

# Road map for integration of victims of human trafficking

among migrants  
in Finland, Germany,  
and Sweden



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# Table of content

	Acronyms and Abbreviations	4
	Introduction	6
<b>CHAPTER 1.</b>	Local integration measures of victims of trafficking among migrants in Finland By Anniina Jokinen	11
<b>CHAPTER 2.</b>	Local integration measures of victims of trafficking among migrants in Germany By Vineta Polatside	25
<b>CHAPTER 3.</b>	Local integration measures of victims of trafficking among migrants in Sweden By Endrit Mujaj and Ninna Mörner	40
<b>CHAPTER 4.</b>	Conclusion and overall recommendations	53
	References	61

# Acronyms & Abbreviations

## **ABIS**

An organisation assisting vulnerable migrants to obtain a work permit in Sweden

## **BMI**

Federal Ministry of the Interior of Germany

## **EKKA**

Greek National Centre for Social Solidarity

## **HVB-homes**

Treatments facilities for individuals with various forms of social needs and assistance

## **BIBB**

Federal Institute for Vocational and Professional Education of Germany

## **CABS**

County Administrative Board of Stockholm

## **EU**

European Union

## **ICMPD**

International Center for Migration Policy Development

## **BMAS**

Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs of Germany

## **CBSS**

Council of the Baltic Sea States

## **GIPST**

German Integration Programme for Survivors of Trafficking

## **IOM**

International Organization for Migration

## **BMBF**

Federal Ministry of Education and Research of Germany

## **DGB**

German Trade Union Federation

## **HEUNI**

European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, affiliated with the United Nations

## **KOK**

German NGO Network against Trafficking in Human Beings

**LSI**  
La Strada  
International

**NBHW**  
National Board of  
Health and Welfare  
in Sweden

**OECD**  
Organisation for  
Economic Co-  
operation and  
Development

**THB**  
Trafficking in  
Human Beings

**MONIKA**  
Multicultural  
Women's  
Association in  
Finland

**NCCTHB**  
Bulgarian National  
Commission to  
Combat Trafficking  
in Human Beings

**S/HE**  
She or he

**TRAM**  
Trafficking along  
Migration Routes:  
Identification  
and Integration  
of Victims of  
Trafficking among  
Vulnerable  
Groups and  
Unaccompanied  
Children

**MoU**  
Memorandum of  
Understanding

**NGO**  
Non-Governmental  
Organisation

**Tdh**  
Terre des hommes

**NAS**  
National  
Assistance System  
for Victims of  
Trafficking in  
Finland

**NSP**  
National Support  
Programme to  
victims of human  
trafficking in  
Sweden

**TE Offices**  
Employment  
and Economic  
Development  
Offices in Finland



# ***Introduction***



The current migration reality in Europe has led to a significant rise in the number of asylum seekers and displaced people - vulnerable people, whose desperation and endeavour to escape the conflicts in their countries is often exploited by traffickers. Protection of trafficked persons is one of the main pillars of anti-trafficking work. States must ensure that comprehensive assistance is provided beyond the provision of an official status of a victim of human trafficking and emergency assistance. Long-term protection and empowerment measures, without any doubt are crucial for successful integration into society alongside prevention of revictimization. However, there has been little attention paid to the long-term prospects of trafficked persons who stay in their destination country. Trafficked persons face life after exploitation and trafficking by and large on their own. They struggle to gain an economic footing while also coping with memories of past abuse and present-day debts.<sup>1</sup> The reason for this lack of attention to the needs of trafficked persons could be that the number of formally identified victims, among recently arrived migrants is relatively small, combined with an unwillingness of some victims of trafficking to cooperate with law enforcement authorities, might be wrongly translated as disinterest in integrating in their destination country. It is largely assumed that trafficked migrants are simply a category among the larger pool of migrants, especially when their cooperation in the criminal proceedings has reached an end.<sup>2</sup>

While migrant's urgent needs are usually effectively addressed, a comprehensive solution, in the form of a long-term assistance programme involving a range of assistance providers and as part of a co-ordinated multi-agency response, is not necessarily offered. There is therefore a critical need to move forward from the concept of "humanitarian emergency" to more elaborated, forward-looking assistance and prevention strategies to avoid large numbers of individuals falling prey to traffickers.<sup>3</sup> To address this gap, there is a need to develop and strengthen multi-disciplinary co-operation beyond the realm of identification and ensure proactive and sustainable integration strategies and programmes.

However, there is no universal strategy to successful integration. Different groups (asylum seekers/refugees/undocumented migrants/victims of human trafficking etc.) face unique problems, have specific needs and confront specific barriers, thus integration of these groups requires different approaches.<sup>4</sup> Assistance should be centred on the victims' needs, age and should be gender-specific, as well as specific to the form of trafficking the victim has experienced.<sup>5</sup>

Although there is a lack of common consensus on indicators of integration, a few domains can be identified as sources for basic indicators to measure the success of integration policy: education, access to labour market, housing and social services, health care, and participation within the political process.<sup>6</sup> The authorities, both at national and local level, seek new approaches to manage the process of integration. As early integration of migrants does not take place at the state level, in practice social capital and trust between newcomers and hosts is built in the local communities and neighbourhoods where the newcomers end up living. Initiatives taken locally are therefore instrumental for effective integration. Regional/local authorities typically possess better knowledge about migrants' needs and are thus better prepared to frame successful plans for economic and social integration and design a more appropriate structure of services.<sup>7</sup> Local authorities also work with greater flexibility and creativity than other levels of government. They can deal with the challenge quickly and efficiently by introducing pilot projects and practices for integration of vulnerable migrants.<sup>8</sup>

The focus of this Integration Road Map is on local level long-term protection and integration measures of victims of human trafficking among forced non-EU migrants. Forced migrants are particularly vulnerable to risks of exploitation in their country of origin, during a migratory journey and also in the country of destination. Thus, the first contact of a migrant with the destination society might be distorted due to the experience of exploitation which causes imbalance in the process of integration. Integration for victims of human trafficking refers to a process of recovery and economic and social inclusion following a trafficking experience.<sup>9</sup> Personal safety and security, as well as recovery from stress and other psychological trauma, and physical health needs should be among the first to be addressed when a trafficked migrant is identified. Empowerment is an important element of successful integration but even if trafficked persons should not be held back or defined by their past of exploitation, willingness to move forward is not enough. There is a pressing need to have more robust policies and long-term protection programmes with fewer strings attached.<sup>10</sup>

The Integration Road Map focuses on longer-term protection initiatives beyond the provision of an official status for victims of human trafficking and into integration measures, especially concerning social and labour inclusion. Early labour market entry is a key determinant of long-term outcomes.

It presents integration measures of trafficked persons, maps out examples of existing good practices and main challenges in protection and provision of rehabilitation services to trafficked persons at the local level beyond the referral period.

## Background – TRAM project

The Integration Road Map is the culmination of the project “TRAM - Trafficking along Migration Routes: Identification and Integration of Victims of Trafficking among Vulnerable Groups and Unaccompanied Children”. The TRAM project is implemented by the International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) in cooperation with the project partners: Council of the Baltic Sea States Secretariat (CBSS); Terre des hommes (Tdh); Bulgarian National Commission to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings (NCCTHB); Greek National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA); and La Strada International (LSI). The Road Map was developed in the framework of the work package: *strengthening integration efforts for the victims of trafficking among migrants, refugees and unaccompanied children in the current asylum and migration context in Sweden, Germany and Finland*. It summarises the findings of the TRAM study “Trafficking along Migration Routes to Europe Bridging the Gap between Migration, Asylum and Anti-Trafficking”, country assessment reports, national round table meetings and pilot simulation exercises with representatives of national and local agencies, non-governmental organisations, international organisations and academia in Helsinki, Oulu, Berlin, Stockholm and Helsingborg.



## Aim of the Integration Road Map

The general aim of the Integration Road Map is to lay out examples of existing good practices and challenges in long-term protection and integration services to trafficked persons among non - EU migrants with a focus on establishing stronger links between asylum procedures and the assistance system. The term “trafficked person or a victim of human trafficking” in the context of the Road Map is used not only as a legal concept but it also refers to non-EU migrants who have not been formally granted “a victim status” but who are presumed victims of human trafficking, who have experienced exploitation and abuse in their country of origin, during the migration journey and/or in a country of destination, just not *enough* to qualify as trafficked.

## Target group of the Integration Road Map

The Road map targets policy makers at the national and municipal level, local actors, social services of municipalities, other relevant state agencies and civil society organisations who work to prevent human trafficking and protect trafficked persons. It intends to be short, practical and to the point, in order to be accessible for practitioners who are often not experts on human trafficking, and to help inspire and strengthen long-term protection and integration measures of victims of human trafficking among migrants.

## Methodology of the Integration Road Map

The Road map focuses on three countries: Finland, Germany and Sweden. The main reason for the selection of these countries was the record number of asylum applications submitted during 2015 and 2016. Moreover, these countries are considered to be favourable destinations for a long term stay for migrants. Germany received the highest number of overall asylum applications, followed by Sweden who received the highest number per capita, followed by Finland. This situation posed significant challenges for national and local actors as regards border management, reception of migrants and identification of forced migrants and as well as integration of migrants.

Mixed migration flows should prompt countries to rethink their migration and integration policies and invent concrete procedures and practice.<sup>11</sup> The influx of asylum seekers has also contributed to the on-going debate on the issue of vulnerability of migrants, especially women and children, and risks of exploitation and human trafficking.

The Road Map does not aim to provide a full account of available integration measures in studied countries but rather to highlight particularly challenging areas and promising practices that could be replicated and could enable other actors to develop and intensify integration measures for trafficked people in their local communities.

The Road Map is based on the outcomes of the national round-table meeting for the TRAM project in Helsinki on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 2018, in Berlin on 12<sup>th</sup> of April 2018 and in Stockholm on 9<sup>th</sup> of April 2018 and workshops for local actors conducted in Oulu on 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2018 and 14<sup>th</sup> of June in Helsingborg. The meetings brought together 90 trafficking experts and practitioners. A local level model strategic plan for integration of trafficked persons was compiled in each country and additional desk review of existing literature and counter-trafficking materials in Finland, Germany and Sweden as well as previous research on human trafficking conducted by the ICMPD, CBSS, HEUNI, IOM and OECD and others was carried out to develop this Road Map document.

As there is no straight path to integration and it can resemble a trail up a steep hill with various bumps, loops, gorges, ups and downs, the Road Map is therefore complemented by graphics illustrating “the road of integration” of trafficked migrants to the desired state: **The individual is empowered as an active member of the society; economically, politically and socially.**

***Long term protection and  
integration measures of  
victims of human  
trafficking among  
non-EU migrants  
in Finland***



In Finland victims of human trafficking who do not have a home municipality, such as asylum seekers and undocumented migrants, are assisted by the National Assistance System for Victims of Trafficking (NAS), while victims who have a municipal residence, such as refugees or migrant workers, are assisted by their home municipalities.

Recent study on the effectiveness of legislation concerning assistance for victims of human trafficking<sup>12</sup> in Finland shows that persons who are directly assisted by the NAS are more likely to get better access to specialised services according to their specific needs (such as therapy, legal counselling etc.) while there is much variation in the type and scope of services provided by municipalities. The study also identified a strong link between the provision of assistance for the victims of human trafficking and the process of bringing perpetrators to justice that results from the existing legislation and its application. The research concluded that there is a need to enact a special act that would apply to assistance for victims of human trafficking. In addition, it was recommended that the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health should issue further instructions to municipalities for the application of legislation concerning assistance for victims of human trafficking. Therefore, **the model strategic plan for integration in Finland focuses solely on the role of municipalities in providing assistance to trafficking victims** and outlines the different gaps, needs and solutions municipal actors may encounter and develop while providing support to trafficked migrants who have a municipal residence.

