

GUIDELINES FOR MUNICIPALITIES

STEPPING UP LOCAL ACTION AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING



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Guidelines for Municipalities

Stepping up local action against human trafficking

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Introduction

Human trafficking is a complex phenomenon that is often driven or influenced by social economic, cultural and other factors. Poverty, oppression, lack of social or economic opportunities and dangers from conflict or instability causes a growing number of populations to want to migrate in search of better conditions and possibilities. States of the Baltic Sea Region are all affected by trafficking in one form or another. Every year women, men, girls and boys are trafficked to, through or from the CBSS Region for the purpose of exploitation. Furthermore, the region is subject to constant changes in the patterns of human trafficking and the forms of victimisation.

People are trafficked for sexual exploitation, but also for forced labour. A growing number of labour trafficking cases have been identified in the region, mainly in sectors such as agriculture, berry-picking, restaurant work as well as cleaning and construction. In addition, people are exploited in domestic servitude, in forced begging and criminal activity or for organ removal and other purposes, such as identity or benefit fraud.

The complex nature of human trafficking and its different forms has an impact on the understanding and awareness of the phenomenon, the identification of victims, assistance offered and on prevention of trafficking in general. These guidelines aim to highlight the key issues that local actors should consider when addressing trafficking in their line of work. The local response to human trafficking should be tailored to the specific situation, trends and groups at risk identified by the local actors.

Background – STROM project

The Guidelines are the culmination of the project “STROM – Strengthening the Role of Municipalities in the Work against Trafficking in Human Beings in the Baltic Sea Region”. The STROM Project is implemented jointly by the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Latvia and the Council of the Baltic Sea States Secretariat Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings (CBSS TF-THB) in close cooperation with the NGO “Living for Tomorrow” in Estonia, the Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security in Norway, the Ministry of Interior in Poland, and the County Administrative Board of Stockholm in Sweden. The specific Guidelines for Municipalities were developed building on the main findings, conclusions and impact of the work undertaken in the STROM project.¹

Why we need guidelines?

Both internationally and within the Baltic Sea region, much of the work which has been undertaken in relation to human trafficking has involved criminal justice and security activities, including the introduction of new legislation, increased policing efforts, and providing training for law enforcement. In addition, work has been done to support NGOs offering services to victims and to improve cooperation between NGOs and authorities. However, while some of these activities can be seen as preventive in terms of presumed deterrent effects, there has been much less focus on local approaches to reduce the opportunities for traffickers to exploit people, identifying the groups at risk, mapping the extent of problem at the local level and assisting victims of human trafficking.²

Trafficking in human beings has very specific implications for local communities, cities and municipalities.³ Recruitment and exploitation take place in local streets and neighbourhoods. Women and men are sexually exploited on the street or in local bars, businesses and hotels. Victims of labour trafficking can be found among domestic workers in private homes, among cleaners cleaning public offices, schools and stores, in local restaurants, fast food outlets, agricultural farms, petrol stations or construction sites.⁴

Local authorities are often the first to come into contact with both victims and traffickers. However, local actors in most cases do not have a prominent place in the national and regional strategies against human trafficking. Also capacity, knowledge and resources of local actors in dealing with human trafficking cases differ greatly in the Baltic Sea region. Local actors have many instruments at their disposal that fit the specific circumstances in their localities but which are not often fully utilised. Any suggested measures can and should of course vary according to local context and trafficking situation.

The guidelines are evidence-based and focus on the main critical issues identified during the STROM project and the assessment study. The issues and topics related to human trafficking are quite complex and include many dimensions, therefore specific measures concerning child trafficking were excluded from the guidelines.⁵ In general, the guidelines call for a mainstreamed gender-sensitive approach in their implementation, yet they do not give gender specific measures. The guidelines build on the utilization of existing structures as far as possible.

Aim of the guidelines

The general aim of these guidelines is to provide local actors with the knowledge and right tools to strengthen their role in the work against human trafficking and increase the effectiveness of the anti-trafficking actions by ensuring proper and timely victim identification, adequate and sustainable assistance and protection.

The specific goals of the guidelines are to:

- promote victims' rights
- improve awareness of human trafficking among local actors
- highlight some of the promising practices that have been developed in the region and beyond where municipalities and/or local authorities play a prominent role in addressing trafficking and protecting victims
- involve local actors in combating human trafficking at the local level by addressing common challenges and providing specific action points to overcome the problems and to improve the counter trafficking measures

Target group of the guidelines

The target group of the guidelines consists of a large variety of actors and stakeholders at the local level. The guidelines are foreseen to be most relevant for experts and practitioners working in big and medium size cities and/or municipalities where there is at least some level of awareness on human trafficking.

- Mayors, policy makers and decision-makers in the general city/municipality governance structures and administration, including public procurement officials
- Top management of sectoral branches, such as social and health services, and the individual employees working in these organisations
- Officials of municipal police and inspection authorities (labour, tax, rescue services and so forth)
- Representatives of NGOs, especially migrant rights groups, social service providers, anti-trafficking NGOs, and local migrant community organisations

Role of municipalities

The main roles of municipalities in combating trafficking in human beings are:

- To conduct a mapping of the trafficking situation to get good knowledge of the problem at local level, to build a clear analysis of the issues and to formulate a plan to intervene.
- To detect populations at risk of being trafficked and take a proactive approach to prevent their exploitation and trafficking. Proximity of local actors to trafficked persons and to the places where the exploitation takes place gives them a greater opportunity to recognize the signs of human trafficking and identify victims.
- Local authorities can play a central role in addressing the immediate and longer term needs of the victims which include the provision of relevant services and helping victims to regain their independent lives.
- While local authorities in comparison with national/central authorities do not play a major role in prosecution of traffickers, local actors can be first to detect a situation of exploitation and have a role to play in assisting the police in disrupting criminal networks.
- To work on all aspects of counter trafficking in cooperation with partners from other public administrations, law enforcement, health care organisations, NGOs and private sector organisations.
- To ensure that local public officials involved in the identification and assistance to victims are aware of their respective roles and responsibilities and are using formal cooperation structures and MoUs where appropriate.
- To raise awareness of the problem of human trafficking by providing adequate training to local actors and by implementing awareness raising campaigns towards the general public or among vulnerable groups.
- To incorporate anti-trafficking activities in the wider crime prevention strategies and structures within the city/municipality.
- To establish and strengthen cooperation and partnerships with other local actors, authorities, civil society, private businesses, trade unions and private sector organisations to address and combat trafficking.

Structure of the guidelines

The **first chapter** of the guidelines illustrates the key principles and standards that apply in the design and implementation of all policies and interventions in addressing trafficking at the local level. There are four key principles which call for a human rights-based approach, unconditional and rights-based victim assistance, evidence-based prevention and multi-disciplinary cooperation.

Chapter 2 introduces what trafficking in human beings is and how it is regulated. In addition, example cases of different forms of trafficking are provided to illustrate the many forms of trafficking that have taken place in the Baltic Sea region.

Chapter 3 focuses on mapping out the local trafficking situation and highlights the various questions that municipalities should consider in order to identify local vulnerable groups and risky locations, and to chart the relevant actors and their resources in order to improve local response to trafficking. Knowing the local context and trends is very important when considering the next steps to be taken in identifying victims, providing assistance and preventing human trafficking.

Chapter 4 focuses on identification of victims of trafficking and introduces indicators of trafficking. A large variety of local actors can identify victims when they are given access to and training on how to use indicators of trafficking. It is important for local actors to react immediately and report suspicions further on to appropriate actors in order to ensure proper support and assistance to victims of trafficking and proper investigation of alleged offenders.

Chapter 5 outlines the key issues regarding victim assistance and the different forms of assistance. The chapter highlights the importance of making sure that the support offered meets the individual needs of the victims and that it is offered unconditionally, irrespective of the victims' willingness to cooperate with the authorities.

Finally, **chapter 6** focuses on supporting municipalities in the Baltic Sea region in establishing and strengthening measures to prevent trafficking in human beings and related exploitation. The section puts forward a number of measures that municipalities can take in this regard. Many of the measures proposed could be integrated into local social, economic and crime prevention policies and programmes, such as those related to addressing social exclusion and marginalization, safe migration, integration of migrants, poverty, education, violence against women, and so forth. The provided action points emphasize the need to establish pro-active rather than reactive prevention strategies. Such pro-active policies are more cost effective and save resources in the end.

The **summary table** recaps the main action points for municipalities in order to strengthen their counter trafficking activities as regards mapping of the local situation, identification of victims, provision of assistance as well as prevention of human trafficking.

1. Key principles and standards

The international framework to address trafficking in human beings is rich and articulated. There are three fundamental instruments, which are particularly relevant in the Baltic Sea region i.e. the UN Trafficking Protocol⁶, the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings⁷ and the EU Anti-Trafficking Directive⁸. The guidelines draw upon international law to address trafficking in human beings (THB) to suggest a set of four key principles and standards that should inform the action of municipalities in the work against THB in the Baltic Sea region.

A human rights-based approach

A human rights-based approach should be integrated into all anti-trafficking interventions and guide the action of municipalities and their partners. Trafficking in human beings constitutes a gross violation of human rights, and an offence to the dignity and integrity of victims. It is both a consequence and a cause of human rights violations. Applying a human rights-based approach means that the rights of trafficked persons shall be at the center of all efforts to prevent and combat trafficking and to protect, assist and provide redress to victims. Such an approach shall be gender-sensitive and child-friendly as trafficking affects women, men and girls and boys who may be exploited for a variety of purposes; interventions (e.g. policies, programs, services) therefore should take into account the different needs and rights of women and men, girls and boys and avoid any unintended negative human rights impact (e.g. stigmatization).⁹ Such human rights considerations should be integrated into the relevant policies and programs of municipalities, in particular those related to addressing social exclusion and marginalization, poverty, health, education, public order (e.g. measures related to begging or prostitution) and public procurement.

Unconditional and rights-based victim assistance

Assistance provided to victims should be rights-based and unconditional, i.e. access to support, protection and assistance should not depend on victims' willingness or ability to cooperate with law enforcement authorities in investigations or criminal proceedings.¹⁰

The principle of unconditional assistance is explicitly set out in the Council of Europe Convention and in the EU Anti-Trafficking Directive at least for the duration of the reflection/recovery period.¹¹

Evidence-based prevention

Policies, programmes or other interventions aimed at preventing trafficking in human beings should be based on solid empirical evidence and knowledge of the phenomenon and the way in which it manifests itself on the territory of the municipality. A good territorial analysis that maps out populations at risk, locations where risky situations (might) occur, causes of the phenomenon, needs of populations affected and availability of resources and competences should therefore inform the interventions.

Prevention policies at local level should take into account those issues that foster demand that leads to exploitation and trafficking, address factors increasing vulnerability (e.g. measures related to discrimination and inequality) and strengthen the protection of law for those who are vulnerable to victimization, particularly protecting them against discrimination.

Multi-disciplinary cooperation

Multi-disciplinary cooperation in areas such as human rights, migration, gender, equality, non-discrimination, labour, health, education, social inclusion and security is crucial to effectively prevent trafficking in human beings, protect victims and punish perpetrators. This requires that different sectors of public administration - at local, regional, and national level - systematically work together with civil society organisations, as well as trade unions and businesses, to establish effective ways to collaborate and coordinate their action in the prevention of human trafficking and protection of victims' rights on the basis of a shared human-rights approach.¹² Multidisciplinary cooperation should also be developed between public authorities and civil society organisations in countries of origin, transit and destination.

