

# **Second Annual Report on Victims of Trafficking in South-Eastern Europe**

**2005**

**Rebecca Surtees**

**REGIONAL  
CLEARING  
POINT**

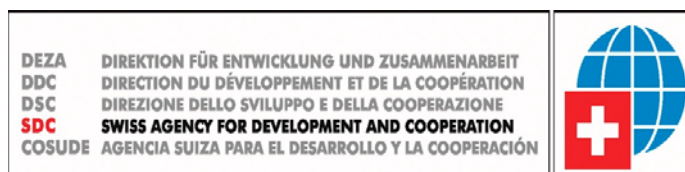


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Author: Rebecca Surtees  
Maps & Cover Design: Peter Biro  
Copy Editor: Rita Bruun Akhtar

Publisher: International Organization for Migration  
17 Route des Morillons  
CH-1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland  
Tel: +41 22 717 91 11, Fax: +41 22 798 61 50  
E-mail: [hq@iom.int](mailto:hq@iom.int), Internet: <http://www.iom.int>

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## FOREWORD

This second report by the Regional Clearing Point presents a comprehensive picture of the trafficking phenomenon in South Eastern Europe. The thoroughness of this work is a testament both to the author and to the many dozens of NGOs and other organisations that responded to requests to share primary information about victims and their trafficking experiences.

Among the report's many findings, I would like to highlight three that could be particularly useful to those working in the field of counter trafficking.

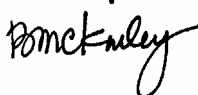
The RCP research highlights that victims were trafficked from, through and to SE Europe for a variety of purposes, not just sexual exploitation but forced labour, begging, delinquency and adoption. This indicates the importance of increased skills in recognising different manifestations of trafficking, and of the need for prevention and protection efforts tailored specifically to the different forms of trafficking.

The RCP report also provides detailed profiles from a wide range of victims, highlighting trafficking risk and vulnerability. Victims were men, women and children from a range of socio-economic backgrounds and with disparate personal experiences. Importantly, the report moves beyond unicausal explanations of trafficking like poverty and low education, identifying links between various causes and contributors.

Finally, the report also outlines the assistance available in each of the countries in SE Europe including a description of good practices and gaps. Of note is the need for specialised assistance and services for less 'typical' trafficking victims, and for this assistance to be tailored and adapted on a regular basis and in response to the dynamic nature of trafficking. An important aspect of this is the necessity for quality control to ensure that the victim's needs are met.

Above all, perhaps, this second RCP report demonstrates the importance of undertaking in-depth and on-going research on the trafficking phenomenon to guard against complacency in counter-trafficking programming and to assist governments, NGOs and International Organizations in developing new strategies appropriate to an always evolving situation. It is my hope that the new Nexus Institute to Combat Human Trafficking in Vienna will continue where the Regional Clearing Point leaves off, and that it will receive the same level of support and cooperation from NGOs, International Organizations and governments within SEE and further afield.

I am sure that people working in the field of counter trafficking will find great benefit in using the data and statistics from this research to assist them in their activities. At the same time, we must not lose sight of the human story behind every fact and every figure: a story of abuse and exploitation and, in many cases, of irreparable damage to human life.



Brunson McKinley  
Director General  
International Organization for Migration

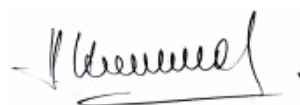
## FOREWORD

I would like to express my appreciation to Rebecca Surtees and the International Organization for Migration for having drawn up the second report of the Regional Clearing Point on the (anti-) trafficking situation in South-Eastern Europe. The report provides a valuable contribution to the information and knowledge about trafficking to, through and from SEE.

Importantly, the report covers the various forms of human trafficking occurring in the region, flagging that trafficking occurs for sexual exploitation, labour, begging, delinquency and adoption. It also provides an analysis of profiles of trafficking victims identified and assisted throughout the region, with particular attention to sites of trafficking vulnerability and assistance needs. And the report gives an overview of the existing victim assistance and protection structures currently in place in the region, including gaps and good practices. Furthermore, the report contains evidence of the heightened awareness and realisation of the problem's complexity, of the enhanced capacity and effectiveness of victim protection and assistance including for children and of intensified exchange of information.

The second annual RCP report provides a sound analysis of the current trafficking-in-persons situation in the Balkans and, for the first time, supplies comparable data on victims trafficked from, to and through the countries of the region. Moreover, it draws attention to the fact that traffickers and their accomplices do respond to the counter-measures taken by modifying their modes of operation and their trafficking routes. It goes without saying that these findings will help to improve the efficacy of existing anti-trafficking structures at national and regional levels and serve as a valuable tool in framing future anti-trafficking policies.

The Regional Clearing Point was established under the umbrella of the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings for South-Eastern Europe some years ago. However, in the course of its work, the need to extend its radius of activities beyond this region has become evident. This was a central rationale for the establishment of the Nexus Institute to Combat Human Trafficking in Vienna, a multidisciplinary centre which will undertake broad research, analysis and evaluation of (anti-)trafficking efforts. The Nexus Institute, which will work in partnership with IOM, international organisations, NGOs and governments, will be a positive contribution to our understanding of human trafficking and toward more effective counter-trafficking response.



Helga Konrad  
OSCE Special Representative  
On Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

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The RCP research was conducted in cooperation with numerous counter-trafficking organizations in the South-eastern European region, including governments, NGOs, UN agencies and international organizations. Of particular importance was the contribution of service providers who provided primary data about assisted trafficking victims, information which forms the foundation of this report. This assistance was provided despite limited resources and staff time and often very heavy victim caseloads. The RCP gratefully acknowledges this invaluable contribution. In addition, many counter-trafficking actors and organizations gave generously of their time and expertise in providing RCP with information about the current state of trafficking and counter-trafficking interventions in the region. A complete list of these organizations can be found in the Introduction. Without the support and participation of all of these organizations, this research would not have been possible. Further, as this research builds on the RCP's first annual report, I would also like to acknowledge the work of the RCP programme team in 2002 and 2003 – Laurence Hunzinger, Pamela Sumner-Coffey and Jovana Skrnjug.

RCP was provided with much logistical support by IOM field missions in the SE European region. Thanks to all for their valuable support in the organization of field research and facilitation of meetings. IOM Belgrade, where the RCP is based, played a particularly central role in providing this logistical and administrative support.

A number of individuals merit special mention and thanks. These individuals contributed in various ways – with advice and input as well as their support and kind words. My thanks to Anelise Araujo-Forlot (OSCE), Ruth Rosenberg (IOM Albania), Stephen Warnath (Nexus Institute), Helga Konrad (OSCE Special Representative on Trafficking, Vienna), IOM Counter-Trafficking Services and Database (Geneva) and IOM field missions in the ten countries/entities of South-eastern Europe.

In addition, I would like to thank Christopher Gascon and Richard Danziger for their ongoing support for the RCP programme and the programme manager. My thanks also to Helen Nilsson and Ksenija Lazovic for their careful review of and input into the draft report as well as their kind words. Zoran Kocovic and Milosh Markovic designed the RCP database as well as contributed with technical assistance and good humour. Krieng Triumphavong from IOM's Counter-Trafficking Database also provided valuable assistance. Rita Akhtar was a valuable help as copy editor. I would also like to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of my colleague, Slavica Stojkovic, who was an integral part of the RCP programme in 2004 and 2005. And my sincere thanks

to Peter Biro who generously contributed his time in preparing maps, proofreading, layout and was an essential source of support.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the trafficking victims whose life stories and trafficking experiences form the foundation of this report. It is our hope that by compiling this information and sharing it widely – with policymakers, practitioners and donors – it can be mobilized to combat this serious abuse and exploitation.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>FOREWORD by Brunson McKinley, IOM Director General .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>FOREWORD by Dr. Helga Konrad, OSCE Special Representative.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>ACRONYMS .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>18</b>
1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH .....	18
2. TARGET AUDIENCE .....	19
3. STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT .....	20
4. DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY .....	21
5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS .....	23
6. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH .....	24
7. SOURCES OF INFORMATION .....	27
<b>REGIONAL OVERVIEW .....</b>	<b>30</b>
1. NUMBER OF IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IN SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE .....	31
2. FORMS OF TRAFFICKING IN SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE .....	33
3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE .....	44
<b>ALBANIA.....</b>	<b>51</b>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	52
1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND ALBANIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED .....	55
2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS.....	57
2.1 <i>Albanian Trafficking Victims</i> .....	58
2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Albanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation .....	59
2.1.2 Profiles and Experiences of Albanian Victims Trafficked for Labour, Begging and Delinquency .....	77
2.2 <i>Foreign Victims of Trafficking in Albania</i> .....	89
3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN ALBANIA .....	97
3.1 <i>Identification and Referral of Trafficking Victims in Albania</i> .....	97
3.1.1 Identification and Referral of Albanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation .....	98
3.1.2 Identification and Referral of Albanians Trafficked for Labour, Begging and Delinquency .....	100
3.1.3 Identification and Referral of Foreign Victims in Albania .....	101
3.2 <i>Victim Assistance and Protection Services</i> .....	101
3.2.1 Assistance for Albanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation .....	102
3.2.2 Assistance for Albanians Trafficked for Begging, Delinquency and Labour .....	108
3.2.3 Assistance and Protection for Foreign Victims of Trafficking .....	111
<b>BOSNIA – HERZEGOVINA.....</b>	<b>113</b>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	114
1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND BiH TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED .....	116
2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS.....	118
2.1 <i>Foreign Victims of Trafficking Assisted in Bosnia-Herzegovina</i> .....	119
2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked to Bosnia-Herzegovina .....	119
2.2 <i>BiH Trafficking Victims</i> .....	139
2.2.1 Profiles and Experiences of BiH Victims of Trafficking .....	139
3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA .....	151
3.1 <i>Victim Identification and Referral in Bosnia and Herzegovina</i> .....	151
3.2 <i>Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in BiH</i> .....	153
<b>BULGARIA .....</b>	<b>163</b>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	164
1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND BULGARIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED .....	167
2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS.....	169
2.1 <i>Bulgarian Trafficking Victims</i> .....	169
2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Bulgarian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation .....	169



2.1.2 Profiles and Experiences of Bulgarian Victims Trafficked for Labour, Begging and Delinquency	186
2.1.3 Profiles and Experiences of Bulgarian Victims Trafficked for Adoption	195
2.2 <i>Foreign Victims of Trafficking Assisted in Bulgaria</i>	199
2.2.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims of Trafficking in Bulgaria	199
3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN BULGARIA	202
3.1 <i>Victim Identification and Referral in Bulgaria</i>	202
3.2 <i>Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in Bulgaria</i>	205
<b>CROATIA</b>	<b>215</b>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	216
1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND CROATIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED	218
2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS	220
2.1 <i>Foreign Victims of Trafficking Assisted in Croatia</i>	220
2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation	221
2.2 <i>Croatian Trafficking Victims</i>	232
2.2.1 Profiles and Experiences of Croatian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation	233
3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN CROATIA	239
3.1 <i>Victim Identification and Referral in Croatia</i>	239
3.2 <i>Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in Croatia</i>	241
<b>THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO</b>	<b>247</b>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	248
1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND KOSOVAR TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED	250
2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS	252
2.1 <i>Foreign Victims of Trafficking Assisted in The Province of Kosovo</i>	252
2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked to The Province of Kosovo	253
2.2 <i>Kosovar Trafficking Victims</i>	271
2.2.1 Profiles and Experiences of Kosovar Trafficking Victims	272
3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO	285
3.1 <i>Victim Identification and Referral in The Province of Kosovo</i>	285
3.2 <i>Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in The Province of Kosovo</i>	287
<b>THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA</b>	<b>296</b>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	297
1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND MACEDONIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED	299
2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS	301
2.1 <i>Foreign Victims of Trafficking Assisted in Fomrer Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</i>	301
2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked for Sexual and Labour Exploitation	302
2.2 <i>Macedonian Trafficking Victims</i>	319
2.2.1 Profiles and Experiences of Macedonian Trafficking Victims	320
3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA	324
3.1 <i>Victim Identification and Referral in Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</i>	324
3.2 <i>Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</i>	325
<b>THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA</b>	<b>333</b>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	334
1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND MOLDOVAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED	337
2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS	338
2.1 <i>Moldovan Victims of Trafficking</i>	339
2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Moldovan Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation	340
2.1.2 Profiles and Experiences of Moldovan Victims Trafficked for Labour, Begging and Delinquency	365
2.2 <i>Foreign Victims of Trafficking Assisted in Moldova</i>	385
2.2.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims assisted in Moldova	385
3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN MOLDOVA	386
3.1 <i>Victim Identification and Referral in Moldova</i>	386
3.2 <i>Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in Moldova</i>	388
<b>THE REPUBLIC OF MONTENEGRO</b>	<b>397</b>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	398
1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND MONTENEGRIN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED	400
2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS	402
2.1 <i>Foreign Trafficking Victims Identified and Assisted in Montenegro</i>	402
2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation	404

2.2 <i>Montenegrin Trafficking Victims</i> .....	416
2.2.1 Profiles and Experiences of Montenegrin Trafficking Victims .....	417
3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN MONTENEGRO.....	425
3.1 <i>Victim Identification and Referral in Montenegro</i> .....	425
3.2 <i>Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in Montenegro</i> .....	427
<b>ROMANIA</b> .....	<b>432</b>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	433
1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND ROMANIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED.....	435
2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS.....	437
2.1 <i>Romanian Trafficking Victims</i> .....	438
2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Romanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation .....	439
2.1.2 Profiles and Experiences of Romanian Victims Trafficked for Labour, Begging and Delinquency	461
2.2 <i>Foreign Victims of Trafficking Assisted in Romania</i> .....	476
3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN ROMANIA .....	478
3.1 <i>Victim Identification and Referral in Romania</i> .....	478
3.2 <i>Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in Romania</i> .....	480
<b>THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA</b> .....	<b>490</b>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	491
1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND SERBIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED.....	494
2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS.....	496
2.1 <i>Foreign Victims of Trafficking in Serbia</i> .....	496
2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation, Labour and Begging.....	497
2.2 <i>Serbian Trafficking Victims</i> .....	514
2.2.1 Profiles and Trafficking Experiences of Serbian Victims .....	514
3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN SERBIA .....	529
3.1 <i>Victim Identification and Referral in Serbia</i> .....	529
3.2 <i>Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in Serbia</i> .....	532
<b>REFERENCES CITED</b> .....	<b>541</b>

## ACRONYMS

<b>ASB</b>	Centre for Women and Children
<b>ASTRA</b>	Anti-Sex Trafficking Action
<b>ATC</b>	Anti-Trafficking Centre
<b>AVR</b>	Assisted Voluntary Return
<b>BiH</b>	Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>BKTF</b>	Së Bashku Kundër Trafikimit të Fëmijëve
<b>CAAHT</b>	Coordinated Action Against Human Trafficking
<b>CAFV</b>	Counselling Centre Against Family Violence
<b>CEFA</b>	European Committee for Training and Agriculture
<b>CLC</b>	Croatian Law Centre
<b>CoE</b>	Council of Europe
<b>CPTW</b>	Centre for the Prevention of Trafficking in Women
<b>CPWC</b>	Centre for the Protection of Women and Children
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>CRS</b>	Catholic Relief Services
<b>CSW</b>	Centres for Social Work
<b>ECPAT</b>	End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking
<b>ENACT</b>	European Network Against Child Trafficking
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EUPM</b>	European Union Police Mission
<b>EVA</b>	Energy, Vision, Action
<b>FBIH</b>	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>FYROM</b>	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
<b>GO</b>	Government Organization
<b>HIV/AIDS</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
<b>ICCO</b>	Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation
<b>ICMC</b>	International Catholic Migration Committee
<b>ICS</b>	Italian Consortium of Solidarity
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>IFS</b>	International Forum for Solidarity
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization

<b>ILO/IPEC</b>	ILO/International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
<b>IO</b>	International Organization
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>IPTF</b>	International Police Task Force
<b>ISF</b>	Interim Secure Facility
<b>ISS</b>	International Social Services
<b>KPS</b>	Kosovo Police Service
<b>MBA</b>	Macedonian Bar Association
<b>MoHSW</b>	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
<b>MoLSA</b>	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
<b>MOU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>MSF</b>	Médecins sans Frontières
<b>MILA</b>	Wise, Persistent, Liberal, Authentic
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Government Organization
<b>NPA</b>	National Plan of Action
<b>NPF</b>	Ndihme per Femijet/Help the Children
<b>NRC</b>	National Reception Centre
<b>NSCOC</b>	National Service to Combat Organized Crime
<b>OIP</b>	Organization for Integrity and Prosperity
<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
<b>PISG</b>	Provisional Institutions of Self-Government
<b>PTSD</b>	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
<b>PVPT</b>	Centre to Protect Victims and Prevent Trafficking
<b>RCC</b>	Referral and Counselling Centre
<b>RCP</b>	Regional Clearing Point
<b>SACP</b>	State Agency for Child Protection
<b>SDC</b>	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
<b>SECI</b>	Southeast European Cooperative Initiative
<b>SEE</b>	South-eastern Europe
<b>SOPs</b>	Standard Operating Procedures
<b>SPTF</b>	Stability Pact Task Force for Trafficking
<b>STC</b>	Save the Children
<b>STD</b>	Sexually Transmitted Decease

<b>STI</b>	Sexually Transmitted Infection
<b>STOP team</b>	UN anti-trafficking police team in BIH
<b>TDH</b>	Terre des Hommes
<b>THBS</b>	Trafficking in Human Beings Investigations Service
<b>TIP</b>	Trafficking in Persons
<b>TPIU</b>	Trafficking in Persons Investigation Unit
<b>TRP</b>	Temporary Resident Permit
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>UNAIDS</b>	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNIFEM</b>	United Nations Development Fund for Women
<b>UNMIBH</b>	United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>UNMIK</b>	United Nations Mission in Kosovo
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>UNOHCHR</b>	United Nations Office of the High Commission for Human Rights
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VAAU</b>	Victims Advocacy and Assistance Unit
<b>VCT</b>	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
<b>VDS</b>	Victimology Society of Serbia
<b>VoT</b>	Victims of Trafficking
<b>VPP</b>	Victim Protection Programme
<b>WCC</b>	Women's Counselling Centre
<b>WSH</b>	Women's Safe House

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The numbers presented above and in the context of this report refer to assisted victims trafficked to, through or from SEE. It is critical to stress the difference between the number of assisted victims and the total number of trafficking victims in SEE, which is estimated to be far greater.
- The total number of identified and assisted victims trafficked to, through or from South-eastern Europe (SEE) in 2003 was 1,329.
- The total number of identified and assisted victims trafficked to, through or from South-eastern Europe in 2004 was 1,227.
- The total number of trafficking victims identified and assisted between 1 January 2000 and 31 December 2004 within the countries of South-eastern Europe was 6,255.
- Albania, Romania, The Republic of Moldova and, to a lesser extent, Bulgaria and The Province of Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro) were countries/entities of origin for trafficking victims in SEE. These nationalities accounted for 90 per cent of victims assisted between 2000 and 2004, 91.5 per cent of assisted victims in 2003 and 89 per cent in 2004. However, in 2003 and 2004, victims were also trafficked from traditional countries of transit and destination, such as Croatia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, signalling the potential emergence of new countries of origin.
- In 2003 and 2004, victims were trafficked from less usual countries and assisted in SEE, including countries as distant as China, Iraq, Georgia, Mongolia, Lebanon, Armenia and Uzbekistan. More proximate and relatively prosperous countries were also represented, including Germany, Slovenia, Slovakia and Hungary. Ukraine was a primary country of origin throughout the reporting period. Ukrainian victims were trafficked to all countries in the SEE region.
- Internally trafficked victims have been increasingly identified in SEE. This has been the case both in traditional destination countries, such as Serbia and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as well as in countries of origin, such as Romania and Bulgaria. In some cases, internal trafficking occurs as a first step in international trafficking, whereas in others, victims are intended for exploitation within the borders of their own country.
- Victims in 2003 and 2004 were trafficked for different forms of exploitation. While the majority of victims were exploited sexually, victims were also trafficked for labour, begging, delinquency and adoption. In addition, many victims throughout the region were trafficked for dual purposes – combinations of labour and sexual exploitation, labour and begging/delinquency and sexual exploitation and begging/delinquency. It is necessary to distinguish among the various forms of trafficking to identify precisely its causes and contributing factors and to understand fully its impact. This information provides the background needed to develop effective prevention and protection programmes.

- In 2003 and 2004, identified and assisted trafficking victims included both males and females. While female victims predominated in both 2003 and 2004, a noteworthy number of assisted victims were men. In Albania, 70 per cent of victims trafficked for labour, begging or delinquency in 2003 and 2004 were male. Similarly, 47.8 per cent of foreign victims of labour trafficking in The Republic of Serbia in 2004 were male. Male victims were assisted in Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, The Republic of Moldova, The Republic of Montenegro, Romania, The Republic of Serbia and The Province of Kosovo. Male victims were trafficked for labour, begging, delinquency and adoption.
- Minors accounted for a significant number of assisted victims in 2003 and 2004, having increased over the past two years. In some countries, such as The Republic of Serbia, Albania and Bosnia Herzegovina, national minors were a large percentage, if not majority, of assisted victims. In 2003 and 2004, minors accounted for 20 per cent and 65 per cent of assisted Serbian victims. Similarly, in Bosnia Herzegovina, 2004 saw a spike in the number of assisted minors, accounting for 58.6 per cent of Bosnia Herzegovina victims. In Albania, 100 per cent of victims of trafficking for labour, begging and delinquency were minors in 2003 and 2004. Minors were trafficked for sexual exploitation, labour, begging, delinquency and adoption.
- No one factor contributed to trafficking. Rather, a multiplicity of factors informs victims' vulnerability to trafficking. Nevertheless, a number of sites of vulnerability appeared particularly salient among victims trafficked to, through or from SEE. These included, but were not limited to, age, economic background, family relations, education, working situation, ethnicity, disabilities and living situation at recruitment.
- There are also some emergent sites of vulnerability noted among assisted victims in 2003 and 2004 that have not been systematically documented in the past. These included the recruitment of victims with mental and physical disabilities (Serbia and Albania), vulnerability of IDPs/refugees (Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina), minor victims (Albania, Serbia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Bulgaria) and victims from ethnic minorities (Albania, Serbia, Bulgaria).
- Where single parents and families appear particularly vulnerable to trafficking, efforts should be made to provide economic support and opportunities as a means of trafficking prevention. Such efforts should target not only vulnerable individuals but also families and even communities as a whole. This is particularly important when seeking to prevent trafficking in minors.
- While most victims originated from "poor" and "very poor" economic backgrounds, a striking number of victims also originated from "average" or "well-off" families, signalling that economics alone is an insufficient explanation for trafficking. This has been true in all countries in SEE.
- Generally, trafficking victims had low education levels. However, a small number of victims from countries such as Ukraine, The Republic of Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria had higher education levels, including university and college degrees. Indeed, many trafficking victims had education similar to and

even higher than that of the general population in their home countries. This highlights that it is not only the poorly educated who are trafficked.

- Work abroad was the main reason that most trafficking victims in the region left home. Many victims were unemployed, underemployed or suffered from low salaries at home. However, it was not always poverty per se that led victims to accept work abroad. Some did so out of a desire for adventure, others because they could not realize their professional or material ambitions in their home countries and still others because of an urgent need for money due to an illness or crisis in the family. Employment opportunities in home countries must respond to these realities if they are to be effective prevention.
- Recruitment methods varied from country to country and have changed over time. Recruitment through job advertisements and job agencies was less common in some countries like Bulgaria where awareness-raising strategies addressed this recruitment technique. Instead, new recruitment strategies were employed, including the “lover boy method”, female recruiter (often victims or former victims), recruitment by male/female couples, etc.
- Increasingly and throughout the region, victims were trafficked with legal documents and crossed borders at legal border crossings. This flags that trafficking is often occurring within a façade of legality.
- Among assisted victims, re-trafficking was widespread, with rates ranging from three per cent to 34 per cent in 2003 and 2004. Re-trafficking rates can serve as a measure of the success of reintegration programmes in countries of origin, of gaps in reintegration efforts and as an indicator of the danger posed by the continued presence and reach of traffickers in victims’ home communities.
- Most victims trafficked to, through or from SEE were identified and referred for assistance by law enforcement authorities. Other identification and referral agencies included embassies, NGOs, IOM, various government ministries (centres for social work, hospital staff) and helplines. In addition, a number of victims were self-referred or referred by family, friends or private citizens. That victims are being identified by a more diverse pool of counter-trafficking actors signals an increased awareness of trafficking among professionals and the general public, as well as increased visibility of services.
- As other profiles of victims and forms of trafficking are identified, more specialized tools need to be developed. Many service providers have been trained in identifying only victims of sex trafficking, which may lead them to overlook victims of trafficking for labour and begging/delinquency.
- Countries in the SEE region have varying assistance services and structures for trafficking victims. Some have quite developed assistance models, while in others services and structures are still being developed and require more investment. There are a number of good examples in the SEE region that can be used by neighbouring countries to enhance the protection and assistance available to victims of trafficking. These are outlined in the individual country



reports. Sharing of good practices within and beyond SEE should be encouraged.

- When identified, some victims decline assistance offered to them. Reasons for declining assistance might include distrust of authorities and assistance providers, not understanding the nature of the assistance to be provided, fear of criminal sanctions, publicity and stigmatization related to the trafficking experience and reluctance to return to the home country. Victims often did not want to return home until they had earned some money and their families could be proud of them and see them as “successful”. Others did not see themselves as victims, having been paid for their work, albeit often less than what had been promised. Still others feared that in accepting assistance they would be seen as collaborating with the police and would face retaliation from the trafficker, who could further threaten them back home.
- The assistance framework available to trafficking victims in traditional countries of transit and destination, such as Croatia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, has been geared primarily toward the return of foreign nationals. However, as national victims are identified, programmes geared to these victims need to be developed and include reintegration components, such as vocational training, job placement, alternative housing options, family mediation/counselling and case follow-up and monitoring. Attention to the geographic distribution of services is essential.
- Specialized assistance for minor trafficking victims is lacking throughout the region. While there are a number of positive examples in various countries, such as the children’s wing in the IOM Rehabilitation Centre in Moldova, good parenting classes offered by Salvati Copii (Moldova) and government return procedures for Bulgarian minors, significantly more attention must be paid to the development of services for minors. Further, consideration should be given to the needs of minors at different ages and at different stages of development. Some thought should also be given to the possibility of assisting minor trafficking victims within existing care facilities, including accommodation for children without parental care, victims of violence, etc.
- Specialized assistance is often not available for more difficult cases. These might include cases of disabled victims, victims with behaviour disorders, victims with addictions, etc. Such cases require assistance that falls outside the scope of the normal assistance package and some service providers were without the skills and/or resources to adequately meet the needs of these victims. More attention is needed to tailoring services and assistance to such victims, including the development of interviewing skills, appropriate services and sensitized staff.
- As victims of trafficking are from different cultural and social backgrounds, service providers must be well versed in these disparate socio-cultural contexts. Generally, there is a need for improved cultural knowledge in the region and increased sensitivity in destination countries both within South-eastern Europe and further a field. Lack of cultural sensitivity and understanding can give rise

to misunderstandings that undermine service provision and prevention efforts. Ideally, this should be an ongoing process as new countries of origin are continuing to emerge.

- Comprehensive case monitoring and follow-up assistance constitutes a gap in services for trafficked victims throughout the SEE region. Despite significant obstacles to effective case management, effective monitoring must be given more consideration and better addressed.
- Overall, standards, protocols and models for victim services and assistance are lacking throughout the region. While handbooks and guidelines have been developed, they are generally either internal documents that are not shared or too general to be directly applicable for service providers. The development of protocols, standards and models should be a requisite component of all service provision. Further, these models should be shared widely among organizations and countries to ensure the best quality of care for all trafficking victims.
- There is a need to distinguish between trafficking victims (those who are already exploited) and potential trafficking victims (those who are in transit and not yet exploited). Better identification of potential victims can serve as a valuable measure of the effectiveness of law enforcement identification efforts. The identification of victims prior to exploitation – which has happened in Bulgaria, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania and The Republic of Serbia – signals improvements in law enforcement and can be used as one measure of programmatic and policy impact.
- Understanding the scope and nature of trafficking to, through and from SEE is limited by the lack of data from destination countries. As more victims stay in destination countries due to residency options, their numbers may appear to decline, giving rise to a misperception that trafficking has been addressed. The true rate of identified and assisted victims is only revealed when victims are counted at both origin and destination. Such hurdles must be overcome to achieve a more holistic picture of trafficking to, through and from SEE and elsewhere. Service providers in SEE have positive experiences and results from information sharing efforts in this regard that should be expanded and replicated in the EU.
- Consideration of the geographic distribution of all programmes and services is essential. Some countries have adjusted services of both government and non-governmental agencies to address geographical distribution. In others, this continues to be a gap in the assistance framework. Geographic distribution is especially important for reintegration services, with victims requiring support services in their home areas.
- The assistance framework was initially developed to respond to a prototypical trafficking victim. However, this report highlights the diversity of victim or trafficking experience and the need to develop appropriate assistance programmes tailored to the specific needs of diverse victim profiles and emerging forms of trafficking. Service providers (and donors) should be aware

of the specific needs of different profiles of victims as they change over time and strive for increasing flexibility in terms of service provided.

- Throughout the region, countries lack formal centralized data registries for victims of trafficking at a national level. Also lacking is a standard methodology for the collection of information on victims. Rather, each organization collects data based on the cases assisted. As such, the type and depth of information collected varies from organization to organization. Attention to standardized data collection is worthwhile.
- Trafficking victims continue to be deported from destination countries to countries of origin such as Albania, Bulgaria, Romania and The Republic of Moldova. Few victims deported from EU and other destination countries reported receiving any information prior to return regarding opportunities for assistance, protection and reintegration in their country of origin. This constitutes a gap in the assistance framework of destination countries and contravenes international standards and obligations by destination states to guard the rights of trafficking victims.
- Overall, transnational identification and referral mechanisms are underdeveloped. Referral procedures between countries of origin and destination need further development. To ensure that victims have access to assistance upon return and given the wide range of destination countries, there is a need for SEE service providers to disseminate information about assistance and services more widely to service providers and victims at the destination. Networks and contacts as well as governmental cooperation should be expanded. Ideally, victims should not be limited in the choice of assistance only to cooperating organizations, but, rather, should be informed about the full range of assistance possibilities in SEE. In this way, the assistance and reintegration programmes can best meet victims' individual needs and interests.
- Although governments in the region are assuming more active roles in counter-trafficking, further strengthening of these efforts is needed. There is a need for coordination, cooperation and communication among different government ministries to offer effective services to victims, at a national level to guide policy and procedures, as well as at regional and local levels to inform the more operational aspects of service provision and counter-trafficking efforts. While the role of the government must be primary, there are significant skills and experiences within civil society that can be used to enhance government capacity in these efforts.