It should be noted that the government of Finland is currently in the process of restructuring the organisation and provision of social and health care services. In the future it is the regions rather than the municipalities that will be responsible for the provision of social and health care services to all residents, including victims of trafficking. As the plan of restructuring is still open, it is difficult to give exact guidance how this should be done before there is more information available on the new system and its functioning.

## Victims of trafficking are entitled to receive the following services:

- Safe housing
- Health care
- Social assistance or reception allowance
- Legal assistance and statutory legal aid
- Interpretation and translation services
- Advice and guidance
- Recovery or reflection period
- Support for returning to home country voluntarily
- Advice and guidance on how to apply for a residence permit
- Eligibility to apply for a residence permit on the ground of being a victim of human trafficking

Trafficked migrants may be granted a reflection period for a maximum of six months even if they have not reported the trafficking offence to the police. However, the continuation of this specialised assistance after the initial six months is often contingent on an on-going criminal justice process.



# Main actors responsible for integration of victims of human trafficking

## Governmental organisations

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health  
Employment and Economic Development Offices (TE Offices)  
Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centres)  
National Assistance System for Victims of Human Trafficking

## Municipalities

Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities

## Non-governmental organisations

Victims support Finland  
Pro-tukipiste  
The Finnish Refugee Advice Centre  
MONIKA – Multicultural Women's Association



# Residence permit

According to Aliens Act 52 § a, a victim of human trafficking may be granted a temporary permit for a minimum of six months but not for more than a year at a time on the grounds of on-going police investigation or court proceedings. After two years of continued residence, a victim may be granted a continuous residence permit. Continuous permit may also be granted if the victim is in a particularly vulnerable position, or when the permit is granted on the basis of individual compassionate grounds. After four years of continued residence in Finland, the person may be granted a permanent residence permit. In addition, a victim may have a valid work

permit as often is the case regarding persons who have been subjected to forced labour, or they may be granted a residence on the grounds of international protection. Many victims of trafficking experience tremendous anxiety and uncertainty when applying or renewing their residents permits. The processes are very long and complex, and since the permits are valid only for a certain period of time, this creates additional stress for the victims. While the question whether they can remain in the country is open, it is difficult for the victims to make any real long-term plans for themselves which would enable better integration into Finnish society in the longer run.

## The role of the home municipality in organising assistance to victims of trafficking in cooperation with the National Assistance System for Victims of Trafficking (NAS)

Those victims of trafficking who receive a continuous or permanent residence permit – or already have e.g. a work permit – are assigned a home municipality. For asylum seeking victims who have been staying at a reception centre this means a move to a home municipality who takes over the responsibility of organising assistance to the victims and bearing the costs of such services. The point of transfer is a key juncture where a gap might occur in terms of the long term

assistance and rehabilitation of the victims. The capacity and knowledge of municipalities vary and there have been cases where some specific services such as therapy have been discontinued or there has been a considerable disruption in the services given. Municipal workers can at any time consult the NAS via their hotline service (open 24/7) at +358 295 463 177.

Information is also available on the website ihmiskauppa.fi.

# Integration services

Usually the municipalities or the Employment and Economic Development Office (TE Office), provide migrants with services to support their integration and employment. Early stage integration services include guidance and advice, an initial assessment, drafting of an integration plan and integration training. The initial assessment may include an interview, a language skills test and a skills assessment. Based on these an integration plan is drawn to set out the services

needed. The plan can include participation in integration training, a course in Finnish or Swedish, other education or training, labour market training or a work try-out.<sup>13</sup> To receive unemployment benefits or social benefits, the migrant must take the initial survey and participate in integration training. It might be difficult for the victim of trafficking to understand the fragmented Finnish system and the role of different actors in providing the services.

***“The social worker told me to meet her at her office. But I didn’t know how to get there. I didn’t know how to read a map or how to use the buses.”***

Man, 35 years.

Persons providing integration services may lack information on human trafficking, its consequences for the victims and their specific needs. The initial assessment for the integration plan must be made within the first three years of municipality residence. Some municipalities have decided that a victim of labour trafficking, who

came to the country five years ago on a work permit is no longer entitled to integration services, because the three-year time limit for the initial assessment has expired. However, the person might not know anything about the Finnish system because they have been exploited by their employer for years.


## Good practices

In some municipalities, social service units that focus on service provision for migrants normally also handle integration services as well as services to victims of trafficking. For the victim this can mean a more streamlined experience, not having to deal with several different actors and having better access to integration services.

Furthermore, some municipalities have been flexible in providing access to integration services for victims of trafficking also after the three-year maximum, as according to the law, the services can be extended for a further two years if necessary.

The integration plan is drafted by the municipality (migrant services) or TE Office in cooperation with the client to make sure it responds to their specific needs, skills and circumstances. They are also responsible for monitoring the implementation of the plan.

An integration plan is always drafted for unaccompanied children to make sure they integrate into the Finnish society and get access to services and training to develop their knowledge of Finnish or Swedish languages, vocational skills, and other capabilities to ensure employment in the future. For the children the plan is drafted by a multidisciplinary team with representatives from educational, youth, as well as social and health care services. The legal representative of the child is also involved in the process to make sure the best interests of the child are fulfilled.



***“I’ve finished all necessary language courses and received a place to study to be a personal assistant to the elderly. My daughter is in daycare. Life isn’t easy but it’s my life now, I’m in charge.”***

Woman, 31 years.



# Language lessons and education

For many victims of trafficking the lack of Finnish or Swedish language skills is a major barrier for their long-term integration into society, including getting access to employment in general.

Victims of trafficking may be so traumatised that they are not really able

to use or benefit from the language lessons or educational courses because they are in a vulnerable psychological situation. The lack of different certificates and education/training which are needed even for acquiring low skilled jobs e.g. in cleaning or in other service sectors is another challenge.

***“It’s like they were angry at me for not speaking any Finnish even though I’d lived in Finland for five years. I didn’t get into the integration program due to my long stay here. But for that five years I lived at the restaurant, I worked there all day. I never went out. I knew nothing about Finland.”***

Man, 32 years.

The educational needs of unaccompanied children are a key component of their integration plan, which is drafted in close cooperation with municipal educational services. It can include specific educational measures according to the children’s needs, including lessons in their native language and extra classes to

supplement their basic education level. The children have a duty to attend school until they are 17 years of age. Some unaccompanied children may have a hard time finding a suitable educational pathway especially if their basic education is insufficient and they might be illiterate or have poor language skills.

# Employment

Access to employment is a challenge for many victims of trafficking, partly because of the issues related to lack of language skills and training. In addition, victims of labour exploitation and migrant workers in particular, have encountered problems in finding non-abusive employment. There are examples of situations where victims of labour trafficking have received a letter from the TE office which obliges them to apply for a certain job where the suggested employer has been

closely or even directly linked to the abusive employer. This may be the case e.g. if the person has been exploited while working as a chef in a restaurant with a specific national cuisine. In such circumstances it is very likely that they cannot find a job in similar restaurants anymore because often the owners are connected. The victim should not share their contact details nor go to an interview with potential employers who are connected to the abusive employer/trafficker.

***“I got a job as a cleaner at a hotel. In the evenings I go to Finnish classes and meet my friends at church. I never thought my life would be this good.”***

Woman, 23 years.

The work permit that the migrant has is normally tied to a certain sector, for instance, the restaurant sector, and the person only has experiences of working with specific cuisine.

However, it would be very difficult and very unrealistic for them to find a similar job in the region without having any links to the abusive employer/trafficker.

## Good practice

NGO Multicultural Women's Association Monika<sup>14</sup> is running a mentorship programme for women in cooperation with different partners including the cities of Helsinki and Vantaa, the regional unemployment office, as well as private companies who provide the women with jobs. This programme has provided an opportunity for migrant women to get access to employment as this group has a much higher rate of unemployment than migrant men or the Finnish population at large.



***“I missed two meetings with my social worker, so they thought I didn’t want help. But I was at home, too scared to go out.”***

Woman, 36 years.

## Long term medical assistance, therapy and housing

Victims of sexual exploitation, in particular, may be seriously traumatized because of trafficking and abuse they have suffered. They may require long-term therapy and specialised medical services, including gynaecological services and medication to be able to cope and recover from their experiences. It may be difficult to find a therapist who would be experienced in dealing with trafficking issues and who would be willing to work with an interpreter if the victim does not speak Finnish/Swedish/English. Municipalities may refuse to offer specialised services to victims of

trafficking, meaning that if the victim has been going to therapy via the National Assistance System, in worst-case scenario, the service could discontinue after the person is transferred to a municipality. Municipalities may also insist on using their own services, rather than a specialised therapist who already has created a relationship with the victim. Victims’ mental state may fluctuate heavily, and they might need therapy again after some years, in particular if they have not been able to deal with their trauma properly at the initial stage of assistance.

***“I can’t concentrate on anything. All I think of is my family back home. The traffickers are causing them trouble. I can’t sleep or eat, I just cry.”***

Man, 28 years.

Normally victims are accommodated by the municipalities in rental apartments or at supported housing units. The victim can be also housed in a secret locations or shelters in certain circumstances. However, there is a

need for intensely supported housing especially for those victims who are in a poor mental state or have special needs. Moreover, there is need for more safe housing options for victims who face security threats from their traffickers.<sup>15</sup>

## Good practice

Municipalities can apply for compensation for offering specialised medical services, including therapy, to victims of trafficking via regional Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centres).<sup>16</sup> This means that the municipality can buy services from specialised therapists and continue buying services from the same person after victims have been transferred to the municipality. The NAS reviews and approves the requests for compensation.

## Fragmented social and healthcare services

The fragmentary system makes it very difficult for a traumatised, non-Finnish speaking migrant victim of trafficking to keep track of things and to deal with a variety of different organisations, actors and the sometimes contradictory decisions these different organisations make. Their situation and psychological state may fluctuate a lot.

These factors should be considered by the service providers.

Victims may lack social networks and access to peer groups and social activities where they could make such connections and have access to cultural and other recreational activities.

## Good practice

NGOs, in particular Victim Support Finland<sup>17</sup> provide such hands-on services to victims of trafficking all around the country, helping them to be able to deal with every-day life in a new environment and assisting them in contacts with different authorities and bureaus.

# Compensation for municipalities for the costs of assistance

Municipalities can apply for compensation from the State via regional Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centres) to cover the costs of providing services to victims of trafficking. The social and health administration in municipalities is not entirely familiar with the Act that applies to the reception and assistance

of victims of human trafficking<sup>18</sup> and the special status of victims of human trafficking should have in receiving services is not often fully realised in municipalities. Municipalities rarely apply for compensation from the State to cover the costs of providing services to victims of trafficking. The main reasons for this seem to be a lack of awareness and resources in the municipalities.

## Good practice

The Association of Local and Regional Authorities has issued a circular letter (7/2016) to the municipalities on assisting victims of human trafficking. The role of the Association to enhance capacity building among municipalities, including management and leadership level, should also be highlighted.

## Regional differences and local anti-trafficking networks

The level of services available to victims might vary from one municipality to another which may result in regional differences in accessing assistance and service provision. In many municipalities the main issue is that victims of trafficking are rarely encountered or identified and thus there is a lack of experience and information, also in terms of provision of services. Furthermore, local service providers in municipalities may lack experience in dealing with

the highly specialised needs of certain victims e.g. in terms of therapy or specific family services. In some instances, a specific municipality may have been reluctant to procure such services through outside service providers. They would rather use their own services, even if that would mean that the service provider would change, the client relationship would be disrupted, and the service provider would not necessarily know how to best proceed with such special needs.



## Good practices

Some municipalities, such as Vantaa and Helsinki, have specialised social workers who are mainly responsible for assisting victims of trafficking to ensure that same people gain experience in working with this particular client group.