2. Defining trafficking in human beings

Trafficking is a serious crime and a gross violation of human rights of a person. Effective action to prevent and combat such a global problem requires a comprehensive international approach in the countries of origin, transit and destination that includes “measures to prevent such trafficking, to punish the traffickers and to protect the victims of such trafficking, including by protecting their internationally recognized human rights”.¹³ Several international instruments govern the regulation of trafficking at the global and European level.

The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime provides the first overarching, international definition of trafficking in human beings. The Protocol has been ratified by all CBSS Member States.

According to the Trafficking Protocol (Art. 3a):

“Trafficking in persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

Following the UN Palermo Protocol trafficking in persons consists of three elements: the act, the means and the purpose.

ACT

- Recruitment
- Transport
- Transfer
- Harbouring or Receipt of persons

MEANS

- Threat or use of force
- Coercion
- Abduction
- Fraud
- Deception
- Abuse of power or vulnerability
- Giving payments or benefits

PURPOSE

- Exploitation including:
- Sexual exploitation
 - Forced labour
 - Slavery or similar practices
 - Removal of organs
 - Other types of exploitation

Human trafficking is a crime with a comprehensive but complex and multifaceted definition, especially where the exploitation can have many forms such as sexual exploitation, forced labour and removal of organs, but also forced begging and forced criminality can take place. The consent of the victim to the intended exploitation is considered irrelevant when any of the listed means have been used (Art 3b).

The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings of 2005 further highlights the principle that trafficking in human beings constitutes a violation of human rights and an offence to the dignity and integrity of a person. It is a legally binding instrument that aims to prevent trafficking, protect its victims and prosecute the traffickers. The Council of Europe Convention has been signed and ratified by all the CBSS Member States except the Russian Federation.¹⁴

Finally, the at the EU-level EC Directive 2011/36/EU on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and protecting victims was adopted on 21 March 2011. The directive aims to improve the protection for victims of human trafficking and to enhance prevention by strengthening the prosecution of the perpetrators of human trafficking. The Directive applies to all EU Member States in the Baltic Sea region except Denmark.

Trafficking cases from the Baltic Sea region

Next some example cases of trafficking in persons are presented from the Baltic Sea region to outline different types of exploitation encountered by victims.

Labour trafficking

In 2008-2010 a total of 26 men from Kyrgyzstan were recruited to work at a wood processing plant located in a small town in North-Western Finland. The recruitment was done by a supervisor working at the plant who was originally from Kyrgyzstan himself. He accommodated the men in the basement of his house and at the plant in poor conditions. The men worked long hours without holidays or mandatory overtime compensations and they were advised not to move around the town by the supervisor or be in contact with the local Finns. He also collected the men's bank cards and codes and withdrew most of the wages directly from their bank accounts totalling up to 240 000 euros. The victims were left with around 300-800 euros a month, part of which they sent to their families back home. The supervisor also confiscated the victims' passports and stopped them from leaving the country. Moreover, he used threats and violence to control the men and to make sure they would not tell anyone outside about their situation. The Finnish plant owners denied knowing what had been going on and condemned the actions of their employee. The man was convicted for human trafficking, assault and aggravated embezzlement in the first instance court. The judgment was later confirmed by the court of appeal which sentenced him to prison for 3,5 years and ordered him to pay hundreds of thousands of euros in damages to the victims.

Sham marriage

A 36 year old Latvian woman was promised a job in the UK working with the children of Latvian families. When she arrived in the UK, her passport was taken away and she was married to a Pakistani man. The woman was then exploited and kept as a prisoner for more than a year in Manchester and Birmingham by the man and his associates. In one house, she was kept in a tiny attic bedroom while the man and the rest of his family lived downstairs. The second house had metal bars over the windows and she was not allowed outside alone. The victim's ordeal ended only after she began writing down what had happened to her and managed to tear off a partial address from a piece of mail and rang her mother, who then informed Interpol. The perpetrators were found guilty of human trafficking by the UK Court.

Sexual exploitation

A number of Belarusian women and girls were recruited in Belarus with the promise of a good, well-paid job in Poland. When the women arrived in Poland their passports were confiscated and they were forced to engage in prostitution. The victims were forbidden from going out and threats of violence were used as means of coercion. The victims were told to work to repay the money that the perpetrator had paid for them and a part of their earnings was collected regularly. The Polish court found that the three Belarusian perpetrators (two men and one woman) took advantage of the economic difficulties and financial problems of the victims, lied to them regarding the real nature of the job offered in Poland and exploited them in forced prostitution. The three defendants were found guilty of human trafficking and other procuring-related offences by the first instance court and later also by the court of appeal and were sentenced to prison for three to four and a half years.

Forced begging

In July 2012, a Romanian-speaking outreach worker in Oslo noticed that a Romanian woman begging on the streets of Oslo with four other people seemed scared and nervous. After speaking with the woman, the social worker understood that a trafficker controlled the group. Safe housing was provided and the victims were all granted a reflection period. The police started an investigation and identified two suspects – men from Romania and Kosovo. The suspects had recruited four men and one woman in Romania by promising them work in Norway. All five agreed to go by minibus to Norway, without any further agreement on payment for the travel. The victims' ID cards were removed from them during the journey. In Norway, the two suspects said that they would get back the ID cards upon payment of a total of €1000. They were forced to steal petrol and to beg, and after refusing to steal more, the other suspect struck one of the victims, and they all received death threats. Oslo District Court convicted the two men on several counts of trafficking in January 2015.

Forced criminality

In 2009, two Romanian men recruited two 16-year-old boys to go with them to Sweden, where it would be easy for them to get jobs. The boys' parents agreed to send them to Sweden. The boys flew from Romania via London to Stockholm Skavsta Airport. Upon arrival the boys were forced to steal. The crime was first discovered when the boys stole a car on the day after their arrival and were arrested by the police in Nyköping. The suspicions increased after a few incidents where the boys were arrested for shoplifting, and the police started an investigation into human trafficking. The court of first instance came to the conclusion that the two men should not be convicted of human trafficking. The boys were never under threat or locked up, they had access to a phone, and they never expressed that they needed help from their families or the police. However, the Court of Appeal found enough evidence of human trafficking and sentenced the men to one year in prison and to pay 60000 SEK to the boys in damages. The Court held that that the two men had a decisive influence over the two boys. The boys only spoke Romanian and were in a foreign country with the two older men. The two victims did not have any money and were totally dependent on the older men for support and to find jobs. The fact that the boys might have agreed to steal in the first place was found irrelevant.

3. Mapping the local trafficking situation

Human trafficking is a global phenomenon, but it also has a local dimension as well as specific implications for local communities in municipalities, which clearly have a responsibility to address exploitative practices in the local community.¹⁵

The starting point for addressing human trafficking at the local level should be based on analysis of the local situation. Local authorities should build their own knowledge and analysis of the features and trends that trafficking and exploitation display in their municipality (i.e. scale, nature, patterns, risks, causes of the crime). This mapping and diagnostic of the situation should provide the basis for designing local interventions including specific measures and/or integrating them into existing policies, programs and services.¹⁶ This process can be called conducting a local safety audit on human trafficking.¹⁷ In the following sections it will simply be referred to as a mapping of the local (trafficking) situation on the ground.

The mapping is meant to be a multidisciplinary and participatory process. In conducting this process, municipalities should involve and consult not only different services of their administration, such as social, health, housing, education, employment, youth, child protection departments and municipal police – but also reach out to other relevant public institutions, such as police, prosecutors, judiciary, employment and migration services. Additionally, key partners in this mapping phase are NGOs, especially those with expertise on trafficking in human beings or working on migrants' rights and violence against women, faith based groups, trade unions and migrant, ethnic and other minorities' organisations. Moreover, during the mapping process, municipalities could also consult relevant private sector actors such as recruitment and employment agencies, associations of employers in the hotel, cleaning, construction or restaurant sectors.¹⁸ The rationale for selecting various stakeholders is to involve all those actors that encounter or can potentially encounter exploited and trafficked persons and that could contribute their knowledge of the local community and areas when municipalities are designing and implementing of policies to address human trafficking.

In mapping the situation, local authorities should look for information on trafficking in human beings available at national level from existing anti-trafficking national coordination and reporting mechanisms and combine it with information from municipal records related to crime, data from social services on vulnerable populations, data from local police and NGOs on trafficked persons, traffickers and existing anti-trafficking initiatives. Overleaf a set of tables provide guidance on questions to consider and actors to involve when conducting the mapping, in particular with regard to:

- the identification of populations at risk of trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation, forced labour, forced begging and criminality;
- locations where potential victims and victims might be encountered;
- traffickers, enablers and users.

In relation to the identification of groups at risk of trafficking for sexual exploitation, it is important to consider what is known about prostitution and persons engaged in prostitution at the local level, local trends, relevant locations both outdoor and indoor, and groups at risk. The mapping should also research which organisations work in this field and provide support and services to women and men involved in prostitution; these organisations are likely to have very precise and specific knowledge also in relation to trafficking. Many different local actors have relevant information but may not always be able to recognise a trafficking situation, yet - if trained - they could help identify and refer to support potential victims of trafficking. These actors include social and health service providers, victim services, as well as private citizens and neighbourhood organisations.

Table 1.

Populations at risk – trafficking for sexual exploitation

Questions to be considered at the local level (mainly in destination countries)	Key actors who can identify people at risk and encounter trafficked persons
<p><i>Women and men involved in prostitution:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many women/men are known to be engaged in prostitution in your area? • What is the demographic profile of these women/men? • Where do they come from? • What proportion of women/men has a pimp/procurer? • What proportion may be victims of international/domestic trafficking? • Are there increasing numbers of migrant women working in bars or in the service sector? • What is the profile of foreign women/men involved in prostitution and who are their clients? • Are the numbers increasing? • In which areas of the city do these women/men live? • In which locations are services offered and provided? • What policies and services exist to support the women and men involved in prostitution? <p><i>Migrants (including EU-citizens), irregular migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and foreign students</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many foreign students, recent migrants, refugees and migrant women are living in your area? • Where do they come from? • What are their circumstances and needs (housing, income, languages, work and training)? • What is their risk of sexual exploitation? • What policies and/or services exist to support them? • What are the gaps in services for them, how can they be filled? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs & service providers • Social and health services • Victim Services • Local police <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelters • Migrant/Refugee support groups • Migrant services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local neighbourhoods • Sex buyers • Private citizens

Source: Adapted from Local Safety Audit Guide: to Prevent Trafficking in Persons and Related Exploitation (2013), 32-34.

As regards labour trafficking and other newer forms of trafficking such as forced begging and forced criminality, local actors should consider a number of issues concerning local migration flows and situations of exclusion and marginalisation as a starting point for their mapping. It is important to understand in which sectors migrant workers are employed, what are their terms of employment, what kind of services they use, whether and who are the local actors offering support services. The mapping should pay particular attention to the situation of migrants in an irregular situation – especially undocumented – who face a higher risk of exploitation; asylum seekers, refugees and even foreign students may also be in a vulnerable position and face risk of exploitation. To the extent possible, data should be disaggregated by gender, age and ethnic background. A number of local actors can identify potential victims of labour trafficking, including different inspection authorities, trade unions, migrant service providers, as well as private citizens and consumers (see table below).