# INTRODUCTION

## 1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

Trafficking is a serious human rights violation with myriad social and individual implications that has reached alarming dimensions, affecting Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia<sup>1</sup>, Serbia, Montenegro and The Province of Kosovo<sup>2</sup> as countries/entities of transit, destination and, increasingly, origin. It also involves Albania, Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova as countries of origin. While it is generally agreed that trafficking in the region is prolific, its precise dimensions are little understood; most statistics are estimates and available detail about victim profiles and trafficking experiences is insufficient to develop a picture of trafficking at a national level. The lack of regional data also limits understanding of the complexity and interconnectedness of the regional trafficking phenomenon.

This dearth of concrete data on this complex, multi-sectoral problem significantly inhibits practitioners' and policy makers' ability to formulate counter-trafficking interventions and policies. The need for this data was the central rationale for the establishment of the Regional Clearing Point (RCP) at the request of the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings (SPTF).<sup>3</sup> The overall objective of the RCP programme is to contribute to improved trafficking programmes and policy through a better understanding of the trafficking phenomenon in the South-eastern European region, with particular attention to the needs and experiences of victims throughout the trafficking process.

The RCP's first report, published in 2003, provided a factual snapshot of the number of victims assisted in each of the region's countries, as well as each country's current capacity and concrete action in victim support activities. The RCP's findings, provided in partnership with governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international organizations (IOs), illuminated the current trafficking situation as well as the effectiveness of countries' efforts to assist victims and combat trafficking.

The focus of the RCP's second annual report was decided in collaboration with the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings (SPTF) and counter-trafficking actors in the region, all of whom expressed the need for more victim-centered data. As such, the report both updates the information presented in the first report as well as expands the section on victim profiles. It explores the factors that

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<sup>1</sup> Hereinafter referred to as Macedonia

<sup>2</sup> The Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro are constituent states of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. However, they are analyzed here as separate republics in an effort to better understand the specifics of trafficking. This should in no way be read as a political statement by the RCP. Similarly, while Kosovo is a province within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, it is also considered separately to better pinpoint trafficking patterns and risks. This, too, should not be read as a political statement on the part of the RCP.

<sup>3</sup> The RCP was established under the framework of the Stability Pact Task Force in Trafficking in Persons in 2002 to ensure standardized regional data on trafficking and victim assistance and to support the further development of victim assistance throughout South-eastern Europe (SEE). The RCP, which opened its office in Belgrade in July 2002, was initially managed by IOM and ICMC and is currently managed by IOM. The RCP works in partnership with all actors involved in combating trafficking in human beings in South-eastern Europe as well as some destination countries in Europe. This includes government officials, NGOs and international organizations.

contribute to trafficking and the changing ways in which these vulnerabilities are exploited, recruitment practices and abuses and violations endured by victims. While all victims of trafficking have suffered human rights abuses, nonetheless, their experiences and needs are varied. Interventions, both for protection and prevention, must attend to this diversity. The data provided in this report will be valuable in developing services and assistance frameworks tailored to a variety of victim profiles and trafficking experiences. In addition, much has changed in the ways that trafficking is played out in the region and these changes must be examined if counter-trafficking organizations are to address the needs of victims appropriately.

This report focuses mainly on the victim side of the trafficking equation. However, studies bearing on the other side of the trafficking equation – the traffickers – are also needed. By taking a victim-centred approach, this report in no way intends to suggest that the problem of human trafficking can be solved simply by changing the behaviour of victims or that victims are in any way culpable in their exploitation. Rather, it reaffirms the urgency of strengthening law enforcement capacity and of the legal, social and economic reforms that lead potential traffickers to reconsider human trafficking as an economic strategy.

The second RCP report presents the main findings of data consolidated from across the region for the period between 1 January 2003 and 31 December 2004, incorporating description and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data concerning trafficking victims assisted within South-eastern Europe (SEE).

The report:

- Provides verified figures regarding the number of trafficking victims identified and assisted in the region as well as SEE nationals trafficked abroad;
- Analyzes profiles and trafficking experiences of identified and assisted victims in the SEE region;
- Identifies significant and emerging trafficking patterns throughout the SEE region, including forms of trafficking and aspects of the trafficking process; and
- Provides an overview of the identification, referral and assistance frameworks available to trafficking victims identified within the SEE region.

## 2. TARGET AUDIENCE

This report is intended for counter-trafficking actors working in the fields of prevention, protection and prosecution at both the operation and policy levels in South-eastern Europe. Different counter-trafficking actors will take different things from the report. Practitioners providing direct services to victims of trafficking will find information about victims that can assist them in protection and assistance programmes. Law enforcement will find details about recruiters, transportation, routes and the use of legal documents and border crossings. Researchers will find verified data regarding numbers and profiles of assisted victims. Organizations working on prevention will find victim profiles and sites of trafficking vulnerability. Donors will find an overview of the trafficking situation at both a national and regional level, as well as information about organizations working on service provision and prevention.

Policymakers will find examples of good practices and gaps in existing counter-trafficking policies and victim services.

### 3. STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report is divided into two main sections – a regional level overview and individual country/entity reports.

The regional section (*Regional Overview – South-eastern Europe: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and The Province of Kosovo*) is a presentation of the current status of trafficking in persons to, through and from the SEE region. The regional level section is divided into three sections:

- 1) *Number of Identified and Assisted Victims in South-eastern Europe*  
This section presents the number of victims assisted between 2000 and 2004, divided by country/entity of origin. Assisted victims were either from SEE or trafficked to or through the SEE region.
- 2) *Forms of Trafficking in South-eastern Europe*  
This section outlines the various forms of trafficking in persons occurring in, to or through SEE. These forms include trafficking for sexual exploitation, labour, begging, delinquency and adoption. In addition, this section includes some discussion of trafficking for organs, for which there are some preliminary signs and secondary data.
- 3) *Overview of the Assistance Framework in South-eastern Europe*  
This section provides an overview of the victim assistance and protection framework in the SEE region, highlighting good practices and existing gaps.

The country/entity reports present country level information on trafficking in persons. These are divided into three sections:

- 1) *Number of Foreign and National Trafficking Victims*  
This section presents statistics on the number of foreign and national victims identified and/or assisted in the country, according to the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.<sup>4</sup> In addition, wherever possible, data is presented about indirect indicators of potential trafficking<sup>5</sup> in the country such as illegal migration, rates of deportation, etc.

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<sup>4</sup> UN Protocol defines trafficking as: “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.” The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, articulated in 2000, supplements the UN Convention on Transnational Crime. Each of the countries in SEE have signed and ratified the UN Protocol.

<sup>5</sup> These “indirect indicators” should be read as supplementary data with links to trafficking in persons. However, it is important to stress that the precise statistical relationship between these indicators and trafficking in persons has not yet been established, which means that they cannot be seen as true proxy indicators. On other issues that are difficult to measure, it has been possible to develop “indirect” or “proxy” indicators. Child mortality can be calculated

## 2) *Profiles of Trafficking Victims*

This section presents profiles of trafficking victims – both foreign and national – originating from and/or assisted in the country/entity. This includes information about the victim (gender, age, education, marital and family status, economic situation, nationality); recruitment (sex of recruiter, relationship to recruiter, work promised, living and working situation at recruitment); transportation and movement (use of legal or illegal documents and legal or illegal border crossings); trafficking experience (working and living conditions, abuse suffered) and the situation after trafficking (means of exiting trafficking, re-trafficking, assistance received). Wherever possible, victim profiles were disaggregated by form of trafficking.<sup>6</sup>

## 3) *Overview of the Assistance Framework*

This section provides an overview of the identification and referral process as well as the assistance and protection framework available in the SEE country. It highlights good practices as well as gaps in the protection and assistance framework.

# 4. DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

**Victim:** The term “victim” has generated much debate in the context of violence against women; many argue that it implies powerlessness, rather than the resilience of the victim and therefore prefer to use the term “survivor”. However, in the area of human rights and protection, the term “victim” is used to refer to someone experiencing injustice for which the perpetrator is responsible. It indicates that the person or persons experiencing human rights violations have the right to protection, assistance and reparation (Billings et al., 2005). In the context of this report – which focuses on protection and assistance – we use the term “victim” with the above clarification to highlight the rights of the victim to protection as well as the responsibilities of government and civil society to afford this protection.

**Trafficking Victims:** Persons who qualify as *victims of trafficking in persons* in accordance with Article 3 of the UN Protocol.

**Identified and Assisted Victims:** Persons who have been identified as victims of trafficking according to a country’s formal or informal identification mechanism, and who have accepted assistance from a non-governmental, governmental, international or other relevant organization.

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through an analysis of adult literacy rates, immunization coverage, the percentage of households with potable water and a range of other indicators that have proven over time to correlate with child mortality. However, as systematic statistical studies on trafficking have been very limited, no formal proxy indicators have yet been developed to assess trafficking (Brunovskis and Tyldum, 2004b). As such, the indirect indicators presented above, while valuable, should be read with this caveat. And they might more accurately be termed “potential” proxy or indirect indicators.

<sup>6</sup> The presentation of victim profiles is intended as a means to identify sites of vulnerability to trafficking and for ensuring that assistance meets their needs and interests. It is not intended to “explain” the crime or unduly focus on the victim over the perpetrator. As has been argued elsewhere, too much attention on the profile of the victim draws attention away from the perpetrators of the crime. Trafficking cannot be explained solely by an exploration of victim characteristics and behaviours and such factors contribute to, but are not the sole explanation for, trafficking (Brunovskis and Tyldum, 2004a: 41).

**Minors:** Persons under 18 years of age.

**Prostitution/Sex Worker:** There is much debate about the choice of terminology when speaking of “prostitution” as opposed to “commercial sex work”, with terminology often reflecting the ideological position of the speaker. In the context of this report, we speak of prostitution and prostitutes. However, the choice of wording does not imply any ideological stance on the part of the RCP or its partner organizations nor should the use of the words “prostitute” and “prostitution” imply any negative judgement of persons engaged in prostitution.

**Assistance and Protection:** Measures taken by non-governmental, governmental, international and other relevant organizations to provide for the physical, psychological, social and legal recovery of trafficked victims as described in, but not limited to, Article 6 of the UN Protocol. Assistance and protection measures may range from voluntary acceptance of a single service (such as transportation to country of origin) to voluntary acceptance of multiple services, including housing, medical, psychosocial, legal, educational and vocational services.

**Shelter:** Premises that meet the following criteria: provides temporary accommodation for victims, recognized within formal or informal referral mechanisms and provided accommodation to two or more victims during the last twelve months.

**Reintegration Centre:** A premises that meets the following criteria: provides temporary accommodation for a minimum of three months, recognized within formal or informal referral mechanisms and provides (either on site or through referral) medical, psychosocial, legal, socio-educational, vocational, job finding and apartment finding assistance.

**Service Providers:** This refers to organizations that provide one or more of the range of services needed by and provided to trafficking victims. This includes shelters, medical care, legal assistance, psychological assistance, return, family mediation, case monitoring and reintegration assistance.

**Country of Origin:** This designates a country that, based on data collected according to the RCP methodology, has a significant number of its nationals trafficked abroad or internally.

**Country of Destination:** This designates a country that, based on data collected according to the RCP methodology, has a significant number of foreign victims trafficked to and exploited within the country.

**Country of Transit:** This designates a country, based on data collected according to the RCP methodology as well as secondary data from police and other sources, through which large numbers of victims are trafficked.



## 5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS

The RCP accessed primary and secondary data in its research. These sources are outlined briefly below.

### 5.1 Primary Data

Primary data about victims of trafficking was collected from service providers in the field currently working with and assisting victims, according to a standardized set of questions. The RCP established and used the following information collection mechanisms with respect to numbers, profiles and experiences of assisted victims:

- Development of a standard questionnaire to document the profile and experiences of each assisted trafficking victim.
  - Among the indicators collected were:
    - Victim profiles and individual characteristics (gender, age, education, marital and family status, ethnicity, area of origin, disabilities, economic status, nationality);
    - Recruitment (sex of recruiter, relationship to recruiter, work promised and reason for leaving home, living and working situation at recruitment);
    - Transportation and movement (use of legal or illegal documents and legal or illegal border crossings, destination, transportation routes);
    - Trafficking experience (form of trafficking, length of time trafficked, working and living conditions, abuse suffered, mental and physical well being); and
    - Post-trafficking (identification, means to exit trafficking, re-trafficking, assistance declined).
- Service providers in all countries/entities of the region were asked to complete this standard questionnaire for assisted victims, excluding victims who overlapped with other service providers. Data was requested for 2003 and 2004 and, in some cases, for 2002. Data collection did not include confidential information, such as the victim's name, address or medical history. This was done to avoid compromising the security and anonymity of victims.
- Completion and submission of these standardized questionnaires by cooperating service providers. For full list of cooperating organizations see: *Sources of Information* (below).
- Direct interviews and correspondence aimed at clarifying figures and victim profiles were conducted with organizations and service providers, particularly during site visits to each of the project countries.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> With respect for victims' privacy rights and recovery period, and in accordance with UN Recommendations on Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking, section 3 on Research, Analysis, Evaluation and Dissemination, RCP did not conduct interviews with, or directly obtain information from, trafficked victims.

- Figures were cross-referenced with other service providers to avoid duplication. In cases where a victim received initial sheltering and medical services on return to home country from one organization and was subsequently referred to a different organization for follow-up services, it was represented only once within the data.

In addition to the collection of primary data about assisted victims in the SEE region, the RCP also received some information from organizations working in destination countries. The same process as outlined above was followed. While only a few organizations provided information from destination countries, the data does provide some valuable information that can be used to compliment that of the service providers within SEE.

## **5.2 Secondary Data**

The RCP also accessed secondary data through in-depth interviews with frontline counter-trafficking personnel, including anti-trafficking police units, outreach workers, shelter managers and professionals providing medical, psychosocial and legal assistance for national and foreign victims. More generally, RCP met with counter-trafficking organizations and government departments working in the field of prevention and policy. Standardized interviews were conducted on critical issues including: victim profiles and trafficking experiences, trafficking trends and patterns, victims' needs at identification, victim identification process, assistance programmes available and problems and issues in the assistance framework. Data was collected in the course of field research and site visits to each of the ten project countries/entities, as well as through email and telephone communication. Secondary data was then verified, cross-referenced for accuracy and analyzed.

Wherever possible, the RCP considered indirect indicators of trafficking to round out the picture of the trafficking phenomenon. Access to this data varied from country to country but included data on migration and trafficking, immigration information, data about deportations, data about prosecutions, asylum requests and government statistical data. In addition, the RCP accessed and included recent research and literature on trafficking to, through and from the SEE region.

## **6. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

The RCP research has numerous methodological strengths. It provides standardized quantitative data on trafficking victims from the ten countries/entities of SEE. This constitutes the only consolidated data about assisted trafficking victims at a national or regional level. In addition and equally important, the RCP presents primary data that frames and considers trafficking from the perspective of victims. The RCP accesses data through service providers who have an existing relationship with victims, thereby avoiding unnecessary interviewing and stress for victims. Finally, the RCP captures and presents the transnational nature of trafficking by embracing a regional approach.

Nevertheless, the RCP methodology has some limitations that are important to highlight:

- The information about victim profiles and experiences was collected only from assisted trafficking victims who were trafficked to, through or from SEE. It is critical to stress the difference between number of trafficking victims in SEE and the number of assisted victims. As is widely recognized, there are no reliable estimates of the number of trafficking victims to, through and from SEE. Information drawn from a range of primary and secondary sources – victims, governments, non-governmental organizations and international organizations – makes it clear that the actual number of trafficking victims is significantly higher than the number of assisted victims.<sup>8</sup>
- Because the RCP methodology draws on assisted cases of trafficking, it cannot be read as a measure of the true scope of trafficking. In some countries, high numbers of assisted victims is also a measure of a country's efforts to tackle trafficking rather than in indictment of their inaction. As such, findings should be read also with this caveat.
- Counter-trafficking service providers have notably improved their data collection practices over the past years. However, some organizations did not possess complete data for all of the RCP's indicators. Wherever comprehensive data was unavailable, it is pointed out in the analysis.
- Counter-trafficking actors have varying levels of skill and experience in the identification of trafficking victims. While most organizations use the UN Protocol as guidance in the identification process, the criteria was at times applied unevenly. Some victims of trafficking were misidentified as victims of violence generally or not identified at all. In other circumstances, victims of violence were misidentified as trafficking victims. However, substantial improvements in identification have been made in the past year.
- Assistance frameworks and data gathering in SEE have been geared mainly toward adult female victims trafficked for sexual exploitation. Data regarding other types of victims (including trafficked minors, trafficked men and victims of other forms of trafficking) were at times incomplete.
- Assisted victims represent a particular subgroup of trafficking victims, those who were willing and able to access assistance. This subgroup is likely to differ systematically from other victims of trafficking, an issue which must be borne in mind in both the analysis and presentation of data and profiles. This data can be read only as representative of assisted trafficking victims.
- While the RCP made every effort to reach service providers in the SEE region, there were some service providers from whom RCP was unable to obtain victim data. In the absence of consolidated, comprehensive data-gathering frameworks in each of the project countries, data regarding victims assisted by practitioners

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<sup>8</sup> In BiH, for example, in the town of Tuzla alone, there were allegedly numerous unassisted victims with one motel housing approximately 50 victims (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 47). However, the total number of identified and assisted victims documented by the RCP in BiH in 2004 was 108. Similarly, in Macedonia, according to testimony of one victim, over 150 Moldovan victims were trafficked to bars or nightclubs in the village of Velestra. However, the total number of identified and assisted victims documented by the RCP in Macedonia in 2004 was 25.

or organizations who were not contacted by the RCP or who did not respond to the RCP were not included in this report. For the most part, however, service providers in each of the countries participated in the research, accounting for the vast majority of assisted victims.

- The time period presented reflects the year that the victim was assisted, rather than when s/he was trafficked. This poses a difficulty in the analysis of trends and patterns, as victims assisted in one year may have been trafficked over a long period. Ideally, data should be analyzed based on the year in which the victim was trafficked. However, service providers do not systematically record the year that victims were trafficked.
- The RCP documents assisted cases only and lacks control data against which it can measure its results. Measuring against a control group is essential in identifying trends and patterns relative to the general population. This has been a consistent issue in terms not only of the RCP research but of data about trafficking generally. The RCP was able to provide statistical data (drawn from central statistics offices and development reports) only about some indicators, such as education, urban/rural living and rates of unemployment. No data exists about some of the indicators collected by RCP, which poses limitations in the analysis.
- RCP efforts to collect information from service providers in key destination countries were largely unsuccessful as many organizations lacked time and resources to assist in the research or were prevented from doing so by institutional regulations on information sharing between organizations. With more victims staying in destination countries due to residency options, the lack of data from these countries can result in repressed figures. The number of victims may appear to decline, giving rise to a misperception that trafficking has been addressed. The true rate of identified and assisted victims is only revealed when victims are counted at both origin and destination. A more holistic picture of trafficking to, through and from SEE as well as further a field will require broader and better information gathering.

## 7. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The following organizations and institutions provided primary data about assisted trafficking victims according to the methodology outlined above. This required substantial time, effort and resources on the part of service providers, for which the RCP is grateful.

<u>Country/Entity</u>	<u>Organizations and Institutions</u>
Albania	Women's Counselling Centre (WCC), Vatra Women Hearth, Terre des Hommes (TdH), Help for Children/Ndihme Per Femijet (NPF), Femijet e Shqiperise dhe botes, Tjeter Vision, IOM Mission in Tirana, Së Bashku Kundër Trafikimit të Fëmijëve (BKTF), European Committee for Training and Agriculture (CEFA), International Social Service (ISS), Different and Equal, National Reception Centre for Victims of Trafficking (NRC)
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Lara, Foundation for Local Democracy, La Strada/Mostar, International Forum of Solidarity (IFS), Zena BiH, IOM Mission in Sarajevo
Bulgaria	Nadja Center, Animus Association – La Strada, National Service to Combat Organized Crime (NSCOC) – Ministry of the Interior, National Border Police Service (Ministry of the Interior), Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), Bulgarian Red Cross, Caritas Bulgaria, IOM Mission in Sofia
Croatia	Organization for Integrity and Prosperity (OIP), Croatian Red Cross, Women's Association Vukovar, Centre for Women War Victims – Rosa, Centre for Disaster Management, IOM Mission in Zagreb
Macedonia	For a Happy Childhood, Open Gate/La Strada Macedonia, Temis, Organization of Women of Skoplje, Macedonian Bar Association, National Coordinator (Ministry of Interior), IOM Mission in Skopje
The Province of Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro)	Centre for the Protection of Women and Children (CPWC), Gjakove Women's Safe House (WSH), Women Wellness Center (WCC), Interim Secure Facility (ISF), Centre to Protect Victims and Prevent Trafficking (PVPT), Hope and Homes, United Methodist Committee of Relief (UMCOR), Victims Advocacy and Assistance Unit (VAAU), Centre for Women and Children (ASB), IOM Mission in Pristina
Moldova	La Strada-Moldova, Salvati Copiii, Interaction, Gencliar Birlili, Rehabilitation Centre, Italian Consortium of Solidarity (ICS), Centre for the Prevention of Trafficking in Women (CPTW), IOM Mission in Chisinau
Montenegro	Women's Safe House, Montenegrin Women's Lobby, IOM Mission in Podgorica
Romania	Social Alternatives, Connexiuni, Reaching Out, Young Generation, Armonia Association, Arhiepiscopia Ortodoxa Romana A Timisoarei, Artemis, Save the Children – Salvati Copiii, Transit and Assistance Shelter for Victims of Trafficking, Resource Centre for Combating Trafficking in Persons (Ministry of Interior), IOM Mission in Bucharest
Serbia	ASTRA, Counselling Against Family Violence (CAFV), ATINA, Agency for Coordinating Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings, Anti-Trafficking Team (Ministry of Interior), IOM Mission in Belgrade
Other countries	Koofra (Germany), Poppy Project (UK), STV La Strada (Netherlands), Dutch Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings – NRM (Netherlands), PARSEC Association (Italy), IOM Counter-Trafficking Service (Geneva), IOM Counter-Trafficking Database (Geneva)

In addition, the RCP accessed secondary data, interviewing and corresponding with numerous counter-trafficking actors from governments, non-governmental and international organizations. These individuals were helpful in illuminating key issues and trends in terms of trafficking as well as outlining the counter-trafficking efforts underway in each country, with particular attention to victim identification, referral and assistance. These organizations include the following:<sup>9</sup>

<u>Country/Entity</u>	<u>Organizations and Institutions</u>
Albania	Coordinated Action Against Human Trafficking (CAAHT), International Catholic Migration Committee (ICMC), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Management Systems International (MSI), Ministry of Public Order, National Coordinator's Office (Ministry of State), Centro Murialdo, Save the Children (STC), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Buducnost, State Coordinator, Ministry of Internal Affairs, UNICEF, OSCE, United Nations Office of the High Commission for Human Rights (UNOHCHR)
Bulgaria	State Agency for Child Protection (SACP), Ministry of Justice, Central Commission for Combating Child Delinquency, Child Crime Unit (Ministry of the Interior), National Police Service (Ministry of the Interior)
Croatia	National Coordinator (Office for Human Rights), Ministry of Interior, Croatian Law Centre
Macedonia	Transit Centre (Ministry of Interior), Department of Anti-Organized Crime (Ministry of Interior), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe – OSCE (Rule of Law and Police Development Unit), Sector for Minors and Delinquency (Ministry of Interior), Border Police Section for Illegal Migration (Ministry of Interior), Esma, Produzen Zivot
The Province of Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro)	Trafficking in Human Beings Services in Pristina (UNMIK/THBS), THBS Prizren, Save the Children, UNICEF, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Prime Minister's Office, OSCE, Pillar 1 – Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, Department of Justice
Moldova	CARITAS, Border Police, UNICEF
Montenegro	OSCE, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Exterior – Office of National Coordinator, Department for Aliens (Ministry of Interior), Save the Children

<sup>9</sup> In addition, a number of other organizations were consulted in the context of the first annual report. As such, we would like to acknowledge the previous contribution of the following organizations: UNHCR (Albania), Open Society Institute (Albania), Ministry of Social Affairs (Albania), Ministry of Science and Education (Albania), Domestic Violence Shelter (Albania), Fountain House (Albania), Centre for Prevention of Child Maltreatment (Albania), UN STOP (BIH), UNMBIH (BIH), UNHCR (BIH), ICMC (BIH), EU Police Mission (BIH), USAID (BIH), U.S. Department of Justice in Sofia (Bulgaria), Neglected Children Society (Bulgaria), Youth Counsel Centre and Shelter (Bulgaria), Bulgarian Family Planning Association (Bulgaria), Open Gate Centre (Bulgaria), Association for Support and Protection of Children and Families at Risk (Bulgaria), KFOR (Kosovo), UNHCR (Kosovo), ICMC (Kosovo), World Vision (Kosovo), Association for Support and Protection of Children and Families at Risk (Macedonia), EU Mission (Macedonia), ICTY (Macedonia), Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family (Moldova), US Embassy (Moldova), USAID (Moldova), Embassy of Sweden (Moldova), OSCE (Moldova), Centre for Women and Children (Moldova), Ministry for Protection of Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities (Montenegro), Secretariat for Information (Montenegro), Employment Agency of Montenegro, UNOHCHR (Montenegro), UNICEF (Montenegro), UNHCR (Montenegro), ICMC (Montenegro), EU/DHRO (Montenegro), SECI (Romania), National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption (Romania), Central Department of Romanian Orthodox Church (Romania), World Learning (Romania), U.S. Department of Justice (Romania), Partnership for Equality Centre (Romania), French Embassy (Romania), Sinergii Association (Romania), Estuar Foundation (Romania), Pro Familia (Romania), SEF (Romania), Ministry of Social Affairs (Serbia), ICMC (Serbia), UNICEF (Serbia), UNOHCHR (Serbia), UNDP (Serbia), UNHCR (Belgrade), UNLO (Serbia), UMCOR (Serbia), Council of Europe (Serbia), Child Rights Centre (Serbia), Cooperazione Italiana (Serbia), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (Serbia), CARE (Serbia), JUCA (Serbia), Hope, Faith and Love (Ukraine).

Romania	Centre of Urban and Regional Sociology (CURS), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), International Labour Organization / International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC), Ministry of Administration and Interior, Institute for Crime Prevention and Research, Society for Children and Parents (SCOP)
Serbia	OSCE, National Coordinator (Ministry of Interior); Department of Border Police (Ministry of Interior); Anti Trafficking Centre (ATC); Victimology Society of Serbia; Provincial Secretariat for Labour, Employment and Gender Equality; Wise, Persistent, Liberal, Authentic (MILA); Energy, Vision, Action (EVA); Centre for Social Work – Sombor; Beosupport; Incest Trauma Centre; Group 484; Catholic Relief Service (CRS); Save the Children; Kvinna till Kvinna; SOS Village; Roma Information Centre
Other countries	Stability Pact Task Force - SPTF (Vienna); BLinN – Humanitas and Novib (Netherlands); End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking – ECPAT (Netherlands); Scharlaken Koord (Netherlands); TAMPEP (Netherlands); IOM Mission in the Hague (Netherlands), KARO (Germany); FAFO Institute (Norway); OSCE/ODHIR CPRSI (Poland)

## REGIONAL OVERVIEW

### SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE: ALBANIA, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA, BULGARIA, CROATIA, THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO, MACEDONIA, MOLDOVA, MONTENEGRO, ROMANIA, SERBIA

This section summarizes the current trafficking situation in South-eastern Europe. The report is divided into three sections: 1) Number of Trafficking Victims Identified and Assisted in South-eastern Europe, 2) Forms of Trafficking and 3) Overview of the Assistance Framework in the South-eastern European region.





## 1. NUMBER OF IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IN SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

Trafficking in persons is a significant and compelling issue, affecting citizens from each of the countries of South-eastern Europe. Citizens of South-eastern Europe are trafficked both within the region as well as further a field. In addition, victims from other countries were trafficked to and through SEE. The table below outlines the country of origin of trafficking victims identified and assisted within the region as well as victims from SEE countries who have been trafficked abroad.

The following table contains case data consolidated from the RCP's individual country reports.

TABLE 1  
NUMBER OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS ASSISTED IN SE EUROPE , 2000 TO 2004

Country or Province of Origin/Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Victims of SEE nationality						
Albania <sup>10</sup>	219	445	375	345	366	1750
Moldova	319	382	329	313	300	1643
Romania	163	261	243	194	193	1054
Bulgaria	46	96	164	172	143	621
The Province of Kosovo <sup>11</sup>	54	67	165	192	90	568
BiH	0	0	8	17	29	54
Serbia	0	1	10	13	21	45
Croatia	0	0	1	1	6	8
Montenegro	0	0	2	3	5	10
Macedonia	0	0	0	14	12	26
SEE countries/entity total	801	1252	1297	1264	1165	5779
Victims of other nationalities, assisted in SEE						
Ukraine	68	97	104	47	41	357
Russia	7	22	21	5	4	59
Belarus	8	9	1	2	1	21
Georgia	0	3	2	0	2	7
Czech	0	0	2	0	0	2
Hungary	1	0	0	0	0	1
Latvia	1	0	0	0	0	1
Lithuania	0	0	1	0	1	2
Mongolia	0	0	0	2	0	2
Slovakia	0	0	0	1	1	2
Slovenia	0	0	0	0	1	1
Italy	0	0	1	0	0	1
Iraq	0	0	0	0	1	1
Morocco	0	0	0	0	1	1
Uzbekistan	0	0	0	3	0	3
China	0	0	0	0	2	2
Kazakhstan	0	0	0	1	0	1

<sup>10</sup> The numbers presented in the table above differ from those presented in the RCP's first annual report, meriting some explanation. The 1200 Albanian victims (presented in the first annual report as "the minimum number of identified and assisted Albanian minors trafficked primarily for begging and forced labour", in fact, referred to the number of families receiving social assistance from Help for Children/Ndihme Per Femijet (NPF) and Terre des Hommes (Tdh). The beneficiaries included both trafficking victims and those "at risk" of trafficking. As such, the RCP has amended this information in its second annual report, presenting only cases of assisted trafficking victims. The RCP apologizes for this error.

<sup>11</sup> While Kosovo is a province within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, in this analysis it is separated out as a distinct entity in an effort to analyze the specific trafficking context of the province. This is done in an effort to provide a more detailed picture of trafficking patterns, trends and profiles within and between each country/entity of the region. It should in no way be read as a political statement on the part of the RCP.

Thailand	0	0	0	2	0	2
Hungary	1	0	0	0	2	3
Greece	0	0	0	1	0	1
Lebanon	0	0	0	0	2	2
Germany	0	0	0	1	0	1
Armenia	0	0	0	0	2	2
Poland	0	0	1	0	1	2
Other countries total	86	131	133	65	62	477
Consolidated number of victims trafficked to, through or from SEE	887	1383	1430	1329	1227	6256

This figure of 6,256 identified and assisted victims in SEE comprises 5,779 trafficked persons from countries of South-eastern Europe as well as 477 victims from other countries identified and assisted within the region. These figures were calculated by adding the numbers of trafficked victims collected from service providers in SEE, as well as the handful of cases of SEE nationals collected from service providers in EU countries. Victims were voluntarily returned to their countries of origin through assistance programmes or identified in their country of origin upon extradition and subsequently assisted. In addition, victims were identified during police operations and investigations and subsequently referred for assistance. And, in an increasing number of cases, victims were self-referred, either in the destination country or upon return to their home countries.