Furthermore, NGO Victim Support Finland<sup>19</sup> has facilitated the work to form local networks against human trafficking in Turku, Vaasa, Kuopio, Oulu and Tampere to improve the level of awareness on human trafficking in different parts of Finland, to share experiences and to better coordinate the local work against human trafficking.

# Recommendations

## RESIDENCE PERMIT

It would be important to make sure that the residence permits for victims of trafficking are processed as quickly as possible and that the decisions made are based on applying systematic guidelines which take into account factors such as the severity and length of exploitation, individual consequences, vulnerability, and the victims' true abilities and opportunities to look after the growth and development of their children.<sup>20</sup>

Permanent residence permits should be automatically given to victims who have cooperated with the police and whose case has resulted in a successful conviction on human trafficking.

## **THE ROLE OF THE HOME MUNICIPALITY IN ORGANISING ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN COOPERATION WITH THE NATIONAL ASSISTANCE SYSTEM FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING (NAS)**

Close cooperation between the municipality and the National Assistance System for Victims of Trafficking is needed to ensure that the services are continued without disruptions and meet the needs of the individual and her/his situation and circumstances. The victim is expected to be a client of

the National Assistance System even if the municipality will organise the assistance and needed services.

The role of the municipal child welfare services is crucial when the trafficking victim is a child. If the child is unaccompanied, s/he will be given a legal representative.

The municipality should draft a plan of assistance for the victim in cooperation with the NAS which is to be updated regularly based on the changes in the victim's circumstances and needs.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

It should be ensured that TE office staff is aware of human trafficking and its consequences in order to ensure realistic options for employment, including vocational training, for the victims.

Furthermore, the service providers should have good contacts in the office to avoid incidents where the victim would be obliged to apply for a certain job where the suggested employer has been closely or even directly linked to the former abusive employer, or that the office can withdraw such orders.

## **LONG TERM MEDICAL ASSISTANCE, THERAPY AND HOUSING**

It is very important to update the initial assistance plan or revisit it after some time. For example if the victim's mental state deteriorates, therapy should be offered. It is clear that a person cannot properly integrate into society if they have not been able to deal with their trauma and do not have the capacity to attend language classes, vocational training or other such courses designed to improve their chances of accessing the labour market. Some of the victims have been receiving services for up to 3-5 years due to their special circumstances.

There is a need to provide supportive and safe housing for victims, including male victims and victims with special needs.



## **HANDS-ON ASSISTANCE IN DEALING WITH THE FRAGMENTED SOCIAL AND HEALTHCARE SERVICES, INCLUDING STRENGTHENING OF SOCIAL NETWORKS AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

It is crucial for the victims to receive low threshold, concrete and hands-on services from local actors, which include municipal actors, local authorities, NGOs and religious organisations as well as the National Assistance System for Victims of Trafficking.

Local civil society actors, including religious organisations, also have an important role in strengthening the social networks of the victims and in providing possibilities for them to meet peers and other people and to have meaningful recreational activities.

## **COMPENSATION FOR MUNICIPALITIES FOR THE COSTS OF ASSISTANCE**

Awareness on human trafficking in the municipalities should be increased and municipalities should be encouraged to provide special services for victims and to apply for compensation from the State for providing these services.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health should issue further instructions to municipalities for the application of legislation concerning assistance for victims of human trafficking.

***Long term protection and  
integration measures of  
victims of human  
trafficking among  
non-EU migrants  
in Germany***





Germany is primarily a country of destination for asylum seekers, refugees and irregular migrants, including unaccompanied children, but also for victims of human trafficking for sexual, labour and other purposes. With more than one million people arriving from 2015 to 2017, it has received the highest absolute numbers of asylum applicants, refugees and migrants of all EU Member States during the above-period. Despite these high numbers of newcomers arriving to Germany since 2015, the phenomenon of human trafficking in connection to immigration to the country remains largely undocumented and understudied, particularly the link between the arrival of migrants and exploitation. There is no statistical information on potential victims of human trafficking among recently arrived asylum seekers, migrants and unaccompanied children.<sup>21</sup>

The main focus of Germany's anti-trafficking policies and responses has traditionally been on trafficking in women and girls for sexual exploitation and the existing structures are geared towards detecting and assisting such victims. However, in recent years the institutional and policy framework is gradually changing to include trafficking for labour exploitation and other forms of trafficking. In Germany, an additional layer of complexity is added by the federal structure of the country. It means that identification, referral, protection and integration of victims of human trafficking fall within the competence of the Länder.<sup>22</sup> Länder are mandated to provide protection and support to victims of human trafficking, finance the work of the counselling centres and set up coordination structures based on cooperation agreements with the police. The municipalities are likewise active in assisting victims and funding counselling centres.<sup>23</sup> The centres of specialised counselling are NGOs which offer advice and support for victims of trafficking. Many of their services are designed to support women because of their gender specific mandate. However, some counselling centres provide support to boys and men as well, or at least can refer a male victim for adequate assistance.

The figures counselling centres provide show that the cases of asylum seekers trafficked during their migratory journey increased in some regions of Germany when the country saw a nationwide increase in incoming asylum seekers. However, there have hardly been any identified cases of trafficking in human beings over the course of displacement from countries like Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>24</sup> Possible reasons might be that victims are not informed about available resources, experience a physical and mental overload that impedes them from seeking help, feeling of disempowerment, lack language skills and others. Two specialised counselling centres in Berlin have reported dealing with increasing numbers of trafficked minors.<sup>25</sup>

Established counselling centres and social and welfare centres are offering a broad range of services tailored for the special needs of the assisted persons. However, long-term assistance in Germany depends on the willingness of the victim to participate in criminal proceedings. Many victims of trafficking deter such procedures and refuse to act as a witness in court. It makes their long-term assistance *de facto* impossible within the legal terms prescribed by the German law. Some of the centres lack certainty and capacity, funding is usually granted on an annual or bi-annual basis and this hampers planning and provision of integration services.

The lack of national referral mechanism negatively impacts the planning and design of a long-term assistance and integration activities, especially targeting men and children.

# Main actors involved in the area of integration of trafficked migrants

## Governmental organisations

Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI)  
Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS)  
Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth  
Federal Office for Migration and Refugees  
Education Ministry (BMBF) and its Federal Institute for Vocational and Professional Education (BIBB)  
Federal Employment Agency  
Social services (Jobcenters)  
Trade union services (DGB)

## Länder and Municipalities

Immigration and Integration ministries and/or designated contact points (varies by land)  
Some municipalities have mayoral offices that coordinate local integration efforts

## Non-governmental organisations

German NGO Network against Trafficking in Human Beings – KOK e.V.  
Counselling centres (e.g. Ban-Ying, Terre des Femmes, ECPAT Berlin and others)



## Residence permit

The right of residence of trafficked persons is linked to their cooperation in criminal proceedings. After formal identification by the authorities, victims are given a three-months period of reflection, in which they can not be deported. If they opt to give testimony, victims are granted a temporary residence permit for the duration of criminal proceedings. If they decide not to do so the process is completed, they must return to the country of origin. If the person is ill and therefore

receives a temporary stay, s/he must leave after recovery at the latest. Many victims try to legalize their status in other ways such as asylum application or marriage with a German national. The possibility to extend the residence permit after the criminal proceedings was introduced by the law amendment in 2015. To what extent this possibility is actually implemented in practice remains to be seen. So far there are hardly any instances.

## Assistance and integration services

***“I couldn’t have gone my way without you. Just knowing that I can call you and get advice helps so much. It is hard here alone, you don’t know what is right, how to start something, where to find answers.”***

Woman, a former victim assisted by a counselling center.

In general, Germany has significantly stepped up its integration efforts, both in scale and scope, and a first national integration law entered into force in August 2016. In particular, Germany has taken a number of initiatives aimed at early intervention, for example by

opening the so-called Integration Courses (600 hours of language training and 100 hours of civic orientation) to asylum seekers from origin countries with high recognition rates. Language training is the cornerstone of the integration policy in Germany.<sup>26</sup>

When it comes to specialised assistance and integration measures for victims of human trafficking, available services and programmes are limited. Potential victims of human trafficking are granted at least three months reflection period. Cooperation with migration offices is required to issue tolerated right to stay for the recovery period.

In specific cases the reflection period can be extended. All counselling centres provide trafficked persons with translation services and legal assistance. Most of them offer safe accommodation (apartments) or a place in a shelter. Emergency medical assistance is granted; also a psychological support, which is in most cases limited.

***“Language remains the principal barrier. German is difficult, yet without a good command of the language, one cannot overcome the feeling of foreignness. I think about my mother and my other relatives in their fifties, who were never even educated in their native language, how would they be able to integrate in a such new and unfamiliar environment? Language courses are not enough: people need the support of the German community, they need more social events where they can meet with their fellow citizens up close and personal.”***<sup>27</sup>

Syrian Writer Widad Nabi, 33 years.

Special case officers should be involved in the handling of applications submitted by certain groups of asylum seekers (unaccompanied minors, persons persecuted on the grounds of their gender, victims of human trafficking or of torture and traumatised asylum seekers). These case officers have received special training concerning the special needs of various vulnerable groups. In addition, they can rely on special legal, cultural and psychological

knowledge in order to handle the procedure carefully.<sup>28</sup> However, an asylum seeker needs to be identified as a possible victim of human trafficking by a regular case officer before the special case officer is called in. Specialised counselling centres cannot offer more than advice to trafficked persons from non-EU countries because all other services – funding for accommodation, maintenance, healthcare etc. – are contingent upon their residency status.

There are no uniform structures in place in Germany, nor are there regulations for a specialised support system. The Federal Government only provides a legal framework for individual benefits for trafficked persons in accordance with laws on benefits, namely the German Asylum Seekers Benefits Act and the German Social Code, in order to guarantee their subsistence.

Most counselling centres are specialised to deal with women (victims of sexual exploitation) and do not have the needed structures and preparedness to offer assistance to men. As a result, reflection/recovery period is almost not provided at all to male victims and/or in forced labour cases. There are also no adequate measures in place to assist male victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Services aimed specifically at (young) men trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation and victims of violence, such as the counselling centre “Hilfe für Jungs” in Berlin, are almost entirely

absent in other regions.

Unaccompanied children are a particularly important and challenging group. However, their exact number can only be estimated as they do not necessarily file an asylum claim. This is a group that often needs access to specialised, long-term support measures that do not end abruptly once they turn 18. There are a number of local initiatives for unaccompanied children in Germany, but a new dispersal rule means that they are now often placed in areas where there is only limited support.<sup>29</sup>

With the exception of some federal states, the counselling centres do not have the mandate to require the issuance of the reflection period from migration offices, in most cases they can only suggest such. Due to the increased number of asylum seekers and migrants in general several social services, e.g. shelters lack capacity (personnel and funding) to deal with cases of human trafficking in a proper way.

## Good practices

To provide better assistance to victims of trafficking for labour exploitation, the majority of whom are men, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) has undertaken measures to shed light on the problem and introduce new measures to tackle this issue. As a result, several new counselling centres have emerged, funded by the BMAS. For example, the counselling centre for Migration and Decent Work (Migration und Gute Arbeit e.V) have dealt with a large number of cases of labour exploitation and provides accommodation to male victims of trafficking.