Table 2.

Populations at risk – labour trafficking

Questions to be considered at the local level (mainly in destination countries)	Key actors who can identify people at risk
<p><i>Migrant workers (including EU-citizens), irregular migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and foreign students</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many migrant workers, foreign students and undocumented migrants are living in your area? • What industries, jobs are they working in? • Where do they live and how do they go to work? • Are there any identified trends in terms of newcomers in the municipality? • What is the background and demographic profile of this population? • What are their working conditions and wages? • Are they aware of their rights, do they receive any support and services? • What services and policies are needed to provide them with greater protection from exploitation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour inspectors • Local police • Health/fire/tax inspectors • Trade unions • Social services • Medical personnel • Public procurement officials • NGOs • Victim Services • Migrant/refugees support groups • Migrant communities organisations • Recruitment agencies • Private citizens

Source:
Adapted from Local Safety Audit Guide: to Prevent Trafficking in Persons and Related Exploitation (2013), 34-35.

Table 3.

Populations at risk – forced begging and criminality

Questions to be considered at the local level (mainly in destination countries)	Key actors who can identify people at risk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there people begging in your area? What is their background? • Is the begging organised and how? Is there someone bringing them into town and coming to pick them up? How much time do they spend begging? Is there someone watching/ controlling? • Do they do other activities in addition to begging? • Where do the persons begging live? What are the conditions? • Are there any support services available? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there indications of forced criminality in your area, e.g. shoplifting or mobile phone thefts done by populations at risk? • Are these persons working and moving in groups within a larger region? What is their background? • Are there reports from other municipalities in your region with similar situations of organised begging or forced criminality? • Were the people involved previously arrested in other cities for similar crimes? • Are the items stolen different than you would expect e.g. women/girls stealing men's razors? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local police • Social services • Medical personnel • NGOs • Victim Services • Migrant/refugees support groups • Migrant communities organisations • Church or faith-based organisations • Private citizens

Source:

Adapted from Local Safety Audit Guide: to Prevent Trafficking in Persons and Related Exploitation (2013), 34-35.

In countries of origin, the mapping should aim at identifying the relevant groups at risk to be recruited and trafficked at local level. It is also important to map key actors who are working with and supporting these vulnerable groups.

Table 4.

Countries of origin - Populations at risk - trafficking for sexual exploitation and labour exploitation

Populations at risk - trafficking for sexual exploitation and labour exploitation (mainly in origin countries)	Key actors who can identify people at risk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people who reside in public care institutions • People living in areas with a declining economic situation, especially unemployed persons and persons with loans and credit problems • Women/men involved in prostitution • Single mothers in a poor economic situation • Persons with substance dependence • Persons with physical or mental disabilities • Minority groups with low level or no national language knowledge • Victims of violence • Homeless persons • Discriminated and marginal groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs & service providers • Social and health services • Public care institutions • Teachers • Medical personnel • Local police • Libraries • Shelters • Unemployment office • Church • Companies providing property and maintenance services • Private citizens

After identifying the specific groups at risk, the mapping should focus on researching local social and economic trends concerning these populations. The next table introduces some of the questions to be considered.

Table 5.

**Countries of origin:
Questions to be considered at the local level**

- How many people live under the poverty line in your area?
- How many unemployed people live in your area?
- Are there support services available for people in need in your area?
- How many people are receiving social benefits and other type of assistance in your area?
- Are there women/men engaged in prostitution in your area or in nearby larger cities?
- Are there women/men who are/were involved in prostitution abroad?
- In which areas do the poorest groups of population live?
- What are the circumstances and needs of people living in areas with poor economic situation?
- How many people are being regularly treated for substance dependency?
- How do they live?
- How many cases of domestic violence are reported in your area per year?
- What is the profile of victims of physical or emotional violence?
- Do they receive any social services and assistance?
- How many people travel abroad in search of employment annually?
- What is the profile of these people?
- How do they find employment abroad?
- What are their working conditions and pay abroad?
- What industries, jobs are they working in?

Another important component of the mapping is the identification of places/locations where vulnerable groups or trafficked persons may be encountered, and of places where exploitation and trafficking is likely to occur. This information can be vital to informing targeted prevention measures such as awareness raising (see Chapter 6 on prevention). The table below provides a list of possible locations to consider in the mapping.

Table 6.

Locations to be considered relevant

(for mapping and for targeted prevention measures such as awareness raising)

Transportation hubs: airports, train stations, ferry terminals & ports, bus and metro stations and other locations where migrants may be informally recruited	Libraries or other such locations with free wi-fi and or free access to computer
Red light districts or areas known for street prostitution, selling of drugs, counterfeit goods and cigarettes, or begging	Clinics and hospitals, including global clinics offering services to undocumented migrants, and hospital emergency departments
Shopping malls, public parks or other locations where young people, migrants, or other potentially relevant groups gather and to spend time	Areas with ethnic shops, market places, ethnic restaurants, internet cafes and telephone shops, cafes and money transfer services where migrants may spend time
Homeless shelters or daytime centres targeting vulnerable groups such as street children, people with substance dependency and addiction, ex-prisoners or unemployed persons	Educational establishments, especially vocational schools and schools for children with disabilities
Centres offering services to migrants, including information centres, cultural centres, language schools	Social service centres
Big construction sites where migrant workers are employed	Asylum centres and reception points Consulates and embassies
Big agricultural farms/areas/regions where migrant workers are employed	Employment services and recruitment & job placement agencies

Municipalities can play an active role also in the prevention of trafficking in human beings through the gathering of information and data about perpetrators at the local level. This information may constitute a useful intelligence source to assist investigation and prosecution of traffickers and exploiters and should therefore be appropriately shared with relevant law enforcement and prosecutorial authorities working on trafficking in human beings.

Traffickers operate at the local level, in different locations and contexts, by recruiting, transporting and exploiting victims. They are commonly seen as part of highly organised and powerful criminal networks that span countries and regions and operate swiftly and fluidly. However, traffickers often function as small time operators, drawing on personal and sometimes family relationships. There are various ways in which individuals can be involved in trafficking process. The term “traffickers” can be used to refer to recruiters, transporters, those who exercise control over trafficked person, those who transfer and/or harbour trafficked persons in exploitative situations, those involved in related crimes and those who profit either directly or indirectly from trafficking, its component acts and related offences.

At the EU-level traffickers come from different countries and have diverse national and ethnic backgrounds; however the majority possesses citizenship of an EU Member State. The majority of perpetrators have strong connections to the country of origin of the victim, they tend to recruit and exploit victims of their own nationality. The majority of traffickers are men, however the number of women involved is increasing. Sometimes the line between victim and offender is blurred as former victims in many cases become traffickers when they are forced to recruit others or are offered a respite from direct exploitation by moving up in the hierarchy of the trafficking network.¹⁹

Table 7.

Gathering information about perpetrators

Questions to be considered at the local level	Key actors who can identify people at risk
<p><i>Traffickers, enablers, users – sexual exploitation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is known about the traffickers in your area? • What industries exist within your area that may use or enable sexual exploitation? • Where are they located? • Are there any third party agencies recruiting workers in your area? • Who are the enablers/observers of sexual exploitation? • How many sex buyers are there in your area? • How big is the problem? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local police • Social and health services • NGOs • Victim Services • Migrant/refugees support groups • Taxi drivers • Hotel staff • Local neighbourhood associations • Private citizens

What services or programs exist that are targeting the demand side of sexual exploitation?

- What is the background and demographic profile of this population?
- What services and policies are needed to reduce demand?

Traffickers, enablers, users – labour trafficking, forced begging and criminality

- What is known about people exploiting labour in your city or area?
- Do you have any information about forced begging and forced criminality?
- Who are the organisers or who benefit from these activities?
- Do other municipalities experience the same challenges?
- Are there mechanisms for exchange of information between municipalities in your country?
- What industries may use or enable labour exploitation?
- Who are the enablers/observers of labour exploitation, begging or forced criminality?
- What services or programs are targeting the demand side of labour exploitation?
- Are there any codes of ethics for companies?
- Do local companies monitor their supply chain?

- Local police
- Labour inspectors
- Health/fire/tax inspectors
- Trade unions
- Social and health services
- Public procurement officials
- NGOs
- Victim Services
- Migrant/refugees support groups
- Taxi drivers
- Hotel staff
- Local neighbourhood associations
- Private citizens

Finally, the mapping should also involve a component directed at gathering information on what resources are available for municipalities to engage and mobilize, both in terms of services and capacities within their own administration and on the territory of their municipality i.e. from third parties. In this regard, the mapping should be used to develop a map of services available specifically for victims of human trafficking and also other services, which could be relevant for people at risk (e.g. social welfare, employment, health, education, counselling, legal). Another outcome of the mapping should also be the identification of training needs among municipality's frontline operators who may be engaged in the identification of victims and potential victims and in the delivery of support services.

If there are no resources available at the local level to conduct the mapping to the scale suggested, one option is to focus on certain areas or types of trafficking which are considered particularly prominent in your area. Another good option is to incorporate human trafficking into existing more general crime prevention or outreach policies and interventions. In the Baltic Sea region many cities and municipalities already conduct local safety audits or have in place urban security plans which focus on actions to improve the safety of certain locations, neighbourhoods or groups. These cities and municipalities could include also a diagnosis of human trafficking issues into their existing or on-going processes. Local anti-trafficking strategies and action plans could then be built upon existing local authorities' programmes and policies on relevant and complementary issues such as those addressing social exclusion, violence against women and migrant integration.

Action points for municipalities

- Conduct a mapping of the local trafficking situation to identify populations at risk, to identify relevant locations and to gather information about perpetrators and facilitators of trafficking.
- In case of limited or scarce resources, include the diagnosis of trafficking situation into existing crime prevention strategies, or make sure the topic is covered in policies, structures and programmes that address, e.g., social exclusion, violence against women or migrant integration at the municipality level.
- Gather information on what resources and services are available within your own administration and within the municipality, i.e., from third parties and create a list outlining the services available specifically for victims of human trafficking as well as for people at risk. This can be used to improve identification, assistance and prevention efforts within the local area.

4. Identification of victims of trafficking

Timely and proper identification of victims of trafficking in human beings is of extreme importance when it comes to tackling human trafficking. Identification is the key in protecting potential victims, safeguarding their rights and ensuring that victims receive the assistance they are entitled to. Proper identification of trafficked persons is also a pre-condition for making perpetrators accountable for exploitation and can lead to growing number of criminal investigations and may help disclose other related crimes. Ideally, the proper identification of potential victims can also disrupt the trafficking process before it even starts and thus prevent the exploitation of vulnerable individuals in the first place.²⁰

Often times local actors are in a better position than central/national authorities to recognise the first signs of human trafficking, given their proximity they are often the first to initialize the chain of assistance and support for the victims. They can also help identify traffickers and other perpetrators.

Who are victims of trafficking?