These figures mainly pertain to women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation as this is the primary form of trafficking for most assisted trafficking victims in SEE. Nevertheless, and as will be discussed in further detail in the following section (see Section 2: *Forms of Trafficking in South-eastern Europe*), in 2003 and 2004, many victims of other forms of trafficking were assisted and are included in these numbers. Victims suffered trafficking for labour, begging, delinquency and adoption.

Given that trafficking is widely recognized as a prolific trend in SEE, the numbers presented herein appear very low. However, it is critical to stress that this report contains only details of assisted trafficking victims within the region and from a handful of organizations in EU countries. The RCP research methodology considers only assisted victims as these are the only verifiable numbers on trafficking. Assisted victims, however, represent only a portion of the total number of trafficking victims, with many more victims never identified or assisted. Information drawn from a range of primary and secondary sources – victims, governments, non-governmental organizations and international organizations – makes it clear that the actual number of trafficking victims is significantly higher than the number of assisted victims.

In 2003 and 2004, Albania, Moldova, Romania and, to a lesser extent, Bulgaria and The Province of Kosovo were the main countries/entities of origin of South-eastern Europe. Albanian victims alone accounted for 26 per cent of all victims assisted in 2003 and 30 per cent in 2004, while Moldovan victims were 23.7 per cent of victims in 2003 and 24.5 per cent in 2004.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Victims from Romania accounted for 14.7 per cent of assisted victims in 2003 and 15.7 per cent in 2004. Kosovar victims accounted for 14.6 per cent of victims in 2003 and 7.3 per cent in 2004 and Bulgarian victims accounted for 13 per cent of victims in 2003 and 11.6 per cent in 2004.

Simultaneously, victims from traditional countries of transit and destination were found trafficked within the region as well as further a field. An increasing number of victims were trafficked from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Macedonia, Croatia and Montenegro. This signals that these countries/entities are potentially emerging as countries of origin. Victims from these countries are trafficked both internally and abroad.

Also of note is the presence of less usual countries of origin, arguably signalling changing routes and emergent countries of origin. In 2003 and 2004, assisted trafficking victims originated from countries as distant as China, Iraq, Georgia, Mongolia, Lebanon, Armenia and Uzbekistan. More proximate and relatively prosperous countries were also represented, including Germany, Slovenia, Slovakia and Hungary. Ukraine was a primary country of origin throughout the reporting period. Ukrainian victims were trafficked to all countries in the SEE region.

## 2. FORMS OF TRAFFICKING IN SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

To date, trafficking in the region has been primarily manifested as trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation. Perhaps more accurately, this is the type of trafficking that has been primarily identified and considered in interventions and policy. Data in the RCP's first annual report focused primarily on trafficking for sexual exploitation as very few victims of other forms of trafficking were assisted (Hunzinger and Sumner Coffey, 2003: 11). Similarly, in this report we note that trafficking for sexual exploitation is the most common form of exploitation among victims assisted in the region, with 85.3 per cent of victims in 2003 and 84.9 per cent in 2004 having suffered some form of sexual exploitation while trafficked.

However, as is clear from the table below, sexual exploitation is by no means the only form of trafficking suffered in the past two years. There are important indications of other forms of trafficking and types of victims to which we must attend. The chart below outlines the different forms of trafficking documented by service providers for assisted victims trafficked from the SEE region.

TABLE 2  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG ASSISTED SEE NATIONALS, 2003 AND 2004<sup>13</sup>

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Sexual exploitation	824 (65.2%)	864 (74.2%)
Labour	91 (7.2%)	48 (4.1%)
Begging and delinquency	51 (4%)	75 (6.4%)
Adoption	0 (0%)	9 (0.8%)
Sexual exploitation and labour	245 (19.4%)	97 (8.3%)
Sexual exploitation, begging, and delinquency	10 (0.8%)	27 (2.3%)
Labour, begging, and delinquency	11 (0.9%)	2 (0.2%)
Sexual exploitation, labour, begging and delinquency	1 (0.1%)	0 (0%)
Potential victims <sup>14</sup>	31 (2.5%)	43 (3.7%)

<sup>13</sup> Forms of trafficking are detailed only for victims from SEE – 1,254 victims in 2003 and 1,164 victims in 2004.

<sup>14</sup> This designation is used when individuals were assisted for insufficient time to clearly establish their trafficking experience or when the individual was identified and assisted before being exploited but showed strong signs of being in the trafficking process. There is a need to distinguish between trafficking victims (those who were already exploited and "potential trafficking victims" (those who are in transit and not yet exploited). The increased identification of "potential victims" can serve as a valuable measure of the effectiveness of law enforcement identification efforts. Where victims were identified prior to exploitation, it signals improvements in law enforcement's work and can be used as one measure of programmatic and policy impact.

Total	1264 (100%)	1165 (100%)
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In addition, many victims were exposed to dual forms of exploitation. As many service providers do not systematically document when victims are exposed to dual forms of exploitation, it is difficult to present a full picture of this trend. Some cases listed as sexual exploitation were, in fact, dual forms of exploitation. However, as some service providers were unable to provide precise information about the second form of exploitation, these cases have been counted only as sexual exploitation. In Bulgaria, 30.8 per cent of victims in 2003 and 20.5 per cent in 2004 were trafficked for sexual and another unspecified form of exploitation. What information is available suggests that this is commonplace. Indeed, 21.1 per cent of victims in 2003 and 10.8 per cent in 2004 suffered dual forms of exploitation.

The focus on the trafficking of women over men and sexual exploitation over other forms of labour is very much tied to conceptualizations of gender and female vulnerability. That is, “whereas men (who migrate) are viewed as active, adventurous, brave and deserving of admiration, for the same behaviour women are pictured as passive, foolish and naïve deserving either rescue or punishment” (Wijers, 1998, cited in Doezema, 1999: 21-2). Overlooking that women voluntarily choose migration (and they do so in large numbers throughout SEE) ignores both women’s agency and current economic realities, in which women as well as men are active contributors to the family income. Similarly, the focus on trafficking for sexual exploitation over others forms is arguably reflects the understandings and agendas of policy makers, practitioners and researchers as much as the reality on the ground. The issue “that defines traffic is force and not the nature of the labour to be performed” (Murray, 1998: 53).<sup>15</sup> The issue of “trafficking in persons” must therefore be understood in its broadest sense and complexity so that the forces and factors that contribute to trafficking can be considered fully and redressed effectively.

Experiences from around the world signal the possibility, if not probability, of other trafficking manifestations and victim profiles. Elsewhere significant trends include:

- Trafficking for sexual exploitation
- Trafficking for labour
- Trafficking for begging and/or delinquency
- Trafficking for adoption
- Trafficking of human organs

Not all of these forms were prevalent in SEE. However, the first four forms of trafficking have been documented and will be discussed below to provide a general sketch of the forms of trafficking in the region. Further, there are preliminary indications of trafficking in organs and, therefore, this form of trafficking will also be discussed briefly.

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<sup>15</sup> As Nussbaum argues, “this suggests that at least some of our feminist theory may be insufficiently grounded in the reality of working-class lives and too focused on sexuality as an issue in its own right, as if it could be extricated from the fabric of poor people’s attempts to survive” (1999: 278).

An understanding of these alternative forms of trafficking and a range of different profiles has implications for all counter-trafficking actors. It is critical in the process of identification where excessive focus on victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation may result in counter-trafficking actors overlooking trafficking for other purposes. Similarly, internal trafficking may be overlooked where attention has been paid to the identification of foreign victims. Moreover, different forms of trafficking and different profiles of victims may require alternative assistance frameworks. The health and medical needs of victims of labour trafficking may differ significantly from those of victims of sexual exploitation. Similarly, minors, men, women, the elderly and the disabled all have their own experiences and protection requirements. An understanding of the myriad manifestations of trafficking also has implications for the prevention efforts of counter-trafficking actors, with information campaigns needing to vary substantially according to form of trafficking and type of victim.

## 2.1 Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation

Trafficking for sexual exploitation remains the predominant form of exploitation experienced by victims originating from and trafficked to South-eastern Europe. Victims exploited exclusively for sexual exploitation accounted for 65.2 per cent of cases in 2003 and 74.2 per cent in 2004. However, when victims who were exploited sexually as well as for other purposes – i.e. labour, begging, or delinquency – are included, this percentage increases to 85.4 per cent in 2003 and 84.9 per cent in 2004.

TABLE 3  
FORMS OF SEX TRAFFICKING AMONG ASSISTED SEE NATIONALS, 2003 AND 2004<sup>16</sup>

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Sexual exploitation	824	864
Sexual exploitation and labour	245	97
Sexual exploitation, begging ,and delinquency	10	27
Sexual exploitation, labour, begging, and delinquency	1	0
Total	1080	988

Victims were trafficked into various sex-related activities and forced to undertake a range of different tasks and work. Victims worked primarily in prostitution, although some were forced to dance or strip, in a variety of different locations – bars, nightclubs, street prostitution, brothels, escort agencies, and private apartments. To some degree, the type and location of work was determined by the destination.

- *France and Italy*: Victims trafficked to France and Italy were generally forced to work in street prostitution, although some victims in Italy were also exploited in private apartments.
- *Germany and Austria*: Victims were primarily exploited in bars and brothels where they provided sexual services on site.
- *United Arab Emirates (UAE)*: Women sexually exploited in UAE were kept in hidden locations, sexually exploited in houses or apartments as well as in bars and discotheques.

<sup>16</sup> Forms of trafficking are detailed only for victims from SEE – 1,254 victims in 2003 and 1,164 victims in 2004.

- *Russia*: Victims trafficked to Russia were either kept in private apartments where they were sexually exploited or used in street prostitution but strictly monitored. Some victims were transported to the client and sexual services were provided there.
- *Turkey*: Victims generally lived in hotels and were taken by their traffickers directly to the client's house or to a hotel room. Arrangements for sexual services were made by telephone. Victims were required to provide sexual services in apartments, cafes, bars, and brothels. In exceptional circumstances, victims were forced to provide sexual services on the street.
- *Balkans*: Women trafficked to the Balkans were exploited in bars and nightclubs as well as kept in private apartments and transported to the clients. In a number of destinations in the Balkans, sexual exploitation was increasingly located in private apartments and homes. This was a tactic to avoid detection.<sup>17</sup> Further, some women were kept in private homes to provide sexual and often domestic services to their "boyfriends"/"owners". This form of exploitation is particularly difficult to detect.<sup>18</sup>

Victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation assisted in 2003 and 2004 were exclusively women and girls. Generally, victims were between 18 and 25 years, although in some countries, such as Serbia and BiH, an increasing number of victims were also minors. However, as will be clear in the individual country reports, women of varied ages and backgrounds were exposed to this form of trafficking – older as well as younger women, well educated as well as poorly educated victims, poor as well as affluent.

To date, none of the assisted victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were male. However, there have been preliminary signs of male sexual exploitation. In August 2003, two Moldovan males – 48 and 23 years of age – were identified as victims of trafficking. The two men were lured with false promises of employment and forced to work in Macedonia in construction during the day and provide sexual services at night

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<sup>17</sup> As one service provider noted of Serbia: "The places where they keep victims are more secure and they have people informing them when there is a danger that somebody might find out or if police are coming to check. They keep victims in houses and apartments where it is hard to find them" (Interview with Vesna Stanojevic, Director, NGO Counseling Against Family Violence, Serbia, 28 October 2005). Also in Serbia, the NGO ASTRA logged 23 calls reporting cases of trafficking victims working in escort agencies, a less visible type of prostitution (ASTRA 2003: 17). This pattern trend was noted in many countries/provinces in the region – Montenegro, Kosovo, BiH (Interview, Ana Savkovic, OSCE, Montenegro, May 2004; Interview, Aida Petrovic, Coordinator, Montenegrin Women's Lobby, Montenegro, May 2004; Amnesty International, 2004: 14; UNOHCHR 2004: 10, Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 56).

<sup>18</sup> An associated trend, although not one noted among assisted victims, was sexual exploitation over the Internet. Women worked from private houses where they offered sexual services "online". The client navigates through several servers that advertise women. Payment is made by credit card and the victim follows the orders given to her by the client via keyboard. This strategy means that the victims, confined to their rooms or apartments, work almost 24 hours a day and allows traffickers to maximize earnings (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 46; Andreani interview, 2004). Similarly, in Moldova and Romania, police raids in 2004 uncovered victims of this form of exploitation (Interview with Mariana Ianachevici, Salvati Copii, Moldova, 10 December 2004; Interview, Gina Maria Stoian, Adpare Foundation, Romania, January 25, 2005). Further, some victims assisted in Montenegro reported having pictures of themselves engaged in forced sexual acts posted on the Internet (WSH 2004: 6), while in Romania, there are sex websites for homosexual men with pornographic pictures of Romanian boys in sexual positions and doing sexual acts (Tipurita, 2004).

(Handziska and Schinina, 2004: 3).<sup>19</sup> A risk assessment conducted by IOM Macedonia also signalled male vulnerability to trafficking for sexual exploitation, with six per cent of the male homosexuals surveyed having used the services of a male foreigner trafficked for sexual exploitation and 16 per cent with knowledge of someone who had used the services of a foreign, male victim of sex trafficking (Handziska and Schinina, 2004: 13).

Sexual exploitation of male minors has also been noted by the International Forum of Solidarity (IFS) in BiH, which works with boys and girls who sell sexual services; it reported male (homosexual) victims of sex trafficking (Email Correspondence, Emir Nurkic, IFS, 29 January 2005; cf. Kvinna till Kvinna and Kvinnoforum, 2003: 33; Limanowska, 2003b: 117). Compelling documentary evidence of the phenomenon was presented in the documentary *Easy Prey: Inside the Child Sex Trade*, which related stories of Romanian boys selling sex on the streets in Italy (including one 14 year old who is sold for sex by his father and another boy sold by his brother), Western paedophiles preying on children in Bucharest, one Western paedophile posting pornographic images of male minors on his website and advertising sex tours with these male minors and Romanian male minors being sent abroad temporarily to provide sexual services to foreign clients (Tipurita, 2004).<sup>20</sup> There was also evidence of male minors from the SEE region working in prostitution in the EU. In the Netherlands, Romanian boys, 16 to 17 years of age, worked in prostitution, a number of whom were trafficked for this purpose.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, on the German-Czech border, minor males (and females) from Eastern Europe, including Moldova, were trafficked to be sexually exploited (Schauer, 2003).

This highlights that many different profiles of victims – of different ages, sexes and individual characteristics – are vulnerable to trafficking for sexual exploitation. Attention to these disparate profiles is essential in efforts to prevent this form of trafficking as well as protect victims.

## 2.2 Trafficking for Labour

Labour exploitation was an increasingly prominent form of exploitation to SEE in 2003 and 2004.<sup>22</sup> Victims exploited exclusively for labour purposes accounted for 7.2 per

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<sup>19</sup> This case resulted in criminal charges against two men for trafficking as well as the discovery of a larger trafficking chain, albeit without further evidence of the trafficking in men for sexual exploitation (Handziska and Schinina, 2004: 3).

<sup>20</sup> For information about this phenomenon in other SEE countries, see Alexandrescu *et al.*, 2003; Andreani and Raviv, 2004; Catana *et al.*, 2003:11; Limanowska, 2003: 116-7; UNICEF and STC, 2004: 4; IOM, 2001: 35; IPP, 2004: 39; ILO-IPEC, 2004: 9.

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Anke van den Borne, ECPAT Netherlands, June 2004; cf. IOM, 2001: 1999-2000.

<sup>22</sup> In ILO's research on forced labour and trafficking, the organization documented 298 cases of forced labour in its database, 186 (62.4 per cent) of which were trafficking. The research covered Moldova, Albania, Romania, Ukraine, France, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Russia, Turkey, UK and USA. Of those trafficked, 26 per cent were men. While the majority were cases of forced labour for sexual exploitation, 16.8 per cent were for construction work, 12.8 per cent were for entertainment/dancing/bartending and 12.3 per cent were for agricultural work (Andrees and der Linden, 2004: 10-11). Identifying cases of forced labour in destination countries proved to be difficult because irregular migrants were reluctant to risk discovery and deportation by sharing their experiences or to cause trouble for their boss. Similarly, many could not see the immediate value of the research and did not want to divulge personal and often humiliating experiences (Andrees and der Linden, 2004: 16).

cent of victims in 2003 and 4.1 per cent in 2004. Further, when victims trafficked for a combination of labour and other forms of exploitation are considered, the percentage increases significantly, to 25.8 per cent in 2003 and 12.6 per cent in 2004. Most commonly, victims were trafficked for a combination of labour and sexual exploitation.

TABLE 4  
FORMS OF LABOUR TRAFFICKING AMONG ASSISTED SEE NATIONALS, 2003 AND 2004<sup>23</sup>

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Labour	91	48
Sexual exploitation and Labour	239	97
Labour, begging and delinquency	11	2
Sexual exploitation, labour, begging and delinquency	1	0
Total	342	147

Victims of labour trafficking were both male and female, adults and minors. Labour tasks varied substantially but included domestic work, agriculture, construction, waiting tables and industrial work. To some degree, the form of trafficking was linked to the victim's sex. Women were primarily trafficked for domestic work and waitressing, while men were trafficked for construction, agriculture and industrial work. Further, age may also be a factor in the type of work undertaken, with more "older" women (generally in their thirties) trafficked for domestic work, while younger women (between 18 and 25 years) were trafficked for waitressing and bartending.

A victim's destination may vary according to the type of work. Victims trafficked for waitressing were primarily trafficked to the Balkans, while victims trafficked for domestic work were primarily trafficked to Turkey and, to a lesser extent, SEE and the EU. Similarly, organizations in Israel noted trafficking in migrant workers to Israel, many from Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova, for work in construction and agriculture.<sup>24</sup> Victims were also, however, trafficked within SEE for labour. In Montenegro, in August 2004, four Ukrainian men were assisted after being trafficked to the Republic for construction work. In 2004, 17 victims were also trafficked to Serbia for labour exploitation, 13 of whom were men and four of whom were minors.

It is also reasonable to surmise that men from SEE intending to migrate for labour into the EU are indeed trafficked. The demand for migrant work is great with many sectors in Western European industry now dependent on (legal and illegal) migrant labour. This includes the agricultural sector in the UK, France, Spain, Switzerland and the

<sup>23</sup> Forms of trafficking are detailed only for victims from SEE – 1,254 victims in 2003 and 1164 victims in 2004.

<sup>24</sup> Many of migrant workers were, in fact, trafficking victims, given the violations they suffered before and during migration. During recruitment, migrant workers were charged mediation fees exceeding those allowable under Israeli law. Upon arrival in Israel their passports were confiscated (which is a criminal offence in Israel), freedom of movement was denied, living conditions were often inhumane and failed to conform to labour regulations, workers were forced to work long hours with few days off, and they were often not paid minimum wage, social benefits or overtime fees. Salaries were usually illegally withheld for 1–2 months and migrant workers also suffered confinement, violence, and forced deportation (Kav La'Oved, 2002: 1–2). In 2003, Bulgarian worker were badly beaten for "violations" including trying to escape, complaining about underpayment, refusing to work on days off (Kav La'Oved, 2003: 16). Other recent reports include Moldovan and Romanian labourers who had suffered trafficking violations. Kav La'Oved, a migrant worker organization, reports that recruiters of workers in Bulgaria, Romania and Moldova employ debt as a control mechanism, binding workers by using their homes as a collateral for working through their contract period (Kav La'Oved, 2004a; 2004b). As a barometer of the scope of this migration/trafficking, the organization estimates that 40,000 Romanian migrant workers are currently in the country (Kav La'Oved, 2003: 10).



Netherlands as well as the garment and shoe industries in Italy<sup>25</sup> and France (Kelly, 2004: 14; cf. ILO, 2003b: 21; ILO, 2003a: 13, 16; Scanlan, 2002: 17). Other anecdotal evidence points to the recruitment of Serbian and Montenegrin men for labour in the EU, especially Germany, Austria and Switzerland (Copic *et al.*, 2004: 143).

### 2.3 Trafficking for Begging and Delinquency

A relatively strong trend of minors being trafficked for begging and various forms of delinquency has also been observed. This form of trafficking accounted for 4.1 per cent of victims in 2003 and 6.4 per cent in 2004. When dual forms of exploitation involving begging or delinquency are considered, the percentage increased to 5.8 per cent and 8.9 per cent respectively.

TABLE 5  
TRAFFICKING FOR BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY  
AMONG ASSISTED SEE NATIONALS, 2003 AND 2004<sup>26</sup>

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Begging and delinquency	51	75
Sexual exploitation, begging and delinquency	10	27
Labour, begging and delinquency	11	2
Sexual exploitation, labour, begging and delinquency	1	0
Total	73	104

Trafficking for begging and delinquency was noted in all countries of the SEE region except Montenegro and Macedonia. However, in these two countries it is suspected that some of the potential victims – those identified prior to exploitation – were intended for exploitation in begging and delinquency. There is also secondary information suggesting that this form of trafficking is far more widespread than is reflected in these numbers. The Temporary Centre for Minors in Moscow, managed by the Ministry of the Interior, estimated in 2001 that there were at least 500 cases in which kidnapped Moldovan minors were forced to beg on the streets of Moscow (O'Brian *et al.*, 2004: 39). In addition, in Romania, in 2003, it was discovered that 26 trafficking networks had trafficked 480 person for beggary (Futo and Jandl, 2004: 122).

The type of tasks involved in this form of trafficking were myriad and, in many circumstances, victims were exposed to more than one form of exploitation at a time. These tasks included begging, petty crime, theft, robbery, pimping and drug dealing. Victims were both male and female, adults and minors. Some victims were trafficked individually, while others were trafficked with their parents or children. Many Romanian victims were trafficked with their families, a pattern also noted in Moldova. Destinations for this form of trafficking were disparate – Russia, EU countries and, to a lesser degree, the Balkans. In some instances, there is an intersection between trafficking for begging and disability, with physically handicapped persons specifically recruited for this type of exploitation.

<sup>25</sup> In Italy, the black labour market involves a large proportion of migrant workers, including children, working without any rights, regulation or social security. In 2000 to 2001, the Ministry of Welfare controlled 25,000 firms that employed 12,000 migrant workers, 40 per cent of whom had irregular job conditions and contracts and 25 per cent of whom were without regular residence permits (ENACT and STC, 2004: 49).

<sup>26</sup> Forms of trafficking are detailed only for victims from SEE– 1,254 victims in 2003 and 1,164 victims in 2004.

## 2.4 Trafficking for Adoption

There is little information on the intersection between international adoption and child trafficking within the SEE region.

TABLE 6  
TRAFFICKING FOR ADOPTION AMONG ASSISTED  
SEE NATIONALS, 2003 AND 2004<sup>27</sup>

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Adoption	0	9

To date, there have been only nine cases of trafficking for adoption documented in 2004, all from Bulgaria. Other information is drawn from the media and anecdotal accounts.<sup>28</sup> Some recent reports in the media suggest that these nine cases were not isolated incidents and that this form of trafficking poses serious risks to minors in the region. In July 2004, French police uncovered a baby trafficking ring that had allegedly sold at least two Bulgarian children to French couples (Bell, 2004), while, in Italy, police arrested six people who had recruited pregnant Bulgarian women to baby trafficking (AGI, 2004).

One source from the Department for Youth Affairs of Balti City in Moldova recounted a case of a mother selling her newborn baby to traffickers who took the baby abroad to foreign parents for adoption (IPP, 2004: 7). Other investigations in Italy uncovered trafficking for illegal adoption, including eight children in 1998 and 1999, seven Albanians and one Belorussian (IOM, 2001: 160). There were also serious allegations of trafficking for adoption from BiH, with adoptive parents originating from Austria and Germany (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 48). Moreover, in 2003, the media reported the case of an Albanian boy trafficked to Italy for adoption. His parents were said to have received a television as compensation (Wood, 2003; cf. Albanian News Agency 2003; Pulaj, 2004; ILO-IPEC, 2003a: 10). The opaque nature of the adoption systems in many countries provides ample space for the exploitation of birth families, children and potential adoptive parents.

Generally, children were trafficked abroad through an illegal adoption process to new families by whom they are raised, while, in other cases, adoption may be used for the purpose of exploiting the child's labour (UNICEF, 1999: 2). Far more information is needed about this form of trafficking to appreciate not only the causes and contributing factors but also the assistance and protection needs of this profile of victims.

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<sup>27</sup> Forms of trafficking are detailed only for victims from SEE – 1,254 victims in 2003 and 1,164 victims in 2004.

<sup>28</sup> Romania was formerly also a source country for international adoption. However, on 21 June 2004, Romanian President Iliescu signed into law a draft adoption bill that limits international adoption to a child's grandparents. The US government raised objections to this law on the grounds that the Romanian government does not have the domestic capacity to care for children in institutions (JCICS, 2004a and 2004b). By contrast, the EU commended Romania on the new law, concerned that Romania's adoption system was open to abuse by child-traffickers. While the government placed a moratorium on international adoptions four years ago, hundreds of adoptions out of Romania proceeded nonetheless. The new law states that adoption would be considered as a "last resort" for orphaned or abandoned children, and that Romanian couples seeking to adopt children would be given priority over foreign nationals (AFP, 2004).

## 2.5 Trafficking in Human Organs

To date there is little firm evidence of trafficking in organs in the SEE region. As in many areas of the world, there have been flurries of allegations and rumours on the subject, most recently in May 2004, in Albania,<sup>29</sup> but so far such rumours have not been adequately substantiated. In 2003, Tdh noted that, while the organization had gathered information from various sources, they did not feel there was sufficient information to confirm the existence of organ trafficking between Greece and Albania (TdH, 2003: 24; cf. Maksutaj, 2004: 32). What is known is that experts state that a minimum of several thousand illegal kidney transplants from live unrelated donors take place every year, a portion of which were cases of trafficking (Pearson, 2004: 5).

Perhaps more common than extensive trafficking in organs is individuals from poorer countries of the region selling their organs on the illegal market and, in some such cases, this doing so in ways that mesh with trafficking. There is an important distinction to be made between selling organs and trafficking in organs. Nevertheless, in reality there is a fair amount of fluidity between the two, especially in dire economic circumstances where consent and choice are arguably constrained. Victims may consent to sell a kidney, but are deceived as to amount of payment and, in some cases, receive no payment at all. Victims are also often deceived about the procedures and consequences of kidney removal, having been told that the operation is minor, that they can return to work immediately and/or that one kidney is “dormant” and so will be removed (Pearson, 2004: 5, 10). Further, consent may be coerced under varying degrees of duress. Cases have been reported in which the person is recruited and taken abroad for an unspecified job that fails to materialize. The person is then kept in a “safe house” and after a period given the “option” to sell a kidney, sometimes with threats to require repayment for all the travel costs and sometimes with out-and-out coercion. Such cases have been documented among Moldovan men trafficked to Turkey (Pearson, 2004: 10).

The Council of Europe did investigate this manifestation of trafficking in a 2003 fact-finding mission, during which the rapporteur met with people who had sold their kidneys through trafficking networks among Moldova, Turkey, Ukraine and Israel. Victims interviewed in Moldova were men between the ages of 18 and 28 years living in poor conditions in rural areas of the country. Their motivation for selling their kidneys was poverty, an action which earned them between US\$ 2,500 and US\$ 3,000.<sup>30</sup> It was found to be a regional issue with similar “donor” recruitment practices existing in countries such as Ukraine, Russia, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova and Georgia and a well-organized and mobile network of brokers, qualified medical staff and police and customs staff. According to Scheper-Hughes of Organ Watch,<sup>31</sup> more

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<sup>29</sup> See Kurani, 2004; Dibra, 2004; Children's Human Rights Centre of Albania, 2004.

<sup>30</sup> Donors — frequently impoverished and poorly educated — may receive as little as US\$ 1,000 for a kidney, although the going price is more likely to be about US\$ 5,000. Moldova is among the countries well known for selling organs and has now passed legislation banning their sale (*Medical News Today*, 2004). The report found that these “donors” used the money to build an extension to help other members of their family, to buy a second hand car or simply to buy alcohol (Vermot-Mangold, 2003: 10).

<sup>31</sup> Organ Watch, an NGO based at the University of California, Berkeley, undertakes to track the global traffic in human organs. A research team led by Nancy Scheper-Hughes, Professor of Anthropology at Berkeley and one of the founding members of Organ Watch, has conducted comprehensive field research into the global traffic and

than 300 Moldovans have sold their kidneys abroad since 1998 with a range of coercion methods used, bringing some of these cases within the definition of trafficking (Pearson, 2004: 24). Moreover, in 2002, two arrests were made on charges of trafficking in organs, charges brought after the victim contacted the police (Vermot-Mangold, 2003: 9-10). Similarly, a recent IOM trafficking assessment noted intelligence reports that pointed to the possibility of child trafficking for organ harvesting in the Balkans, including Macedonia, Albania and Greece (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 10, 38). Finally, La Strada Molodva was approached by one man from southern Moldova who had agreed to sell a kidney to a Turkish broker. However, in Turkey, he was rendered unconscious and his kidney was allegedly taken without payment. When he approached the Turkish police, they deported him, while in Moldova the police lacked evidence to take action. He reported the case to La Strada Moldova's hotline, seeking help in locating the Turkish broker (Pearson, 2004: 8).

## 2.6 Multiple Forms of Trafficking

Many victims in the SEE region suffered multiple forms of exploitation while trafficked. Indeed, 21.3 per cent of SEE victims assisted in 2003 and 10.9 per cent in 2004 were exploited for two or more purposes. In one striking case in 2003, a Moldovan victim was exploited sexually as well as obliged to undertake begging and labour tasks. The rate of multiple forms of trafficking is likely to be higher still, as many service providers do not systematically document this variable.

TABLE 7  
MULTIPLE FORMS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG ASSISTED SEE NATIONALS, 2003 AND 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Sexual exploitation and labour	245	97
Sexual exploitation, begging and delinquency	10	27
Labour, begging and delinquency	11	2
Sexual exploitation, labour, begging and delinquency	1	0
Total	267	126

Among the multiple forms and combinations noted in the SE European region are the following:

- *Sexual exploitation and labour*: This is the most common form of dual exploitation, accounting for 91.8 per cent of cases in 2003 and 77 per cent in 2004. Often, victims working as prostitutes in bars or restaurants were obliged to also undertake labour tasks – as waitresses, dancers/entertainers, cleaners, bartenders or cooks. This was particularly common in the Balkans, where, in the past, cafés and bars were frequently sites of sexual exploitation. While currently more victims are exploited in private accommodation, many victims in the Balkans continue to suffer dual forms of trafficking. A more recent form of dual exploitation in the Balkans was by men who kept a woman in their private accommodation, where she was obliged to provide sexual services and domestic labour, such as cooking and cleaning.<sup>32</sup> Another manifestation was among victims trafficked as domestic workers who were also exploited sexually. In

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documented the practices of organ harvesting in many parts of the world. See <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/biotech/organswatch/index.html>.