The German Integration Programme for Survivors of Trafficking (GIPST), financed by the EU's AMIF Fund and implemented by the association Together against Trafficking (Bündnis Gemeinsam gegen Menschenhandel e.V.) started in January 2017 and has three main objectives:





To identify victims of trafficking and to inform potential victims (e.g., asylum seekers), as well as relatives, about the dangers of trafficking in human beings; • To integrate identified trafficked people in Germany through a comprehensive programme including mentoring, life skills training and internships; and • To accompany the voluntary return of people to their country of origin or another country and the further support provided by local partner organisations.<sup>30</sup>

In October 2014, the German Land of Baden-Württemberg started a programme for deeply traumatised women and children who have been raped and tortured and escaped Isis in northern Iraq. The programme's main aim is to offer women and children who have suffered so much the chance to build a new future. Twenty-two towns and villages decided to set up a programme offering medical treatment and humanitarian visas to the women and children concerned. The doctors working on the scheme chose the people who would benefit based on two criteria: the severity of the physical and psychological trauma they have endured and the way the programme could benefit them. As well as receiving therapy, the programme's beneficiaries attend German language classes every day and take part in simple activities such as shopping and cycling. The children attend school. Initially, the programme helps to stabilise the people on it, enabling them to overcome their fear of going out or meeting other people. The aim is to enable these people to live independently after two years of treatment, even though experts acknowledge that for some of them the process will take longer. Although the Mayor admits that he faced some resistance when he announced the arrival of the beneficiaries of the programme in his village, relations are now very good with all the local people and some shopkeepers have already given some refugees the chance to gain their first work experience.<sup>31</sup>

AWO Reception Centre or the Marie-Schlei-Haus has been in operation since April 2013 and is the first institution for particularly vulnerable refugees in Berlin. AWO has enhanced its counselling in nine languages to vulnerable groups maintaining contact with the assisted person and giving advice even after they move out of the center. AWO works in close cooperation with other counselling services to provide a broad range of services, e.g., social-educational counselling and support, mediation for especially vulnerable refugees, support in finding preschools, schools, flats, doctors and other services.<sup>32</sup>

Specialised counselling centre Ban Ying has launched a platform with the title "Empowerment of Migrant Women at Risk of Exploitation, Trafficking and Enslavement" to bring together self-organised migrant groups and projects





supporting migrants in Berlin. The aim of Ban Ying's work is to improve the living conditions and social and legal situation of migrant women in Germany. In order to achieve this, the organisation's work does not just focus upon migrant women affected by violence, but also upon their environment and the wider public sphere. Ban Ying offers advice and counselling services to migrant women and transgender individuals in Berlin and other parts of Germany. In exceptional circumstances, Ban Ying can also offer their services to migrant men.

To enable integration into the education system, local authorities are working to set up new «welcome classes» based on the “Willkommensklassen” model. These transitional classes, which focus on learning the German language, are intended to enable children to join mainstream education after one year. The teachers involved are specialised in teaching German as foreign language. These classes give refugee children a pattern of life similar to that of other children, whilst also enabling them to meet other youngsters of their own age. They bring together children of different levels, ages and countries of origin. The lessons are given in primary and secondary school buildings in Berlin, which facilitates contacts with young Germans. The Länder of Saarland and Berlin have made school attendance by refugee children compulsory.<sup>33</sup>

## Accommodation

Safe accommodation is an important aspect of protection, however accommodation for trafficked persons is not consistently regulated in Germany. Creating, funding and organising accommodation is the responsibility of individual federal state and municipality and there are significant differences in the way accommodation is organised due to the specific situation in a federal state (funding, number of specialised counselling centres, number of women's shelters and safehouses).

In most federal states, the specialised counselling centres usually provide/organise safe shelters. Centres receive funding from the Länder and/or from the council to house trafficked persons,

so that they can be accommodated in women's shelters or in a safehouse. Some Länder, such as North Rhine-Westphalia, Rhineland-Palatinate and Baden-Württemberg, have a state fund for the accommodation of trafficked persons that can fund, for example, a short stay in a hotel or a B&B. However, there are usually no adequate funds and, therefore, mixed financing using their own resources, donations and/or endowed funds is necessary in all Länder and funding has to be secured and negotiated on a case-to-case basis. Women's shelters in Germany are reporting a generally worsening shortage of spaces – in September 2017, the situation was identified as more dramatic than ever before. They often have to

refuse women affected by violence or can only admit them after a very long wait. This means that resorting to this kind of accommodation for trafficked persons is also just as difficult.<sup>34</sup>

A particularly problematic issue is accommodation for trafficked men, children or whole families. No federal state in Germany offers specific accommodation for trafficked men. Only the city and land of Berlin is at the moment planning to establish accommodations specifically for male victims of trafficking.<sup>35</sup> Specialised counselling centres often have to resort to case-by-case solutions, e.g. hotels/B&Bs, homeless shelters etc.

There are no specialised accommodation options for trafficked children either. Institutions and accommodation for boys is lacking, as are those for specific groups like refugees or small children that have been subject to exploitation and child trafficking. They are sometimes housed in hotels or communal accommodation. These options cannot guarantee the specialised protection children require, nor can they conform to legal child protection requirements as per the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Yet, even child and youth welfare institutions mostly do not comply with the special requirements of trafficked and exploited minors. Youth welfare is a matter of the federal states, with each individual youth welfare office deciding how minors are housed and how this

accommodation will be financed and provided. The situation is therefore very different in each of the sixteen German states. Additionally, 18 to 21-year-olds can sometimes receive protection as part of extended youth welfare. This is also handled differently by each state.

It is therefore crucial that care institution staff are informed of the trafficked child's particular situation of vulnerability as soon as the child is taken into care and that their specific security needs are taken into account. Generally speaking, existing accommodation options in general care institutions managed by child and youth welfare organisations cannot fulfil the needs and do justice to the trafficked minor's situation. In specific cases, children can be placed in specialised safehouses, temporary shelters or, if no better solution can be found, a private rental accommodation approved by the Youth Welfare Office. Girls are sometimes accommodated in shelters for women or girls. Children who have come to Germany unaccompanied often stay in "clearing-houses" which offer special support. Much of the time, the problem is that children/youngsters who have experienced serious violence/exploitation often find it difficult to comply with rules, which means that they are likely to be violent, use drugs or run away. This often causes conflict with child and youth welfare institutions needing to uphold their rules, and this can result in them being turned out after repeated breaches and living on the street.<sup>36</sup>

## Good practice

In 2015, specific accommodations for particularly vulnerable persons were provided in Hamburg, Berlin and Durlach near Karlsruhe. The shelters provide for the specific needs of certain groups of vulnerable persons, such as pregnant women, single mothers and their children and/or older female refugees, blind asylum applicants, traumatised refugees, including victims of human trafficking.

## Social and labour integration

***“Naturally every story of integration begins with difficulty. Yet, ultimately they will all find a way of communicating, even if in the beginning much remains confined to the realm of body language and gestures. Integration is not a garment we put on and – voila! – instantly become German. It is rather the acceptance of cultural differences and the search for common ground.”***<sup>37</sup>

Syrian Writer Widad Nabi, 33 years.

The current practice in Germany is that after a reflection period (it can last from three months up to several years), a trafficked person is referred to the social services, e.g. job centres, centres offering professional trainings and qualifications, if there is a need. German municipalities and the Federal Agency for Employment are trying to speed up the process of labour market integration.<sup>38</sup> There

are many social assistance services in Germany with well-established structures and networks. However, the standards of social services often depend on the financial situation/capacity of the respective Länder. It remains difficult to gain access to the German labour market and therefore to take lawful and safe employment options, especially for migrants with low qualifications.

***“My greatest wish is to stand on my own two feet. But that’s also precisely the biggest problem: the fact that we need assistance in so many areas. Even though it really doesn’t have to be this way. For as long as I’ve been here I’ve wanted to work. I tried to get that ball rolling and presented myself to all kinds of governmental agencies. Many want me to work for them. But that’s a long way from saying that I’m allowed to work for them.”***

Man from Afghanistan.



There is no national coordination centre to facilitate the possibility of transferring a trafficked person from one federal state to another with better labour market conditions and more possibilities to receive long term assistance. Because of the different

standards of welfare structures and services in the different federal states, such transfer could facilitate long-term assistance of a victims of trafficking in another federal state than the one where the initial intervention occurred.

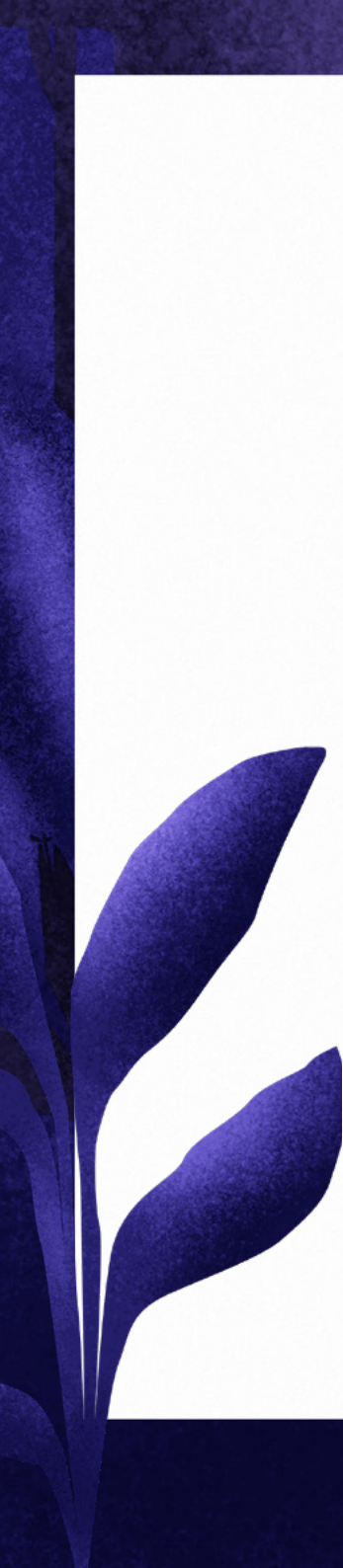
## Good practices

The initiatives dealing with employment and vocational training, including language courses, for migrants and specifically refugees, have recently significantly increased. The German Trade Union Federation (DGB) has become increasingly active in the fight against labour exploitation, in particular by lobbying for practical and legal measures to reduce labour exploitation, developing information materials and advising employees. The DGB runs and supports projects, for instance the Berlin Alliance against Human Trafficking for Labour Exploitation (Berliner Bündnis gegen Menschenhandel zum Zwecke der Arbeitsausbeutung) aimed at gaining knowledge about the phenomenon of labour exploitation and building up structures to fight against it. The Alliance is working with trade unions and responsible ministries to sensitize, give advice and train organizations working with victims of human trafficking and labour exploitation. The Alliance is located at the Arbeit und Leben e.V. office in Berlin.