Victims of trafficking originate from all over the world and present a variety of backgrounds and experiences. People who are physically, psychologically or economically vulnerable and who do not have enough inner resources or external assistance and support are at risk to become victims. In contrast to the vulnerability of victims it is the perceived or real power that traffickers possess and/or wield enabling them to take advantage of the persons' dependent status or insecure state which results in an emotional, economical, physical or psychological power imbalance between the victim and the perpetrator. This imbalance can be caused by several factors, such as family circumstances, personal relationships or employment relationships. Many factors can also render the person insecure, which may be taken advantage of by the traffickers. These factors are outlined below:

- young age,
- serious illness,
- substance dependency,
- serious illness or substance dependency of a close family member,
- difficult economic situation,
- homelessness,
- psychological state,
- physical or mental disability,
- previous traumatic experiences, e.g., previous sexual exploitation or prostitution, and
- status of being a foreigner/asylum seekers/refugee,
- gender identity or minority status

Victims of trafficking may have different residence statuses. They can be undocumented (irregular) migrants, but they can also just as well be EU-citizens or third country nationals with valid residence permits or nationals of your country, who end up in situations of trafficking and exploitation.²¹ Indeed, according to Eurostat (2014), at the European level as many as 65 per cent of registered victims of trafficking are EU-citizens.²²

At the same time it is important to remember that profiling potential victims and risk groups should not lead to generalizations and discriminatory policies, approaches and attitudes. Rather than focusing only on a person's migration status, the monitoring and enforcement activities should aim at providing information and protecting the fundamental rights of migrants and other vulnerable persons and at preventing their abuse and exploitation.²³

Irregular migrants at risk to be trafficked

Often irregular migrants face the highest risk of exploitation because of their vulnerable, even clandestine status which is then exploited by traffickers and other criminals, including in the formal or informal job market. Usually undocumented migrants find it very difficult to contact authorities or seek help from governmental institutions because they are afraid of deportation.²⁴ This lack of trust results in problems of identification which is exacerbated by lack of awareness of trafficking in the first place. Therefore co-operation among NGOs, local authorities and other local actors is of utmost importance when it comes to building trust among vulnerable populations and groups at risk.

Process of victim identification

As a rule, identifying a trafficked person is a complex and time consuming process. In principle the identification is actually a two stage process: the first stage is to assess whether there are reasonable grounds to treat someone as "a victim", and the second stage is to make a decision on victim status. Sometimes it takes weeks for a person to develop enough trust in the authorities or social services to be able to speak out and share their experiences with others. At the same time, the identification procedure should be carried out quickly and accurately because it grants the victims access to necessary assistance in the first place. Therefore it is important to ensure that frontline officials and actors are aware of the most important trafficking indicators and can identify victims and set the chain of assistance in motion. When a front-line officer has reasonable suspicion that a person is a victim of trafficking she or he should immediately refer the person to assistance and support services. Some countries have in place a national referral mechanism, a help-line or other mechanism to activate the chain of assistance which should be followed (see also chapter 5).

A victim-centred human rights approach calls for informing victims about their rights. Some victims may not even realize that their rights have been violated. Indeed, trafficking victims seldom identify themselves as victims and rarely seek assistance under the "trafficking label". Instead they may encounter authorities or local actors when they are using or accessing different existing services at the local level (e.g., visiting a doctor or renewing their residence permit or other documents). Local authorities can also encounter victims because of some irregularity in their work place, because of a fire alarm, an inspection or other such occurrences.

VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING ARE SELDOM IN A SITUATION WHERE THEY WOULD IDENTIFY THEMSELVES AS VICTIMS, BECAUSE THE PERSON IS:

- Unwilling to be labeled as a victim or stigmatized
- Unaware of her/his rights and the concept of human trafficking or that her/his experience constitutes human trafficking
- Unaware of the assistance granted to a victim of trafficking
- Having feelings of guilt or shame about her/his exploitative situation
- Afraid of retributions to her/his family or her/himself
- Afraid of imprisonment, deportation or monetary fines
- Dependent on the abuser ("Stockholm Syndrome")
- Regarding her/his situation as "better" than her/his previous (unemployment, extreme poverty, violence, conflict and similar scenarios)

“Victim of human trafficking” is a legal concept, and not a quality, condition or attribute of a person. It is the authorities who have the responsibility for verifying a person as a victim of human trafficking and it shall not be expected or demanded that the person herself or himself must feel or behave as “a victim” (in the sense of being totally dependent on help and protection from someone else). Nor shall gratitude be demanded or expected. It is however very important to accurately identify potential victims. Sometimes trafficked persons may be treated like “criminals” themselves because of their irregular migration status or because of the activities they have been compelled to do.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCURATE AND EARLY IDENTIFICATION

Victims of trafficking...

- require specialised assistance and protection.
- are likely to have immediate and acute physical and psychological health needs.
- have suffered from serious and grave crimes and may still be at risk. Particular arrangements and procedures can therefore be necessary for both the victim, her/his loved ones and the personnel working for the organisation providing assistance.
- may have been forced to commit crimes while being trafficked or as a result of their trafficking situation and are afraid of authorities.

Sometimes it might be easier for the authorities to close their eyes than to investigate deeper what lies behind the boy pickpocketing tourists in the shopping mall or the woman begging and selling fake jewelry in the streets. However, in the recent years an increasing number of cases related to forced begging and criminality has been detected also in the Baltic Sea region.

IF YOU SUSPECT that an individual is a victim of trafficking and if she/he needs help you should, with the consent of the person, report the situation to the relevant authorities, organisations or assistance providers.

IF YOU IDENTIFY someone as a potential victim of trafficking you should treat them as a victim of trafficking.

YOU MUST ACT FAST to assist a victim of trafficking, so you must be familiar with the procedures.

Indicators of trafficking in human beings

There are a number of indicators that can help to identify a potential victim of trafficking. For example, the International Labour Organization has developed operational indicators on trafficking in human beings which provide a very detailed aid for identifying and recognising cases of trafficking.²⁵ Moreover many countries have in place their own guidelines and check lists for identifying victims of trafficking. It is important to know the local context and have knowledge of the trafficking situation in the region and or local area combined with general and more direct indicators to build a clearer picture of the person’s situation and the probability of them being a trafficking victim. The indicators listed here are of general nature and can be supplemented with available national indicators.

GENERAL INDICATORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- Age
- Gender
- Nationality/Ethnicity
- Signs of abuse or physical violence
- Signs of trauma or psychological abuse – uncertainty, insecurity, nervousness
- Sector of employment (e.g., agriculture, construction, cleaning, restaurant sectors, domestic work)

Human trafficking is a complex and multifaceted crime that takes many forms. Therefore it is important to keep in mind specific indicators of trafficking for sexual exploitation, for forced labour and for forced begging/criminality. They may share commonalities, but some aspects vary according to local circumstances, legislation and particularities. In addition, the experience of anti-trafficking actors shows that different forms of human trafficking often cannot be clearly separated in practice, they overlap with each other as people are often exploited for multiple purposes. A victim of forced labour can also be exploited sexually or a victim of forced begging may be also exploited in forced labour and prostitution for example.

Sexual exploitation

DOES THE PERSON...

- ...perform sexual services against her/his will or under control?
- ...perform or provide services in an environment that is different from that advertised or expected because the environment is sexualised?
- ...provide sexual services under different circumstances than previously agreed?

IS THE PERSON...

- ...allowed to choose the services given or to whom?
- ...able to stop providing services on her/his own accord?
- ...able to refuse unprotected or violent sex?
- ...aware of the regulations on prostitution in the country in which she/he is in, including the legal age to be involved in prostitution?
- ...threatened with violence or other forms of punishment or threats to loved ones?
- ...able to keep all or part of her/his earnings?
- ...threatened to be reported to the authorities for deportation?
- ...allowed to keep their passport or is it been confiscated by someone?

Labour exploitation

DOES THE PERSON...

- ... have a contract?
- ... have a work permit?
- ... work illegally long hours?
- ... receive very low or random payment or no payment at all?
- ... work in dangerous conditions (including physically dangerous and unsanitary)?
- ... have the necessary safety gear (including equipment and clothing)?
- ... have the ability to terminate her/his work situation?
- ... know her/his labour rights and that she/he can join a trade union organisation?
- ... work in an environment other than advertised?
- ... have their passport or has it been confiscated by the employer?
- ... live with the employer?
- ... have any free time which they can spend without monitoring from the employer?

Forced begging or criminality

IS THE PERSON...

- ... forced to beg or commit acts of petty crime – for example stealing or selling drugs – especially if she/he is disabled, elderly or underage, or in debt?
- ... threatened with violence or punishment if she/he does not steal or collect enough?
- ... forced to give part or all of her/his earnings to someone else?
- ... living and travelling in large groups across the entire country or region without ability to leave or move freely on their own?
- ... have their own identity documents with them or have they been confiscated or sold?
- ... living in a site which is controlled through e.g., video surveillance or has windows with bars?
- living in a place which is over-crowded, unhealthy or has no basic hygiene facilities?

From the victims' perspective, it is essential to make an overall assessment of their experience. Therefore, attention should be paid to the totality of the situation and elements that render the victim unable to leave the situation he/she is in.²⁶ Focus should be paid on assessing the means by which the victims are controlled, their indebtedness made worse, or their freedom of movement and their sovereignty restricted.²⁷ Moreover, trafficking in human beings is by its nature a process rather than a single event, and as such the situation of a single victim may also change over time over a continuum of different levels of abuse and exploitation. What in the beginning could be considered or identified as verging on exploitation can later turn into something much more grave in nature and ultimately into a situation of trafficking.

Who can identify victims at the local level?

The role and experiences of municipalities in identifying victims of trafficking differs a lot in the Baltic Sea region. Who can officially identify a victim of trafficking depends on the country in question. Often times the official identification is done by authorities, but for example, in **Norway** no agency, organisation or commission has a monopoly or responsibility for identifying a potential victim of trafficking. In principle all relevant agencies, organisations or individuals who have a concern that a person may be exploited in human trafficking have a responsibility to identify the person as a potential victim, and refer her or him to the responsible authorities and assistance measures. A person can also identify herself or himself as a victim of trafficking. The police, the Prosecutor's Office, the Immigration Authorities or the Child Welfare Services can each individually confirm the status of a potential victim of trafficking.

In **Poland**, on the other hand, only the law enforcement agencies such as the Prosecutor's Office, Police and Border Guard can formally identify a victim of trafficking in human beings and refer her or him for assistance to the mandated service provider – National Consulting and

Intervention Centre for Victims of Trafficking (KCIK). However, the KCIK and social services can identify potential victims and provide assistance even if the person has not been officially identified as a victim of human trafficking.

In **Latvia**, formal identification procedures are established by legal acts. Only mandated NGOs, the Police, and Prosecutor can make a decision on victim status. Other competent institutions and practitioners can assess whether there are reasonable grounds to identify a person as potential victim and refer her/him to a mandated NGO or Police Unit for formal identification. In **Sweden**, all relevant actors, mainly social services in the municipalities are responsible for identification of victims.