<sup>32</sup> This has been noted in The Province of Kosovo, and in BiH and Macedonia.

some cases, these victims were exploited by their employer, while, in other instances, they were sold to clients. One victim, trafficked as a domestic worker, was regularly raped by her employer. He then organized a party for his male friends with the intention that she provide sexual service to them also. She escaped before this took place. In exceptional cases, this combination involved labour tasks such as agriculture and construction. In BiH, in 2002, six women were forced to work in agriculture, labouring in the fields during the daytime and providing sexual services in a bar at night. In another unusual case, two Moldovan men, trafficked to Macedonia, were required to labour in day and were sexually exploited at night (Handziska and Schinina, 2004).

- *Sexual exploitation, begging and delinquency*: Female minors trafficked for begging were often also exploited sexually, forced to work as prostitutes at night. This trend was noted primarily among Moldovan and Albanian victims. Nine victims assisted in Montenegro reported being forced to steal as well as provide sexual services (WSH, 2004: 6; Cf. Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 98; cf. Catana *et al.*, 2003: 11-12). Males (primarily minors) were also exposed to this combination of exploitation. In a recent documentary, one Romanian male minor in Italy related how he begged during the day and sold sexual services at night (Tipurita, 2004). Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were also required to traffic or peddle drugs, as was the case among many Albanian victims.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, 15 victims of sex trafficking assisted in Montenegro between 2000 and 2004, seven of whom were minors, were being forced to transfer drugs, munitions and weapons across the border (WSH, 2004: 6).<sup>34</sup> In addition, a recent report in the Serbian media noted that many victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation transiting through Serbia were forced by their traffickers to smuggle drugs, often without their knowledge.<sup>35</sup>
- *Labour, begging and delinquency*: This commonly involved a combination of street vending and begging. Victims sold tissues, cleaned car windscreens and begged. Another equally common combination was begging and petty crime, with victims additionally obliged by their traffickers to pick pockets and steal from shops and stores. This combination of trafficking was normally endured by male minors, but some adults were also exploited in this way. This combination was noted primarily among Albanian minor trafficking victims, although it was also documented in Serbia.

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<sup>33</sup> This trend has been noted elsewhere in the world. Research by the Women and Gender Studies Centre at the University of Indonesia found that a significant number of women on death row sentenced for drug trafficking had in fact themselves been trafficked for this purpose. See Rosenberg, 2003: 114-115.

<sup>34</sup> These cases are not included in the numbers of dual forms of exploitation as there was no information about this practice for victims assisted in 2003 and 2004.

<sup>35</sup> Before departing for Italy, the trafficker gave them a "gift" (heroin) that they were obliged to deliver in Italy. At the destination, if the girl passed safely, she was met by someone to collect the package, whereas if she was arrested she was left to fend for herself (Blic, 2004; cf. Copic *et al.*, 2004: 172).

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

In addition to a breakdown of assisted victims by nationality, it is also interesting to consider the number of victims assisted in each of the countries of the SEE region. The following table provides this overview. This table should be read as a tabulation of numbers of assisted victims and as a means to gauge the scope of assistance offered in each of these countries.

TABLE 8  
NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND NATIONAL VICTIMS ASSISTED IN SEE COUNTRIES, 2000 TO 2004<sup>36</sup>

Country or Province	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Albania	336	512	405	362	378	1993
BiH	200	200	283	109	108	900
Bulgaria	70	137	168	178	153	706
Croatia	0	0	7	8	19	34
The Province of Kosovo	167	202	251	252	150	1022
Macedonia	114	262	248	155	25	804
Moldova	319	382	329	314	302	1646
Montenegro	14	5	11	7	15	52
Romania	165	261	246	202	211	1085
Serbia	0	37	63	50	64	214
Total	1385	1998	2011	1637	1425	8456

As can be seen from the above chart, countries throughout the region provide a significant amount of assistance and protection. Each country within South-eastern Europe has established a distinctive victim assistance and protection framework. The type of assistance provided varies according to whether the country is one of origin, transit or destination. Reintegration assistance for national victims is the key service offered by service providers in countries of origin, such as Moldova, Albania, Bulgaria and Romania. By contrast, areas of transit and destination, such as BiH, Macedonia, Serbia, The Province of Kosovo, Montenegro and Croatia, provide temporary shelter and return assistance for victims identified within their borders. Regardless of whether a country is primarily a country of origin, transit or destination, most of the assistance provided to trafficking victims throughout the region is in the form of shelter-based, short-term services designed for adult female victims of sexual exploitation, provided by NGOs or international organizations and funded by foreign donors.

However, services offered in some countries have expanded and adapted in response to the rise of internal trafficking and the blurring of designations between countries of origin and destination. In Serbia, one NGO offers assistance to Serbian victims providing them with shelter and stabilization through a one-year rehabilitation programme. This service runs alongside that of another NGO providing shelter and more emergency intervention to foreign victims prior to their return. Similarly, in Albania, assistance is provided for the long-term reintegration of Albanian victims trafficked for sexual exploitation as well as begging and labour, while other organizations such as IOM provide assistance in the return of foreign nationals and reintegration support upon arrival in country of origin.

<sup>36</sup> These figures capture the number of victims (foreign and national) assisted in each of the countries of SEE. This is done to provide some measure of the assistance and protection offered by each of the countries in SEE. These numbers cannot be considered cumulatively as there are duplications within caseloads. That is, a Moldovan victim assisted in BiH and subsequently assisted in Moldova will appear twice in these figures. Rather, the intention is to present the scope of assistance provided and needed in these ten countries/provinces.

### 3.1 Good Practices and Positive Developments

There have been a number of positive developments in the area of victim assistance and protection in 2003 and 2004, with a number of good practices implemented and even replicated. These are highlighted in detail in each of the country reports. In general, however, we can speak of improvements in the following areas:

- **National referral mechanisms:** The development and implementation of national referral mechanisms for both foreign and national victims have been increasingly considered in 2003 and 2004.<sup>37</sup> Some countries have an existing referral mechanism, while others are in the process of developing and/or implementing this structure. Regardless of the stage of development, it must be stressed that counter-trafficking actors are increasingly attending to the development of more systematic referral and assistance frameworks. National referral mechanisms are essential for the standardized and systematic provision of services for trafficked persons.
- **Increased involvement of government:** Over the past two years, counter-trafficking efforts in SEE have increasingly included the work of the various national governments as well as individual ministries responsible for health, education, labour or social welfare services. Indeed, there are a number of positive examples of counter-trafficking efforts that should be highlighted and, ideally, replicated. Various government ministries have significant roles to play in supporting the disparate aspects of prevention, protection and prosecution. There is a need for coordination, cooperation and communication among different government ministries to offer effective services to victims. This is required at a national level to guide policy and procedures, as well as at regional and local levels to inform the more operational aspects of service provision and counter-trafficking efforts. While much more effort is required and not all countries have shown equal interest in counter-trafficking, these efforts on the part of government should not go unrecognized.
- **Victim identification and referral:** In 2003 and 2004, trafficking victims have been identified by an increasingly diverse pool of counter-trafficking actors. This has included law enforcement, NGOs, international organizations, embassies, helplines, medical staff, social workers, families of victims, victims themselves and private citizens. This indicates increased awareness of trafficking among the public and professionals in countries of origin and destination. In part, this increased and diversified identification can be attributed to extensive training and capacity-building efforts throughout the region, as well to effective advocacy on trafficking issues.

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<sup>37</sup> One valuable contribution to the development of assistance frameworks is OSCE/ODHIR's *National Referral Mechanisms*. This handbook outlines in general terms a national referral structure, which can be adapted and implemented at a national level. The handbook defines suggested roles for governmental institutions and civil society as well as highlights key issues and describes the types of programmes and services that should ideally be available to trafficked persons. For more information, please refer to the handbook: OSCE/ODHIR (2004) *National Referral Mechanisms: Joining Efforts to Protect the Rights of Trafficked Persons*. OSCE/ODHIR: Warsaw, Poland.

- **Training and capacity-building opportunities:** Over the past two years, extensive training and capacity-building efforts have sought to provide much needed skills and knowledge to the various actors engaged in counter-trafficking. Training has targeted law enforcement authorities in the identification of victims, sensitization of frontline personnel, region-wide training for helpline operators, direct assistance to service providers in terms of care, etc. Ongoing training and capacity-building efforts must continue to be a focus for the SEE region. While service providers have gained valuable experience from their existing work, trafficking assistance frameworks remain embryonic relative to assistance frameworks for other forms of violence. Ongoing training is needed to keep abreast of developments and changes in this very dynamic industry. Also advisable is multi-disciplinary training among these professionals.
- **Geographic distribution of assistance and services:** The geographic distribution of services has been increasingly considered and addressed in many countries/entities. In Croatia and BiH, safe houses are located throughout the country providing temporary accommodation for victims prior to their referral to the main shelter. In Bulgaria, Albania and Romania, medium to long-term accommodation (and associated services) are available throughout the country to support the reintegration of victims. In addition, in Moldova, community organizations are mobilized in a number of regions to support the reintegration process. In some countries, however, this continues to be a gap in the assistance framework.
- **National Plans of Action:** Each of the countries in the SEE region has a National Plan of Action, either in formal or draft version. National plans of action are essential in the provision of services for victims since they outline the various services afforded to victims as well as the organizations and departments tasked with these responsibilities. While national plans of action have yet to be implemented, their articulation is an important step forward. Further, some countries have made significant strides in the implementation of their action plans, which can and should serve as positive examples for other countries in the region.
- **Victim sensitivity:** There have been substantial improvements in the area of victim sensitivity, with greater understanding and consideration on the part of many counter-trafficking actors. Improvements have been noted in an array of arenas – among service providers, law enforcement, government officials, the media and the public. The identification of “potential victims”, individuals in the trafficking process but prior to exploitation, can serve as a partial gauge of this increased sensitivity. Nevertheless, sensitivity varies from country to country and, indeed, from sector to sector. One study found that among some actors involved in direct assistance, it was still possible to distinguish prejudicial views related to women and prostitution as well as paternalistic ways of viewing and treating victims (UNICEF, 2004b: 4). Sensitivity to victims is an ongoing issue that, despite significant advances, merits continued attention.



### 3.2 Existing Gaps and Issues

While these developments and improvements should be lauded, there remain significant gaps in the assistance framework. Attention here is essential toward to the protection of victims' rights and well-being.

- **Inadequate specialized assistance for minor victims of trafficking:** Identification of minor victims of trafficking improved in 2003 and 2004. Consequently, throughout the region, there is increasing recognition of the need to develop specific assistance schemes for victims of trafficking who are minors. Various countries have initiated measures to ensure protection and assistance to minors, which are outlined in the individual country reports. Nevertheless, many service providers continue to handle trafficked minors in much the same way as trafficked adults. In most countries, there are no specialized interview procedures, identification processes, or formal referral mechanisms in place for trafficked minors. Further, many states do not routinely appoint legal guardians for minors; most minors were sheltered with adults and received the same medical, psychological, legal and assisted return services as adults. Minor trafficking victims require specialized protection and assistance that must be tailored to the various developmental stages of childhood and adolescence.
- **Lack of standards and protocols for victim assistance and protection:** Overall, standards and protocols for victim service and assistance are lacking in the region. There are no formally agreed upon regional standards outlining a minimum level of care and a necessary package of services for trafficking victims. While a basic package of assistance is provided in the region (which includes temporary accommodation, food, basic medical care, crisis counselling, legal information and assistance with administrative documents), there are no protocols for the implementation of these services. In addition, some service providers provide more extensive and specialized medical assistance, individualized legal advice, legal representation during legal proceedings, family mediation, psychological counselling, recreational activities, vocational training, employment placement assistance, transportation and other reintegration services. However, there are also no standards and protocols for these services. While handbooks and guidelines have been developed, either they are internal documents that are not shared or they are too general to be directly applicable for service providers.<sup>38</sup> The development of protocols, standards and models should be a requisite component of all service provision. Further, these models should be shared widely – among organizations and countries – to ensure to best quality of care for all trafficking victims. Finally, there is a need to consider monitoring of the implementation of these protocols and standards to provide quality control and protection of rights.
- **Insufficient assistance for foreign victims with temporary or permanent stay option:** Assistance programs for foreign victims unwilling to return to their home countries have been practically non-existent, although NGOs in the region

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<sup>38</sup> IOM is currently finalizing a *Direct Assistance Handbook* for use by NGOs and governments in service provision for trafficking victims. This will be published and disseminated in late 2005.

have provided some *ad hoc* assistance and are working to expand service provision. NGOs try to assist with vocational training, initial accommodation and some social support. With options for temporary residence permits (TRPs) now possible in Serbia, BiH and Croatia, attention to the type of assistance required for these victims is important, as the number of victims receiving TRPs are likely to increase.

- **Inadequate communication and information sharing between origin and destination:** Another critical issue is the overall lack of communication and information sharing among service providers. While cooperation and communication among organizations in SEE has improved substantially in the past two years, some service providers within transit and destination countries lack full and updated information regarding the availability and extent of reintegration services within countries of origin. This gap in information impedes service providers' ability to inform foreign victims about the reintegration options available upon return and to implement appropriate case planning. Further, service providers in countries of origin are often referred victims about whom they have only limited information, which results in extensive re-interviewing of the victim and little continuity with services provided to date. To improve service delivery, it is important that service providers in the region improve direct communication and case coordination. Ideally, victims referred by one organization should be offered the full range of services available in the country, not only those offered by the assisting agency. Such communication and coordination can also be a critical tool in anticipating changes in trafficking trends and, by implication, making the necessary adjustments in the services offered to meet these changes.
- **Need for cooperation and referral beyond SEE borders:** Cooperation and communication beyond the borders of SEE are limited. Service providers in the region stress that with more victims being trafficked to EU countries, as well as destinations such as Turkey, Russia and the Middle East, there is a need for links with organizations in these destinations and for inter-governmental cooperation. Given the range of destination countries, there is a need for SEE service providers to disseminate information more widely to ensure that these victims have access to assistance upon return. Networks and contacts should be expanded. Victims' needs can be best met by reintegration programmes if they are not limited in the choice of assistance only to cooperating organizations, but are also informed about the full range of assistance possibilities in SEE.
- **Lack of centralized victim registry or database:** Generally, countries within South-eastern Europe do not possess a formal, centralized victim registry or agreed upon methodology for collecting information about victims. Rather, individual organizations collect data based on the cases they have assisted so that the type and depth of information collected varies from organization to organization. Some efforts are underway to remedy this, with some countries including victim documentation as part of their national referral structures. Indeed, it is anticipated that this gap in the assistance framework will be addressed in a number of countries in 2005. This is essential in terms of documenting rates of trafficking at a national level as well as monitoring the provision of services and assistance.

- **Lack of comprehensive case monitoring and follow-up assistance:** This constitutes a gap in services for trafficked victims throughout the SEE region. Service providers monitor cases for a number of months following a beneficiary's departure from a shelter and some victims receive longer-term assistance through organizations working in their home regions. However, overall, follow-up is limited. This is due to limited resources available for comprehensive monitoring, logistical problems and reluctance of victims to stay in contact with service providers. Ways must be sought to make comprehensive case monitoring available yet consistent with the wish of many victims to remain anonymous upon return to their home communities.
- **Need for a more diverse assistance framework:** The assistance framework was initially developed to respond to a prototypical trafficking victim – a young, poor, uneducated woman trafficked for sexual exploitation for long periods and exposed to extensive and myriad forms of abuse. However, this report highlights that there is no one type of victim or trafficking experience and that, therefore, the provision of services needs to be made flexible enough to meet the specific needs and interests of a wide range of victim. Specialized assistance is needed for babies who have been trafficked for adoption, mothers trafficked with their children, pregnant mothers, drug or alcohol addicted victims, male trafficking victims and minors of varying ages. Service providers (and donors) should be increasingly flexible in terms of service provided as well as being aware of the specific and changing needs of different profiles of victims.
- **Inadequate reintegration assistance in “destination countries”:** To date, assistance in traditional destination countries has focused on short-term shelter, emergency medical and psychological care and assisted returns for foreign victims identified within their borders. With the rise of trafficking in nationals from what were traditionally destination countries, there is a need for longer-term assistance geared toward the recovery and reintegration of national victims. While some efforts have been made to address this gap, more attention is needed. National victims in destination countries must be afforded the same services and protections as victims in countries of origin.
- **Lack of data from destination countries:** The lack of data from destination countries limits understanding of the scope and nature of trafficking to, through and from SEE. With more victims staying in destination countries due to residency options, the lack of data from destination countries can repress the number of victims, giving rise to the misperception that trafficking has been addressed. Unless victims are counted at both origin and destination, it impossible to know the true rate of identified and assisted victims. Such hurdles must be overcome to provide a more holistic picture of trafficking to, through and from South-eastern Europe and beyond.
- **Inadequate budgetary provision for counter-trafficking by SEE governments:** With few exceptions, assistance and protection for trafficking victims in the SEE region is supported by funds from international donors and organizations. In a handful of instances, local and national government structures have provided funds for victim assistance as well as developed and

implemented victim services. Generally, however, services such as medical care, legal assistance, psychological care and shelters are supported by foreign donors, even when assisting national victims. There is a need for government investment in the assistance framework as an important step toward sustainability.

# COUNTRY REPORT

## ALBANIA

This section analyzes the current situation of trafficking victims and victim assistance and protection in Albania. The report is divided into three sections: 1) Number of Foreign and Albanian Trafficking Victims Identified and Assisted, 2) Profiles of Trafficking Victims and 3) Overview of the Assistance Framework in Albania.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The total number of foreign victims identified and assisted in Albania between January 2000 and 31 December 2004 was 243.
- The total number of Albania victims identified and assisted between January 2000 and 31 December 2004 was 1750.
- Albania is primarily a country of origin for trafficking in human beings, including some cases of internal trafficking. Albania is also a country of transit and destination, albeit to a far lesser degree.
- Albanian victims were trafficked primarily for sexual exploitation, although a significant number were also trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency. In addition, a number of victims were trafficked for multiple forms of exploitation. These included labour and delinquency as well as sexual exploitation and delinquency in the form of drug dealing. Foreign victims were primarily trafficked for sexual exploitation, although there were also cases of labour trafficking.
- Both male and females were trafficked from Albania. In large part, the sex of the victim was linked to form of trafficking, with women trafficked for sexual exploitation and primarily males trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency. Among foreign victims assisted in Albania, a few male victims were also identified.
- Minors accounted for a significant percentage of assisted Albanian victims. Albanian victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation were minors in 21.1 per cent of cases in 2003 and 23.6 per cent in 2004. A striking 100 per cent of victims of trafficking for labour, begging and delinquency were minors in 2003 and 93.2 per cent in 2004.
- A multiplicity of factors, including economic background, family relations, education and employment, inform victims' vulnerability to trafficking. In Albania, no single factor accounted for trafficking in foreign and national victims. Prominent causes in Albania include poor family relations, violence and abuse in the home, lack of economic opportunity, social disenfranchisement and poverty.
- Roma and Egyptian victims are highly represented among victims of trafficking for all forms of exploitation. This highlights the acute vulnerability of ethnic minorities and the need for prevention and protection efforts aimed at the specific needs of this profile of victim.
- Mentally and physically disabled victims appear particularly vulnerable to trafficking in Albania. In 2003 and 2004, as many as one-third of assisted victims of sex trafficking were disabled.

- While victims were generally poor, an increasing number were from "average" or "well off" backgrounds. This was particularly true for victims of sexual exploitation.
- Victims suffered varying levels and types of abuse while trafficked. However, in 2004, fewer victims of sexual exploitation suffered abuse and much of the abuse exerted was psychological. This signals a change in the tactics of traffickers who restrict abuse to prevent victims seeking escape.
- A number of Albanian victims of sexual exploitation became pregnant and had children as a result of their trafficking experience. This profile of victim requires specific assistance to protect and support both them and the child.
- Most Albanian victims were trafficked by someone known to them. Among victims trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency, families were at times complicit in trafficking. This feature of recruitment poses serious obstacles in the reintegration process, which must be tackled in ways that guard the best interests of the child.
- Albanian trafficking victims primarily crossed borders illegally and with false or no documents. This was consistent across different forms of trafficking and stands in contrast to other countries where traffickers increasingly used legal routes and documents.
- As poverty is often a main contributor to migration/trafficking, there is a need to consider the material conditions of victims upon return. Reintegration efforts must address the training and employment needs of victims. Where victims are minors, support and training should be given to parents as a means of preventing future trafficking and supporting sustainable reintegration.
- Rates of re-trafficking among all Albanian trafficking victims was high in 2003 and 2004. In 2003, these ranged from 33.7 per cent among victims of sexual exploitation to 30.8 per cent of victims of labour, begging and delinquency. Re-trafficking rates were particularly high among victims from ethnic minorities.
- Mapping areas of origin is valuable for targeted prevention efforts as well as identifying gaps in assistance and reintegration services. As source areas may fluctuate over time, there is a need to monitor areas of origin and mobilize resources and service providers to fill these gaps.
- Currently in Albania, there are three distinct identification and assistance frameworks for the different profiles of victims. The Albanian government is in the process of formulating a national referral mechanism to harmonize assistance available to trafficking victims.
- The lack of long-term reintegration assistance and options for adult victims of trafficking constitutes a gap in the assistance framework. There is a need to attend to longer-term assistance including employment placement, family counselling and case monitoring.

- Local and international NGOs have established mechanisms for returning trafficked Albanian minors from Italy and Greece. Së Bashku Kundër Trafikimit të Fëmijëve (BKTF) and partners have drafted coordinated assisted return procedures for trafficked children and created a pilot project for safe, voluntary and legal return of Albanian children from Greece. This approach utilizes and strengthens partnerships between NGOs inside and outside Albania; it acknowledges the wishes and interests of the minor and the minor's family and it aims to expedite the assisted return process.
- While family reunification is the ideal solution for minor victims of trafficking, alternative options (both short and long-term) must be identified in cases where victims cannot be safely returned to their families and while family mediation is pursued. Some short-term accommodation options for this target group should be considered. As most of these victims are male minors, a dedicated accommodation is required.
- Reinsertion into mainstream schools has not happened in large numbers due largely to reluctance on the part of schools to readmit school-leavers. This is further complicated by an order from the Ministry of Education that requires students to attend schools in their home districts. While service providers have been able to address this issue on a case-by-case basis, this *ad hoc* approach necessarily limits impact and results. Comprehensive reinsertion agreements are needed in addition to alternative educational programs.
- Vocational training and job placement are critical components of any effective reintegration process. All shelters work to provide some basic vocational training and employment placement, but the scope and quality of the programmes varies. Further, with the poor economic conditions in the country, this is not an easy task. More resources should be allocated to offer comprehensive vocational and job finding assistance to beneficiaries. This is particularly important when so many victims became trafficking victims out of a desire to find work.
- Social workers for all forms of trafficking provide family mediation and family reunification assistance to victims who wish to return to their families. This is an essential component of assistance work, given that most victims express a desire to return home to their families. In some cases, assessments highlight the need to consider other options for these victims, such as placement with extended family or integration into a new social environment. Where families have been complicit in trafficking, thought must be given to the advisability of reintegration.
- There is an absence of case monitoring by government social workers. While social workers at the shelters follow up their cases by telephone and are available for consultation when victims seek assistance, there is no comprehensive programme of case monitoring. This is due partly to a lack of resources and time and partly to the reluctance of victims themselves to maintain contact with case workers, as it may draw unwanted attention to them in their communities. Further, victims may not be accessible by telephone and



they may live in remote, hard-to-reach areas. Some victims move frequently, which also complicates ongoing contact.

- Very few housing and independent living opportunities exist for trafficked victims who do not wish or cannot return to live with their families. Rental prices for private accommodation are prohibitive for most victims and it is not socially acceptable for an Albanian woman to live alone. Alternative housing options in Albania are needed. Governmental resources and support for subsidized housing is needed to provide a longer-term option for working beneficiaries.
- Trafficking victims continue to be deported to Albania, contravening international standards. Destination countries are obliged to identify and assist trafficking victims.
- Lack of data from destination countries can camouflage the extent of trafficking in Albanian nationals. There is a need to access information from both origin and destination countries to measure the scope of trafficking in Albanian nationals.
- International networks for victim services should be further expanded. Ideally, victims should not be limited in the choice of assistance only to cooperating organizations, but should be informed about the full range of assistance possibilities, to ensure that these meet their individual needs and interests.

## 1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND ALBANIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED

Albania is a country of origin for trafficking in human beings. Albanian nationals are trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation, labour, begging and delinquency. While victims are most often Albanian women and girls, a significant number of victims are male minors. In addition, foreign nationals are trafficked through Albania *en route* to other destination countries and, in some cases, are also deported to Albania from these destination countries.

Statistics and information were compiled according to primary data provided by organizations working in Albania, including Women's Counseling Centre (WCC), Vatra Women Hearth, Terre des Hommes (TdH), Help for Children/Ndihme Per Femijet (NPF), Femijet e Shqiperise dhe botes, Tjeter Vision, IOM Mission in Tirana, Së Bashku Kundër Trafikimit të Fëmijëve (BKTF), European Committee for Training and Agriculture (CEFA), International Social Service (ISS), Different and Equal (DandE) and the National Reception Centre (NRC). In addition, data has been included from organizations working in destination countries that have assisted Albanian victims: Hope and Homes (The Province of Kosovo) and Poppy Project (UK).<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Other organizations in Albania that participated in and provided information for the RCP research, include: Coordinated Action Against Human Trafficking (CAAHT), International Catholic Migration Committee (ICMC), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Management Systems International (MSI), Ministry of Public Order, National Coordinator's Office (Ministry of State), Centro Murialdo, Save the Children (STC) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Through an examination of victim profiles, we are better equipped to consider interventions that can address their needs and redress their trafficking experience.<sup>40</sup>

Currently in Albania, there is no formal centralized data registry for victims of trafficking or a standard methodology for the collection of information on victims. Each organization collects data based on the cases assisted. The type and depth of information collected varies from organization to organization.

TABLE 1  
NUMBER OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO  
OR ORIGINATING FROM ALBANIA, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign trafficking	117	67	30	17	12	243
Albanian trafficking victims	219	445	375	345	366	1750

The numbers presented in the table above differ from those presented in the RCP’s first annual report, meriting some explanation. The 1200 Albanian victims (presented in the first annual report as “the minimum number of identified and assisted Albanian minors trafficked primarily for begging and forced labour”), in fact, referred to the number of families receiving social assistance from Help for Children/Ndihme Per Femijet (NPF) and Terre des Hommes (Tdh). The beneficiaries included both trafficking victims and those deemed “at risk” of trafficking. As such, the RCP has amended this information in its second annual report and presents only cases of assisted trafficking victims.<sup>41</sup>

The majority of victims returned to Albania through voluntary return programs, although in some cases victims were forcibly returned by third countries and assisted upon or after arrival in Albania. Victims who were voluntarily returned to Albania under formal assistance programs, but declined further assistance are included within the assistance figures. Similarly, foreign victims who entered an assistance program but voluntarily departed before receiving the full assistance package are also included in the above figure. In these cases, victims are considered assisted because they received some form of assistance – shelter, medical care, transportation, counselling and/or material assistance – although they did not receive assistance toward a durable solution.

With two exceptions, these figures do not include trafficked Albanian victims identified and assisted in transit and destination countries who were not returned subsequently to Albania. Only two organizations from destination countries provided primary and disaggregated data about assisted Albanian citizens not yet returned. These were the Poppy Project in the UK and the International Social Services – Albanian Delegation (ISS).<sup>42</sup> The RCP stresses that the lack of data about victims in destination countries represents a gap, particularly when victims are increasingly being trafficked outside of SEE. For example, between June 1996 and June 2001, 654 Albanian trafficking victims were enrolled in Italy’s (Article 18) social assistance schemes for trafficked victims

<sup>40</sup> For a full discussion of how data was collected and the methodology used, please see: Introduction.

<sup>41</sup> The RCP apologizes for the confusion and inconvenience caused by this misinterpretation.

<sup>42</sup> The Poppy Project in the UK provided comprehensive victim profiles for all Albanian trafficking victims assisted by the organization. The International Social Services – Albanian Delegation (ISS) also provide primary data about Albanian victims being assisted under Italy’s Article 18 programme, disaggregated by age and gender.

(Transcrime, 2004).<sup>43</sup> In 2002 alone, 251 trafficking victims were being assisted under the programme. Further, STV La Strada in the Netherlands assisted an additional ten Albanian Moldovan victims in 2003 and 2004.<sup>44</sup> As the RCP was not able to collect primary data about these cases according to its research methodology, these numbers are not included in the table presented above.

Data from these destination sources is needed to highlight: a) the extent of trafficking to various destinations; b) various forms of trafficking and c) the specific profiles of a wider range of victims to ensure effective prevention and protection efforts. RCP attempts to collect information from service providers in destination countries were largely unsuccessful as many organizations lacked time and resources to assist in the research or were prevented from doing so by institutional regulations on information sharing. Such hurdles must be overcome to provide a more holistic picture of trafficking to, through and from SEE and further a field. With more victims staying in destination countries due to residency options, the lack of data from destination countries can repress the number of victims, giving rise to a misperception that trafficking has been adequately addressed. Unless victims at both origin and destination are counted, it is impossible to know the true number of identified and assisted victims.

The figures also do not include Albanian trafficked victims who were either extradited or who managed to escape their traffickers, but who were not subsequently identified and assisted within a formal assistance program in Albania. The figures also miss victims who were identified but declined assistance.<sup>45</sup> The NGO Tjeter Vision was informed by law enforcement of as many as 60 such cases in Elbasan region alone in the last two years.

Additional data reinforces the prominence of trafficking as an issue in Albania. During 2004, the following penal lawsuits were initiated with regard to trafficking: 66 penal acts regarding trafficking of women for prostitution involving 115 suspects; 17 penal acts for trafficking in children involving 18 suspects and 44 penal acts for trafficking in human beings involving 83 suspects.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, in 2003, the government arrested 317 suspects for trafficking-related crimes, and imposed sentences in 75 of 102 convictions from two to over ten years' imprisonment (US State Department, 2004; cf. Pulaj, 2004).

## 2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

Victims' needs are intimately informed by the specific dynamics of their trafficking experience. Understanding victims' backgrounds as well as the precise nature of recruitment, transportation and exploitation is an essential starting point in both the development of appropriate assistance and services for victims and the formulation of prevention strategies that take into account areas of victim vulnerability. In this section,

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<sup>43</sup> In the same period, there were 2,930 proceedings on trafficking in human beings, with 29.8 per cent of traffickers being Albanian (Transcrime, 2004).

<sup>44</sup> Correspondence with Suzanne Hoff, La Strada, Netherlands, April 26, 2005.