The joint GIZ<sup>39</sup> and German Federal Employment Agency programme “Triple Win”, which provides jobs for trained carers from the Philippines, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Tunisia in Germany, could serve as a model to improve integration of migrants into the German labour market. In the recruitment of skilled workers from countries outside the European Union, the Triple Win Pilot Project focuses on the interests of German companies, foreign skilled workers, and the countries of origin – benefiting all three groups. In areas with large numbers of refugees, it offers medical and psychosocial care. Furthermore, it enables children to attend school and adults to receive vocational training.<sup>40</sup>

The “Stuttgart Model“ is an ambitious plan designed to facilitate migrants’ integration into the job market. Refugees are one of the four target groups of the scheme. To facilitate migrants’ integration into the job market, Stuttgart city authority launched the «Stuttgart Welcome Center» as the main service and point of contact for new arrivals





working and living in Stuttgart. The Stuttgart Welcome Center works closely with the main players in the local job market. It gives precise information on jobs available locally, training opportunities and the steps to be taken to have qualifications recognised. Apprenticeship and employment advisors from civil society assist refugees and new arrivals, providing information and advice so that they can identify the main players and accelerate their integration. The municipality also organises German lessons for refugees combined with other activities provided by volunteers or a part of training courses.<sup>41</sup>

In Germany many companies, small, medium and large, have set up schemes to facilitate refugees' access to the job market. For example, Porsche launched a programme to «demonstrate the German culture of welcoming people and enabling them to settle as quickly and as well as possible». Aged between 16 and 38, the 13 participants benefiting from this programme in Stuttgart come from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan and Syria. Selected from about a hundred candidates, they were given German lessons for five months, lessons in the culture of the country - history, bureaucratic formalities, how companies work - and a variety of technical lessons. The great majority of the 13 participants will remain at Porsche in the medium or long term, undergoing multi-disciplinary training, an apprenticeship or going directly into production on a permanent contract. This commitment on the part of the private sector goes hand in hand with the support granted by local authorities (Länder and municipal authorities) for the training and schooling of new arrivals.<sup>42</sup>

In Berlin, refugees with various backgrounds are recruited as guides in the city's main museums. The "Multake" project has enabled 25 Iraqi and Syrian refugees to train to be Arab-speaking guides at the German Historical Museum in Berlin. The Museum has been recruiting refugees since 2015: musicians, architects, archaeologists, lawyers. Each of the people selected can then choose to work in one of these four Berlin museums: the Museum of Islamic Art, the Museum of the Ancient Near East, the Bode Museum or the German Historical Museum. They undergo rigorous training, not only acquiring knowledge relating to the works, but learning how to transmit that knowledge to the public. The diversity of the profiles of the refugees selected is a real asset for the museum. For they each put across a particular message on the works in the museum, making it more fun and easier to understand for visitors. Gaining a knowledge of German history reinforces their sense of belonging to their host society, with which they can identify more easily. Today, representatives of the German authorities and international museum community go to Berlin to see how the Multake example can be reproduced beyond Germany's borders.<sup>43</sup>

## Medical assistance

Specialised counselling centres provide trafficked persons with access to healthcare. In reality, however, this can be challenging. During the reflection period, trafficked persons from third countries have access to the healthcare system as per the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act, which only covers the costs for emergency medical treatment. However, immediately after their experience with human trafficking, they may require further treatment beyond this. Access to psychological advice and therapy is, in practice, also difficult. This is, for example, due to a lack of funding, long waiting times for appointments or the lack of treatment options, particularly

in their native tongues. The specialised counselling centres offer advice and information and accompany clients to healthcare professionals. However, there is still no comprehensive network of specialised counselling centres for trafficked persons throughout Germany.<sup>44</sup> An undocumented migrant who cannot cover his or her healthcare costs is obliged to seek financial assistance from the German social services, which, in turn, are obliged to report undocumented migrants to the authorities.<sup>45</sup> For this reason, people in irregular situation, including victims of human trafficking might be reluctant to seek medical assistance.

## Compensation for victims of human trafficking

Victims of human trafficking can pursue claims for compensation in accordance with the Law on the Compensation of Victims of Crime. If the claim is rejected, the victim can challenge the decision in court and also pursue claims directly against

perpetrators in accordance with the Civil Code. The victim can also apply for legal aid for the court proceedings, however, it is not standard practice for victims to pursue claims. The amounts paid are usually significantly lower than the claims initially pursued.<sup>46</sup>

## Recommendations

### RESIDENCE PERMIT

A residence permit (at least toleration to stay) for potential victims of human trafficking should be offered without the obligation to participate in legal proceedings.

## PLAN OF ASSISTANCE AND INTEGRATION SERVICES

An independent national rapporteur's or national coordinator's office to support cooperation between social services, counselling centres and state institutions at the national and federal states' level should be established to create better referral mechanisms and to promote long-term assistance and integration.

Counselling centres should be developed for men and children. Special attention should be paid to the group of 18-21 years old young adults as special assistance for children are stopped rapidly when a child turns 18 and it puts a young adult in extremely vulnerable situation. Assistance to transit into adulthood should be provided.

Long-term financial support for counselling centres should be ensured to allow planning and implementation of long-term protection and integration services for trafficked persons.

Counselling centres must be given a mandate to assist victims of all forms of human trafficking. As forms of exploitation tend to overlap, any creation or development of support structures should ensure as much as possible that there is no strict separation between the different forms of exploitation or that collaboration between stakeholders is effective in the event of divided responsibilities.<sup>47</sup>

Collaboration with migrant organisations should be facilitated to empower vulnerable migrants and create a system of support.

Trafficked persons must be offered low-threshold services, as developments in support structures for trafficked persons have shown that measures such as meet-ups for women can help gain the trust and establish contact with trafficked persons.<sup>48</sup>

## ACCOMMODATION

Special, secure and adequate accommodation options for trafficked children should be put in place and they should be integrated into youth welfare support systems.

Social integration and resource mobilisation must also be strengthened in accommodation structures.



## **SOCIAL AND LABOUR INTEGRATION**

More lawful migration options and access opportunities to the German labour market should be created for persons with low qualifications.

The work of trade unions in the field of assistance to victims of human trafficking should be encouraged and further enhanced since unions are in a position to provide long-term anti-trafficking measure addressing the needs of male and female victims of human trafficking, especially to assist them with integration into the labour market.

## **MEDICAL ASSISTANCE**

Medical assistance should be disassociated from the legal status of victims. If trafficked migrants fear repercussions as a result of seeking medical assistance, they are likely to refrain from getting the health care they need, resulting in negative outcomes for themselves and increased health risks for the communities in which they live.

Access to psychological therapy and trauma treatment for victims should be improved alongside better education for all health professionals and frontline staff on how to respond appropriately to the needs of trafficked people.



***Long term protection and  
integration measures of  
victims of human  
trafficking among  
non-EU migrants  
in Sweden***



In Sweden third country nationals and undocumented migrants who are victims of human trafficking for various reasons might receive less services than EU nationals as access to the protection and rehabilitation services is directly linked to the legal status of a victim. Non-EU migrants who are victims of human trafficking might be excluded from the Swedish National Referral Mechanism or Voluntary Return Program due to fear of contacting state authorities or because of the irregular status in Sweden.

One of the key issues concerning protection of exploited migrants relates to residence permits. In order to stay in Sweden legally and access the assistance and integration measures, the person must have a valid residence permit. A formal identification of the victim is a central component of the Swedish assistance system. Preliminary investigations are often not initiated, even if an increase can be noted. One reason is that migrants often are exploited already in their home-countries or during the journey to Sweden. In 2017, the Swedish National Coordinators Office against Trafficking in Human Beings reported only 19 suspected cases of human trafficking involving third country nationals. The remaining 150 cases involved EU-migrants.

The Swedish Migration Agency is identifying more and more potential victims of trafficking among their clientele concerning asylum, work permit and family ties cases. In 2015 the Agency identified 195 potential victims, including 66 minors, and in 2016 a total of 341 victims, including 91 minors. The trend continued in 2017, as the Agency identified more than 400 potential victims of human trafficking but only 19 out of 169 human trafficking cases dealt by the authorities in 2017 involved non-EU victims of human trafficking.

Assistance to victims is provided by municipalities which have the responsibility over people who live in the municipality. Social services must place a person subjected to crime in adequate housing, where s/he will be offered relevant protection such as counselling, access to legal aid, and information on how a reflection period is granted or how to access the Voluntary Return Programme. If the victim is a child, social services must follow the case during the entire process. Close cooperation with law enforcement authorities, the Swedish Migration Agency (if it involves an unaccompanied child), and other actors is maintained until “a sustainable solution in best interest of the child has been identified and implemented”. In addition, NGOs can assist victims in cooperation with the municipalities or directly.

When a victim of human trafficking is a child, the Migration Agency and the Social Services seem to lack routines for collaboration. However, in all human trafficking cases involving a child the social services are notified directly after identification, but there are signs showing that these cases are not always followed up and in very few cases criminal proceedings are initiated. The trafficked child is often viewed as a child in distress and not as a victim of trafficking. This might result in the child being exploited even after the initial identification as the signs of trafficking were not taken into account when developing a plan of assistance.

In the recent years, however, the measures aimed at identifying and protecting exploited children or children at risk to be exploited and trafficked increased. Several of these actions are included in the Swedish National Action Plan against human trafficking in children, 2016-2018.<sup>49</sup>

The National Board of Health and Welfare (NBHW) has been given the task to develop a series of recommendations for municipalities when encountering and referring a child victim of human trafficking or a child at risk to be trafficked. This report is currently under review.<sup>50</sup> The NBHW has further identified vulnerable groups amongst unaccompanied children. The groups identified included children who have received a negative asylum decision but have not left the country, young persons who turned 18 or had their age re-registered as adults and unaccompanied children who did not intend to apply for asylum. According to the findings those groups lack adequate support from the society and are often overlooked by public authorities.<sup>51</sup>

## Main actors responsible for integration of victims of human trafficking

### Governmental organisations

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs  
Ministry of Employment  
Gender Equality Agency (Jämy)  
Swedish Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*)  
Swedish Migration Agency

### Municipalities

Social services of municipalities  
County coordinators against Trafficking in Human Beings  
Miika Reception Centres

### Non-governmental organisations

The Swedish Civil Society Platform  
Caritas Sweden  
*Insamlingsstiftelsen mot Trafficking*



# Residence permit

Formal identification of a victim of human trafficking is a central component in the Swedish system of assistance. In order to receive assistance from state agencies and municipal social services, the victim must have a legal status in Sweden. However, getting the status of a victim of human trafficking is not in itself a ground for being granted asylum in Sweden. But circumstances of a person and experienced trauma can affect the decision in an asylum matter. The residence permit may be also granted on humanitarian grounds, but in reality these instances are really rare. There are no legal provisions offering victims of Human Trafficking a permanent residence permit as a result of them being formally identified as victims, other than a reflection period and a temporary residence permit. The process of granting a reflection period and a temporary residence permit are parallel processes to the asylum process, meaning that a victim of human trafficking may be granted a temporary residence permit for taking part in criminal proceedings connected to the trafficking crime, even though s/he are also seeking asylum simultaneously.

In order to be granted a reflection period a potential human trafficking case must be reported to the police and a preliminary investigation should be initiated. Both third-country nationals and EU/EEA citizens may be granted a 30-day reflection period. The Aliens Act provides the possibility for victims of human trafficking to be issued a temporary residence permit both on the basis of their co-operation with the authorities and on the basis of their personal situation. A temporary residence permit can be granted if it is necessary to enable a preliminary

investigation or a main hearing in a criminal case is to be carried out. It can be cancelled or renewed upon request of the person in charge of the preliminary investigation. The temporary residence permit entitles a victim to access social assistance measures. A temporary residence permit can also be granted if an overall assessment of her/his situation reveal such exceptionally distressing circumstances that s/he should be allowed to stay. According to the Swedish authorities, victims of human trafficking are considered to be a category of persons who can be considered as being in exceptionally distressing circumstances. However, in practice such cases are extremely rare. Residence permits have been granted mostly to victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation who agreed to participate in criminal proceedings.<sup>52</sup>

The legal status of a person and available assistance are intertwined, as a legal status determines what kind of assistance a victim can access as well as the duration of the provided assistance. If a victim of human trafficking has obtained a legal status, s/he has access to the Swedish welfare system to a much larger extent than irregular migrants.

Accommodation, protection, assistance before, during and after legal proceedings are types of services available to a victim of human trafficking with a legal status according to the Swedish National Referral Mechanism.<sup>53</sup> In addition, from 1 June 2017, a new regulation<sup>54</sup> came into force that can make it possible for those who arrived as unaccompanied minors and who have applied for asylum to receive a longer residence permit for high school studies.



An asylum seeker, regardless if s/he is a victim of human trafficking or not, has the possibility to initiate a so-called *track change*. This means that if offered a job, with standards stipulated by the

Migration Agency, s/he can apply for a work permit. After a total 2+2 years of holding a work permit, it is possible to apply for a permanent residence permit.