Since trafficking cases are fairly rarely encountered in comparison to many other crimes (e.g. domestic violence, drug offences), the experiences of different municipalities are varied when it comes to dealing with trafficking cases. Moreover, the forms of exploitation encountered by local actors are different, ranging from labour trafficking to sexual exploitation, forced begging and criminality to forced marriage and exploitative sham marriages. Regardless of the formal identification system in place, a variety of different local actors can encounter and thus identify potential victims of trafficking in their line of work. For example in **Finland**, one case of labour trafficking originally came to the attention of the authorities via day care staff who started to wonder why the parents of the children they were looking after did not have days off or any holidays. The parents were working long hours at an ethnic restaurant in poor conditions. Their employers were later found guilty of human trafficking for the purpose of forced labour.

Local actors who can identify or contribute to the identification process at the local level

- Municipal police
- Inspection staff, including labour inspectors, health and fire inspectors, tax inspectors etc.
- Health care workers, including doctors, nurses, midwives, dentists etc.
- Social service staff, including social workers, migrant service providers, psychologists, other persons working with vulnerable and or marginalised groups
- School and daycare staff, including teachers, school psychologists, day care teachers, school nurses and social workers
- Unemployment services
- Other professionals: interpreters, librarians, public procurement officials

- NGOs working with vulnerable groups
- Migrant communities and organisations
- Trade unions
- Church and other faith-based organisations
- Support groups
- Neighborhood associations

- Private businesses: staff of property and maintenance companies, recruitment and job placement agencies etc.
- Taxi drivers, hotel staff, security guards, sales staff
- Private citizens

There are examples of awareness raising campaigns targeting some of these specific local actors, such as taxi drivers, hotel staff or librarians. Taxi drivers, for example, are valuable first level identifiers of not only victims, but also traffickers. As victims are sometimes transported by taxi to/from the location where they are being exploited, taxi drivers are in a unique position to establish direct contact with victims and traffickers. Also, in different cultures, taxi drivers work as referrers for clients looking for the parts of the city where prostitution can be found. Educating taxi drivers regarding the dangers of human trafficking can work as a way to make them aware that they can be facilitators in the trafficking process for users and exploiters and they must be alert. They need to be prepared to report what they have seen and heard. Next an example from **Greece** is provided.

Engaging taxi drivers in identifying victims of human trafficking in Greece.²⁸

In Greece, in the framework of the A21 Campaign the main taxi station around the city were contacted with a goal of promoting the hotline number for victims of trafficking. The partnership was set up between the taxi union and the A21 Campaign. Taxi drivers were given the brochure stating:

Taxi drivers,
What you see or hear might be the clue needed to save a life. Your help is important to identify people often brought to Greece from other countries, usually tricked by false job offers. Once here, they are trapped under the control of someone else, and forced into a life of sexual exploitation. This is known as human trafficking.

Look for people that:

- Don't speak Greek
- Have bruises or marks of abuse
- Look like they are afraid
- Are visibly being controlled by someone else

What to look for and where?

Already in the chapter 3 a list of risky locations was provided. The following table outlines some of the key aspects to be considered when looking at the circumstances of people working or living in certain locations in connection with the trafficking indicators introduced. This list is not exhaustive, but should be considered in the context of circumstances that have been identified as relevant at the local level.

Table 8.

Summary for practitioners on identification

Where to look?	What to look for?
Restaurants, shops, construction sites, agricultural farms, cleaning companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff show signs of physical abuse or restraint • Poor or non-existent safety equipment • Workers do not have suitable clothing for their work • Workers have no days off or holiday time • Workers are not allowed breaks • Employer is holding their identification documents • Workers live on site/ poor conditions/ together with the employer
Apartments, other accommodation locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcrowded conditions, with many people sharing one room • Occupants do not know their own address • Occupants live in sheds, tents or storage areas or offices or on-site at their workplaces • Occupants live together with their employer • Occupants are not allowed outside the house on their own • Minibuses pick up occupants at unusual times

Local authority premises, including offices, schools, construction sites etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers on cleaning contracts arrive in minibuses and appear to be fearful • Workers on building contracts arrive in minibuses and appear to be controlled • Workers do not have their own identification papers • Workers have no days off or holiday time • Workers do not know any local language
Red light districts or areas known for street or open site prostitution, such as parks or truck stops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women/men show signs of physical/ sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement or torture • Special services are offered, included unprotected sex at a low price • Woman/man only knows how to say sex-related words in local language • Women/men appear to be controlled or monitored closely by a pimp • Women/men are not free to come and go as they wish or to take breaks • Women/men appear to be under 18

Source: Adapted from SOLACE – Human Trafficking report 2009, 37-38.

It is important for different actors and private citizens to react and report their suspicions to law enforcement or inspection authorities, if they think a person might be exploited or if there is a problem regarding an unsafe work site, for example. In many countries, the police and labour inspectorates have in place online forms where anyone can report their suspicions or submit a tip even anonymously. Based on these tips, inspection authorities can do check-ups to see if everything is in order. Moreover, also anti-trafficking NGOs, hotlines or trade unions can offer advice and expertise in cases where more information is needed before anything further can be done.

Training on indicators of trafficking

Based on the results of the STROM assessment study, municipality employees and authorities need more training on indicators of trafficking and what to do with suspected victims of trafficking, including where to refer them to. Therefore more regular training would be needed to make sure that the municipality staff and other actors have up-to-date information on the issue, local/regional/national trends and what should be done when a suspected victim of trafficking is encountered by a staff member. However, obviously lack of funds and/or limited resources of different actors place limitations on the amount and quality of work that can be done. Therefore it is important to set local priorities in improving identification of potential trafficking victims (see chapter 3 for more information). These measures can be either general or focus on specific sectors or forms of trafficking, such as labour trafficking as described in the box below.

Berlin Alliance project

The Berlin Alliance project²⁹ aimed to provide a comprehensive approach to combating human trafficking for labour exploitation in the Berlin-Brandenburg area. The project raised awareness among the organisations, institutions and professional groups that come into contact with (potential) victims of trafficking for labour exploitation. Both practical trainings as well as a handbook were developed in order to increase the knowledge of local actors while also improving victim identification and assistance. The handbook and trainings targeted practitioners within state and federal agencies, trade unions, migration, labour and health actors as well as migrant organisations and other relevant stakeholders. In addition, an information brochure on employee rights was developed and disseminated in multiple languages to persons potentially affected by labour exploitation.³⁰

Some cities or rural municipalities have further developed cooperation models to be used when a victim of human trafficking is identified. For example in **Finland**, the city of Tampere has developed a cooperation model together with local NGOs active in the region to make sure they have procedures in place to identify and assist victims of trafficking. Such examples provide promising practices that can be done at the local level to improve victim identification and general awareness on trafficking in persons.

Tampere cooperation model

City of Tampere has developed a cooperation and action model for identification and assistance of victims of trafficking. City of Tampere social services developed the model in cooperation with NGOs Pro-tukipiste and Victim Support, local police authority as well as two other NGOs running local shelters. The aim of the model is to make it easier to identify victims of trafficking and to enable easier recognition of the phenomenon at the local level. Furthermore, the model focused on outlining the different stages of crisis assistance with focus on the rights of the victims. The developed model is based on the idea of establishing a local network of actors who can cooperate in identifying and assisting victims. By introducing clear areas of responsibilities for different stakeholders, the model aims to decrease the time used to identify victims. Naming focal points and training local actors about indicators of trafficking is foreseen to reduce overlaps in the activities organised by different stakeholders which in the end results in savings made in terms of resources. The model also allows the local community to anticipate coming trends, including the increased risk of trafficking.³¹

Action points for municipalities

- Think of all the local actors (e.g. municipal staff, inspection authorities, NGOs) who might meet and identify potential victims of trafficking (and vulnerable groups) in their line of work and establish cooperation with them.
- Make sure indicators of trafficking are available for frontline staff to use and they have received training on how to use them. This will enable improved identification of potential victims at the local level, particularly in risky locations.
- Assign clear responsibilities for different actors involved in the identification and referral process. Who can officially identify a victim of trafficking depends on the country in question – in some countries this can be done by municipality actors, in others it can only be done by authorities such as the police or national assistance system, in others NGOs can identify victims.
- Focus on early identification as this serves the needs of the victim best and is also the most cost effective solution. Find out where to refer a potential victim of trafficking upon reasonable suspicion (depending on their specific needs – e.g. gender, forms of exploitation encountered).

5. Assisting victims of trafficking

Assistance to victims of trafficking is one of the main pillars of the anti-trafficking work. Local governments and municipalities “must ensure that counter-trafficking activities and initiatives extend beyond victim identification to comprehensive victim assistance and support as well. Support provided to the victim must be given in a way that restores their sense of control over their lives. If support is given without respect of the will of the victim, this may lead to secondary victimization.”³²

The role of municipalities in the process of victim assistance is not to be underestimated. The unique predisposition of municipalities is due to the fact that they are placed and work at the ground level, having close and direct contact with all residents. Therefore they could be the first responders to cases of human trafficking, including support and assistance to victims. Irrespective of the victims’ residence status and whether or not the victims are returning back to their place of origin, they have a right to assistance and support that will respect their human rights and respond to their individual needs.

However, provision of assistance and support to trafficked persons is not an easy task due to the complexity of victims’ situation. The experience of being trafficked often includes harsh working conditions, betrayal of trust, and a lack of control over one’s life. Victims often have experienced or witnessed violence, threats, serious injuries, rape, and psychological abuse. The impact of these events may result in psychological symptoms such as depression and anxiety, which necessitate emotional support and care.³³

Assistance and support programmes to victims should be comprehensive, integrated and must reduce suffering and harm.³⁴ A number of international legal instruments³⁵ underline that victims are entitled to safe and appropriate shelter and assistance. Long term experience assisting victims has led service providers to conclude that victims require different types of help, due to factors such as their age, gender, cultural background, residence status, as well as the type of exploitation they have suffered and other relevant factors.

Principles of assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings

State duty to assist victims of human trafficking is underlined in all the relevant international legal instruments and provisions. The European Commission in its Directive³⁶ requires Member States to set up national mechanisms for identifying and assisting victims early on, based on cooperation between law enforcement and civil society bodies, to provide victims with unconditional support, regardless of a victim’s willingness to cooperate in the criminal investigations, prosecution or trial, including safe accommodation and material assistance, medical treatment, psychological assistance, information and legal counselling, translation and interpretation, and safeguarding of the victim’s anonymity.

In the Baltic Sea region, assistance to victims of trafficking is organised in different ways. The range and standards of social services vary considerably among Member States; the practice of cooperation between state and non-state actors, and/or in particular between law enforcement agencies and service providers is also different from country to country. These considerations play an important role in shaping victims’ support and assistance.

In some countries, like in **Sweden**, municipality actors are responsible for organising assistance, while in other countries assistance to victims is provided by NGOs funded by the State or other funding sources in cooperation with local actors. In **Finland**, the National Assistance System for Victims of Trafficking coordinates assistance and provides it directly to victims who do not have municipality residence in **Finland**, while the local municipalities are responsible for providing assistance to their own residents. In **Latvia**, the National Assistance System is funded by the State budget and provided by the mandated NGO. The service provider cooperates with social services in the municipal districts and other local institutions where a trafficked person resides to facilitate re-integration of the victim into society. The National Consulting and Intervention Centre for Victims of human trafficking in **Poland** is fully financed from the State budget as a public task commissioned by the Minister of the Interior to non-governmental organisations. No matter what the system of assistance is in place in the country, the basic principles of assistance should be the same.