<sup>45</sup> Both foreign and Albanian victims have declined assistance. Reasons that a victim may decline assistance include: distrust of authorities and assistance providers; fear of criminal sanctions, publicity or stigmatization related to the trafficking experience; and reluctance to return to home country.

<sup>46</sup> Interview with Edmond Baiti, Head, Counter-Trafficking Unit, Ministry of Public Order, January 15, 2005.

we analyze the profiles and experiences of Albanian victims trafficked in, to and through Albania – for sexual exploitation (Section 2.1.1) and for labour, begging and delinquency (Section 2.1.2). We also consider foreign victims trafficked to Albania (Section 2.2).

## 2.1 Albanian Trafficking Victims

In what follows, we will examine the context of trafficking in Albanian nationals from and within the country.

TABLE 2  
NUMBER OF ASSISTED ALBANIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Albanian trafficking victims	219	445	375	345	366	1750

Albanian victims were trafficked for a variety of purposes. As in other countries of South-eastern Europe, the majority were female victims of sexual exploitation, accounting for 100 per cent of victims in 2000, 88.1 per cent in 2001, 91.2 per cent in 2002, 85.2 per cent in 2003 and 79.8 per cent in 2004. Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation worked in a variety of arenas – in bars, nightclubs, private apartments, escort services, brothels, and on the street.

TABLE 3  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG ASSISTED ALBANIAN NATIONALS, 2000 TO 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Sexual exploitation	219	392	342	294	292	1539
Labour exploitation, begging/delinquency	0	53	33	26	44	156
Potential victims <sup>47</sup>	0	0	0	25	30	55
Total	219	445	375	345	366	1750

In addition, a number of assisted Albanian victims were trafficked for begging, delinquency and/ or labour, accounting for 11.9 per cent of victims in 2001, 8.8 per cent in 2002, 7.5 per cent in 2003 and 12 per cent in 2004. These victims – generally minor males – undertook begging, petty crime, selling small items on the street and other such tasks.

To date, there have been no assisted cases of trafficking for adoption or organ harvesting.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>47</sup> This designation is used when the individual was assisted for an insufficient time to clearly establish his/her trafficking experience or when the individual was identified and assisted before being exploited but showed strong signs of being in the trafficking process.

<sup>48</sup> There have been allegations and media accounts about these forms of trafficking among Albanian victims. In 2003, the media reported the case of an Albanian boy trafficked to Italy for adoption (Wood, 2003; cf. Albanian News Agency, 2003; Pulaj, 2004; ILO-IPEC, 2003a: 10). Other investigations in Italy uncovered trafficking for illegal adoption including eight children in 1998 and 1999, seven Albanians and one Belorussian (IOM, 2001: 160). And, in 2004, there were allegations of trafficking in organs made against a medical clinic in Fier, Albania (Kurani, 2004). To date, Bulgaria is the only country in South-eastern Europe that has assisted victims of trafficking for illegal adoption. See *Bulgaria Country Report* for details.

The identification of “potential victims” – persons believed in the trafficking process but who have not yet been exploited – is a striking development in 2003 and signals improvement in effort and skills of various counter-trafficking actors in the identification process.

### 2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Albanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation

The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of assisted Albanian victims trafficked for sexual exploitation.

TABLE 4  
ALBANIAN NATIONALS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2000 TO 2004

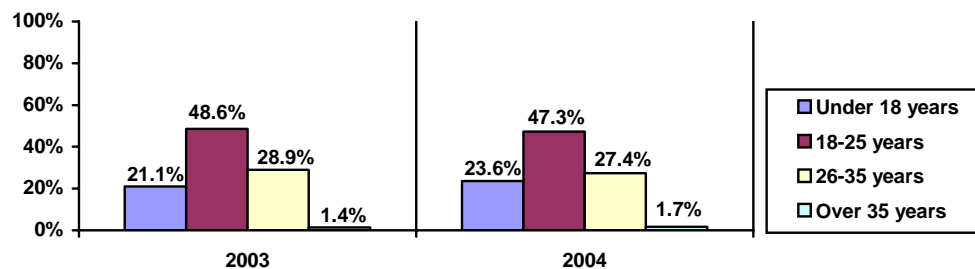
Forms of Trafficking	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Sexual exploitation	219	392	342	294	292	1539

#### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics<sup>49</sup>

**Sex:** All victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation assisted since 2000 were women.

**Age:** In both years, victims were primarily between 18 and 25 years, consistent with data from throughout the region.

GRAPH 1  
AGE OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Minors constituted a noteworthy number of victims assisted in 2003 and 2004.<sup>50</sup> Given the high percentage of minors, attention to their specific needs, including the impact of such trauma in the developmental stages of life, is needed. In addition, as most service

<sup>49</sup> Profiles of Albanian victims of sexual exploitation presented herein were drawn from the cases for which there was comprehensive data. In a number of cases – generally those where victims stayed a short period at the shelter or declined further assistance – it was not possible to collect comprehensive data. In addition, due to staffing and time limitations, NGO Vatra, which assisted a large number of victims in 2003 and 2004, was able to provide details about only a portion of the RCP indicators. As such, comprehensive data was available for 63 victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in 2003 and 61 victims in 2004. Indicators for which there is comprehensive data about all 294 victims in 2003 and 292 victims in 2004 were: gender, age, form of trafficking, education, area of origin, marital and family status, number of children, employment at recruitment, transportation routes, use of legal documents and legal border crossings, country of destination and victim identification and referral.

<sup>50</sup> Of note, the percentage of minors decreased from previous years. According to Vatra, from 1999 to mid 2001, minors comprised 70 per cent of assisted victims and, in 2001 and 2002, minors constituted 60 per cent and 70 per cent respectively of assisted victims (Vatra 2003).

providers documented the victim's age at identification rather than at recruitment, some victims identified as adults may have been minors when trafficked.<sup>51</sup>

A stable proportion of victims in 2003 and 2004 were slightly older – between 26 and 35 years and a smaller percentage over 35 years. This is consistent with the ages of women from other source countries, such as Moldova,<sup>52</sup> and highlights that higher age does not preclude trafficking vulnerability.

**Ethnicity:** While not all service providers systematically documented this indicator in case management, those that did noted a high rate of ethnic minorities among assisted victims. Of the 231 victims assisted by the NGO Vatra in 2004, 30 (or 13 per cent) were either of Roma or Egyptian<sup>53</sup> ethnicity (Vatra, 2005: 37). While this is lower than among victims trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency, ethnic minorities were highly represented proportionally.<sup>54</sup> Further, eight of 50 victims assisted by IOM in 2003 (16 per cent) were from an ethnic minority, two Roma and six Egyptian. Similarly, six of the 41 victims of sexual exploitation assisted by IOM in 2004 (or 14.6 per cent) were ethnic minorities, one Roma and five Egyptian.

This finding highlights the need for prevention programmes and awareness raising efforts that specifically target this group. Such efforts must also take into account the low educational level of this profile of victim (25 of 30 victims were illiterate) as well as the specific recruitment strategies used (most were recruited with false marriage promises). Also critical is attention to how reintegration can be tailored to the needs of this group. Services, such as an educational reinsertion programme, birth registration and vocational training, are essential. As pressing is consideration of how victims can be reintegrated when family and/or community have been complicit in trafficking. A noteworthy number of Roma and Egyptian victims were trafficked more than once, and some as many as four times. This raises questions about the effectiveness of existing reintegration efforts. At the very least, proactive case monitoring is needed urgently.

Prevention and protection efforts must be tailored to ethnic minorities and more cooperation is needed between counter-trafficking actors and organizations already working with ethnic minorities. Further, differences among and within ethnic minority groups must be taken into account to ensure that interventions are appropriate and effective.

**Area of origin:** NGOs and international organizations reported a notable shift in areas of origin. A significant proportion of victims were from urban areas in the late 1990s, followed by an increase in rural victims from 1999 to 2000, and a subsequent shift in

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<sup>51</sup> According to Vatra's caseload, more than 80 per cent of adult victims assisted in 2003 were recruited for the first time between 14 and 17 years of age (Vatra 2003).

<sup>52</sup> From 2000 to 2004, between 14.6 per cent and 23.3 per cent of Moldovan victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were between 26 and 35 years. Between 0.3 per cent and 3.6 per cent were over 35 years of age. See *Moldova Country Report*.

<sup>53</sup> Egyptian (or Jevgiit, Jevgj or Evgjits) are an ethnic minority in Albania. While often called Roma, they claim their origin as ancient Egypt, generally do not speak the Romani language, and distinguish themselves from Roma as a separate ethnic group (Beddies *et al.*, 2003: 10).

<sup>54</sup> In Albania, an estimated three per cent of the population are Roma (World Bank, 2001). Currently, there are no reliable estimates of the number of Egyptians in Albania.

2001 to more urban cases. In 2002, 62.3 per cent of victims assisted by Vatra were from urban areas. In 2003 and 2004, urban and rural dwellers accounted for approximately equal numbers of victims, 51.1 per cent and 52.7 per cent respectively.

Increased numbers of urban victims may reflect the overall trend of urban migration since the 1990s as well as the emergence of peri-urban settings, which, in many environments, are as or more impoverished than rural households. In addition, it is not surprising that urban women as much as rural women wish to migrate and work abroad.

Information about the precise areas and regions from which victims originated is critical not only for targeted prevention efforts, but also to map the areas where services are needed to support reintegration.

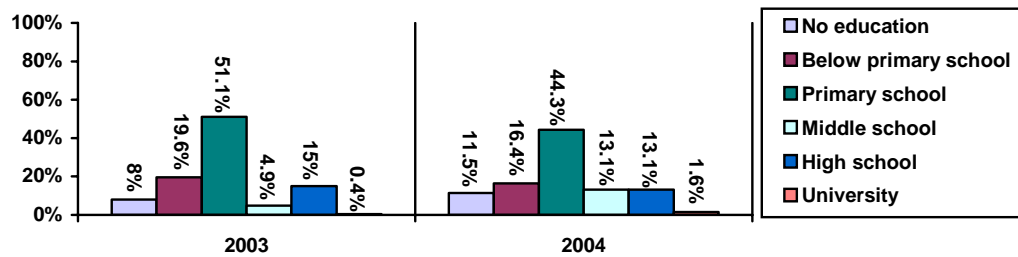
TABLE 5  
TOWNS OF ORIGIN OF ALBANIAN VICTIMS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004<sup>55</sup>

Towns	2002	2003	2004
Vlora	53	56	54
Fieri	12	45	37
Lushnja	23	34	26
Berati	0	21	36
Bat	14	0	0
Tirana	55	10	13
Elbasan	12	9	14
Kucove	5	9	11
Durres	23	9	13
Sarande	14	6	6
Gramsh	7	5	0
Mallakaster	0	3	0
Fushe Kruja	1	3	0
Gjirokastra	1	3	3
Delvine	0	3	1
Tepelena	2	2	0
Skrapar	0	2	6
Permet	0	0	2
Librazhd	4	2	1
Korce	8	0	2
Lezhe	4	2	0
Kruje	6	1	0
Mirdite	0	1	1
Peshkopia	6	1	0
Rrogozhine	0	1	0
Shkoder	10	1	0
Peqin	0	0	1
Burrel	0	1	0
Kavaje	3	0	0
Cerrik	7	0	0
Lac	7	1	3
Pogradec	4	0	1
Tropoje	5	1	0
Bulqize	2	0	0
Total	288	231	231

<sup>55</sup> This table refers only to victims assisted by the NGO Vatra. See Vatra; 2003; Vatra, 2004 and Vatra, 2005.

**Education:**<sup>56</sup> Overall, the education level of Albanian women trafficked for sexual exploitation is low. Approximately 85 per cent of victims possessed less than high school education, with most having attended only at primary level. As worrying is the eight to 12 per cent of victims in 2003 and 2004 with no education and the additional 17 per cent to 20 per cent with less than primary school education. These education levels were lower than the average education level in Albania.<sup>57</sup> Low educational attainment is particularly pronounced among ethnic minorities and victims from rural areas, where many children are required to undertake agricultural and other labour tasks as a household survival strategy (Vatra, 2004).

GRAPH 2  
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2000 TO 2004<sup>58</sup>



Poorly educated victims may be more easily manipulated in the recruitment process as well as less equipped to negotiate trafficking and abuse. These findings reinforce the need for continued and expanded prevention activities targeting girls from primary school to high school level, including informal venues for early school leavers. Part of this prevention work is more rigorous follow-up analysis to assess the impact of awareness programmes and explore ways to enhance their efficacy. Low education poses problems in reintegration as under or uneducated victims are ill equipped to support themselves upon return home, leaving them vulnerable to re-trafficking. Educational reinsertion and/or vocational training are therefore essential components of effective reintegration.

While low, the education level of victims of sexual exploitation increased over past years, albeit incrementally. A handful of victims had high school education and recruitment appeared to correlate more directly with poor economic conditions than low education. Also interesting is the number of victims – albeit it very small – who had university education in 2003 and 2004. These findings underline that education is only one contributor to trafficking.

**Mental and physical disabilities:** In both 2003 and 2004, a noteworthy number of victims were mentally or physically disabled – 30.2 per cent in 2003 and 31.2 per cent

<sup>56</sup> Primary school is the first four years of schooling, while middle school is grades five to eight and high school refers to the eleventh and twelfth years of school.

<sup>57</sup> In Albania, the expected number of years of formal schooling for females in 2002 was 11 (UN Statistics Division, 2004).

<sup>58</sup> In 2004, victims assisted by Vatra had the following educational background: illiterate (9.09 per cent), grades four to eight (64.07 per cent) and grades nine to 12 (26.84 per cent) (Vatra, 2005). Educational attainment of victims assisted by Vatra in 2003 is included in the statistics presented above.

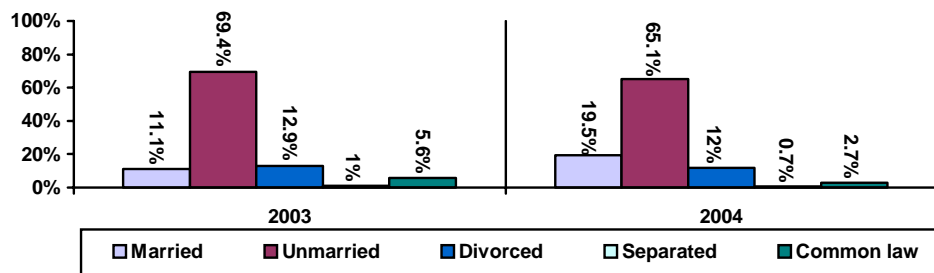


in 2004. In the majority of instances, these were mental disabilities.<sup>59</sup> This is arguably an emergent site of trafficking vulnerability among Albanian nationals.<sup>60</sup> Mentally disabled victims are likely to be particularly vulnerable to trafficking because they can be more easily manipulated. This poses special difficulties for prevention work, with a need for awareness raising tailored to the capacity of victims. In addition, this profile of victim has specific assistance needs both in the short and long-term.

**Marital and family status:** Most victims in both years were unmarried women. Their unmarried status is critical not only in terms of identifying risk but also as a possible obstacle to reintegration. Some service providers argue that many of these women will face difficulty getting married if their trafficking becomes known to the community. Married women, as well, may face difficulty in returning to their families and be blamed for their sexual exploitation. This can create great additional stress and anxiety for women.

One notable finding is the rate of common-law relationships in what is a “traditional” society, accounting for two to six per cent of victims. It is unclear to what we can attribute this trend.

GRAPH 3  
MARITAL STATUS OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004

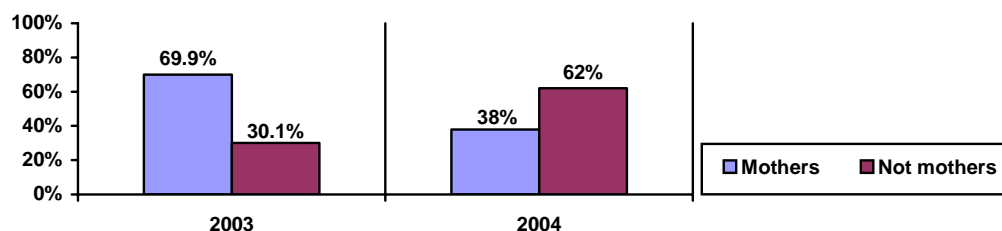


A significant number of victims were mothers at recruitment, 69.9 per cent in 2003. As so many victims were unmarried, divorced or separated, the rate of single motherhood was also high. In 2004, the rates of both motherhood and single motherhood declined steeply, to 38 per cent and 15.6 per cent respectively. The presence of single mothers in both years underlines the socio-economic vulnerability of this group. Most mothers left their children with their grandparents when migrating. In contrast to neighbouring countries, no children were placed in state care. Upon return, service providers may need to support the fostering of a relationship between mother and child as well as the development of good parenting skills. Family counselling may also be needed to reconcile families separated by trafficking/migration, Guardianship may prove an issue for returning mothers who have relinquished their guardianship rights.

<sup>59</sup> In two cases in 2003 and one in 2004, the victim was physically disabled.

<sup>60</sup> Not all service providers systematically recorded this variable in 2003 and 2004. Data was available only in the case of 63 victims in 2003 and 61 in 2004. This is a critical issue that merits further study and, ideally, this indicator should be noted in future case management.

GRAPH 4  
 NUMBER OF MOTHERS AMONG ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED  
 FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 TO 2004



A number of Albanian women became mothers as a result of trafficking. In 2003, eight women returned pregnant (five of whom chose to keep the child) and three returned with children born while trafficked. In 2004, four victims returned to Albania pregnant and chose to keep the baby. Mothers have some specific assistance needs, including the option of accommodation with their children, programmes that support the development of good parenting skills, etc. In addition, there is likely a special need to support the reintegration of single mothers who are often socially and economically vulnerable.

In addition to dependent children, many victims were also responsible for the care of other family members, parents, siblings and elderly relatives, at recruitment. This, too, can serve as a push factor for trafficking. Systematically documenting a victim's dependents, including but not limited to dependent children, would be useful. With this information, efforts can be made to provide economic support and opportunities as a means of trafficking prevention. Such efforts should ideally target families as a whole, not just vulnerable individuals. This is particularly important for preventing trafficking in minors.

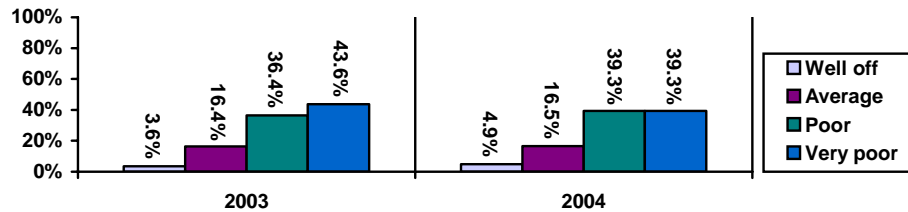
**Economic status:**<sup>61</sup> Most victims were from "poor" or "very poor" economic backgrounds. This meshes with the general assumption that poverty is a central contributor to trafficking.

Nevertheless, poverty was not always the critical push factor. Even when victims were poor, it was not poverty that thrust many victims into trafficking. For instance, one victim from a very poor family of nine children was raised by her widowed mother, but it was family pressure to marry that led to trafficking when her husband/trafficker presented himself as a prospective spouse. Indeed, a large percentage of Albanian women were trafficked under the guise of marriage.

Further, some poor communities do not have high rates of trafficking. Community-based, indigenous prevention strategies may be part of the general cultural terrain and attention should be paid to prevention and survival efforts that have been developed and mobilized within poor communities.

<sup>61</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim's self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of "poor" or "average" vary accordingly.

GRAPH 5  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Strikingly, in 2003 and 2004, victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation were also from average and affluent economic backgrounds, accounting for one fifth of victims in both years. Of course, these economic variables must be contextualized in Albania, where the overall economic situation is poor in comparison with EU countries. Nevertheless, it is clear that it is not only the poor in Albanian that are trafficked. Further investigation is needed to pinpoint other contributors to trafficking for sexual exploitation as well as the combination of factors – including poverty – that translate into trafficking.

**Family and social relations:**<sup>62</sup> Although data is insufficient data to draw strong conclusions, anecdotal information provides some insight. In some instances, family violence and abuse was a primary contributor to trafficking. One victim, raised in a rural village in the north, was sexually abused by her brothers. She accepted work to escape this situation. Another victim grew up without her mother who had been killed by one of her cousins and her father had also spent time in prison for murder. When her father did remarry, the stepmother was abusive, even after the father was once again imprisoned for murder. It was against this backdrop that the victim accepted a marriage proposal and was subsequently trafficked. Service providers report that victims often came from an abusive family situation and accepted work abroad as a means to escape this abuse.

Single-parent households may also contribute to trafficking. As many as 21 per cent of victims assisted by Vatra in 2004 were from a single-parent family. The precise correlation between trafficking and single-parent households has yet to be established. However, in the Albanian context, there is reason to believe that the link is salient, with single-parent families less able to support children economically as well as suffering social stigma linked to divorce.

In addition, some victims assisted by Vatra had mothers working abroad in prostitution, very likely as trafficking victims. A recent IOM assessment flagged the possibility of “second generation” trafficking victims, children left behind by migrant parents who then fall prey to traffickers themselves. The degree of risk is unclear. Does a family environment disrupted in this way contribute to a trafficking? Are unsupervised children more vulnerable to trafficking? Alternatively, do remittances from the migrant

<sup>62</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims’ self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim’s individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim’s relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

family member (even trafficking victims) offer some protection? Given the prolific rate of emigration from Albania, the relation between these phenomena merits exploration.

It may also be in the more subtle family and social tensions that we can identify behaviours that serve to increase vulnerability to trafficking. Albania is a traditional country and rebellion against tradition may make young women open to work offers that camouflage trafficking recruitment. In addition, women or girls who are rebellious, adventurous or independent minded may be particularly at risk, given their willingness to break with social convention. Similarly, victims who have poor social relations with peers or in the community may be more inclined to accept work abroad. Given the normative acceptance of migration in Albanian society, parents may pressure their daughters to migrate to find work, making them vulnerable to trafficking. In short, further exploration of which aspects of the broader social environment might promote, or prevent, vulnerability to trafficking is needed.

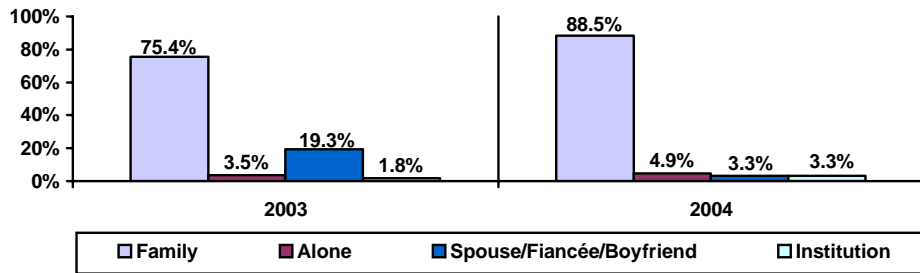
Even where family relations have been good in the past, the experience of trafficking can strain these relationships. Victims manifest their trauma in different ways and upon returning home can be violent, anxious, depressed, etc. Tension can be particularly acute when the victim was sexually exploited while trafficked and experiences feelings of guilt and shame. This issue has a particular resonance in Albania where ideals of female virginity and fidelity are pronounced and where families may blame the victim for the sexual exploitation. Thus, long-term family mediation and counselling needs to be firmly entrenched in all reintegration programmes.

### **Recruitment Experiences**

**Living situation at recruitment:** In both 2003 and 2004, the vast majority of victims were residing with their families at recruitment. This is consistent with general residence patterns in Albania. Most victims are unmarried at recruitment and most unmarried women in Albania live with their families until marriage. Moreover, it is not uncommon for married women to live in an extended family environment.

Residing with family apparently does not provide sufficient protection against trafficking. One Albanian victim lived with her mother in the house of her mother's employer who treated her badly, including beating her. When they left this living situation, she was sexually abused by her stepfather. Residence patterns like this one, in fact, may contribute to trafficking. Living in an extended family can be stressful for women, particularly young women, when it circumscribes their freedom. Similarly, divorced women may be socially stigmatized and not warmly welcomed on returning to their parents' home. In addition, families can be directly involved in trafficking. One victim, trafficked for sexual exploitation through a false promise of marriage, learned later that her stepmother, with whom she was living, was involved in the recruitment. Understanding victims' living situations at recruitment is useful for both prevention and reintegration assistance.

GRAPH 6  
LIVING SITUATION AT RECRUITMENT OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



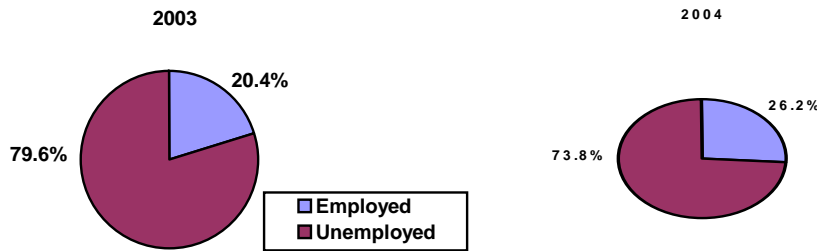
In 2003 and 2004, 1.8 per cent and 3.3 per cent of victims respectively were living in institutions at recruitment. While a small percentage, it is significant since institutionalization is an uncommon practice in Albania relative to other countries in the region. Instead, large extended family networks serve as the main social safety net. A childhood spent in institutions informs development and negotiation skills. Further, upon departure from these institutions, individuals lack a safety net or social support usually provided by family or extended family.

Also noteworthy is that 3.5 per cent of victims in 2003 and 4.9 per cent in 2004 lived alone at recruitment. As most women in Albania live in family environments, this may indicate either a problematic family background, from which escape has been sought, or a more adventurous and independent minded personality. Either way, the reasons must be fairly compelling and worth understanding, given that most salaries in Albania are insufficient to cover independent living.

It is important to bear in mind that the data presented is reflective only of victims' living situations at recruitment. In many cases, individuals may have lived in other environments earlier in their lives that may have contributed to trafficking but are not reflected in the figures. More information is needed about past and present living arrangements to accurately pinpoint trafficking risk.

**Working situation at recruitment:** In both years, almost 80 per cent of victims were unemployed at recruitment, flagging unemployment as a crucial factor in their willingness to migrate abroad. In addition, a number of victims were without any employment experience, raising questions about their employability. This not only serves as partial explanation of trafficking, but also highlights potential obstacles in reintegration, particularly in terms of job placement.

GRAPH 7  
EMPLOYMENT AT RECRUITMENT OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004

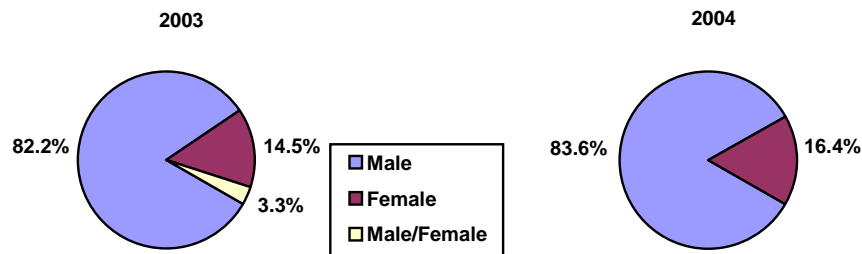


Victims who were employed worked in a variety of different sectors, including agriculture, private enterprise, industry, and domestic work. Other victims were waitresses, nurses, salespeople and some begged. One victim in 2003 was working in prostitution at recruitment. Thus, recruitment for trafficking is, in some cases, occurring within this arena, signalling the need for trafficking prevention efforts aimed there.<sup>63</sup>

**Recruiter:** Most Albanian women trafficked for sexual exploitation were recruited by men. In contrast to some other countries in region, there has been no significant emergence of female recruiters and in only a handful of cases were victims recruited by a couple.

Most recruiters were Albanian nationals, although a few were nationals from surrounding countries, such as Macedonia, the Province of Kosovo, Italy and Greece.

GRAPH 8  
SEX OF RECRUITER(S) OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



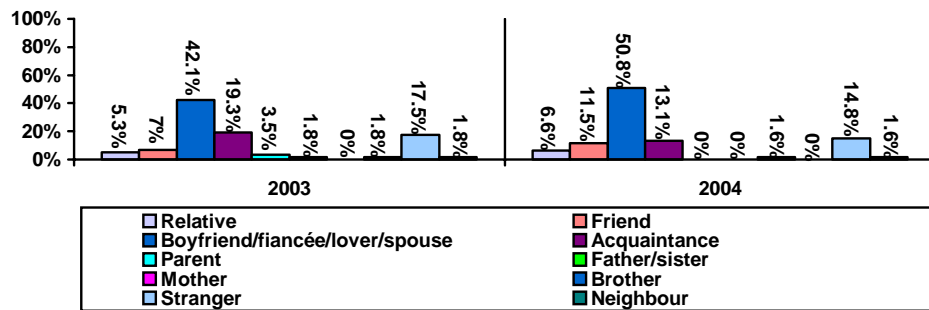
Also critical is the victim’s relationship to the recruiter. In both years, most victims had an existing relationship with the recruiter – 82.5 per cent in 2003 and 85.3 per cent in 2004.

A particularly high percentage of recruiters were men with whom the victim was in an intimate relationship. Recruitment by “husbands”, ”lovers”, “fiancées” and

<sup>63</sup> It should be noted that this finding is of no relevance in terms of an individual’s status and right to be treated as a victim of trafficking.

“boyfriends” parallels a recruitment method used in the Netherlands called the “lover boy method”.<sup>64</sup> Women entered what they believed to be a genuine relationship and were subsequently pressured by their husbands or boyfriends to engage in prostitution. They were asked to do this to raise money to address a family crisis (e.g. a brother in jail, an ailing grandmother) or to help the man fulfil his dream (e.g. live abroad, buy a house). One victim started a relationship with a man when she was working in prostitution in Albania. When they were first together, he encouraged her to stop working in prostitution and she believed that this was a genuine relationship. However, after a short time, he suggested that they go and work in Italy where she learned that his intention was to prostitute her. More attention should be paid to the particular dynamics of this common and insidious recruitment method. Recruitment by intimate partners is also a very effective means of control, hindering both for escape from traffickers and reintegration.

GRAPH 9  
RELATIONSHIP TO RECRUITER OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Also noteworthy is the number of victims recruited by family. The predominance of recruiters known to the victim is worrisome, as it decreases the victim’s ability to recognize the risks in work offers. Consequently, awareness raising efforts must highlight the danger of recruitment within immediate and trusted environments. The issue of family complicity also poses problems for reintegration. Given the intimacy of many Albanian communities, recruitment by friends and neighbours raises similar concerns.

**Reasons for leaving home and type of work promised:** Available data for 2003 and 2004 indicates that many victims (61.6 per cent and 49.3 per cent respectively) were recruited with the promise of work. Fewer Albanian women were recruited with work promises than in other source countries, such as Moldova and Romania. Work offered was primarily labour, domestic and service sector work, although some victims were also told they would beg. A significant number of victims reported accepting work in prostitution.