## Good practices

ABIS<sup>55</sup> is an organisation which operates in Gothenburg, Stockholm and Malmö. ABIS provides working opportunities for the most vulnerable asylum seekers, mostly families. The Swedish Civil Society Platform against Human Trafficking has initiated a collaboration with ABIS to encourage and help vulnerable migrants to apply for a work permit. The idea is to provide vulnerable migrants or victims of THB an opportunity to *change track* from an asylum process to a work permit process which would then result in a legal status for the victim and a possibility to reintegrate in the country of destination.

A skilled lawyer can in some instances determine the possibilities of a victim to obtain a legal status in Sweden. The project “Safe Havens”, run by the Salvation Army in cooperation with the law firms *Åkermark Advokatbyrå* and *Asylbyrån*, offer legal advice to victims of human trafficking. The project also involves a number of volunteers “legal buddies”, who are law or social work students who have received specialized training and can provide not only legal advice but also be a contact person for other matters. The project has a close cooperation with the Swedish Civil Society Platform against Human Trafficking and victims can be referred to the legal counselling by visiting the premises of Safe Havens who have drop-in hours. During 2018, several of the victims assisted by the Platform were referred to the Safe Havens legal counselling and NSP.

## Assistance to victims of human trafficking

Providing assistance to victims of human trafficking is mainly the responsibility of the social services located in the Swedish municipalities. Moreover, specialised THB units within

the social services are established in Gothenburg, Malmö and Stockholm; offering victims various types of assistance and, if needed, referring the victims to relevant stakeholders.

**“Today I am happy that I had the courage to ask for help. I feel lucky that I met some wonderful people who are helping me to change my life. I feel happy that finally someone believes in me and – most importantly – now I feel safe.”**

Woman, a former victim of human trafficking assisted by the Civil Society Platform.

The Swedish Gender Equality Agency, responsible for national coordination of the work against human trafficking, have established County Coordinators against Trafficking in all Swedish administrative regions, following the same administrative division as the Swedish Police Authority. The county coordinators are responsible for referral of victims of human trafficking regionally as well as for ensuring that their needs are fulfilled. The referral responsibility of the coordinators is vertical as well as horizontal since they cooperate with national stakeholders as well as local stakeholders, with the aim to provide the victim with assistance. The impact of this practice has not been officially evaluated, but interviewed experts emphasized that this structure has improved local coordination and has been found useful by many actors, especially at the local level.

The assistance system in Sweden sometimes is described by Swedish stakeholders as a *geographical lottery*, meaning that provision of assistance to victims of human trafficking is not centralized but rather a municipal issue. Thus, children who are irregular migrants can attend school in Sweden although this in practice depends on which municipality the child is in. Moreover, these children rarely attend school due to various reasons. The assistance services vary drastically depending on if the victim was identified in a municipality

experienced in cases of human trafficking compared to a municipality lacking both knowledge and resources.

The assistance system is currently more suitable for female victims exploited for sexual purposes in Sweden and who are willing to cooperate with the authorities.

If the victim is exploited for forced labour the case is less likely to be investigated by the authorities as stakeholders lack the competence and the resources to do so. Most cases involving, e.g., a potential victim of forced criminality will likely not be investigated at all. The non-EU migrants are less likely to receive help through the assistance system if they have not been exploited in Sweden or are afraid to cooperate with the authorities. Furthermore, if there is no report to the police and no preliminary investigation is being initiated, it will limit the possibility of offering the victim assistance. In these cases, victims are often referred to the civil society, most probably the Swedish Civil Society Platform. The assistance provided by the Platform is unconditional. Furthermore, NSP can also assist victim's children. A problem arises if the woman has substance dependency or if the victim is male. In case of a child victim of trafficking, social services are immediately notified, and they take the responsibility to provide assistance and protection.

## Good practices

The Helsingborg Network against Trafficking in Human Beings was set up in 2016 with the purpose to identify more victims, refer them to competent stakeholders and to raise local awareness on human trafficking for all forms of exploitation in the municipality of Helsingborg. The network is coordinated by the local office of the Salvation Army and consists of social services, the police, the migration agency, shelters, county coordinators against THB as well several hotels in the municipality. The fact that the network includes NGOs, local authorities and the private sector has made the network successful and highly active, resulting in new THB cases identified in the municipality.

In 2015, the County Administrative Board of Stockholm and the Civil Society Platform initiated a pilot national support programme (NSP) for victims of trafficking as a part of a governmental assignment. The programme runs in parallel to the support measures offered under the National Referral Mechanism and the Return Programme.<sup>56</sup> The NSP aims to provide an improved and additional support for victims of trafficking who cannot access the NRM and to address the needs of persons who fall in the gaps of the official system or who do not want to contact the authorities, or return to their home country. The NSP makes it possible to offer a maximum of 30 days of services to a person while s/he makes a decision of whether to contact the authorities. After 30 days, up to 90 days of services are available to people who do not want to report to the police nor are included in the NRM. An additional 90 days can be granted or the final closure of 45 days for planning safe return through the Gender Equality Agency's Safe Return Program for victims of Human Trafficking. In 2017, NSP supported 27 cases mostly on long term basis. NSP is funded by the government. Within the frame of the NSP, victims can receive both short-term and long-term assistance.

## Accommodation

One key factor that renders migrants, especially undocumented migrants, vulnerable to exploitation is the lack of accommodation. There are no legal provisions, settling the issue of accommodation specifically for victims of human trafficking, and the general issue

of accommodating exploited persons is not a state responsibility, but a municipal responsibility. Some NGOs, located mainly in the larger city areas of Sweden, run specialized shelters for mainly female victims of human trafficking. The staff of these shelters have a long experience in



assisting victims of THB and the shelters can provide different types of services lasting up to a year. As victims may require assistance for a period of time exceeding one year, several shelters also provide transfer accommodation in the form of apartments. The rent for these apartments is paid by the NGO responsible for the victim. The apartments are provided in the later process of the long-term assistance plan when the NGO and the victim herself have concluded that she is ready for this step in the process of recovery. The main purpose of a transfer accommodation is to help victims to integrate into the society.

The Swedish Civil Society Platform against Human Trafficking can also fund the rent for a transfer accommodation for victims who are part of the National Support Program, run by the Platform.

Migrants who are in an asylum process are provided with accommodation by the Swedish Migration Agency. The types of accommodation vary depending on age of the asylum seeker, which step of the process the asylum seeker is in and if it is a single asylum seeker or a family. Moreover, asylum seekers in need of additional assistance or support; for example, an unaccompanied minor with drug abuse problems or a family in need of parental support will be assisted by the social services as well and provided with specialized accommodation in treatment facilities such as Swedish HVB-homes, while their asylum case is handled at the Migration Agency.

However, many undocumented migrants live in private households and are taking care of the garden and doing domestic chores such as cleaning in exchange for having a place to sleep. Several instances where encountered when young men had to provide sex to older men in exchange for accommodation. This problem might be more common, but young people are extremely reluctant to talk about

it due to shame.<sup>57</sup> The Swedish Policy Authority have reported that whole shadow societies might be emerging in Sweden consisting of migrants who have been denied asylum and gone underground. Entire families may be living in abandoned warehouses with authorities having very little information about the living standards these migrants live under and how they economically support themselves and their families.

In 2017 the Salvation Army opened the first shelter for male victims of THB in Sweden, located in the Gothenburg area. Previously all male victims were referred to shelters offering assistance to persons with addictions on a case - by - case basis. This practice will presumably continue as the Salvation Army shelter cannot meet all the needs for accommodating men.

Unaccompanied children are, in accordance with the Social Services Act, offered temporary housing in the municipality where the child presents herself or himself to a Swedish authority. The municipal social services place the child in a so-called transit shelter (also known as arrival housing) until the child can move in to an assigned municipality where s/he is placed in suitable housing, usually a foster home or treatment facility for children. The assigned municipality is also responsible for ensuring that a child has access to schooling and to dental and medical care. The child is assigned a social worker and if the child is placed at HVB home, s/he is assigned a contact person. Furthermore, a legal guardian is appointed by the Chief Guardian/Chief Guardian Committee in the municipality where the child is residing. The legal guardian works on a voluntary basis and represents the child in the capacity of both the custodian and guardian making decisions that concern the child's personal, financial and legal affairs. The municipality is further responsible for the child's integration and establishment if the child receives a residence permit.<sup>58</sup>

## Good practice

The NGO Talita operates one shelter in the Stockholm and another in the Gothenburg area. It has three single rooms for long-term stays (up to one year) and one single room for shorter term stays. Staff comprise two full-time staff members who have been trained as trauma therapists specialised in sexual abuse, as well as three part-time staff. In addition, Talita runs a flat with two places in which trafficking victims can live after their stay at the main shelter, while continuing to receive therapy. Since the shelter opened in 2012 Talita has hosted some 12 women per year, plus some 10 emergency cases. Apart from therapy, the women are given lessons about Swedish society. Work practice can be arranged at a cleaning company which has agreed to try to offer this.<sup>59</sup>

## Integration services

The possibilities to obtain long term assistance and integration services vary in different parts of Sweden. Some groups of victims are less likely to receive long term assistance as formally identified victims; for example, undocumented victims because of their risk of being expelled; victims who do not cooperate with law enforcement; these include men, young boys and girls that are not formally recognized as victims. Children are a whole other class of victims who are not always treated as victims but more as children in need of custody.

Integration services and the actors that provide these services in Sweden differ, depending on the purpose of the integration measures; are these services designed to integrate migrants socially or are they intended to help migrants to integrate into the labour market.

According to the national legislation, the social services of a municipality are responsible for ensuring assistance to victims of human trafficking based on individual assistance plans. The plans can be short-term as well as long-term. In practice long term protection services are mainly provided either by specialised social service units for vulnerable groups (available in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö) or by specialised NGOs. Some municipalities have signed agreements and MoUs with NGOs regarding the provision of support to victims of human trafficking.

Integration measures provided to victims of human trafficking specifically are limited and are mainly provided by NGOs. Victims might be provided with language courses, vocational training, social activities and transitional accommodation, given that they have acquired a residence permit of some kind.

## Good practice

The Swedish Society Platform has initiated cooperation with the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm to offer creative workshops to former female victims of human trafficking and their children. The workshops are also attended by the staff working at the shelters. The purpose of these workshops is to let the victims and the staff jointly explore and express themselves in a creative environment. To be in the location of a contemporary museum and learn about the most famous artists and art practice is also part of the empowerment and integration services that NSP provides.

## Labour integration

The main responsible actor for labour integration in Sweden is the Swedish Public Employment Service, *Arbetsförmedlingen*. The labour integration services offered range from state funded language courses of Swedish to direct job offers.<sup>60</sup> These integration measures are usually implemented in cooperation with municipalities, the Migration Agency and County Administrative Boards.

Recently, legislation regulating labour integration of newly arrived migrants have been revised and harmonized to correspond with regulations covering labour integration of the general population. Furthermore, Swedish Integration Programs are shaped as individual plans consisting of language courses as well as other measures expected to aid migrants in the process of entering the labour market and may last up to 24 months. Reports show that female newly arrived migrants chose to be involved in these programs to a lesser extent than male migrants.<sup>61</sup>

Moreover, Sweden has introduced a *fast track program*, meaning that newly arrived migrants with a certain expertise or degree in a field from their country of origin that has been identified as a priority field in Sweden, are provided with an individual integration plan consisting of language courses combined with vocational training. The aim of the fast track is to swiftly make the newly arrived migrant prepared to take on a profession in Sweden.

As sometimes victims of human trafficking have low education or are illiterate, integration for migrants with minimal education is a key long-term challenge for Sweden. Building up the basic skills to be functional in the labour market will require some time.<sup>62</sup> So far, no specialized programs have been established for migrants lacking education from their country of origin. However, the general programs for labour integration are available to this group as well.