A number of international and intergovernmental organisations have developed guidelines for assisting victims of trafficking. They have been further developed by many NGOs for work on the ground level to provide direct assistance to victims. The main principles drafted by different organisations are similar to a large degree and incorporate a human rights-based approach “ensuring equal protections to all victims of trafficking, regardless of their gender, age, or field of work. All victims are entitled to equal access to aid mechanisms, protection, and justice, as well as the choice to access these services in the way that they choose so as not to have their agency compromised (for example, not being obligated to testify in criminal proceedings).”³⁷

Basic principles of assistance to victims of human trafficking.³⁸

Protection of human rights

As trafficking itself constitutes a serious human rights violation and often leads to further violations of the rights of the victims, all assistance and protection efforts should seek to restore the victim’s rights and prevent further violations without discrimination.

Confidentiality

From the first meeting with the victim up to the completion of the assistance process, service providers should ensure that all personal information regarding the victim and the particular case are kept confidentially.

Safety, including a risk assessment

The first step in confronting a threat to the victim is to properly identify and assess the level of risk. Effective risk assessment involves a generic risk assessment conducted in the country of destination, continuous review of the risk assessment, and specific assessment of risk in response to specific events. To facilitate this process, IOM has suggested a range of risk indicators to be considered.³⁹ Where there is strong cooperation between the service providers,

including municipal actors, and the relevant local law enforcement authorities, the process of risk assessment should be conducted in close consultation.⁴⁰

Informed agreement and choice

All assistance to victims of trafficking should proceed on the basis of the victim’s full and informed consent from the time the municipal social worker or other service provider comes into contact with the victim up to the time that the victim is fully reintegrated. The service provider should explain relevant actions, policies, and procedures to the victim in a way that she or he understands before asking her or his consent to any action or proposal.

Empowerment

In recognition of the rights and needs of victims of trafficking to make their own informed choices and decisions, service providers should encourage them to participate as much as possible in the decision-making processes.

Non-victimizing attitude (victim-blaming attitude) and non-discrimination

All service providers should provide the best suitable assistance to the victims of trafficking without discrimination on the basis of disability, ethnicity or national origin, colour, race, creed, gender, marital status, domestic circumstances, age, HIV status, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, religion, language, political belief or any other grounds.⁴¹

Chain of assistance

The chain of assistance is a concept used to describe the network of cooperation between governmental, local and non-governmental actors working in the field of counter-trafficking to ensure help and support to victims. The chain of assistance is often also referred to as the national referral mechanism (NRM). It is a core element of an effective anti-trafficking response. The actors in the chain of assistance include, for example, municipal social services or non-governmental organisations, the police, migration or border guard authorities, health services, prosecutors and lawyers. The chain of assistance should start as soon as there is a reasonably grounded indication for believing that person might be a victim of trafficking. The purpose of the chain of assistance is to refer a victim of trafficking to the most appropriate authority ensuring a victim-centred and rights-based approach throughout the assistance process.

It is also recommended to establish a local or regional referral mechanism – a co-operative framework through which local actors fulfil their obligations to identify, protect and assist victims of trafficking. The basic aim of the referral mechanism is to ensure that human rights of trafficked person are respected and to provide an effective way to refer victims to services. In addition, local referral mechanisms can improve procedures on a broad range of victim-related issues such as residence and return, victim compensation and so forth. Formalised and well-thought through cooperation among various actors can save time, increase effectiveness and reduce costs of the provided services.

For example in **Poland**, where the National Referral Mechanism has been in place since 2005, the model of the voivodship (province) anti-trafficking teams has been gradually established starting from 2010. **Sweden** is also on the way to establish a National Referral Mechanism in 2016. In addition, regional anti-trafficking coordinators are appointed to enable improved assistance to victims of trafficking.

Provincial trafficking teams in Poland

Currently, a special project “Improvement of cooperation in the field of national structures set up to fight human trafficking, through the creation of voivodship (provincial) structures/teams” is being implemented in Poland. Its main aim is to develop a voivodship anti-trafficking team in each of 17 voivodships within the country. The project is implemented by the Ministry of Interior in cooperation with NGOs and the IOM office in Warsaw. The content of the project is based on the experience of the first anti-trafficking team in Mazowieckie voivodship which has been operating since 2010. Additionally, the project aims to establish close cooperation among all relevant stakeholders involved in preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and those responsible for providing support and assistance to victims. The teams are already operating in 16 provinces.

Types of assistance

Assistance to victims of human trafficking should respond directly to the specific needs of the individual in question. These needs cover a large variety of topics that may be relevant for the person identified as a victim of trafficking.

KEY ISSUES FOR THE VICTIM:

- **SAFETY** – personal safety and that of the family or others
- **STATUS** – in the country they have been identified in (legal, irregular migrant, victim or other)
- **CONFIDENTIALITY** – fear of being stigmatised by the public or media and possible family consequences; this is especially acute in cases of trafficking for sexual exploitation
- **FEAR** – of the reprisals by the traffickers and, in case of participation in court proceedings, fear of having to testify in the presence of their trafficker
- **RE-TRAUMATISATION** – from reliving the abuse experienced
- **LIVELIHOOD** – victims worry about how to secure their income and support their families, including financial assistance, receiving compensation and/or back-pay for unpaid wages (labour trafficking).

Assistance to victims needs to take note of all these different issues and be adjusted accordingly. Moreover, the victims have both immediate needs as well as more long term needs. To respond to these specific needs, different actors have developed assistance models and schemes. For example, La Strada network has developed a model of assistance and practical support for victims of trafficking that includes the two types of the assistance: emergency assistance, reflecting the immediate needs of victims, as well as long term assistance.

Two types of assistance to victims of trafficking:

- **Emergency assistance**
- **Long term assistance**

Assistance to trafficked persons generally consists of emergency assistance that principally means crisis intervention care, including medical, psychological, legal and social support, as well as a prior needs assessment of all above mentioned areas of needs. It also includes residential care (shelter, safe housing). An important part of medical care are mental health interventions that can include – according to the individual needs of the person in question – e.g. counselling, cognitive-behavioural therapy, antidepressant drug treatment, alcohol detoxification services or treatment for substance abuse and dependence. The emergency assistance should be followed by long term assistance which focuses on the long term needs of the person such as education and reintegration. Reintegration support is essential to prevent re-victimisation and reduce the risks of re-trafficking. Clear information should be provided to the victim about the whole process including rights, legal proceedings, appeal, compensation, rehabilitation possibilities and return.

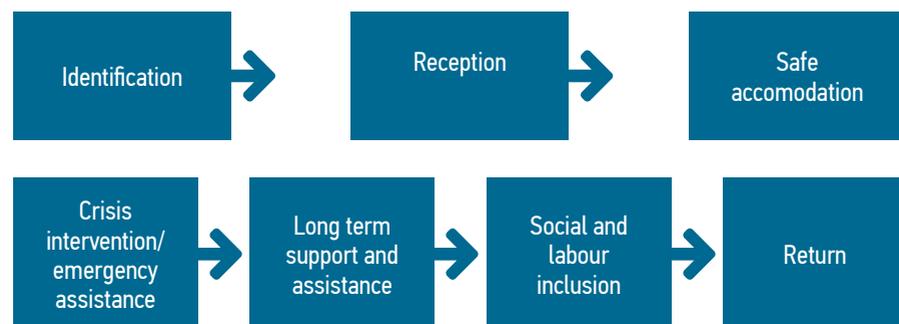
Some municipalities have developed identification and assistance tools to their staff and other relevant actors. For example, the City of Malmö in **Sweden** has prepared a practical handbook for social workers who have victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation as their clients.

Malmö handbook for social workers

The handbook briefly outlines indicators of trafficking and then follows the assistance process in detail, with separate sections on emergency assistance and long term assistance. Very concrete checklists are included in order to make sure that the social workers focus on the right questions and issues. The handbook emphasises the importance of providing the clients with information about what is happening with their cases and treating them as persons, not as helpless victims. It also outlines how cultural factors can affect the way a person is behaving and dealing with their experiences. In addition, the handbook highlights how the needs of the clients may change over time and how it is important for them to receive relevant support in different stages of the police investigation, for example. Finally the handbook outlines some of the relevant actors who can offer support and shelter for the victims in the Malmö area.⁴²

It should be noted that some offers of assistance might not be welcomed by the victim. When exiting a trafficking situation, victims are in a very vulnerable situation and they may not be in a position psychologically to accept assistance. Assistance, by its nature, can be disorientating and the victim may, due to the trauma suffered, not have the capacity to make clear decision. Nevertheless, it is important to grant a reflection period and/or a recovery period and offer assistance to every victim under all circumstances. Unconditional support serves to help the victim to stabilize and start recovering physically and psychologically and to consider her/his situation and options to make an informed decision about cooperation with the authorities.

Flow chart on assistance⁴³



Scheme of assistance

The following scheme of assistance is based on good practice of cooperation among all key actors involved. The model describes the process – a sequence of actions that need to be taken into account in order to assist and take care of victims of trafficking by the relevant stakeholders at the local and national level. The term “service provider” used in the scheme of assistance could stand for state institution, municipal social services, NGOs, international organisations or any other institution. The degree of involvement of different service providers varies in each country. It depends on municipal/local situation, national systems as well as the capacity of key actors. For instance, in some countries municipal social services are very strong, in others NGOs play a crucial role, while in others it might be a local church or a charity organisation. Successful assistance depends not only on good communication, coordination and cooperation between all involved stakeholders, but also on respecting and implementing the basic principles of assistance to victims of trafficking. Thus the term “service provider” aims to cover all these relevant actors in a generic way.

TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBLE ACTORS
Hot line assistance or other low threshold services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychological and emotional support. 	Service provider (municipal social service, NGO etc.).
Assistance in reaching a safe place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arranging and paying for travel, meeting victims at the airport, railway station etc. 	Municipal police, local service provider, local NGO, others.
Referral to the local/national service provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of information and arrangement for the safe travel to the local/national service provider; coordination and cooperation between hot line services and local/national service providers. 	Social worker or NGO who has the first contact with a victim; Service provider responsible for victim assistance.
Risk assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquiring on trafficked person's perception on risks and security; • Conducting risk assessment with various individual organisations; • Informing the trafficked person on potential risks and available measures of protection; • Interpretation/translation.* 	Service provider or the law enforcement agency, if they are involved.
Crisis intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe housing; • Food and clothing; • Psychological support; • Immediate medical intervention/assistance; • Legal assistance, including assistance in obtaining/recovering documents; • Social assistance; • Translation/interpretation; • Reflection and/or recovery period. 	Service provider; Local medical services or hospitals; crisis centres; Local legal aid offices.

TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBLE ACTORS
Long term assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term needs assessment and development of a long term plan of assistance; • Accommodation; • Social counselling; • Medical assistance; • Psychological counselling/therapy; • Information about legal rights and avenues for legal redress; • Legal assistance, including legal aid and representation for claiming compensation and back pay; • Family mediation; • Contact with authorities if a victim is willing to cooperate with law enforcement and testify in court. 	<p>Service provider; Municipal social services; Health services; Migration service;</p> <p>Legal aid offices, lawyers/ law firms, trade unions; NGOs help in obtaining compensation and back-pay.</p>
Social and labour inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language training; • Educational activities; • Vocational training; • Employment counseling/ coaching in a process of active job seeking; • Job placement assistance; • Income generating programmes; • Recreation activities. 	<p>Service provider; Local employment office; Local employers or local association of employers.</p>
Return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing the trafficked person with relevant information on legal and social aspects of return; • Obtaining written consent on voluntary and informed decision of the trafficked person to return; 	

TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBLE ACTORS
Return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the relevant NGO/International Organisation networks or competent government authorities in the country of origin to initiate family tracing, if needed; • Contacting relevant embassies/consulates to facilitate return process; • Ensuring accuracy and providing the travel documents; • Contacting the service provider in the country of origin, obtaining confirmation that the trafficked person will be received and assisted in the country of origin. 	<p>Service provider Organisation responsible for voluntary safe return Embassy/consulate.</p>

*Interpretation/translation for a victim who does not speak the local language should be provided during the whole assistance process, if needed.

Types of assistance

in countries of origin and countries of destination

The types of services and assistance required by victims of trafficking vary somewhat depending on whether the victim is in the destination country or has returned to the country of origin. While in the country of destination, the victims most immediate needs may be finding safe accommodation and receiving legal counselling to assist - for example - with immigration and compensation issues, upon returning to the country of origin in addition to the immediate needs, also long term needs such as social and labour inclusion should be addressed to help to reintegrate in the society and prevent re-victimisation.

Even if a victim of trafficking has been returned to her/his home country, the need for protection and assistance continues. The process of reintegration can be enormously difficult for victims. Rehabilitation programs should include all of the same services as in the context of destination countries: shelter, legal assistance and health care. In addition, in order to reintegrate and start a new live, trafficking victims can benefit from education programmes, such as job training or vocational skills courses and orientation and support on seeking employment. In some cases return to the country of origin might not be in the best interest of a victim and the assistance needs to be provided to help a victim to stay in the country of destination. Both language courses as well as vocational training are the key in integrating the victim into their new home country.

Types of assistance

in countries of origin and countries of destination

ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS IN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN	ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS IN COUNTRIES OF DESTINATION
Temporary shelter/safe accommodation	Temporary shelter/safe accommodation
Medical/health care	An initial medical check- up and immediate medical assistance
Psychological support	Psychological support
Material assistance (including food and clothing)	Immediate material assistance
Social assistance	Social assistance
Renewal of documents	Translation/interpretation services
Legal assistance in criminal investigations/ civil claim for damages/representation of the victim in the court	Legal assistance, in particular regarding victim's rights and obligations/migration status/residence/work permit/civil claim for damages/representation of the victim in the court
Reintegration assistance: life skills training, education, vocational training, family support	Assistance in obtaining travel documents/ passport
	Risk assessment before safe return to country of origin
	Arrangement for a safe return to country of origin
	Assistance in social and labour inclusion process, if the victim stays in the country of destination (language training, integration assistance, education, vocational training)

Action points for municipalities

- Map out services available for (potential) victims within the municipality and actors providing or actors who could provide these services;
- Establish a flexible and quick to respond chain of assistance with clear roles and responsibilities assigned to the different actors involved;
- Harmonize the local anti-trafficking work with a national level activities (national referral mechanism where relevant) in providing assistance to victims of trafficking;
- Improve efficiency of victim assistance by introducing formal cooperation tools such as cooperation agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoU);
- Provide unconditional (not depending on victim's cooperation with the law enforcement) and rights based assistance not only to formally identified victims of human trafficking, but also to potential victims in vulnerable and unprotected situations;
- Provide assistance tailored to the specific individual needs of the victim taking into consideration their background, gender, age, ethnicity, orientation and identity;
- Promote trust, professional attitude and dialogue in well-functioning system of victim assistance and protection;
- Address the mental health concerns of front-line professionals working with trafficked persons in order to maintain a certain quality of service.

6. Prevention of trafficking at the local level

Prevention is also an important component of any anti-trafficking responses, yet it remains one of the most challenging and complex areas of intervention. It is often hard to demonstrate that preventative policies did indeed result in reducing the occurrence of trafficking in human beings. Yet, engaging in prevention is the key to address such a complex and structural phenomenon and it is likely to be more cost effective in the long run.

Broadly speaking, trafficking prevention is about tackling the factors that contribute or enable the exploitation of people. Such factors are multiple, multifaceted and interlinked, they include, for example, discrimination, social exclusion, weak rule of law, corruption, weak social protection, poor enactment of labour laws, lack of employment and education opportunities, as well as lack of legal and safe migration channels. It is often a particular combination of these factors and root causes that lies behind an individual trafficking experience or that characterizes a social environment in which trafficking is prevalent, or that enables or facilitates the crime of trafficking. “This means, crucially, that it is highly unlikely that one singular approach to trafficking prevention will be equally appropriate and relevant for all types of victims and across the spectrum of trafficking vulnerability. [...] Further, it is important to keep in mind that **people are trafficked not because they are vulnerable, but because someone decides to exploit them.**”⁴⁴

It is important to make sure that all counter-trafficking activities implemented take note of both the national as well as local contexts and respond to the identified challenges, existing gaps and risk factors. Local authorities should become active agents in the prevention of human trafficking, and should implement specific preventative measures in response to local needs.

Next, different potential prevention measures are outlined. It should be emphasised that the prevention measures should be in line with key priorities identified in the local mapping (see chapter 3.) It is also essential that all measures are implemented in partnerships, involving e.g. municipalities, the police, schools, health and social services and the private sector.⁴⁵ Such partnerships can cover a wide range of programmes and thematic issues, they may focus on some specific aspects (e.g., recruitment) or forms of trafficking (e.g., sexual exploitation), on certain groups at risk to be trafficked/exploited (e.g., unemployed youth, asylum seekers, migrant farm workers) or on training certain professional groups to increase their awareness on human trafficking.

Awareness raising measures

Different awareness raising measures can be used to inform the general public, specific risk populations, professional groups and businesses about human trafficking. Ideally, general awareness raising efforts should be embedded in a broad framework aiming at promoting zero tolerance of labour exploitation, safe migration and decent work. This would be not only conducive to discussing and addressing all forms of trafficking in human beings in the community but also to educating the society and practitioners to understand and recognize the various forms of exploitation and to intervene and refer victims to appropriate support. For example, the City of Riga has done a lot in this regard.

Prevention efforts of Riga City Council

Since 2010, Riga City Council is implementing a project “Preventive measures for the elimination of human trafficking”. The initiative is financed by the Fund for Provision of Public Order in Riga. In the framework of this local initiative, regular trainings are conducted to a variety of target groups: social workers, social pedagogues, and municipal police officers of Riga municipality. The Department of Welfare of Riga City Council has set a priority of targeted trainings for local government officials and provides funding for the trainings. The City Council has established close contacts with key civil society actors and jointly organise regular prevention activities. During a five-year period, regular trainings have been provided to more than 400 municipal employees of Riga city. In addition, Riga City Council publishes yearly an informative booklet “Prevention of Human Trafficking” in Latvian and Russian. The main purpose of the info material is to inform the general society about the risks and threats of human trafficking, the available assistance to victims, and the provision of relevant contacts of stakeholders involved in combating human trafficking.

Awareness raising should disseminate accurate, realistic and rights-based information, avoid stigmatization and stereotypical images of victims and should inform the public about services for trafficking victims and potential victims so to encourage the referral of individuals in need to support services. Furthermore, awareness raising should be related to the local context and reflect the findings of the mapping done.⁴⁶

Municipalities can also design and implement targeted awareness raising activities towards populations at risk. This awareness raising should empower people at risk; it should advise them about what they can practically do to stay safe from exploitation before and after their migratory journey. It should provide practical and realistic information about what their rights and options are, what precautions they can take to reduce risks of abuse and exploitation, where to seek help and what support services are available and importantly how to put forward a complaint. There are already examples of this work in the Baltic Sea region where some cities, such as Helsinki,⁴⁷ have established specific information services that give advice to migrants and residents.

Not every train goes to Hollywood campaign, Poland

The Polish project⁴⁸ “Not Every Train goes to Hollywood” focused on increasing the level of knowledge and awareness about human trafficking among teachers, students and parents in Pomerania region of Poland. The region is known for its border towns, seaside resorts and tourist areas as well as migratory outflow. Traffickers transit their victims through the region to Western Europe and the Nordic countries and also recruit victims while in the region, primarily for the purpose of sexual and labour exploitation. Therefore the project focused on educating young people on how to better manage risks when seeking opportunities abroad. The project disseminated leaflets and posters which presented some of the basic recruitment strategies used by traffickers, and provided advice on e.g. verifying a job offer or the credibility of the recruitment agency and a checklist for traveling abroad. In addition, social media and online activities were organised, and an anti-trafficking film was produced.⁴⁹

In Europe there are also examples of awareness raising initiatives specifically targeted to addressing one particular form of exploitation, for example, domestic servitude and domestic servitude in diplomatic households.⁵⁰ There have been also a number of awareness raising activities targeted to consumers to tackle demand and opportunity for exploitative labour practices, and to specific categories of professionals.

In addition, municipalities can also engage in awareness raising addressed to businesses active in economic sectors, which are particularly prone to exploitation. Building on the evidence from their analysis of trafficking and exploitation in their local area, municipalities could approach business associations in the sectors of employment and recruitment, agriculture, cleaning services, construction, hotels, food processing and packaging, restaurants, etc. to make them aware of exploitation and trafficking and of their obligations to respect human rights throughout their operations. Through this targeted awareness raising, municipalities could engage business associations to promote ethical standards of recruitment and employment of workers among their associates.⁵¹ This would include for example informing them about existing legal channels for recruitment of migrant workers and facilitating the access to those channels.⁵² In this work, municipality’s authorities should also partner with relevant labour administration actors (e.g. labour and health & safety inspectorates), with the police and other law enforcement agencies with a view to strengthening controls and inspections on site to prevent exploitation, and to exchange intelligence about perpetrators where appropriate.

Outreach to populations at risk

In many municipalities the social service department provides – directly or through a civil society partner – outreach services to respond to the needs of vulnerable groups of the population such as women and men involved in prostitution, people with substance dependency, homeless people, migrants and others who for various reasons including social and cultural isolation need to be approached in person. These service providers should be made aware of human trafficking and its indicators, so that they could assist potential victims of trafficking and refer them to social welfare, health, employment, language training and other more specialized services that they may need.

Furthermore, in order to best respond to the needs of the most vulnerable groups of the population and in particular migrants (e.g. undocumented migrants), such services could be offered in cooperation with or by non-governmental organisations, trade unions, faith groups and local community organisations that may also provide cultural mediators or community leaders who can gain more easily the trust of different migrant groups and can more effectively refer and accompany them to various support services.