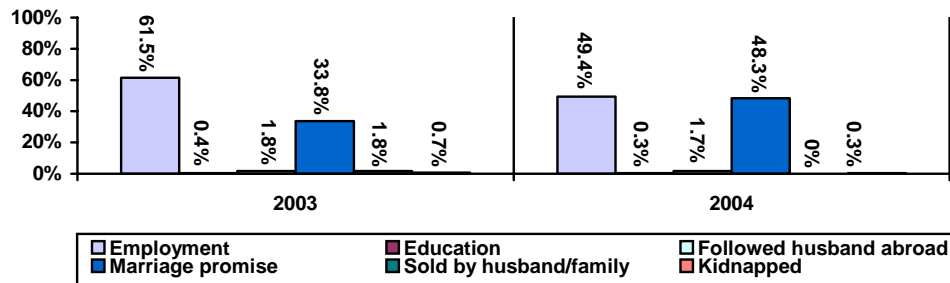
Albanian women also accepted other offers, most commonly marriage and engagement promises – 33.8 per cent in 2003 and 48.3 per cent in 2004. This is consistent with past practices in which approximately 50 per cent of victims (especially rural dwellers) were

<sup>64</sup> The “lover boy” method, observed in the Netherlands as well as SEE countries, is one in which the man initiates a relationship with the girl/woman with the intention of exploiting and trafficking her. For further explanation, see Noten and van den Borne, 2004.

recruited with marriage promises. Some were promised marriages that never materialized, while others married men who subsequently trafficked them.<sup>65</sup> One victim lived with her lover for two years, having been promised marriage. He then suggested that she work in The Province of Kosovo and sold her to a bar where she was forced to work as a waitress and prostitute. In that vein, a handful of women in 2003 and 2004 (2.4 per cent and 2.2 per cent respectively) followed their husbands abroad and, once overseas, were forced to work in prostitution.

A few victims were forcibly recruited – sold by family or kidnapped. While this is not a new phenomenon, what is seemingly new is the complicity of husbands/families. Some victims also reported that their husbands had sold them to other persons under the guise of being kidnapped (Vatra, 2004).

GRAPH 10  
PROMISES MADE AT RECRUITMENT – ASSISTED ALBANIANS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



The disparate recruitment techniques require different prevention strategies. Perhaps most problematic from a prevention perspective is the love and marriage promise, with women, quite reasonably, reluctant to mistrust men with whom they are intimate. As troubling is the psychological impact of this recruitment, including an unwillingness to trust their judgement in future relationships.

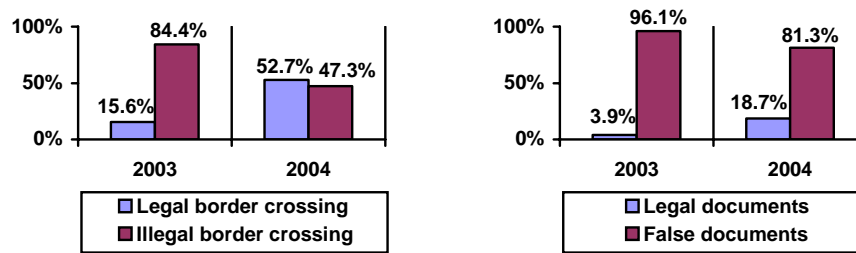
### Transportation and Movement

**Border crossings and documents:** In contrast to other countries in the region where travel has become increasingly legal and regularized, most Albanian victims trafficked for sexual exploitation continued to cross borders illicitly and with false or no documents. However, a change was observed in 2004, with far more victims crossing at legal borders.

<sup>65</sup> A number of those recruited with marriage promises were of Roma or Egyptian ethnicity, a practice that, in some ways, meshes with the cultural traditions of arranged marriage. Still, many Albanian victims were also recruited in this way and so we must be cautious not to attribute this trend only to cultural tradition.



GRAPH 11  
BORDER CROSSINGS AND DOCUMENTS OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Illegal, undocumented border crossing amplifies vulnerability in the destination country, as victims may be reluctant to approach the police without any type of document or identification. They may also feel complicit in the trafficking and fear reprisals from law enforcement.

**Transportation routes:** Prior to 2002, most victims were trafficked to Italy using illegal speedboats from major Albanian ports. However, the significant law enforcement measures and tightened maritime control initiated in the summer of 2002 substantially affected trafficking routes. In 2004, there were three main routes – overland (68.7 per cent), by air (8.4 per cent) and by sea (22.9 per cent).

- *Land routes:* Victims travelling overland generally travelled in groups, passing through forests and over mountains in an effort to avoid border detection. Routes were increasingly through the former Yugoslavia, including Slovenia, as well as through Greece<sup>66</sup>. These included the following:
  - Gjirokaste – Kakavije – Greece – Italy and other EU countries (72.7 per cent)
  - Korce – Kapshtice – Macedonia – Greece – Italy – EU countries (17.7 per cent)
  - Shkoder – Hani I Hotit – Montenegro – Serbia (4.8 per cent)
  - Permet-Tre Urat – Greece – EU (3.4 per cent)
  - Sarande – Qafebote – Greece – Italy (1.4 per cent)
- *Sea Routes:* Other victims opted for sea travel, crossing using the following routes:
  - Vlore – Brindisi – Italy – other EU countries (61.2 per cent)
  - Vlore – Otranto – Italy – other EU countries (34.7 per cent)
  - Durres – Bari – EU (4.1 per cent)
- *Air routes:* Victims travelled by air from Rinas airport directly to various EU countries

Some journeys were quite lengthy and required a great deal of coordination across borders and between trafficking networks. One woman trafficked to Norway was first escorted to Greece and then taken by ferry to Italy. Once in Italy, the victim and her escort travelled by train to Germany where her escort changed. They then travelled by

<sup>66</sup> Once in Greece, victims were generally met by escorts who arranged their travel by ferry to Italy (Brindisi, Bari or Ancona) where other Albanian or Italian escorts received them and escorted them to their destination.

ferry to Sweden and by bus to Norway where she was met by yet another escort/trafficker (Vatra, 2004: 30).

**Destination Country:** EU countries were the primary destination for most Albanian victims. In 2003, 62.6 per cent of victims were trafficked into the European Union, a number which increased again in 2004, to 77.4 per cent.

TABLE 6  
DESTINATION COUNTRIES OF ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004

Destination Country	2003	2004
Albania <sup>67</sup>	45	42
Belgium	7	10
Croatia	0	1
Denmark	0	1
Finland	1	
France	3	7
Germany	2	11
Greece	57	110
Italy	105	78
The Province of Kosovo <sup>68</sup>	2	5
Macedonia	0	1
Netherlands	3	1
Norway	6	2
Serbia and Montenegro	0	3
Spain	0	2
Turkey	0	1
United Kingdom	3	6
United States	0	1
Unknown	60	10
Total	294	292

Given the increased number of victims trafficked to EU countries, data from destination countries is needed. With fewer victims returning to Albania (given the option of temporary residence in some EU countries), the lack of data inhibits an understanding of the scope of trafficking. The decreased number of victims returning to Albania can camouflage the extent of trafficking and trafficking risk from Albania.

Another important destination in both years was Albania, accounting for 15.3 per cent in 2003 and 14.4 per cent in 2004. This is evidence of internal trafficking; it is also possible that some victims were trafficked within Albania as a first step in international trafficking. It is also evidence of the increased skills of law enforcement in Albania as a number of these victims were identified in the trafficking process, prior to leaving Albania.

<sup>67</sup> This designates cases of internal trafficking. In some cases, victims were trafficked only internally, while in other instances, victims were trafficked internally as a first step in international trafficking.

<sup>68</sup> While Kosovo is a province within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, in this analysis it is separated out as a distinct entity in an effort to analyze the specific trafficking context of the province. This is done in an effort to provide a more detailed picture of trafficking patterns, trends and profiles within and between each country/entity of the region. It should in no way be read as a political statement on the part of the RCP.

## **Victims' Trafficking Experiences**

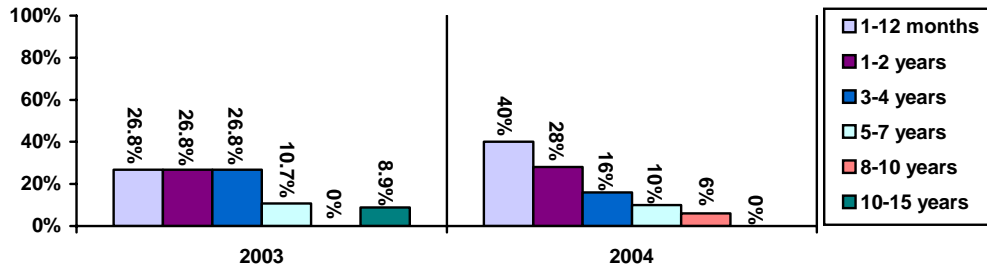
**Forms of trafficking:** Most Albanian victims assisted between 2003 and 2004 were trafficked for sexual exploitation. Victims were forced to provide sexual services in brothels, bars and nightclubs, on the street, through escort agencies and in private apartments. In large part, the type and location of work was determined by the destination country. Many victims trafficked to Italy and France worked in street prostitution, while in Germany and Austria, victims tended to work in bars and brothels. Victims trafficked to the Balkans were increasingly kept in private homes or apartments – more hidden from the police – and either forced to perform sexual services at this location or transported to the client. Location was at times also determined by the victim's age. In Italy, for example, women working in street prostitution tended to be older, whereas minors were kept in hotels and more private locations.

In a number of cases, victims were trafficked for more than one form of exploitation. Most commonly, this was a combination of sexual exploitation and delinquency. In 2003, victims of sexual exploitation were forced to also engage in petty theft (two) and drug dealing (six), while in 2004, 16 victims were forced to sell drugs while working as prostitutes and one was exploited both for robbery and prostitution. Women's involvement in drug dealing and other criminal activity may also contribute to reluctance to seek assistance, leading them to feel criminally complicit and fear arrest by authorities for criminal actions while trafficked. Traffickers often play on these fears, stressing to victims that if they approach the police they will be arrested. In addition, some victims, particularly those trafficked to the Balkans, were required to undertake labour tasks, such as waitressing or cleaning, along with providing sexual services.

Victims trafficked for labour but who have also been sexually exploited will require many of the same forms of assistance as victims trafficked for prostitution. Victims exploited for criminal activities may require tailored legal assistance to avoid prosecution in some countries. Attention to the precise forms of exploitation is a valuable starting point in both the development and assessment of assistance frameworks.

**Length of time trafficked:** Albanian victims were trafficked for periods ranging from one month to 15 years. Most victims were trafficked for more than one year and in some compelling cases, as long as ten and 15 years. While more victims in 2004 than in 2003 were trafficked for less than a year, a disturbing number of victims continued to be trafficked for excruciatingly long periods, five to ten years.

GRAPH 12  
 LENGTH OF TIME TRAFFICKED OF VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION,  
 2003 AND 2004

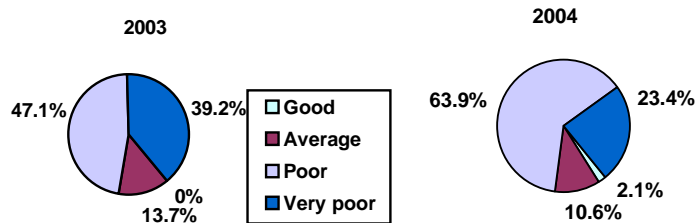


Time spent trafficked fluctuates according to a number of factors, including the level of repression endured by the victim, identification skills and priorities of law enforcement at the destination and the accessibility of services and assistance. Further analysis of this indicator, cross-correlated with details of the identification process, would be valuable in monitoring improvements in law enforcement’s identification efforts as well as the efficacy of outreach measures by social services and civil society.

Victims trafficked for long periods were likely to be more traumatized and physically ill at identification, which had implications for assistance required as well as the time needed to stabilize the victim. In addition, they may have affection for and dependency on the trafficker, which must be considered in psychological care.<sup>69</sup> The length of time trafficked also affects the victim in other ways. Lengthy periods spent separated from family and friends and being forced to live outside of their family environment under extreme stress will affect the victim’s recovery and reintegration.

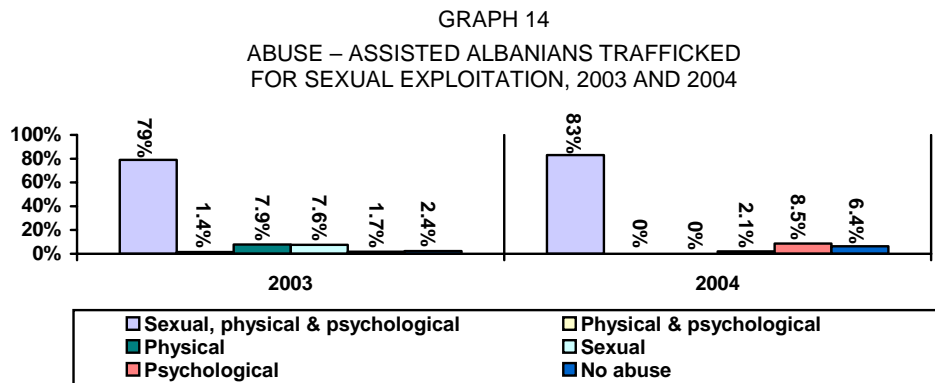
**Living and working conditions:** While victims’ living conditions were generally poor, there were slight improvements in conditions from 2003 to 2004 with fewer victims reporting “very poor” conditions and more victims reporting “good” or “average” living conditions. This finding was consistent with conditions in a number of countries in the region in which victims reported slightly better living and working conditions, apparently a strategy on the part of traffickers to dissuade victims from seeking assistance. There is insufficient information about working conditions to draw any substantive conclusions.

GRAPH 13  
 LIVING CONDITIONS OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED  
 FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



<sup>69</sup> In the context of field research throughout SEE, many psychologists referred to this phenomenon, akin to “Stockholm Syndrome”. Stockholm Syndrome describes the behaviour of kidnap victims who, over time, become sympathetic to their captors. The name derives from a 1973 hostage incident in Stockholm, Sweden at the end of which several kidnap victims resisted rescue attempts and refused to testify against their captors.

**Abuse:** Multiple forms of abuse were suffered by the majority of victims assisted in 2003 and 2004. Of note is the number of victims who suffered sexual, psychological and physical violence.



Two interesting changes can be seen in patterns of abuse in 2004, which may signal a change in the use of violence against trafficking victims. These were the increased number of victims who suffered only psychological abuse (from 1.7 per cent in 2003 to 8.5 per cent in 2004) and the number of victims who suffered no abuse (from 2.4 per cent in 2003 to 6.4 per cent in 2004). This may reflect a change in strategy on the part of traffickers, who restricted abuse as a means of dissuading women from seeking assistance.

Forms of abuse do not denote severity of abuse. More knowledge of this perhaps most important but difficult to measure variable would be invaluable in ensuring that medical and psychological services meet the needs of victims.

**Mental and physical well-being:**<sup>70</sup> Albanian victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation had a range of medical and psychological assistance needs. Most were exposed to unprotected sexual intercourse with clients as well as to violence and harsh living and working conditions, which had direct impact on their health and well-being.

- *STIs and reproductive health:* Of 159 victims assisted since 2001, 95 tested positive for STIs. These included candida, trichomonas, gardnarella, hepatitis, syphilis, and genital herpes. Victims also suffered from urinary tract infections.
- *HIV/AIDs:* Only one victim assisted by IOM in 2002 tested positively for HIV. However, in 2004, one shelter reported two cases of victims infected with HIV/AIDs.
- *Pregnancy:* In 2003, eight women returned from trafficking pregnant and three returned with children born while trafficked. In 2004, four victims returned to Albanian pregnant.
- *Alcohol and narcotic dependency:* In 2003, four victims assisted by IOM were addicted to either drugs or alcohol, while in 2004, six victims had drug and/or alcohol dependency. In some cases, victims entered detoxification programmes.
- *General health:* A number of other ailments were commonly noted, including upper respiratory diseases, kidney infections, dermatological problems, and mental disorders/illnesses.

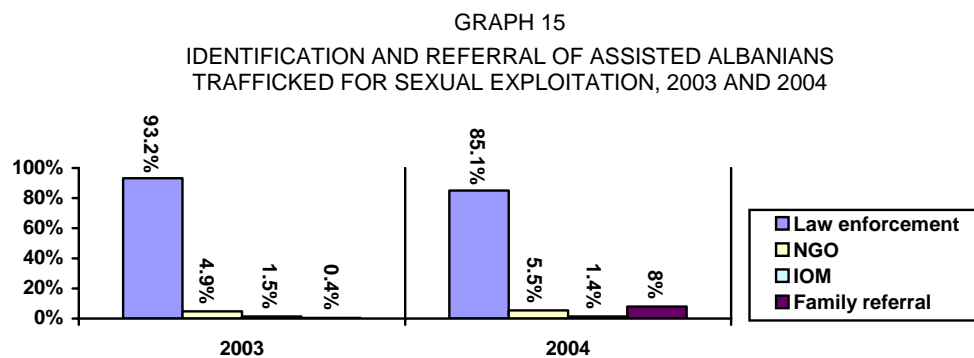
<sup>70</sup> The statistics presented generally refer to victims of sexual exploitation assisted by IOM. While some of the data is specific to 2003 and 2004, other data refers to the overall caseload of 159 victims assisted by IOM since 2001.

- *Psychological conditions:* Of 159 victims assisted since 2001, 52 suffered from mental health problems at identification. Problems included depression, anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder, psychosis, and bipolar disorder.

In Albania, as in the rest of the region, information and analysis regarding the long-term health implications of trafficking for sexual as well as other forms of exploitation is lacking. Also under-investigated is the impact of trafficking on public health generally. More attention needs to be paid to this issue, including long-term follow-up health care for victims, in a way that avoids further stigmatizing trafficking victims and respects fully the privacy rights and autonomy of victims.

### Post Trafficking Experience

**Victim identification and referral:** The majority of victims were identified by law enforcement authorities, albeit from different sectors and in different locations. Most were identified in destination countries and subsequently returned, although some were identified at border crossings or in the course of police operations in Albania. In two cases in 2003 and one in 2004, this category also included victims who escaped their traffickers and sought the assistance of the police.



Of concern is the number of Albanian women deported from destination countries. In 2004, 221 of the 291 victims assisted by Vatra were deported to Albania.<sup>71</sup> Significantly, none of the victims deported from EU countries reported receiving any information prior to return regarding opportunities for assistance, protection and reintegration in Albania. This constitutes a gap in the assistance framework of destination countries.

The deportation of trafficking victims is appalling and involves serious risks of re-trafficking and additional trauma. Further, it contravenes commitments made by EU countries about the protection and care of trafficking victims. Lack of proper victim identification and referral is cause for concern and one that must be addressed beyond Albania's borders. Pressure must be exerted on EU countries to properly identify and assist victims of trafficking.

<sup>71</sup> The 291 victims assisted by Vatra refers to the total number of victims assisted by the organization in 2004, of which 231 were newly registered cases and 60 entered in 2003 but were still being assisted in 2004. RCP counts only the 231 newly registered victims in its statistics.

**Re-trafficking:** The rate of re-trafficking among Albanian victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation was high. In 2003, 33.7 per cent of assisted victims had been trafficked previously, some a number of times. Further, 109 of the 179 victims returned from EU countries and assisted by Vatra (or 60.9 per cent) were abroad again, most likely re-trafficked. Re-trafficking appears to be particularly acute among victims from ethnic minorities. Of 30 Roma and Egyptian women assisted by Vatra in 2004, the majority had been trafficked previously, some as many as four times (Vatra, 2005: 37).

Many victims attempted to migrate again shortly after their return because of a need to earn money, lack of opportunity, problems in their homes and/or dissatisfaction with the material conditions at home, which can be poorer than those faced while trafficked. Indeed, the socio-economic conditions that initially sparked migration often remain the same with limited possibilities for improvement. Difficulties faced in the reintegration process, including stigma and shame associated with sexual exploitation, may also contribute to re-trafficking. Other victims may find it difficult to evade their trafficker upon return and be forced to go abroad again. Some may have incurred debt as a result of trafficking and the need to recoup this money can fuel the victim's decision to migrate again. In addition, re-trafficking may be due to limitations in existing reintegration programmes. Reinstallation grants are generally small, long-term assistance options are limited and programmes have limited resources to monitor victim's reintegration progress.

Obtaining a more reliable picture of re-trafficking rates will require increasing the length and scope of the monitoring component within reintegration programmes, as well as establishing mechanisms for exchange of information among organizations about shared caseloads. Further investigation into predominant push factors for re-trafficking specific to the Albanian context is critical in developing sustainable reintegration programmes.

**Assistance declined:** Information about this subject is insufficient to draw any substantive conclusions. Anecdotal information from service providers indicates that some victims returned home with the assistance of service providers but declined further assistance. In such cases, they were provided with contact information for services such as vocational training or job placement that are provided by partner NGOs in their home communities.

Reasons for declining assistance include but are not limited to distrust of authorities and assistance providers; fear of criminal sanctions and publicity and/or stigmatization related to the trafficking experience. Understanding why and when victims decline assistance is essential to avoiding it.

### ***2.1.2 Profiles and Experiences of Albanian Victims Trafficked for Labour, Begging and Delinquency***

The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of assisted Albanian victims trafficked for begging, delinquency and/or labour exploitation.

TABLE 7  
ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2000 TO 2004

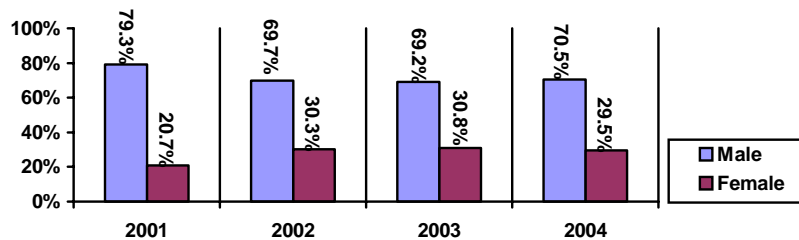
Forms of Trafficking	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Labour exploitation, begging/delinquency	0	53	33	26	44	156

In addition, there are other indirect indications of trafficking from Albania for these forms of trafficking. Between January and October 2004, the NGO Slovene Philanthropy Association identified 104 cases of Albanian unaccompanied minors in Slovenia, the majority of whom were boys between the ages of 16 and 18 years (BKTF, 2004). It is unclear how many of these unaccompanied minors were, in fact, trafficking victims. In addition, recent media accounts flag the high rate of street children and working children in Albania (Prifti, 2004; cf. Janina, 2004), a portion of whom may be victims of trafficking.

#### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics

**Sex:** The majority of Albanian victims of trafficking for labour and begging were male. This stands in contrast to other SEE countries where victims trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency were primarily female. It is unclear what accounts for this radically different gender composition.

GRAPH 16  
SEX OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2001 TO 2004

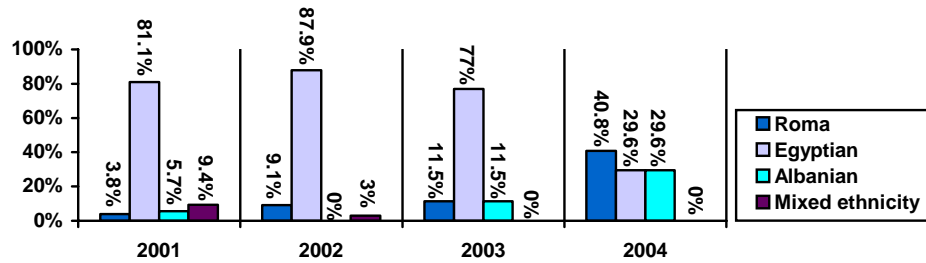


**Age:** Victims of these forms of trafficking were minors in 100 per cent of cases between 2001 and 2003 and in 2004, 93.2 per cent of victims were minors. Social care actors stress the acute vulnerability of minors not only to being trafficked, but also in terms of the impact of trafficking. Psychologists argue that such serious trauma in the developmental stages of life informs the individual's perceptions in all areas of human relationships, hampering recovery and reintegration.

**Ethnicity:** A dramatically disproportionate number of victims of these forms of exploitation were from ethnic minorities, Egyptian, Roma, or mixed ethnicity. These findings are particularly striking since only an estimated three per cent of the population of Albania are Roma (World Bank, 2001).



GRAPH 17  
 ETHNICITY OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR  
 LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 TO 2004



It is acknowledged that Roma and Egyptian minorities are among the poorest and most socially marginalized in Albania. Service providers report that a significant number of victims of labour and begging are without identity documents and that often their birth has never been registered. As such, they lack access to social support and benefits, such as medical care, educational programmes, social assistance, etc. This, in turn, translates into vulnerability to trafficking and a need for specially tailored prevention and protection programmes. In addition, there is a need for government institutions to redress the social marginalization and exclusion of minority groups.

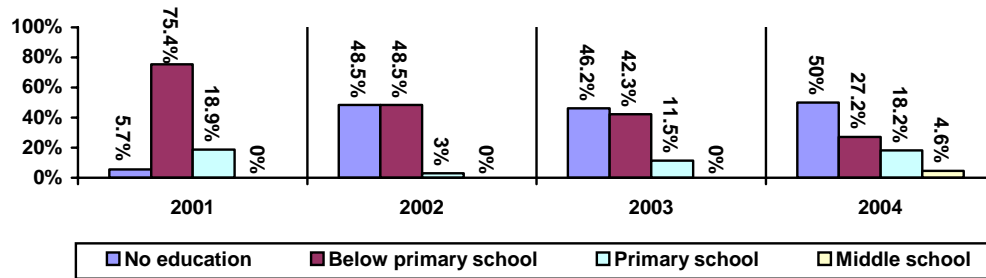
Finally, in social environments where bonded labour is both common and socially accepted, efforts to redress the practice must be based on a firm understanding of the conditions that created and contribute to its continuation.

**Area of origin:** Anecdotal information suggests that victims originated from a wide array of source areas. BKTF's extensive coverage in the country – with service providers in 80 per cent of Albania – is of particular importance, both for prevention and protection efforts. Service providers should continue to map changes in areas of origin to ensure that the various regions are adequately covered in terms of victim services.

**Education:** Victims had low education levels due, at least in part, to their young age. In many cases, minors had less than primary school education or no education at all. Further, the number of victims with no education has increased over time.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>72</sup> As so many victims were Roma or Egyptian, it is valuable to note the average education level of this group as a basis of comparison. Overall, Roma attend four years of school, while Egyptians have attended an average of five years. Further, a large number of these ethnic minorities have never attended school, accounting for 62 per cent of Roma and 24 per cent of Egyptian between the ages of 7 and 20 years (Beddies et al., 2003: 100).

GRAPH 18  
EDUCATION OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR,  
BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2001 TO 2004



Lack of education and often even the lack of basic literacy underlines the importance of education reinsertion programmes, alternative education models and vocational training for this profile of victim. As well, there is a need to consider how prevention efforts can be better targeted since most of these minors do not have access to information through formal schooling or even informal education programmes or clubs.

A corollary and perhaps partial explanation for the low education level of victims is the overall low educational attainment of victims' parents. Among minors assisted by TdH and NPF (both trafficking victims and minors "at risk"), only six per cent of fathers and three per cent of mothers had more than eight years of schooling (NPF and Tdh, 2005: 10). The educational and training needs of parents therefore have a place within the assistance framework. Further, prevention must target parents in appropriate venues and at an appropriate education/literacy level.

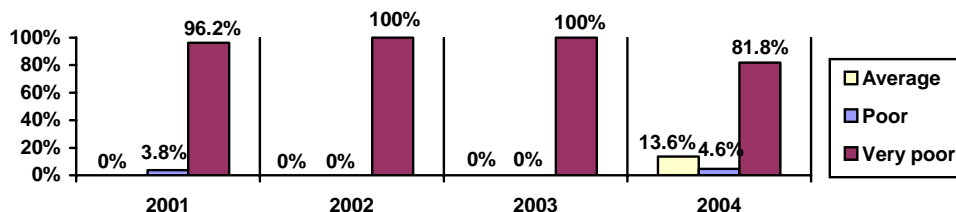
**Mental and physical disabilities:** To date, only a few victims were mentally or physically disabled. In 2002, one victim was mentally disabled and, in 2004, four victims were mentally disabled. It is unclear whether these victims were recruited because of their disability or in spite of it. There is evidence from other countries that mentally disabled victims may be targeted in recruitment because of their limited capacity to gauge risk or escape trafficking. The degree to which this is the case in Albania is unclear, but it is a risk factor that should not be overlooked.

**Marital and family status:** Only one victim – in 2004 – was married at recruitment. The rest were unmarried. No victims were parents with dependent children. This is consistent with the overall young age of victims.

Worth considering in future is whether these victims were responsible for the care of other family members – parents, siblings or elderly relatives since this, too, can serve as a push factor for trafficking. Anecdotally it seems that many of these minors were at least partially responsible for supporting family members. Systematically documenting a victim's dependents, including, but not limited to, dependent children, would be illuminate this risk factor.

**Economic status:**<sup>73</sup> Generally, victims came from “poor” or “very poor” economic backgrounds, again in line with the overall living standards of Roma and Egyptian minorities in Albania who constitute a significant minority of assisted victims.<sup>74</sup>

GRAPH 19  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR  
LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2001 TO 2004



Of note, in 2004, a handful of victims (13.6 per cent) reported coming from an “average” economic background. This is the first year in which this finding was documented. Investigating the background and recruitment of victims from average economic backgrounds would be useful determining alternative contributors to these forms of trafficking. In some cases, poverty may not be the critical push factor for trafficking; the desire to realize personal and/or professional aspirations may be equally important. Victims from “average” economic backgrounds may be particularly dissatisfied with the limited options available to them at home.

It would also be helpful to identify what, if any, strategies are used by the poor in Albania to guard against sex trafficking. Many poor children are not trafficked but it is not clear whether this is due to any protection and prevention strategies having been developed and mobilized within their communities.

**Family and social relations:**<sup>75</sup> Information about this indicator is also insufficient to draw any conclusions. However, this topic merits further attention. In some countries of origin, family violence or tension was a significant contributor to trafficking, although not necessarily an explanation in and of itself.

More subtle family tensions may also increase vulnerability to trafficking. Many of the minors assisted by TdH and NPF (both trafficking victims and minors “at risk”) came from unstable family environments. In 25 per cent of cases, the biological parents no longer lived together, with 13 per cent living with one parent, five per cent without any parent and six per cent living in a recomposed family (NPF and Tdh, 2005: 10). Other overarching family issues may include lack of quality family interaction, poor

<sup>73</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim’s self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

<sup>74</sup> Roma and Egyptian household incomes are less than half that of Albanian urban household incomes at the national level. Further, over 40 per cent of Roma families and 30 per cent of Egyptian families do not have running water in their homes, most live in makeshift or dilapidated homes and face difficulties in obtaining social assistance (Beddies et al., 2003: 15).

<sup>75</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims’ self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim’s individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim’s relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

communication between parents and children and weak integration into the family environment. Social relations more generally may also be salient, especially given that so many victims of trafficking for labour, begging and delinquency were from poor and socially marginalized groups.