***When I arrived the most difficult was to get used to the different culture and to learn the language. I was surprised by the indifference I felt from the society. I felt observing looks, but these looks were not positive.***

Hamid from Afghanistan

The labour integration programs today are available only for migrants with a legal status, although there are services provided by a few NGOs and trade unions aimed at assisting irregular migrants as well. Although Swedish labour law covers all individuals working in Sweden, including those working but lacking a legal status, irregular migrants subjected to trafficking or labour exploitation are not assisted to the same extent as Swedish citizens or migrants with a legal status. The employment rate for migrants who have received residence permits on safety grounds is at 35-45% after five years. For these migrants the employment rate will rise for some years but peak at about 60- 65%, far lower than for the population as a whole, which is 82.1 %.<sup>63</sup>

Rejected asylum seekers and undocumented migrants are extremely vulnerable to exploitation and human trafficking. This concerns especially young asylum seekers who might have their asylum application rejected after they turned 18. Thousands of rejected asylum seekers have gone into hiding after receiving the final negative decision on their asylum claim in 2015 and 2016.<sup>64</sup> In particular, undocumented, but also other migrants are exploited in the underground labour market e.g. in restaurants, cleaning, agriculture, sales and in domestic work. For example, Vietnamese labour migrants are exploited in nail salons, Mongolians in laundries and Thai women in massage parlours. Other such jobs include shoveling snow from the roofs during winter, working in restaurants doing dishes and cleaning both for private people and for firms.<sup>65</sup>

## Good practices

The Swedish Trade Union (LO) has established the Trade Union Center for Undocumented Workers. The Center offers assistance to irregular migrant workers and asylum seekers and promotes their rights in the labour market. For example, irregular migrants can contact the center and be advised about their rights in the labour market, on wages, working conditions and work environment issues. If a person has been exploited, the center can provide various types of assistance.<sup>66</sup>

To obtain work opportunities, the Swedish Civil Society Platform can provide victims who are a part of the National Support Program with language courses in Swedish as well as

vocational work. Moreover, NGOs such as *Insamlingsstiftelsen mot Trafficking* offer similar services related to work opportunities, through their project *Vägar till egenförsörjning*. The purpose is to find long-term work opportunities for victims of human trafficking and assist them to integrate in Sweden. The City of Malmö have established an office specialized in providing migrants who have experienced various forms of trauma assistance in adapting to society with the goal for them to enter the labour market in their own pace.

# Recommendations

## RESIDENCE PERMIT

Professionals from both state agencies and NGOs underline the difficulties in convincing a victim to file a police report as well as participate in criminal proceedings due to lack of trust in authorities and a fear of being deported to the country of origin where they might be identified by their perpetrators.

Victims of Human Trafficking who have participated in criminal proceedings and been granted a temporary residence permit should be granted a permanent residence permit.

Suspected victims of human trafficking, identified by state authorities during raids should be granted a reflection period and have their case tried in court instead of being directly referred to detention centres while awaiting deportations.

## ASSISTANCE

Swedish stakeholders, mainly state agencies, should have an increased focus on long-term assistance when developing schemes for assisting victims. These should involve measures that could offer the victim long-term accommodation in the country of destination and ultimately a work opportunity. Short-term assistance in terms of shelter and accommodation covering only shorter periods and basic needs of the victim is in itself not a factor hindering the victim from getting re-trafficked, nor does it encourage anyone from participating in criminal proceedings if the only benefit is the very likely option of being deported. Swedish stakeholders must review the possibilities of establishing a structure, funded by a state

agency, which foresees long-term assistance for victims of THB in the country of destination.

A plan of assistance of the victims should be developed by and shared amongst the relevant actors to the extent possible in order to avoid different plans of assistance developed by stakeholders separately. The victim needs to feel safe with the assistance providers. The situation in which the victim must tell her/his story repeatedly to various actors is crucial.

## INTEGRATION SERVICES

Integration is not solely to be defined as an activity in which a person contributes to society by being productive and understanding the language spoken in the country of destination. Integration also involves a social aspect which should be taken into account, particularly when having victims of human trafficking in mind who might have experiences of trauma.

It is essential that victims are assisted in the process of finding their role in a new society through social activities, such as projects and workshops carried out by NGOs in cooperation with the private sector, museums or cultural centres. Activities such as these must be intended to equip the victim and prevent re-victimisation.

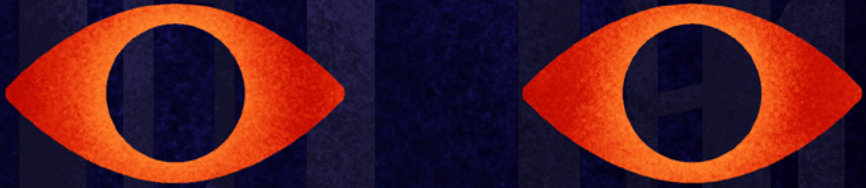
## LABOUR INTEGRATION

As Swedish public programs on labour integration are characterized by a general approach to newly arrived migrants, it is important that labour integration initiatives designed to assist migrants suffering from trauma should be developed or extended in municipalities in which they exist. This would benefit for example victims of human trafficking and aid them to enter the labour market in their own pace and according to their needs.

For the group of victims of human trafficking with minimal education a long-term labour market strategy that goes beyond the language courses is needed. Investing into building the necessary basic skills for this group should not be seen as something that will provide immediate pay-off, but as an investment into better integration in the long run.<sup>67</sup>



# *Conclusion and overall recommendations*



The phenomenon of human trafficking in connection with immigration to destination countries remains largely understudied, particularly the link between the arrival of migrants and exploitation. There is a lack of information and data, especially in Germany and Sweden, on potential victims of human trafficking among recently arrived asylum seekers, migrants and unaccompanied children. There are also no reliable statistics available on the extent of undocumented migrants who are deemed particularly vulnerable to trafficking.

Long term assistance and integration measures provided to trafficked persons differs as these issues fall within the competence of municipalities in Finland and Sweden and the Länder in Germany.

Existing integration measures in Finland, Germany and Sweden have been significantly scaled up since the inflow of asylum seekers in 2015 and 2016. Several new initiatives and networks were launched, for example, a fast-track initiative to integrate skilled migrants into the labour market in Sweden, mentorship programmes in Finland, the “Triple Win” programme in Germany and many others. However, the standards of services often depend on the financial situation/capacity and experience of the respective municipalities and Länder. Most of these initiatives target migrants in general and are not specifically designed for exploited migrants and victims of human trafficking who due to their vulnerabilities and experienced trauma need special approaches, longer term and more flexible integration pathways. A challenging factor in designing assistance and integration policies is that policy makers have a tendency to respond in a short-term manner and expect quick effects. Assistance programmes and integration policy, especially to vulnerable migrants like victims of exploitation and trafficking, however, requires long-term commitment by central and local authorities and adequate sustainable funding. The availability of resources is a significant issue affecting the effectiveness of integration policy at every level. And yet these funds are not sufficient for various reasons, including: a failure to distinguish between (short-term) assistance and (long-term) integration; the complex, messy and unpredictable nature of integration work; the risk of failed integration; the high cost of integration services; lack of budget allocation from national governments; a lack of interest in integration from international and national donors and so on.<sup>68</sup>

Analyses carried out in Finland, Germany and Sweden shows that that there are various levels of long-term assistance and integration to victims and that provided support to trafficked migrants often does not fully meet the needs for long-term recovery and integration. Victims of human trafficking are often predisposed to poor health that is aggravated by limited access to healthcare services. Trafficked persons require healthcare that is trauma-informed and culturally sensitive to their particular needs. This is especially significant where the harms are lasting, which they often are in cases of, for example, severe sexual violence.<sup>69</sup> However, there are problems with the timely provision of psychiatric and psychosocial support and a shortage of psychotherapists able to deal with trauma. The overemphasis on victim's status rather than on victim's individual healthcare needs can also be observed. The public health and safety importance of ensuring ‘firewalls’ between provision of health services and legal status needs to be recognized. Every individual, regardless of their status, must have access to and be encouraged to avail themselves of health care attention and services without fear.<sup>70</sup>

Legal assistance and psychological support in connection with legal proceedings, as well as access to the labour market and education are other areas where shortcomings occur.

How smoothly and deeply integration goes depends on victims' participation in criminal proceedings or on a certain legal status and services made available to victims. Assistance systems are often fragmented and complicated to navigate and to keep track of, especially for victims who do not speak a host country language. This situation discourages trafficked persons from accessing much needed long-term protection and rehabilitation services, while also hampering anti-trafficking criminal investigations.<sup>71</sup>

Host country language skills are key to integration and a major barrier for migrants to get access to employment in general, as well as the lack of different certificates and education/training which are needed even for acquiring low skilled jobs e.g. in cleaning or in other service sectors. But in addition to language and vocational training, victims of human trafficking often need help to build the basic skills necessary to function successfully in the destination country.

The situation and psychological state of trafficking victims may fluctuate over time and there is a need for very practical and hands-on support, where plans can be changed and revisited when the victim is in a better position to attend various courses and trainings. In the future, there is a need to develop more specific programmes to facilitate access to the labour market for victims of trafficking, especially for those who have little or no education.

It can be concluded, that for successful integration, the aspect of empowerment is central, and that the victim is provided with meaningful alternatives. It is important to nurture such essential life skills like making connections, complex problem solving, self-motivation to regain control over one's life, critical thinking etc. that facilitate integration, social and labour inclusion. After experienced trauma, that can cause mistrust in people and insecurity in life, it might be challenging for trafficked persons to master these skills if adequate support and assistance is not provided for the necessary period. These aspects of integration and long-term protection are usually poorly addressed and need to be strengthened.

Even if the institutional and policy framework in all the studied countries is gradually changing to include all forms of trafficking, most service providers, especially in Germany and Sweden, are still specialised to deal with female victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

All countries face the challenge of ensuring appropriate housing for victims of human trafficking. A particularly problematic issue is accommodation for trafficked men, children or whole families. The first shelter for male victims of human trafficking was recently opened in Gothenburg, Sweden. Services aimed specifically at men trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation and victims of violence, are available in Berlin, Germany and are almost entirely absent in other regions.

It remains difficult to gain access to the labour market and therefore to take lawful and safe employment options, especially for migrants with low qualifications. On the surface, the initiatives dealing with employment and vocational training, including language and integration courses, for migrants and specifically refugees, have



recently significantly increased and diversified. However labour market integration will remain problematic if the responsibility to be employed will fall solely on the migrant and the significant barriers to gaining employment will not be addressed. In the absence of integration plans that address discrimination in the labour market, inclusion and progression in the labour market remain difficult for migrants. Many end up working in the shadow economy and fall victims to exploitation.<sup>72</sup>

Another underlying challenge in all anti-trafficking work as well as integration of victims of trafficking is how to tackle discrimination. Discrimination is a reality in the destination countries and has a direct or indirect effect on the person and the services they receive. Migrants, especially female migrants, often encounter discrimination on multiple grounds, due to their status as migrants, coupled with other grounds, including race, sex, religion, ethnicity, real or perceived health conditions and other grounds. Victims also experience self-discrimination based on internalized values of self-worth and self-actualisation. Societies can be exclusionary of others, including migrants (not to mention trafficking victims) who can experience difficulties in their attempts to access the labour market or housing market let alone build meaningful social contacts.

Men suffer discrimination just based on the fact of a shortage of service provision. Men also suffer from a basic societal discrimination towards men that demonstrate weakness – self-identification and reporting efforts are hampered because of a reluctance to admit a crime has been committed against them. If this is a sexual crime, the reluctance to report increases.