Crossroads support centres in Stockholm and Gothenburg

Crossroads is an advice and support centre for EU migrants living in poverty or homelessness in Stockholm. Crossroads targets foreign EU citizens and citizens of non-European countries that have long-term residence from another EU country. They offer consultation on the Swedish system and registration process, and provide support and assistance in numerous European languages. Clients are offered free breakfast, lunch, shower, opportunities for doing laundry and they can take part in various courses and other services. The support centre is run by Stockholm City Mission which is a local non-governmental organisation that cooperates with Stockholm municipality, county councils and other NGOs.⁵³ There is a similar place also in Gothenburg, which is run by a similar local organisation in cooperation with the city of Gothenburg.⁵⁴

Municipalities could also step up prevention activities by involving less conventional actors and developing innovative prevention practices targeting at-risk persons who are seeking to escape from difficult circumstances. Some innovative initiatives have already been implemented in the Baltic Sea region, for example involving an unconventional professional group such as librarians in anti-trafficking prevention in Latvia.

Librarians against human trafficking

To reach the most vulnerable groups at risk to be trafficking, the NGO “Shelter “Safe House”” in Latvia carried out the initiative “Open your eyes”. In the first phase of the project, the NGO carried out awareness raising activities involving librarians in order to explain the problem and scope of human trafficking and the role of librarians in counteracting this crime. During the second phase, training sessions were conducted for librarians and training materials and booklets about human trafficking were disseminated in the libraries across Latvia. In the final stage of the project, librarians organised various training and awareness raising events in the libraries, e.g., thematic book exhibitions, discussion clubs with authors writing about various issues related to human trafficking, training sessions for school children etc. Books helped to link the problem of human trafficking to the work and function of libraries. Librarians, especially in rural areas, pointed out that they are often in contact with potential victims of human trafficking. Visitors of libraries search for jobs abroad using free internet provided in the libraries as well as ask assistance from the librarians to print out their plane tickets. At this point librarians can try to get into contact with and consult potential victim of human trafficking about the risks and precautionary measures they may consider taking before leaving the country.

Ethical criteria and social clauses

in public procurement to prevent exploitation

Municipalities engage in numerous public procurement activities for example for construction work or for cleaning services, and through these contracts they may inadvertently be complicit in trafficking and exploitation. As large buyers of goods and services, they may risk that their contractors and sub-contractors recruit and/or employ persons in abusive and exploitative situations or purchase goods and services produced through exploitative labour (e.g. cleaning services). To avoid such risks, municipalities should have in place appropriate due-diligence procedures to ensure respect of human rights. Furthermore, municipalities should lead by example and be ethically and socially responsible through the inclusion of ethical criteria and social clauses in their public procurement processes with a view to promote respect of human rights and prevent labour exploitation and trafficking. The box below outlines some of the requirements for which municipalities could request contractors’ compliance to award a public tender.⁵⁵

Social and ethical requirements for municipality public procurement processes⁵⁶

Public contracting authorities could request their contractors’ commitment to e.g.:

- Have in place an explicit policy commitment and corresponding processes to ban exploitation, forced labour and trafficking in human beings;
- Provide evidence of regular payment of workers’ wages in line with the sector’s collective agreement or other minimum wage standard and of compliance with occupational health and safety, and social insurance;
- Include in their sub-contracting contracts for goods and services a provision obliging all the subcontractors in the chain to respect the sector’s national minimum wage or collective agreement regarding the terms and conditions of employment.

Building multi-disciplinary partnerships

Trafficking prevention requires engaging, mobilising and coordinating actions from a variety of actors within the municipal administration, relevant regional and national public services, civil society, trade unions and businesses. Housing, health and job creation, education, and social services can all impact the likelihood that people will become victims or offenders.

Cooperation between these sectors, the police and the justice system, using strategies which are based on good evidence and knowledge about crime problems and their causes, can prevent crime and victimization.⁵⁷

Municipal mayors could play a very important role in initiating and driving these partnership processes. Other mayoral initiatives in the region are organised through the Union of Baltic Cities or twinning city initiatives, as well as, covenants of mayors on topics like energy efficiency and climate change adaptation. Furthermore, such partnerships would benefit from exchanges, collaboration and coordination with other municipalities at regional and national level not only to generate sharing of experiences and mutual learning but also to avoid effect whereby effective and stringent measures to prevent human trafficking locally result in the problem being shifted to other areas where those measures are not yet in place.⁵⁸

Bergen cooperation model

In Bergen, the local authorities have secured more convictions on trafficking than any other region in Norway, many of them concerning cases of child trafficking. A local Interdisciplinary Operational Team (TOT) which consists of representatives from local law enforcement authorities and the municipality, including a representative of outreach service, a representative of social services and one of child protection services, has built up knowledge and expertise on trafficking over time.⁵⁹ The TOT meets within 24 hours from the moment when a child who is suspected to be a victim of trafficking is detected. The TOT also facilitates referral and cooperation among the various agencies involved. Moreover, work on human trafficking cases is considered a high priority for the Bergen Police. They have specialized prosecutors and investigators who work integrated in the same group and investigate all trafficking related cases. Both Norwegian authorities and NGOs have complemented their success in combating trafficking in the Bergen area.⁶⁰

Lithuanian regional cooperation project

Caritas Lithuania implemented a regional project “Complex Approach to the Problems of Human Trafficking in Panevezys Region, Lithuania” in 2012-2014. The Panevezys region is a known place of origin for female victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation as well as more recently of men forced to steal, perform burglaries, and sell drugs in such countries as the UK, Germany, Spain, and Sweden. The project focused on mapping the local situation and developing cooperation and active involvement of the local community in order to prevent human trafficking in the region. During the course of the project, flexible teams of police officers, social workers and psychologists were formed to implement a special programme “SOS! The Dangers of Human Trafficking” in local schools, orphanages and youth centres. Moreover, trainings on human trafficking were organised for local social workers, police officers, prosecutors and judges. In total 190 persons were trained to identify trafficking victims and to improve understanding about the trauma and the psychological portrait of the victims in general. Altogether 25 open events were organised to local community members, including round table discussions with the local professionals to increase awareness and share experiences.⁶¹

Action points for municipalities

- Implement general awareness raising as well as targeted awareness raising towards groups at risks, professional groups and businesses according to the local needs and identified risks
- Expand the target groups for prevention work beyond the conventional ones, for example to taxi drivers, librarians, health inspectors etc.
- Offer and implement outreach activities to support and engage with populations at risk
- Include ethical criteria and social clauses in public procurement to prevent exploitation when purchasing goods and services
- Build multi-disciplinary partnerships to enhance prevention of trafficking at the local level

Summary of the main action points

for municipalities

Aim	Action to be taken	Who
Addressing trafficking at the local level through mapping the situation on ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a mapping of the local trafficking situation to identify populations at risk and risky locations and to gather information about perpetrators and facilitators of trafficking. • Gather information on what resources and services are available within municipality administration and in territory of the municipality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local trafficking expert group; or crime prevention task force or other structures in place at the municipality level to address e.g. social exclusion, violence against women and/or migrant integration. • Other local actors, such as police and NGOs.
Enhancing identification of (potential) victims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map out the local actors who might meet and identify potential victims of trafficking (and vulnerable groups) in their line of work. • Make sure indicators of trafficking are available for frontline staff to use. This will enable improved identification of potential victims at the local level, particularly in risk locations. • Sign clear responsibilities and provide regular trainings for different actors involved in the identification and referral process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal staff, including social and health services, school authorities etc. • Local police, inspection authorities. • NGOs, faith-based organisations, migrants' rights organisations trade unions, businesses and private citizens.

Improving victim assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a flexible and quick to respond chain of assistance with clear roles and responsibilities assigned to different actors involved. • Provide unconditional and rights-based assistance not only to formally identified victims of trafficking, but also to potential and presumed victims in vulnerable situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal social and health services, crisis centres, local police. • NGOs and shelters, any other organisations offering social, legal or other counseling services or doing outreach work among vulnerable populations.
Prevention of trafficking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer and implement outreach activities to support and engage with populations at risk. • Conduct awareness raising activities among general population, groups at risk, professional groups and businesses. • Include ethical criteria and social clauses in public procurement to prevent exploitation when purchasing goods and services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal social and health services, public procurement officials, NGOs, migrants' rights organisations, women's organisations, trade unions, businesses, employers' associations, • Private citizens.

References

¹ In order to assess the current role and responsibilities of municipalities in the chain of assistance to victims of all forms of human trafficking and develop effective anti-trafficking policies at the local level, a baseline assessment was carried out in the Baltic Sea Region. Regional experts from the municipalities in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, the Russian Federation and Sweden met in the international expert group meeting in Riga to share and analyse the local mechanisms in place to deal with cases of human trafficking.

² ICPC (2011): Towards Human Trafficking Prevention: A Discussion Document, 11–12.

³ ICPC (2014): 4th International Report. Crime Prevention and Community Safety: Trends and Perspectives. Montreal: International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC), 130.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ For more information please see the CBSS (2015): Promoting the Human Rights and the Best Interests of the Child in Transnational Child Protection Cases; CBSS (2015): Practical Guide for Caseworkers and Case Officers. Available at: <http://www.childcentre.info>

⁶ UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women, and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (15 Nov 2000).

⁷ Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CETS No. 197).

⁸ Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA. OJ L 101, 15/04/2011.

⁹ UN OHCHR (2010): Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking. Commentary, Principle 1, 49–74. See also Recommendations from the Conference on How to Enhance Assistance to Victims of Human Trafficking in the Baltic Sea Region, 2.

¹⁰ UN OHCHR (2010): Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking. Commentary, Principle 8, 141–151. See also Recommendations from the Conference on How to Enhance Assistance to Victims of Human Trafficking in the Baltic Sea Region, 2.

¹¹ CETS (197) Article 12(6), Directive 2011/36/EU, Recital 18, Article 11(3)

¹² UN OHCHR (2010): Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking, Guideline 2 and 11.

¹³ Preambular paragraph 1 of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime, United Nations 2000.

¹⁴ For more information: https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/trafficking/Docs/Convntn/default_en.asp

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¹⁶ Ibid., 17.

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- ²⁹ <http://www.gegen-menschenhandel.de/>
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- ³¹ Ihmiskaupan uhrin tunnistaminen ja auttaminen. Tampereen toimintamalli. Tampereen kaupunki, Pro-tukipiste & RIKU.
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- ³⁵ UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, 2000; Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, 2005; Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims.
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- ⁴⁹ TRACE Project Deliverable 6.1: *Review of EU Projects - Promising Practices in Combatting Human Trafficking 2015*, 26–28. http://trace-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TRACE_D6.1_Final.pdf
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Human trafficking is a complex transnational crime that has specific implications also for local communities. Recruitment and exploitation take place in local streets and neighbourhoods. Women and men are sexually exploited on the street or in local bars, businesses and hotels. Victims of labour trafficking can be found among domestic workers in private homes, among cleaners cleaning public offices, schools and stores, in local restaurants, fast food outlets, agricultural farms, petrol stations or construction sites. People are also exploited in forced begging and forced criminality.

The Guidelines for Municipalities – Stepping up Local Action against Human Trafficking aims to provide local actors with the knowledge and right tools to strengthen their role in the work against human trafficking and increase the effectiveness of the anti-trafficking actions by ensuring proper and timely victim identification, adequate and sustainable assistance and protection. The local response to human trafficking should always be tailored to the specific situation, trends and groups at risk identified.

— THE STROM PROJECT —



Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Latvia