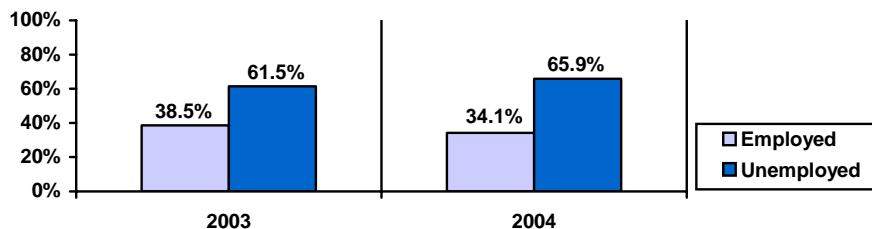
### Recruitment Experiences

**Living situation at recruitment:** All victims of trafficking for labour, begging and delinquency were living with their families at recruitment. Not only did living with family not protect victims, in many cases, victims were encouraged by family members to work abroad, often as a survival strategy. It is essential to learn about family living environments to understand how they affect vulnerability to trafficking as well as the possibilities of successful reintegration.

Consideration of the precise family composition can also be helpful in understanding trafficking vulnerability. Large, extended families may require economic contributions from a number of members, including minors. Similarly, single-parent families where the parent is chronically unemployed may also demand economic contributions from minors.

**Working situation at recruitment:** An increasing number of assisted victims were working at recruitment. Victims undertook a variety of tasks including polishing shoes, selling items on the street and salesperson as well as begging. Indeed, a large proportion of victims were begging at recruitment – 80 per cent in 2003 and 73.3 per cent in 2004. For the most part, victims were recruited with promises of tasks that they were already undertaking in Albania.

GRAPH 20  
WORKING SITUATION AT RECRUITMENT OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR  
LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 TO 2004<sup>76</sup>



Also salient is the employment rate of victims’ parents, given that all victims were minors and residing with their family at recruitment. Of the minors assisted by TdH and NPF (both victims and “at risk” minors), 80 per cent of their families suffered unemployment (NPF and Tdh, 2005: 10; cf. ILO-IPEC, 2003a: 9).<sup>77</sup> As such, the unemployment of parents is an important contributor to trafficking and makes clear the need for vocational training and job placement programmes that specifically target the

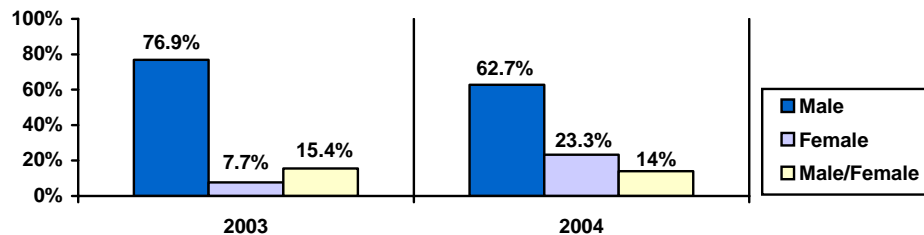
<sup>76</sup> In 2001, 18.9 per cent of victims were employed at recruitment, while 81.1 per cent were not. In 2002, the number of employed increased slightly to 24.2 per cent, with 75.8 per cent of victims unemployed at recruitment.

<sup>77</sup> In 2002, the national unemployment rate level was approximately 16 per cent. However, unemployment among Roma and Egyptian was far higher – 71 per cent and 67 per cent respectively of the working age population. Further, 88 per cent of Roma and 83 per cent of Egyptian were unemployed for more than one year (Beddies et al., 2003: 18).

parents/families of trafficked minors. Where parents are able to work and support their families, there is decreased pressure for children to work. However, the social acceptability of child labour in Albania also complicates prevention efforts.

**Recruiter:** The majority of victims of these forms of trafficking were recruited by men. While the number of female recruiters increased over time, it was nevertheless a small number. A consistent minority of victims were recruited by male/female pairs, a configuration not commonly noted in the region.

GRAPH 21  
SEX OF RECRUITER OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR  
LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 TO 2004<sup>78</sup>



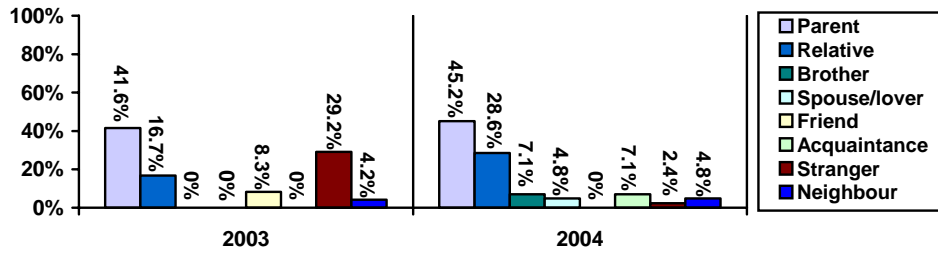
Also significant was the victim's relationship to the recruiter. In an increasing number of cases, victims were intimately connected with their recruiter, often by blood. Whereas in 2001, 37.7 per cent of victims were recruited by a stranger, this decreased to a mere 2.4 per cent in 2004.

Also of note was the number of victims recruited by a close family member, such as a parent or sibling. Family involvement in trafficking raises serious concerns about reintegration efforts for victims. Other research shows that even when the victim was not recruited by a family member, they were generally recruited with the consent of their family, usually with a promise of ongoing payment to the family (ICMC, 2003: 6).

Finally, in two cases in 2004 (or 4.8 per cent of victims), victims were recruited by their spouse or lover. This is consistent with other countries in the region as well as with victims of sexual exploitation. In some cases, men started a relationship with a woman/girl as a means of recruitment.

<sup>78</sup> In 2001, 69.8 per cent of victims were recruited by men, while 15.1 per cent were recruited by women and 15.1 per cent by a male/female couple. In 2002, 75.8 per cent were recruited by a man, while 12.1 per cent were recruited by a woman and 12.1 per cent by a male/female pair.

GRAPH 22  
RELATIONSHIP TO RECRUITER OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR  
LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 TO 2004<sup>79</sup>

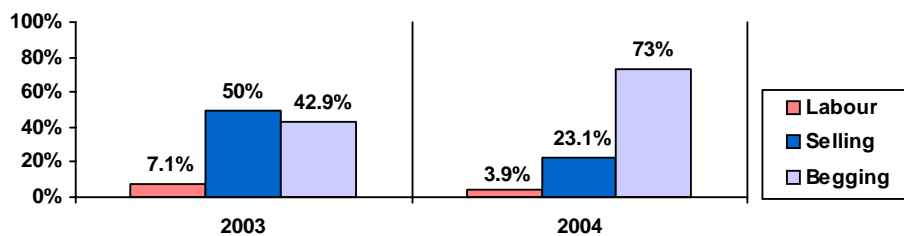


In all cases of trafficking for labour, begging and delinquency between 2001 and 2004, all recruiters were Albanian nationals.

**Reasons for leaving home and type of work promised:** Remittances from international migration is a survival strategy for many Albanian families. Most minors were promised work abroad, for the most part similar to what they were doing in Albania. This was primarily begging and selling but, in a handful of cases, also domestic work and as an *au pair*/babysitter.

Minors may accept work abroad to assist their families and in response to what they perceive as poor material conditions at home. Others may accept to work abroad in response to a specific family crisis – an ill relative, to send a sibling to school or a parent’s unemployment.

GRAPH 23  
TYPE OF WORK PROMISED AT RECRUITMENT – ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004<sup>80</sup>



Other reasons for leaving home included violence or conflict in the family, lack of quality family interaction, poor communication between children and their parents and poor integration into the family environment. Some also left home because they wanted an adventure.

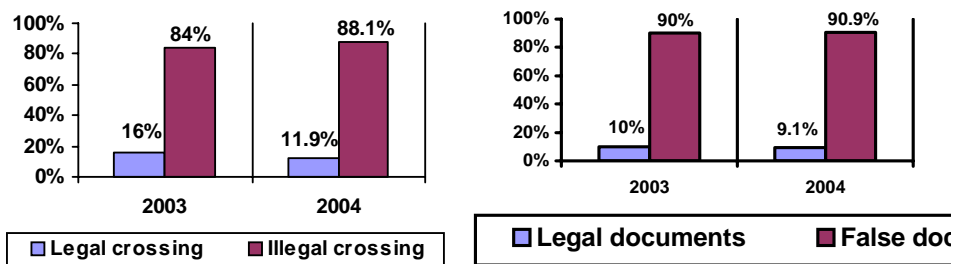
<sup>79</sup> In 2001, victims were recruited by a stranger (37.7 per cent), relative (28.3 per cent), parent (22.6 per cent), neighbour (9.4 per cent) and brother (1.9 per cent). In 2002, victims were recruited by a relative (28.1 per cent), parent (25 per cent), stranger (15.6 per cent), friend (15.6 per cent), neighbour (9.4 per cent) and brother (6.3 per cent).

<sup>80</sup> Most victims in 2001 (82.9 per cent) were offered work selling in shops and on the street. An additional 17.1 per cent were told they would beg. In 2003, victims were promised begging (48.4 per cent), selling (45.2 per cent) and nanny or domestic worker (6.4 per cent).

## Transportation and Movement

**Border crossings and documents:** The majority of victims crossed borders illegally, either with false documents or no documents at all. One victim described his journey to Greece as follows: “A person came by car to our house with two other children and a woman. Close to customs only we, the children, got out of the car. A young boy took us and ordered us to follow him without talking. It was dark and the road was difficult. The other two children, who were smaller than me, were exhausted. After midnight we met up with the person again and the woman. They were waiting for us with another taxi, this time with a Greek license.” (ILO-IPEC, 2003a: 25)

GRAPH 24  
BORDER CROSSINGS AND DOCUMENTS OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR  
LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004<sup>81</sup>



**Transportation routes:** Victims *en route* to EU countries increasingly passed through Slovenia and Hungary. In addition, the Albania-Greece land border served as a key land route for Albanian minors trafficked to Greece. For the most part, routes were similar to victims trafficked for sexual exploitation. For a more thorough discussion of routes, see *Transportation routes* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Albanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

**Destination country:** For all victims assisted between 2001 and 2003, Greece was the intended destination country. In 2004, a few victims were promised work in other locations, including France and Italy (one case), province of Kosovo (four cases) and Albania (six cases). Overall, victims were trafficked to the country where they were promised work.

Of note is the number of victims trafficked internally within Albania for labour, begging and delinquency. For example, one 11-year-old boy from Elbasan was trafficked to Durrës where his sister-in-law forced him to beg. Service providers report that this may be an emerging trend, possibly due to greater difficulty in crossing borders and increased public awareness of the issue in destination countries.

## Victim's Trafficking Experiences

**Forms of trafficking:** Victims of labour, begging and delinquency undertook a number of different tasks, including domestic work, selling, babysitting and begging.

<sup>81</sup> In 2001 and 2002, 96.1 per cent and 97 per cent of victims crossed at an illegal border crossing. Similarly, few victims used legal documents while trafficked, accounting for 2.7 per cent of victims in 2001 and none in 2002.

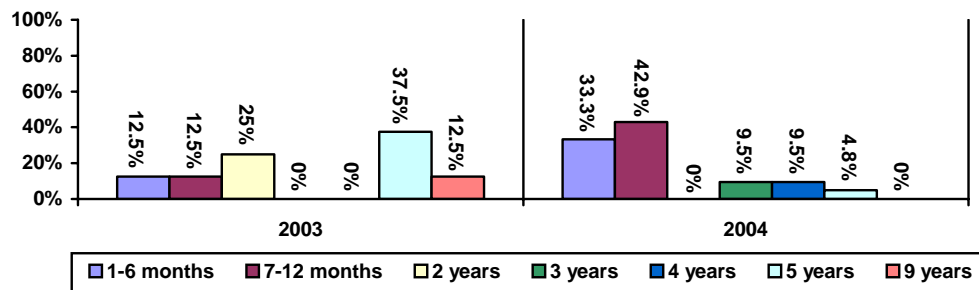
TABLE 8  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING FOR ASSISTED ALBANIAN NATIONALS, 2000 TO 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Labour exploitation	0	2	3	0	3	8
Begging	0	27	22	20	31	100
Selling and begging	0	7	0	1	1	9
Selling and stealing	0	0	1	0	0	1
Street work/selling small items on the street	0	16	7	5	9	37
Criminal activity	0	1	0	0	0	2
Total	0	53	33	26	44	156

Most commonly, minors were required to beg, accounting for 50.9 per cent of victims in 2001, 66.7 per cent in 2002, 76.9 per cent in 2003 and 70.5 per cent in 2004. In two cases, minors were forced to engage in criminal activity, primarily theft. Some victims were also exposed to dual forms of exploitation, required to sell and beg in a number of cases as well as beg and steal in one instance.

**Length of time Trafficked:** The length of time victims spent trafficked decreased in 2004. Whereas, in 2003, 87.5 per cent of assisted victims were trafficked for a year or more, in 2004, only 23.8 per cent of victims were trafficked for more than a year.

GRAPH 25  
TIME TRAFFICKED OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 TO 2004<sup>82</sup>



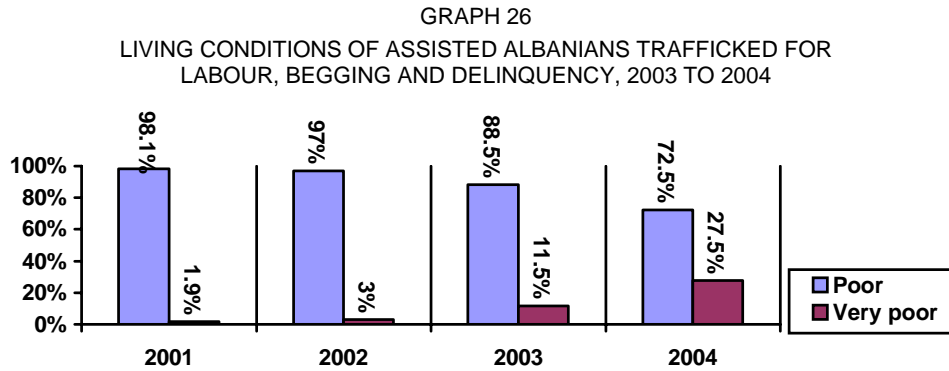
Nevertheless, in both years, some victims suffered very long periods of trafficking. In 2003, 37.5 per cent of victims were trafficked for five years and 12.5 per cent for nine years. In 2004, some victims were trafficked for as many as four and five years. Given that all assisted victims were minors, many have spent the better part of their lives in a trafficking situation. Minors therefore face special difficulty in exiting trafficking and require programmes that address the issue of having the formative years of life shaped by the trafficking experience. Programmes that address the impact of extreme exploitation and poor conditions over long periods need to be developed along with programmes geared to support the forging of healthy family and interpersonal

<sup>82</sup> In 2001, 43.2 per cent of victims were trafficked for less than six months, 29.7 per cent for six to 12 months, 18.9 per cent for one to two years, 2.7 per cent for two to three years and 5.4 per cent for three to four years. In 2002, 50 per cent of victims were trafficked for six months or less, 20 per cent for six to 12 months, 20 per cent for one and a half years and ten per cent of four and a half years.



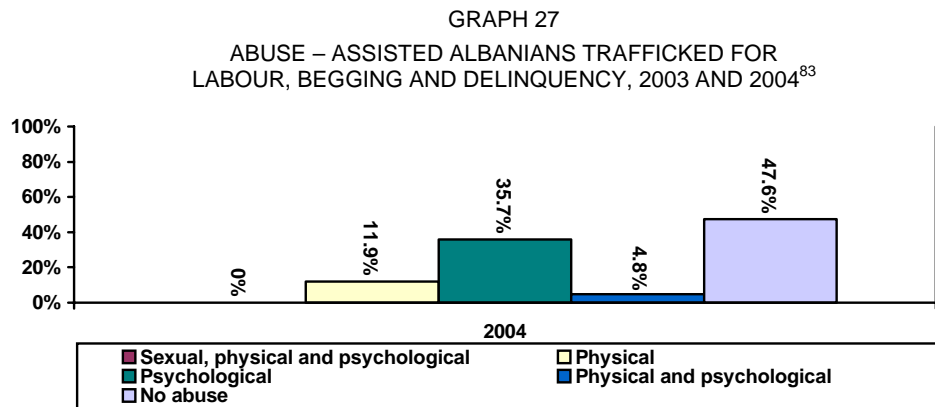
relationships for minors who have spent so much time outside of healthy family environments.

**Living and working conditions:** Although adequate information about working conditions is lacking, generally living conditions can be described as “poor” and sometimes “very poor”. Indeed, an increasing percentage of victims suffered poor conditions – from 1.9 per cent in 2001 to 27.5 per cent in 2004.



Trafficked minors lives, for the most part, were comprised only of work. Few victims were able to keep any of the money earned, although in some cases money was remitted directly to parents (ILO-IPEC, 2003a: 28).

**Abuse:** Victims suffered varying degrees of abuse while trafficked, with the majority between 2001 and 2003 reporting no abuse. In 2001, 58.5 per cent of victims suffered abuse while trafficked, while, in 2002, 45.4 per cent of victims reported abuse. In 2003, abuse rates decreased to 27 per cent, although this reversed in 2004, increasing to 52.4 per cent. Particularly worrisome is the impact that abuse has on minors. It is unclear to what we can attribute this variation.



It should be noted that much of the abuse suffered was psychological. Psychological pressure as a form of control in the trafficking process needs to be better understood as a starting point to combat its use. Its prevalence also underscores the importance of counselling services for victims to counteract its effects.

<sup>83</sup> In 2001, 58.5 per cent of victims suffered abuse while trafficked, while, in 2002, 45.4 per cent of victims reported abuse.

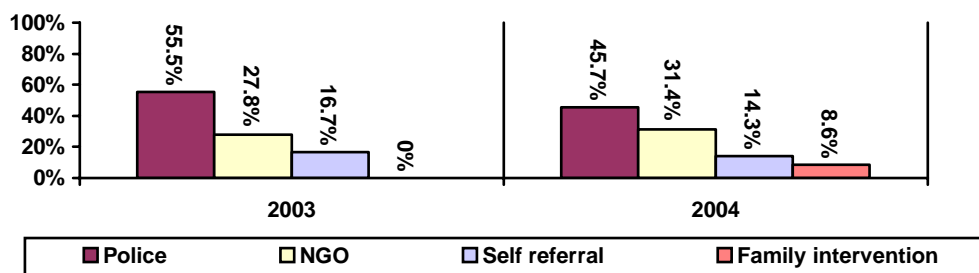
**Mental and physical well-being:** Substantive conclusions cannot be drawn from the information available but knowledge on this score would be valuable in gauging the medical and psychological assistance needed by victims.

### Post-Trafficking Experience

**Victim identification and referral:** Available data highlights the significant role played by law enforcement in the identification of victims trafficked for labour and begging/delinquency. Until 2004, the majority of victims were identified by law enforcement.

In 2004, slightly fewer victims were identified by law enforcement, with slightly increased number of victims were identified by NGOs. This is probably due to the increased activities and scope of work of the BKTF coalition and its members as well as of NGOs in destination countries. Also noteworthy is the number of self and family referrals. This suggests that assistance and services are increasingly and sufficiently visible in the community, both within Albania and abroad.

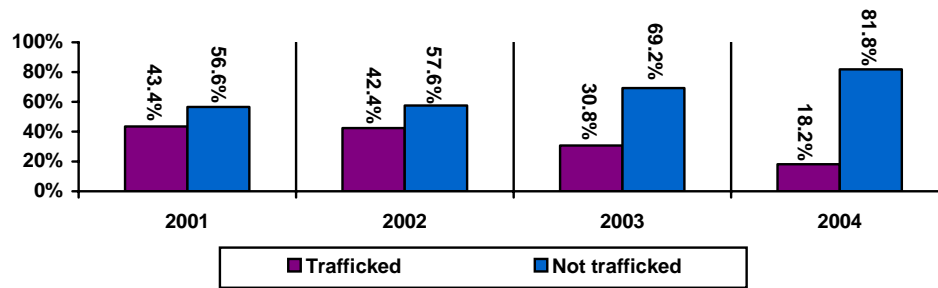
GRAPH 28  
IDENTIFICATION OF ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 TO 2004<sup>84</sup>



**Re-trafficking:** Re-trafficking is considerable. In 2001, as many as 43.4 per cent of assisted victims had been trafficked previously. While this percentage dropped to 18.2 per cent in 2004, it is still a notable percentage of victims. In their short lives these re-trafficked victims have suffered multiple forms of abuse and exploitation, with their consequent impact on their development as well as their mental and psychological well-being.

<sup>84</sup> In 2001, 63 per cent of victims were identified by law enforcement, while 26.1 per cent were identified through self-referral and 10.9 per cent through family intervention. In 2002, the number of victims identified by law enforcement declined to 52.3 per cent, with 23.8 per cent identified by NGOs, 19.1 per cent through self-referral and 4.8 per cent through family intervention.

GRAPH 29  
PREVIOUSLY TRAFFICKED – ASSISTED ALBANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR  
LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2001 TO 2004



As family complicity was likely in a number of cases, special attention must be paid in the development of reintegration efforts to mitigate the risk of re-trafficking. Equally critical is that traffickers may seek to re-traffic these victims and families may be without the power to stop them. One boy explained of his return, “When I came home I did not feel really welcome. They (the parents) already knew that I had escaped from the exploiter. He called them and threatened them, asking them to give back the money he had spent on my trip to Greece if I did not go back. My father was angry because he could not see a way to pay him back.” (ILO-IPEC, 2003a: 32)<sup>85</sup>

**Assistance declined:** There is insufficient information about this indicator to provide an assessment.

## 2.2 Foreign Victims of Trafficking in Albania

In this section, we explore the profiles and experiences of foreign victims assisted in Albania. As is clear from the table below, there has been a steady decline in the identification and assistance of foreign trafficking victims in Albania. This is due in part to a police crackdown on illegal migration and trafficking to Italy *via* speedboats and in part to visa-free access to the *Schengen* region for Bulgarian and Romanian citizens, who in the past were prominent among assisted foreign victims. The decline indicates that use of Albania as a country of transit *en route* to Italy and the European Union is decreasing.

TABLE 9  
NUMBER OF ASSISTED FOREIGN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IN ALBANIA, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign victims	117	67	30	17	12	243

Still, illegal migrants continued to transit through the country, some of whom may be victims of trafficking. In 2004, IOM Tirana assisted eight Chinese nationals who showed strong signs of being in the trafficking process.<sup>86</sup> In only ten days in January 2005, an additional 11 Chinese nationals, including five women, were identified while

<sup>85</sup> For a more thorough discussion of possible explanations for re-trafficking as well as the importance of re-trafficking rates in gauging the success of reintegration programmes, see *Re-Trafficking* in Section 2.1.1: *Profiles and Experiences of Albanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

<sup>86</sup> All had incurred large debts; some had Albanian visas but had never been to the Albanian embassy in China; all documentation and travel arrangements were made through third parties; they were not clear about the type of work they would do, etc.

being smuggled/trafficked through Albania, all of whom also manifested similar signs of trafficking vulnerability. These findings may indicate new source areas for trafficking as well as new manifestations of trafficking to which police and service providers must attend in the coming year.<sup>87</sup>

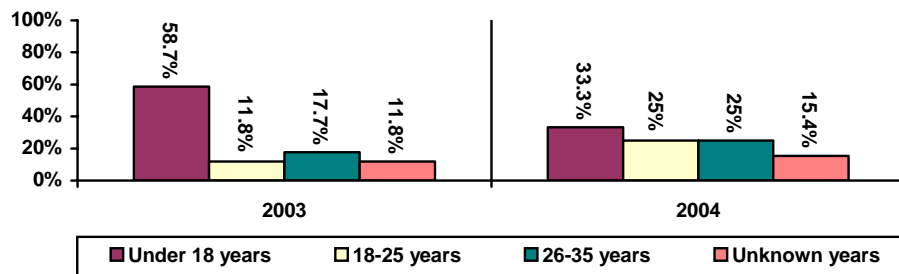
### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics

The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of foreign victims assisted in Albania who have been trafficked primarily for sexual exploitation, with particular attention to 2003 and 2004. What is perhaps most noteworthy is that it is no longer possible to speak of the “typical” foreign victim identified and assisted in Albania. Whereas in 2000 and 2001, the majority of these victims were young, unmarried women from Romania and Moldova, the victims identified in 2003 and 2004 included both female and male victims originating from different and “new” countries and with unique stories of recruitment and trafficking.

**Sex:** In 2003, two of the 17 foreign victims were male minors. This represents the first instance of male foreign victims being identified and assisted in Albania. In 2004, all victims were female.

**Age:** In 2003 and 2004, the ages of assisted victims were disparate, although a high percentage were minors in both years. In 2003, minors accounted for a striking 58.7 per cent of victims.<sup>88</sup> This represents an increase even from the previous year and signals the acute vulnerability of minors among foreign victims. One explanation for the high representation of minors is that minors are easier for law enforcement to identify and refer for assistance. Another plausible explanation is that trafficking in minors is proving more lucrative for traffickers.

GRAPH 30  
AGE AT RECRUITMENT OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN ALBANIA, 2003 AND 2004



Victims between 18 to 25 years accounted for a minority of victims, in contrast to many countries in the region. As many victims in 2003 and 2004 were between 26 and 35 years as those between 18 and 25 years.

<sup>87</sup> The Albanian border police have been trained in pre-screening three categories of foreign citizens with irregular documents: asylum seekers, victims of trafficking, and irregular migrants. Five-day courses were offered at the Police Academy. In addition, awareness-raising meetings were held with border guards to support their work in identifying these three categories of foreigners. To date, 234 border police officers and around 700 border guards have been trained. This training was conducted by IOM, UNHCR, and OSCE.

<sup>88</sup> Because the service provider in this instance recorded the victim’s age at recruitment (as well as at identification), it was possible to note that 10 of the 17 victims (58.7 per cent) were minors when trafficked. If minors are calculated according to age at identification rather than recruitment, the findings differ substantially. In 2003, 35.3 per cent were minors at identification as compared to 58.7 per cent who were minors at recruitment. Recording victim’s age at recruitment is therefore advisable to provide a measure of the specific vulnerability of various age groups and formulate interventions accordingly.

**Country of origin:** The majority (81.1 per cent) of foreign victims identified and assisted in Albania between 2002 and 2004 were Romanians and Moldovans, accounting for 37 per cent and 44 per cent respectively. In recent years, roughly equal numbers of victims were Kosovars, Moldovans, Bulgarians and Romanians. New nationalities were also identified in 2003 and 2004, including Chinese and Greek.

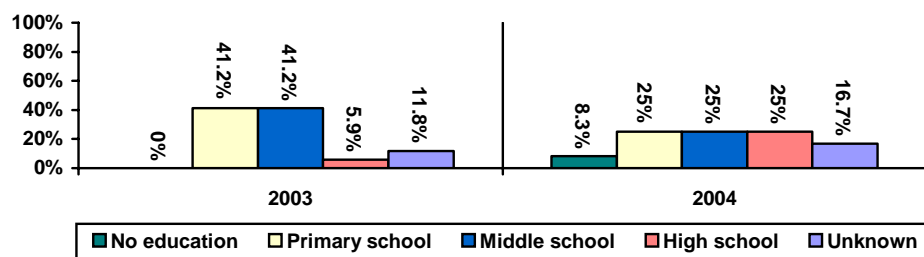
TABLE 10  
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN OF FOREIGN VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED IN ALBANIA, 2000 TO 2004

Country of Origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Bulgaria	2	4	0	2	2	10
China	0	0	0	0	2	2
Greece	0	0	0	1	0	1
The Province of Kosovo	0	0	3	4	1	8
Macedonia	0	0	0	1	0	1
Moldova	67	27	7	3	3	107
Montenegro	0	0	1	0	0	1
Poland	0	0	1	0	1	2
Romania	40	30	16	3	1	90
Russia	3	1	1	0	0	5
Serbia	0	1	0	0	0	1
Ukraine	5	4	0	1	0	10
Unknown	0	0	1	2	2	5
Total	117	67	30	17	12	243

**Ethnicity:** Foreign victims from ethnic minorities were not highly represented in 2003 and 2004. Only one victim in 2003 was an ethnic minority – a Russian from Moldova. This, arguably, indicates that ethnicity in some countries may not be as critical a push factor for trafficking.

**Education:** The education level of foreign victims was generally quite low. One victim in 2004 had received no education at all. The generally low educational attainment of foreign victims can be read as a significant contributor to trafficking, especially striking when victims are from Moldova and Romania where education levels are relatively high.<sup>89</sup>

GRAPH 31  
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN ALBANIA, 2003 AND 2004



**Mental and physical disabilities:** In both 2003 and 2004, no assisted victims were physically or mentally disabled.

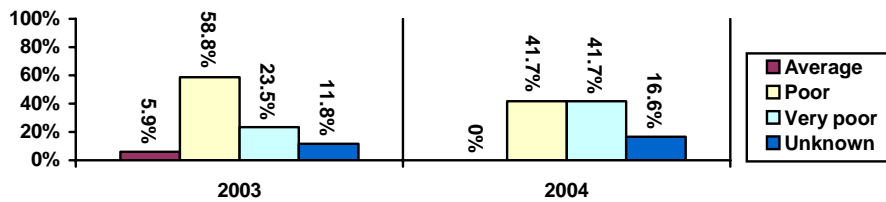
<sup>89</sup> In Moldova in 2000/1 female net enrolment was 78 per cent at primary, 70 per cent at secondary and 33 per cent at tertiary. Female net enrolment is the number of students enrolled in a level of education who are of official school age for that level, as a percentage of the population of official school age for that level (UNDP, 2004). According to the UN Statistics Division (2004), school life expectancy for females (number of years of formal schooling) in Romania is 12 years.

**Marital and family status:** Most victims assisted in both 2003 (73.3 per cent) and 2004 (50 per cent) were unmarried at recruitment. This is not surprising given the young age of victims overall.

A number of assisted victims were mothers – four in 2003 and four in 2004.<sup>90</sup> The need to support dependent children may have contributed to migration/trafficking.

**Economic Status:**<sup>91</sup> Victims in 2004 generally came from “poor” or “very poor” family backgrounds. In 2004, more victims (41.7 per cent) reported coming from a “very poor” background, an increase from 23.5 per cent in 2003. Consequently, a link between poverty and trafficking appears salient in the case of foreign victims.

GRAPH 32  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN ALBANIA, 2003 AND 2004



**Family and social relations:** There is insufficient data on this topic to draw any conclusions. For a more general discussion of the link between family relations and trafficking, see *Family and social relations* in Section 2.1.1: *Profiles and Experiences of Albanian Victims of Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation*.