Victims of sexual exploitation can experience shame and low self-worth due to their exploitation, as well as judgement from others, which acts as a form of discrimination and stigma attached to the person because of their past. This discrimination can also have adverse effects within communities and groups of people linked to religious belief, stereotyping and social prejudice based on ideas of purity, honour and cleanliness.

Racism and stereotyping also play a part in discriminatory practice across the migration spectrum – how willing is the host society to accept migrants with different experiences and values. Relating to those who look different, sound different, act different can trigger numerous tacit or implied discriminations. It is often the case that trafficked persons have an overlapping and intersectional experience – a woman from Nigeria exploited in prostitution or a man from Syria exploited in a grocery store will meet different assumptions from people in their process of integration which will not be tied to just one preconception.

Acceptance and successful integration is experienced differently depending on the individual and the structures in place. Access to services needs to be unbiased because the groups of trafficked people are diverse and have different needs. Currently there is inbuilt discrimination within social systems such as lack of provision of housing and shelter, health care, especially mental health services, and alternatives to certain groups which if solved would dramatically improve the situation for victims of human trafficking.

# Overall recommendations

To address challenges and to improve long term protection and integration of victims of human trafficking at the different levels, the following overall recommendations can be made:

## **Co-ordination between stakeholders should be enhanced:**

The continued cooperation between the different actors (authorities, municipal actors and civil society actors) is vital both at the local level as well as at the regional and national levels and should be further strengthened in the future.

The agency of exploited persons should be more valued. Protection and integration programmes should be built around the knowledge and recommendations of trafficked persons.

To reduce fragmentation of assistance system to trafficked persons, the initiatives for one-stop-shops combining different services under one roof should be extended. Services to victims should be offered simultaneously (at the same time) rather than sequentially (after each other).

## **It should be ensured that legal requirements do not hamper access to assistance and integration measures:**

State authorities and other anti-trafficking, migration and protection stakeholders should ensure that effective protection and assistance services are offered to presumed and identified victims of trafficking, including secure

residence status and long-term protection services, regardless of their willingness to participate in criminal proceedings against the perpetrator(s).<sup>73</sup>

Incentives and opportunities should be created to irregular migrants to regularise their status as they are the most vulnerable to exploitation and human trafficking. It should be ensured that fair and legal access to employment is available to all, to mitigate the need for migrants to rely on unsafe and exploitative work that can lead to trafficking.

Low threshold services should be offered to migrants irrespective of their migration status. In order to best respond to the needs of the most vulnerable groups of migrants, such as undocumented migrants, such services could be offered by NGOs or trade unions who can gain the trust of different migrant groups.

### **More targeted long – term support for exploited migrants and victims of human trafficking should be developed**

Regular coordination should be developed between the asylum procedures and the trafficking protection systems in order to ensure that people identified as at risk of trafficking during asylum procedures are referred to the trafficking protection system and — when both grounds are recognized — have access to both refugee status and protection as victims or potential victims of trafficking.<sup>74</sup>

The discontinuation of assistance and support services could have a devastating impact on the victims. Therefore, the duration of the assistance should not have an established end-point and should be carefully and continuously assessed by trained professionals, specialised in the areas in which the victim is being supported.<sup>75</sup>

The development of age-appropriate, safe and confidential programmes, medical, social and psychological support services, as well as gender-specific accommodation services for children and specialised shelters for girl victims should be ensured.<sup>76</sup>



## **The employment focus of integration activities should be increased**

Develop labour market integration plans for all migrants, addressing issues of exploitation, skills recognition and acquisition, career progression, mobility and vocational training.<sup>77</sup>

Introduce measures that facilitate the transfer of work permits to new jobs, thereby avoiding situations of exploitation and reducing the likelihood of informal employment situations.<sup>78</sup>

Facilitate access to the labour market by developing programmes in which migrants' skills and competences are matched with job shortages and opportunities.<sup>79</sup>

The offer of upskilling measures should be offered, particularly for the low-skilled trafficked migrants and a long-term approach should be taken.

Flexible pathways should be created to enable migrants with qualifications obtained abroad to begin employment in positions that require little or no additional training but that relate to the profession in which they have experience and training. Such pathways can provide the opportunity to acquire vocational-specific language, build contacts and strengthen understanding of the local labour market.<sup>80</sup>

## **Local level long-term protection and integration measures for exploited and trafficked migrants should be strengthened**

Municipalities should apply a cross-cutting approach. Several departments, such as education, healthcare, or housing, integration and others should be involved.

Local networks should be established to facilitate the integration process. The local network should prepare and set up a structure to guide the victim to self-reliance and life free from exploitation. Each case however must be dealt on a flexible manner and in accordance with the person's own choice and capacities.

There is a need to offer further guidance to municipal and regional actors on human trafficking in general, as well as on their specific obligations to assist victims of trafficking, and the special rights and needs of victims of trafficking.

## **Pro-active measures should be developed to protect migrants from discrimination**

NGO's initiatives assisting migrants that are victims of discrimination in the labour, housing market etc. should be promoted and sustainable funding should be ensured.

Diversity and anti-discrimination consultants from the private sector for the public sector and other sectors in the private sphere to encourage the inclusion of migrants and their potential should be introduced.

Forums for social contact should be encouraged to ensure that ignorance and inexperience do not drive fear and mistrust which, in turn, may ultimately underpin discrimination towards exploited migrants.

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- <sup>15</sup> Koskenoja et al. 2018, 57.
- <sup>16</sup> <https://www.ely-keskus.fi/en/web/ely-en/>
- <sup>17</sup> <https://www.riku.fi/en/>
- <sup>18</sup> Act on the Reception of Persons Applying for International Protection and on the Identification of and Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings (746/2011)
- <sup>19</sup> <https://www.riku.fi/en/various+crimes/human+trafficking/>
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<sup>32</sup> <https://www.awo-mitte.de/index.php/unterkuenfte-fuer-gefluechtete/awo-refugium-fuer-besonders-schutzbeduerftige-fluechtlinge-marie-schlei-haus> accessed on 20.09.2018.

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<sup>34</sup> Evaluation Report on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by the parties to the treaty, 2018, KOK.

<sup>35</sup> [https://www.kok-gegen-menschenhandel.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/medien/Publikationen\\_KOK/KOK\\_Studie\\_Unterbringung\\_2017\\_18.10..pdf](https://www.kok-gegen-menschenhandel.de/fileadmin/user_upload/medien/Publikationen_KOK/KOK_Studie_Unterbringung_2017_18.10..pdf) accessed on 19.09.2018.

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<sup>37</sup> <https://en.qantara.de/content/syrians-in-germany-writer-widad-nabi-integration-is-the-search-for-common-ground> accessed on 24.10.2018.

<sup>38</sup> Social Affairs. Refugee Reception and Integration in Cities, 2016, EUROCITIES. <https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/sites/futurium/files/eurocities-refugees-report.pdf>

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<sup>45</sup> Promoting a Rights-based Approach to Migration, Health, and HIV and AIDS: A Framework for Action; International Labour Office, 2016, ILO.

<sup>46</sup> Fleischer A. TRAM country assessment report in Germany (not published)

<sup>47</sup> Mitwalli J. (2016) Severe Labour Exploitation and Trafficking in Human Beings for the Purpose of Labour Exploitation in the case of Women, KOK.

<sup>48</sup> Evaluation Report on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by the parties to the treaty, 2018, KOK.

<sup>49</sup> Handlingsplan 2016–2018 till skydd för barn mot människohandel, exploatering och sexuella övergrepp; <https://www.regeringen.se/49e528/contentassets/5e54ec6f9cb14d2a828273d05b256196/handlingsplan-2016--2018-till-skydd-for-barn-mot-manniskohandel-exploatering-och-sexuella-overgrepp-skr-15-16-192.pdf>

<sup>50</sup> The country expert is on the list of reviewers, and thus has taken part of the outline ideas and schemes in the report to be built upon in this integration plan.

<sup>51</sup> Report “Kunskapscentrum för ensamkommande barn - Delredovisning 2018”: <http://>

[www.socialstyrelsen.se/publikationer2018/2018-6-29](http://www.socialstyrelsen.se/publikationer2018/2018-6-29)

<sup>52</sup> Report concerning the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Sweden, Second evaluation round, 2018, GRETA, Council of Europe.

<sup>53</sup> National Referral Mechanism - Protecting and supporting victims of Trafficking in Human Beings in Sweden <https://rm.coe.int/168070acc0>

<sup>54</sup> SFS (2017:352) Lag om ändring i lagen (2016:752) om tillfälliga begränsningar av möjligheten att få uppehållstillstånd i Sverige.

<sup>55</sup> <http://wp.arbetskooperativetsolidaritet.se/om-abis/> accessed on 11.09.2018.

<sup>56</sup> The Return Programme is run in cooperation with International Organization of Migration Helsinki office. Should the victim want to return to their home country, the Programme can be initiated in the various phases (from identification to the ruling of the Court), CBSS, 2016.

<sup>57</sup> Jokinen A. TRAM Country assessment report in Sweden (not published)

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Report concerning the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Sweden, Second evaluation round, 2018, GRETA, Council of Europe.

<sup>60</sup> <https://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1194719/FULLTEXT01.pdf> accessed on 08.10.2018.

<sup>61</sup> <https://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1194719/FULLTEXT01.pdf> accessed on 08.10.2018.

<sup>62</sup> [https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/working-together-skills-and-labour-market-integration-of-immigrants-and-their-children-in-sweden\\_9789264257382-en#page28](https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/working-together-skills-and-labour-market-integration-of-immigrants-and-their-children-in-sweden_9789264257382-en#page28) accessed on 12.10.2018

<sup>63</sup> Racism and Discrimination in the Context of Migration in Europe, ENAR Shadow report 2015-2016.

<sup>64</sup> Sydsvenskan newspaper 7.3.2017. Police warns about growing shadow society. <https://www.sydsvenskan.se/2017-03-07/polisen-befarar-vaxande-skuggsamhalle>

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<sup>66</sup> <http://www.fcfp.se/>

<sup>67</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/els/mig/Finding-their-Way-Germany.pdf>

<sup>68</sup> R Surtees and F de Kerchove, 'Who Funds Re/integration? Ensuring sustainable services for trafficking victims', *Anti-Trafficking Review*, issue 3, 2014, pp. 64–86, [www.antitraffickingreview.org](http://www.antitraffickingreview.org)

<sup>69</sup> Gender-specific measures in anti-trafficking actions, 2018, EIGE.

<sup>70</sup> Promoting a Rights-based Approach to Migration, Health, and HIV and AIDS: A Framework for Action; International Labour Office, 2016, ILO.

<sup>71</sup> Forin, Roberto & Healy, Claire (2018). *Trafficking Along Migration Routes to Europe: Bridging the Gap between Migration, Asylum and Anti-Trafficking*. Vienna: ICMPD.

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<sup>74</sup> Report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children to the UN Human Rights Council, 2018. Available at <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G18/133/20/PDF/G1813320.pdf?OpenElement>

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>80</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/migration/mig/Finding-the-Way-Finland.pdf> accessed on 15.10.2018.



The current migration reality in Europe has led to a significant rise in the number of asylum seekers - vulnerable people, whose desperation and endeavour to escape the conflicts in their countries is often exploited by traffickers. While migrant's urgent needs are usually effectively addressed, a comprehensive solution, in the form of a long-term assistance programme involving a range of assistance providers and as part of a coordinated multi-agency response, is often not offered.

**THE INTEGRATION ROAD MAP FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG MIGRANTS IN FINLAND, GERMANY AND SWEDEN** focuses on longer-term protection initiatives beyond the provision of an official status for victims of human trafficking.

The Road Map does not aim to provide a full account of available integration measures in studied countries but rather to highlight particularly challenging areas and promising practices that could be replicated and could enable other actors to develop and intensify integration measures for trafficked people in their local communities.