protection facilities in Austria as well as source countries of human trafficking said that male-specific support structures would be met with broad support by authorities, NGOs and last but not least by the victims themselves.

### **Training of Key Workers**

Trainings on awareness and the identification of victims in trafficking for all relevant control authorities, prosecution, counseling centers and mobile social workers, were considered a main issue. Workshops offered by the police in cooperation with LEFÖ-IBF, ECPAT and other organisations should stand as a model.

In the context of voluntary workshops, training on human trafficking is also offered by the Federal Academy of Finance. As opposed to this, labour inspectorates, contribution departments of health insurance and other control authorities seem to have not yet decided on workshops and awareness trainings. However, representatives of counseling centers and NGOs also see the need for training within their own ranks, particularly with regard to identifying victims.

### **Provision of Ressources for the Support of Victims**

All interviewees welcomed our research as a first step towards the establishment of a support center for affected males, especially with regard to future (suspected) cases. The current Third National Action Plan provides a basis for research and practical experiences that could be crucial for the establishment of a support center in the context of the Fourth National Action Plan for Combating Human Trafficking. Expected cases range from „a number of individual cases in the next 2 or 3 years“ to „dozens per year as soon as support offers are established“.<sup>37</sup> Thus, in order to be resource-efficient, yet flexible and able to meet growing demands an already existing facility should be commissioned with the building of resources.

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<sup>37</sup> The first estimate comes from the head of the Central Unit at the BK, the second from the journalist who was interviewed.



Skills and resources should be pooled as follows and provide:

- Expertise in crisis intervention and psychological support for men
- Intercultural, gender reflected skills to build trust
- Interpretation resources
- Safe accommodations in cooperation with existing facilities
- Knowledge and resources for individual first aid kits
- Cooperation with advisory bodies on labour, social law and immigration issues
- Assistance in legal procedures in cooperation with existing facilities

### **Initial Contact with Victims in the Context of Health Care**

The health problems seen in victims of trafficking are largely a result of several factors: exorbitant working hours, short recovery periods, physically and psychologically exhausting work, medical problems. Exploitation-related problems also include alcohol abuse that, apart from short-term relaxation, can result in further health problems.

Though exploiters, being in command and control, carry out all types of physical exploitation they are likely to provide medical treatment to maintain their victims' working ability. Even more, since an illness or injury may lead victims to identify themselves as such and try to find a way out.

Given the lack of health insurance and the need to remain undetected, uninsured patients turn to surgeries and hospitals in which they are treated without insurance and free of charge. Apart from a well-known religious hospital, Amber-Med is one of the few medical facilities in the Vienna area that explicitly offer diagnosis and treatment to uninsured people. Amber-Med's experience includes encounters with both actual and presumed victims of human trafficking.

On the one hand, support offers for males affected by human trafficking have to address their medical situation and need to provide access to medical treatment. On the other hand, facilities like Amber-Med are also places of possible first contact with victims. Thus, it would be recommended to form a consultation liaison service that provides consultation and support in facilities like Amber-Med.

## **Not Victims without Rights, but Persons betrayed of Their Rights**

The working committee „Undocumented Work“ comprises of representatives from four unions, the Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB), the Vienna Chamber of Labour, LEFÖ-IBF and several NGOs. The committee aims to establish a focal point for persons in Austria who work without papers, receive only part of their salary or have been harmed in any other way. Men and women who are affected by labour exploitation should be given legal advice concerning labour and social law with particular focus on their immigration status. The focal point is supposed to be a low-threshold contact point and a basis for further contact to counseling centers or unions.

Furthermore, the focal point is expected to be an important partner for LEFÖ-IBF, EXIT, support initiatives and the yet to be created support center. Apart from recovery, mental stability, safety and the time to develop plans for the future and to decide whether to press charges, well founded legal advice is a key for the rehabilitation of those affected. In addition, the focal point will be a place for initial contact with male victims of trafficking and is thus significant also with respect to a prospective male-specific support facility.

### **Cooperation with LEFÖ-IBF**

The first concept for a support center for male victims of human trafficking was developed by LEFÖ-IBF and Men's Health Centre MEN in 2010. Meanwhile, trafficking in persons has become a central issue for the European Union. According to the Convention on Action against Trafficking from the European Council<sup>38</sup> member states are obliged to introduce comprehensive measures for victim protection and support. As an organisation that is highly experienced in combating human trafficking and is collaborating with national and international key players, LEFÖ-IBF should provide technical expertise in the establishment of a male-specific support structure.

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<sup>38</sup> See Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. <http://www.conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Treaties/Html/197.htm> (2012, December 12)

## **Cooperation with the Austrian Federal Crime Police Office and Operational Unit 10**

A newly established male-specific support service will not be able to facilitate the same services as LEFÖ-IBF from the outset. Though networking and collaboration with officials of Operational Unit 10 (EB 10) will have to be enhanced, the supply of around the clock accessibility and treatment for affected males needs be aligned to the development of the support service.

## **Networking with Regional Counseling Centers and NGOs**

The support of men who suffer from human trafficking in Austria can hardly be settled by a central, isolated point of contact in the capital. Hence, part of facilitating a support structure should be dedicated to promotion and networking with counseling centers, NGOs and authorities in all provinces. For this purpose, already existing networks of NGOs and advisory bodies should be used.

## **Final Recommendations**

Similar to other European countries, there is not enough data for reliable estimates on the extent of human trafficking in Austria. However, the experts we interviewed reported on cases and suspected cases of trafficking and exploitation of men. Police criminal statistics and systematic studies of court files show dozens of cases with male victims. In some of these cases charges have been filed and court proceedings have been initiated. So far, the number of convictions related to trafficking in men is only small.

After all, the identification of men who have become victims of human trafficking remains the biggest challenge to protecting victims according to the current UN-convention and implementation provisions. The continuation and increase of trainings for police and authorities, for counseling centers and NGOs seems appropriate. Support and a focal point should be implemented to provide counseling, assistance and protection to identified victims as well as information for identification and self-identification of affected males. The authors hope that the present report of the Task Force for Combating Human Trafficking will help in the planning and implementation of further steps to fight human trafficking and labour exploitation of men in Austria.