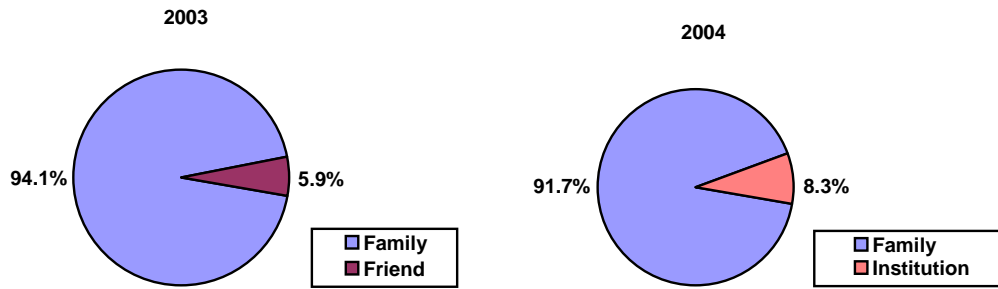
### Recruitment Experiences

**Living and working situation at recruitment:** The vast majority of victims were living with their families at recruitment. While none of the victims’ families were complicit in trafficking, neither were they instrumental in preventing it. This makes clear that living with one’s family does not always afford adequate protection against trafficking. Prevention efforts must increasingly take note of this, incorporating the family as a key target group.

<sup>90</sup> For a discussion of the vulnerability of mothers, see *Family and marital status* in Section 2.1.1: *Profiles and Experience of Albanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

<sup>91</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim’s self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

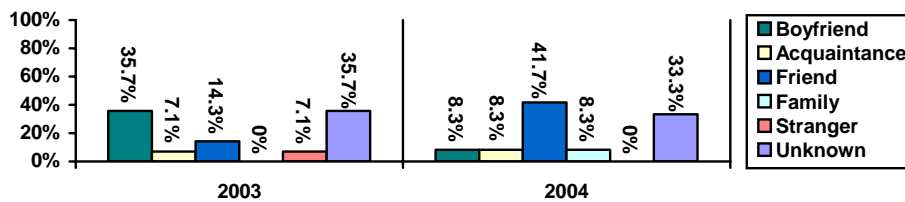
GRAPH 33  
LIVING SITUATION AT RECRUITMENT – FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN ALBANIA, 2003 AND 2004



Many victims were not working at recruitment, arguably contributing to their willingness to accept work abroad. In 2003, only two of 17 victims were working. In 2004, six victims were working at recruitment. Those employed received low, sporadic salaries, which did little to dissuade them from accepting work abroad.

**Recruiter:** In the vast majority of cases, foreign victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 were recruited by men. The only exception was in 2003 when the victim was promised work by her (female) friend.

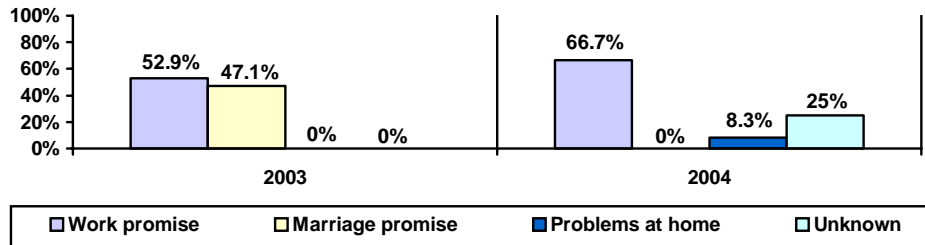
GRAPH 34  
RELATIONSHIP TO RECRUITER – FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN ALBANIA, 2003 AND 2004



In most cases, the recruiter was the same nationality as the victim. However, seven victims in 2003 and three victims in 2004 were recruited by an Albanian male. Some victims were recruited by Albanian males in their countries of origin, while others were recruited in Albania.

**Reasons for leaving home country and type of work promised:** Work was the predominant reason that victims left home. Nine victims (52.9 per cent) in 2003 and eight (66.7 per cent) in 2004 were recruited with promises of work. These victims left their home countries because of poverty and poor future prospects. Victims were generally offered work either as a domestic workers or waitresses.

GRAPH 35  
REASONS FOR LEAVING HOME OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN ALBANIA, 2003 AND 2004



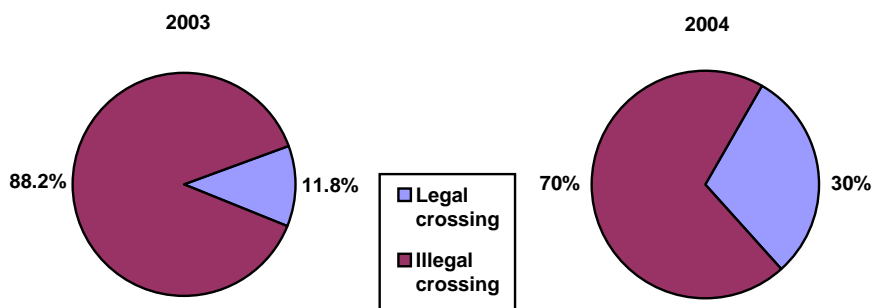
Among the reasons women left home was promise of marriage, accounting for 47.1 per cent of victims in 2003 and none in 2004. Marriage promises were made by boyfriends, friends and acquaintances. Problems at home was the rationale for migration given by one victim in 2004. There was only one case of kidnapping reported, of a Romanian minor. She was stopped by two men when walking down the street in her hometown, forcibly put into their car and taken to another town. From there she was trafficked to Albania, via Serbia.

Whereas in the past many victims were recruited through newspaper advertisements, no such cases were reported in 2003 and 2004. This can be attributed to prominent prevention campaigns and hotlines in Romania and Moldova that specifically address the potential dangers of such advertisements.

### Transportation and Movement

**Border crossings and documents:** In general, foreign victims assisted in Albania in 2003 and 2004 crossed borders illegally, as shown in the graph below.

GRAPH 36  
BORDER CROSSINGS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN ALBANIA,, 2003 AND 2004



In some cases, victims were trafficked with no documents and, in others, with legal documents. In 2004, three victims crossed at legal border crossings with legal documents and seven victims crossed illegally with no or false documents. One victim from Romania described crossing the border into Serbia illegally at night and by foot.

**Intended destination:** In both 2003 and 2004, most victims were promised work in Italy. One victim was told she would work in Italy but her escort was arrested before she was transported. She was kept at his sister's house in Albania for two years where she was forced to have sex with men.



Greece, a popular destination in 2003, was the intended destination of only one victim assisted in 2004. In a number of cases, victims were promised work (and in many cases marriage) in multiple destinations.

TABLE 11  
INTENDED DESTINATION OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2003 AND 2004

Intended Destination	2003	2004
Belgium	0	1
Greece	5	1
Italy	7	8
Italy and Albania	1	0
Italy and France	0	1
Greece and Canada	1	0
Montenegro and Albania	1	0
Unknown	2	1
Total	17	12

### Victims' Trafficking Experiences

**Forms of trafficking:** The majority of foreign victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation. This took a variety of forms, including street prostitution in Italy, brothel-based prostitution, and exploitation in bars and nightclubs. Victims exploited in Albania were often kept in private homes.

In addition, cases of labour exploitation were also documented, including in 2004. This included service sector work, such as waitressing and cleaning, as well as agriculture.

TABLE 12  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING OF FOREIGN VICTIMS IDENTIFIED  
AND ASSISTED IN ALBANIA, 2003 AND 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Sexual exploitation	117	65	28	8	7	225
Labour exploitation	0	2	2	3	1	8
Begging	0	0	0	0	0	0
Potential victims <sup>92</sup>	0	0	0	6	4	10
Total	117	67	30	17	12	243

**Length of time trafficked:** Most victims assisted in 2003 were trafficked for long periods. While 17.6 per cent were trafficked for less than a year, the remaining 82.4 per cent were trafficked for periods ranging from one and half years to five years. This is consistent with findings from 2004 in which most victims were trafficked for more than one year and, in one instance, a staggering twelve years.

Not only are some victims trafficked for long periods but also within different countries. One Polish victim was initially trafficked in southern Italy by her Albanian trafficker with whom she later had a child. After a considerable time, he forced her to travel to Albania where she was kept in a small village in the north and served as a slave to his family. She escaped only when her child became seriously ill and was hospitalized.

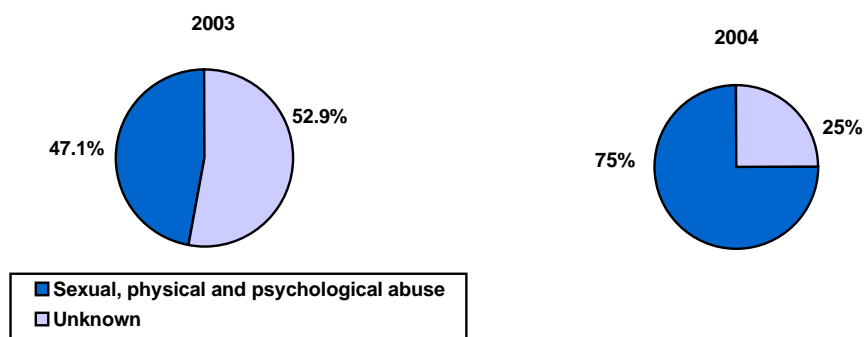
<sup>92</sup> This designation is used when the individual was assisted for an insufficient time to clearly establish his/her trafficking experience or when the individual was identified and assisted before being exploited but showed strong signs of being in the trafficking process.

That victims are trafficked for such long periods raises questions about the identification procedures of authorities both in Albania and destinations countries. In addition, assistance programmes must be cognizant of the impact of such long periods of exploitation and servitude.

**Living and working conditions:** Information about victims’ working conditions while trafficked for both 2003 and 2004 is lacking. However, the limited data available about living conditions, points to variable conditions. In 2003, eight victims reported “poor” living conditions, while four victims reported “average” living conditions. Five did not provide details. In 2004, six victims reported “poor” living conditions, while three victims reported “average” working conditions and three did not respond. None of the foreign victims reported receiving any payment during their trafficking experience.

**Abuse:** All victims who provided a response to this question (eight in 2003 and nine in 2004) reported extensive abuse and exploitation. Victims were abused sexually, physically and emotionally, most at the hands of their traffickers, but sometimes also by clients and recruiters.

GRAPH 37  
ABUSE OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN ALBANIA, 2003 AND 2004

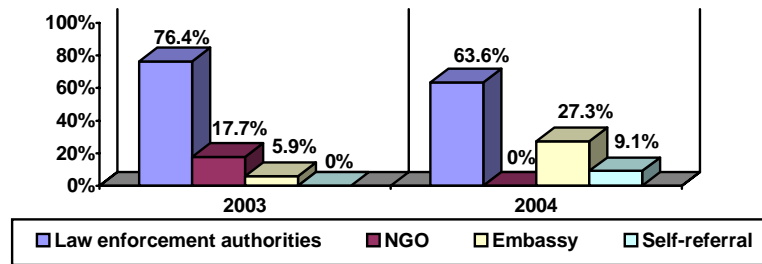


**Mental and physical well-being:** Service providers report that foreign trafficking victims presented similar ailments to those of Albanian trafficking victims, including injuries, STIs, anxiety, and pregnancy. In addition, five victims suffered psychological problems, with five cases of personality disorders noted. For further detail, please see *Mental and physical well-being* in Section 2.1.1 *Profiles and Experiences of Albanian Victims of Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation*.

### Post Trafficking Experience

**Victim identification and referral:** In 2003, most referrals were through law enforcement authorities. However, the initial identification was slightly more complicated and not all victims were found because of police investigations. Rather, seven were identified upon deportation from a third country, one was denied entry into Greece and four were found by the police through intelligence work and after a long stay in Albania. In addition, three assisted victims in 2003 were referred by NGOs and one was referred by the Romanian Embassy after escaping and approaching the embassy for assistance (cf. Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 20).

GRAPH 38  
IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN ALBANIA, 2003 AND 2004



In 2004, seven victims were identified and referred by the police, three victims (Moldovan) were referred by the embassy and one was self-referred. There is insufficient data about the remaining victims.

**Re-trafficking:** Two of 17 foreign victims assisted in 2003 (11.8 per cent) had been trafficked previously. In 2004, one of 12 victims (8.3 per cent) had been trafficked previously. For a more thorough discussion of re-trafficking, see *Re-trafficking* in Section 2.1.1: *Profiles and Experiences of Albanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

**Assistance declined:** During the reporting period, a number of foreign victims declined assistance. Reasons that a victim may decline assistance include: distrust of authorities and assistance providers, fear of criminal sanctions, publicity or stigmatization related to the trafficking experience and reluctance to return to the home country.

The number of foreign victims declining assistance has decreased over the last two years, with only three victims in 2003 and two victims in 2004 declining assistance. At the same time, however, fewer foreign victims were identified, which explains in part why fewer decline assistance.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN ALBANIA

In this section, we analyze the identification and referral mechanism in Albania for the different profiles of victims – victims trafficked for sexual exploitation (Section 3.1.1), victims trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency (Section 3.1.2) and foreign trafficking victims (Section 3.1.3). In addition, we consider the various types of assistance available to Albanian victims (Sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2) as well as to foreign victims trafficked to Albania (Section 3.2.3).

#### 3.1 Identification and Referral of Trafficking Victims in Albania

There is currently no national identification and referral mechanism in Albania. While referral agreements have been mapped out among the various identifying agencies and service providers, no central body is tasked with identification and referral. Rather, three distinct identification and referral procedures exist for trafficking victims in Albania dealing with Albanians trafficked for sexual exploitation, Albanians trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency and foreign nationals trafficked to Albania.

Neither is there a national harmonized system of case management for identification and referral.

However, in 2005, the Government of Albania together with various counter-trafficking actors initiated the development of a national referral mechanism to harmonize the identification and referral process for victims of all forms of trafficking. It is intended that this referral structure will be finalized by late summer 2005.

### ***3.1.1 Identification and Referral of Albanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation***

Outlined below is the general referral process for Albanian victims trafficked for sexual exploitation.

#### **Voluntary Returns from Transit and Destination Countries**

Most assisted voluntary returns were conducted by the IOM according to formal agreements between the IOM mission in Tirana and IOM missions abroad. However, there was a decline in the number of referrals by IOM missions in 2004. The number of assisted voluntary returns to Albania was quite low, given the assumed high numbers of Albanian women and girls trafficked abroad. This might be explained by victims' reluctance to return to Albania as well as the inclination on the part of law enforcement authorities in transit and destination countries to deport victims rather than refer them for assistance. It may also be linked to an expanding assistance framework in destination countries, including options for temporary stay. There is evidence that increasing numbers of Albanians opt not to return home from countries such as Italy and Belgium, where they are able to obtain temporary residence permits.

Very few victims of sexual exploitation were returned through assistance programmes operated by NGOs in the European Union. Overall, there is a lack of cooperation, coordination and information sharing between NGOs in the European Union and Albania. This stands in contrast to cooperation between NGOs assisting minor victims of trafficking for begging or labour. Expansion of these NGO contacts would be valuable in the identification and assistance of adult Albanian victims.

#### **Returns upon Extradition**

Increasingly, victims were deported from Western European countries without the intervention of IOM or other appropriate assistance organizations. In 2004, of the 291 victims assisted by Vatra, 221 were deported. Similarly, in 2003, 22 of 50 victims assisted by IOM were deported and, in 2004, ten of the 41 assisted victims were deported. These victims were subsequently referred by the police or partner NGOs. The deportation of trafficking victims is contrary to international standards on the treatment of trafficking victims and efforts must be made to discourage this practice in countries of destination. There is a need for appropriate screening and identification of trafficking victims at the destination as well as for appropriate services. Destination countries must uphold obligations of victim protection and the rights of trafficking victims.

In October 2002, international organizations and NGOs, in cooperation with the Albanian government, initiated a systematic screening process for the identification and referral of Albanian females expelled from transit and destination countries. This outreach model involved Albanian national police referring all Albanian women

returned from transit and destination countries to OSCE focal points for screening interviews. Unfortunately, in practice this model did not function effectively. In its place, the Government of Albania, IOM, and NGOs are working on the development of a national referral mechanism. Further, in 2005, IOM will work with the border police to identify victims of trafficking among Albanian deportees. This will involve developing procedures for interviewing and identifying victims as well as procedures to offer assistance.

Another important initiative in terms of appropriate and sensitive identification by law enforcement was the establishment of special police rooms in ten of the 12 police districts throughout Albania. These special police rooms, located within the police station, are designed as comfortable rooms in which victims can be interviewed. Plans are underway to establish similar facilities at border points where border police can temporarily accommodate and interview irregular migrants and potential trafficking victims.

### **Helplines**

One helpline is currently operating in Albania to provide trafficking victims assistance and referrals. This is the helpline of the Women's Counselling Centre, which operates in four cities around Albania – Tirana, Shkoder, Pogradec, and Berat.

The helpline, which has been operating since 1996, receives calls from victims of all forms of violence, a portion of whom are victims of trafficking. According to the Women's Counselling Centre, the proportion of trafficking related calls decreased over time – from 50 per cent of calls between 1997 and 1999 to 2000 of the 12,000 calls (16.7 per cent) received in 2004. Of the trafficking related calls, about 60 per cent were about victims or suspected victims of trafficking – some directly from victims and some from family or friends of missing persons suspected to be trafficking victims. In addition, 30 to 40 per cent of calls were termed “preventative”, requesting information about migration and trafficking. Approximately five to ten per cent of calls are threatening. When trafficking victims are identified through the helpline, they are referred according to their individual needs.

In 2005, due to lack of funding, the helpline does not appear to be functioning at the same level that it once did. This constitutes a gap in the identification process and it is hoped that the helpline will resume operations.<sup>93</sup>

### **Embassy**

To date, no Albanian victims of trafficking have been identified by Albanian consulates or embassies abroad. This stands in contrast to victims of other countries of origin, such as Ukraine, Romania, Moldova and Bulgaria, where embassy staff have been involved in the identification and referral of victims. Embassy staff can serve as a valuable entry point for identification and should be mobilized to a greater extent.

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<sup>93</sup> The helpline is also a valuable tool in identifying and assisting victims of family violence. Since many trafficking victims come from violent homes, the helpline can also serve to some extent as a prevention tool for trafficking. If abused victims access and receive assistance, they may not seek and/or accepting work abroad that could turn into trafficking.

### **3.1.2 Identification and Referral of Albanians Trafficked for Labour, Begging and Delinquency**

Victims of these forms of exploitation are almost without exception minors. NGOs observe that in the last few years there has been an overall decrease in the number of Albanian minors trafficked to Italy and Greece. However, NGOs also point out that traffickers have modified their activities, and it is likely that they have decreased overtly visible activities on the street, while increasing more discreet or hidden activities. Further, routes have changed, with victims routed through more porous borders, such as *via* The Province of Kosovo. The recent identification of unaccompanied minors in Slovenia, many of whom were potential trafficking victims, highlights the changing routes and destinations of victims trafficked from Albania.

Service providers report that law enforcement in both Albania and destination countries are better equipped to identify victims of sexual exploitation than victims of other forms of exploitation, such as begging and labour. Greater attention is therefore needed to the development of skills and capacity in the identification process for these forms of exploitation. The following sections detail the various means of identifying minors trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency.

#### **Outreach Initiatives**

Local and international NGOs have developed several methods for identifying Albanian minors trafficked abroad primarily for begging and labour exploitation. These NGOs have formulated networks of direct outreach programmes on the streets, in schools, in community centres, at border crossings, on frequently travelled routes to Italy and Greece and other high risk areas. This direct outreach also includes working in destination countries through and with counterpart NGOs. An example is Tdh's partnership with the Greek NGO Arsis regarding the identification of Albanian children working on the streets in Thessaloniki. Outreach and identification is undertaken by teams of Greek and Albanian social workers. This strategy of mixed cultural teams helps NGO staff to better understand the countries of origin and destination. As important, Albanian outreach staff – through their shared culture and language with the victim – have an advantage in building trust and communication. This kind of partnership can serve as a model for other NGOs cooperating between source and destination countries.

#### **Voluntary Assisted Return for Trafficked Minors**

Local and international NGOs have established more appropriate, humane mechanisms for returning trafficked Albanian minors from Italy and Greece. BKTF partners have drafted coordinated return procedures and created a pilot project for safe, voluntary and legal return of Albanian children from Greece. When the Greek NGO interviews the minor, it enters the case into a database, refers the case to an Albanian NGO for an assessment and awaits the return decision of the minor and family. If the minor wishes to return and the family agrees to accept the minor, an NGO representative escorts the minor to Albania. This approach utilizes and strengthens partnerships between NGOs inside and outside Albania; it acknowledges the wishes and interests of the minor and the minor's family and it aims to expedite the return process.

### **Returns upon Extradition**

According to service providers in Albania, the Greek police continue to deport minors over 12 years old at the border with minimal effort to refer them to an appropriate agency in Albania. Instead, identified minors are generally treated as illegal migrants and deported without any services or notification of Albanian officials or family members. This practice has negative implications for the minor, not the least of which is the risk of re-trafficking. In addition, in the absence of short-term accommodation for minors, there is inadequate time to conduct a family and security assessment prior to return to their family. In recognition of this practice, some organizations conduct outreach at border points as well as border monitoring, including BKTF's border monitoring programme for the period around the Olympic Games in Athens in 2004. Ideally, similar initiatives should be implemented in all destination countries where Albanian minors are trafficked.

### **3.1.3 Identification and Referral of Foreign Victims in Albania**

The vast majority of victims are identified by law enforcement, although a small number of foreign victims of trafficking have been identified by the Romanian Embassy and a few NGOs.

#### **Law Enforcement**

Some victims – four in 2003 – were identified in the course of police investigations. All were identified after a long stay in Albania. When Albanian law enforcement identify women who they suspect are trafficking victims, they contact IOM to conduct an interview to assess their trafficking status.

### **Returns upon Extradition**

An increasing percentage of foreign victims were identified and referred following their deportation to Albania from a European Union country. In 2002, 24 per cent of assisted foreign victims were deported to Albania from EU countries, such as Italy, France and Greece. A further increase was seen in 2003, with 47 per cent of foreign victims deported to Albania from Italy, Greece and Austria (Andreani and Raviv, 2004). This practice continues. In 2004, three victims were identified by Italian police in Italy and deported to Albania, as they had transited through Albania *en route* to Italy. Had these victims been properly identified in the destination country, they would have been entitled to assistance. Inappropriate deportation denies victims their rights to protection and places an unnecessary and unviable burden on the Albanian assistance framework.

#### **Embassy**

A handful of victims have been referred by embassies in Albania – three victims in 2004 (Moldovan) and one in 2003 (Romanian). It is useful to consider embassy staff as an entry point for intervention and assistance. Sensitization of embassy staff on trafficking and the associated assistance framework is valuable as citizens can be misidentified as illegal migrants when approaching their embassy.

## **3.2 Victim Assistance and Protection Services**

Distinct assistance frameworks have been developed for the three categories of victims. For the most part, these frameworks operate independently of each other. Each is outlined briefly below.

### **3.2.1 Assistance for Albanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation**

#### **Shelter**

There are four shelters for trafficked victims in Albania. All of them accept national victims, although one – the National Reception Centre (NRC) – also accepts foreign trafficking victims and illegal migrants. The three shelters, located in Tirana, Vlora and Elbasan, are managed by local NGOs and supported by international organizations and donors. Vatra operates the shelter in Vlora; Tjeter Vision operates the shelter in Elbasan and Different and Equal operates the shelter/reintegration centre in Tirana. The government run NRC, managed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), is also supported by international organizations and donors. The capacity of the various shelters varies – from 15 victims at the Different and Equal Reintegration Centre to more than 100 spaces at the National Reception Centre.

The shelters provide both short-term lodging and as well as longer-term lodging and reintegration assistance. The provision of shelter accommodation is essential in Albania where many victims are unable and/or unwilling to return to their families. Service providers report that difficulty is often faced when initial contact is made with the family to assess reintegration options. Many families are reluctant to have the victim return due either to the shame they themselves feel or to the stigma that she will suffer at the hands of the community. The continuation of existing shelters is not only essential, their capacity should be assessed to determine whether sufficient accommodation is available.

Prior to 2004, shelters existed only in Vlora and Tirana. While both are critical hubs in the transportation of victims, more geographic coverage is advantageous, particularly in terms of reintegration efforts. Of importance is the recent establishment of a shelter in Elbasan to allow for reintegration services as well as case follow-up. Consideration might also be given to the establishment of smaller reintegration centres providing longer-term lodging and assistance to victims in other areas of origin.

One critical issue reported by some shelters is threats and intimidation by traffickers. This is a very worrying aspect of service provision and creates additional stress for both service providers and victims. Security is essential for shelters and it is currently provided by private security personnel and/or police officers.

#### **Medical Care**

Shelters offer free-of-charge medical care for trafficked victims. In most cases, agreements have been reached with private clinics where staff have been sensitized on the issue and provide confidential services. Almost all beneficiaries request medical care, and are especially concerned about gynaecological problems. The medical care routinely includes a basic physical examination and testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Pregnancy tests are conducted upon request, and most beneficiaries request them.

Almost all beneficiaries require treatment for various STIs, including syphilis and gonorrhoea. Several trafficked victims arrived at the shelter pregnant – eight in 2003 and four in 2004. Some of beneficiaries discovered they were pregnant while abroad



and obtained terminations in illegal, non-hospital settings, which may in turn have contributed to the high number of gynaecological complications and infections.

HIV testing is available at the Institute for Public Health. Since 2001, 42 IOM beneficiaries have been tested for HIV, one of whom tested positive in 2002.<sup>94</sup> In 2004, one shelter reported two additional cases of HIV/AIDS. However, as only a limited number of victims have been tested, it is impossible to estimate the number of beneficiaries who have contracted the virus. Albanian law requires that a psychologist discuss HIV test results with each person tested and shelter managers confirm that their programmes provide counselling for beneficiaries undergoing testing. Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) is free of charge and confidential; Albanian law does not require an HIV positive person to be included in a public health registry. Further, since July 2004, people living with HIV/AIDS in Albania are provided with antiretroviral treatment. IOM Tirana and other counter-trafficking agencies contributed to the preparation of the National Strategy on HIV/AIDS (approved in 2004), flagging the particular risk for victims of trafficking and mobile populations. IOM Tirana has provided training for social workers and other staff and information sessions with victims of trafficking regarding HIV/AIDS and STIs.

Some service providers report that victims are forced to use alcohol and drugs while trafficked, which often translated into addictions. This requires access to detoxification programmes and, to date, a number of victims assisted by IOM were treated in detoxification programmes.

Hospitalization was also necessary in some cases. Of the 159 victims assisted by IOM since 2001, 14 required hospitalization for a variety of illnesses, including allergies, infections, gastrointestinal problems, gynaecological problems, injuries, drug detoxification, and psychiatric problems. Average hospital stays were for ten to 15 days.

### **Psychological Assistance**

Each of the shelters offers individual and group counselling sessions to beneficiaries provided by social workers. Psychologists and psychiatrists are also available for additional counselling. The type and amount of counselling varies considerably according to the length of time a beneficiary spends at a shelter. Accordingly, counselling provided at the longer-term reintegration shelter is more comprehensive than counselling at the shorter-term shelters, which tends to focus more on stabilizing a beneficiary in order to secure placement within the family. Service providers at the reintegration centre state that most victims need at least three to four months of intensive psychological counselling before they are stabilized. As most victims stay at the shelters for short times – less than three months – they are provided with the more basic “stabilization” counselling. There is a need for longer-term counselling that could be provided by specialized NGOs or trained health care workers in communities throughout Albania as a component of reintegration programmes.

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<sup>94</sup> This victim was infected by her pimp when she was 16 years old. As no treatment was then available in Albania for people living with HIV/AIDS, IOM received a donation of a one-year supply of antiretroviral treatment from a German company, facilitated through the German Embassy in Tirana. In cooperation with the Institute of Public Health, psychosocial counselling was provided to the victim, to ensure adherence to the treatment and psychological well-being (IOM Albania 2004).

A few victims have been diagnosed with psychiatric disorders, including schizophrenia. In addition, a number of Albanian victims have attempted suicide. Psychiatric hospitalization of victims is rare, although some victims require psychiatric medication for a short time. There are few qualified, clinical psychiatrists in Albania, which makes it unlikely that victims will have access to such services once they return home.

There have been a number of cases of assisted victims suffering from mental disabilities. Such clients can be among the more difficult to assist and appropriate resources available in Albania to meet the specialized needs of this target group are limited.

### **Legal Assistance**

Legal assistance is provided to shelter residents by NGOs, which offer individualized, free-of-charge representation to victims. Beneficiaries also receive legal information and advice from police and prosecutors as well as shelter staff members. In addition, the legal NGO Centre for Advocacy provides free legal assistance to victims. Legal assistance is also available to victims of trafficking who are not resident at the various shelters but who require legal advice and support.

However, it is important to note that victims of crimes are not legally entitled to bring their legal representative to court with them. This is a matter of judicial discretion, and many Albanian judges do not allow for the presence of a victim's attorney. This constitutes a gap in the protection available to victims and, in many respects, impedes the successful completion of trafficking prosecutions, as victims are less willing to testify and are poorly equipped as witnesses. There is a need for further training of judges, prosecutors and victims' legal representatives to ensure the appropriate handling of trafficking cases. A court monitoring system is needed as well to systematically review trafficking cases and make targeted recommendations for specific areas of improvement.

One NGO shelter reports a significant improvement in the legal proceedings participated in by victims. While fewer victims are willing to denounce their traffickers than in the past – 20 victims assisted by the NGO shelter denounced their traffickers in 2004 as compared to 36 in 2002 – the prosecution success rate was far greater, with 100 per cent of the 20 legal proceedings in 2004 receiving a conviction with maximum sentence.<sup>95</sup> This represents not only a success for the victim but indicates serious effort and cooperation on the part of police in their investigative work, the prosecutors and judges in pursuing the case, the victims' legal representatives and the service provider in supporting the victim. With the implementation of the new witness protection law, it is hoped that this will improve further.

### **Witness Protection**

According to various sources, there have been cases of threats and attacks on trafficking victims in Albania, including a victim who was murdered three years ago before testifying. Currently, two of the shelters are able to accommodate high-risk victims including witnesses (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 27). In 2004, a witness

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<sup>95</sup> Interview with Vera Lesko, Executive Director, Vatra, 12 January 2005, Vlora, Albania. Of the 159 victims assisted by IOM since 2001, 71 victims denounced their recruiters/traffickers. Of these, 15 cases resulted in the penalization of the offenders with the remaining cases still pending (IOM Albania, 2004).

protection law was passed. However, it has not yet been implemented and lacks the resources to be fully enacted. The effective implementation of the law is critical.

Prior to the passage of this law, witness protection was conducted on an *ad hoc* basis through the mediation of a witness protection task force comprised of various actors including relevant government ministries, international organizations (i.e. IOM, OSCE) and NGOs. In cases deemed “high-risk”, protection for the witness was undertaken by service providers in cooperation with the government. Since 2001, seven witnesses have been settled abroad through this mechanism to guarantee their protection and safety.

The witness protection programme has yet to be implemented in Albania making it difficult to assess its effectiveness and sensitivity concerning minors. However, it is important to flag the law’s lack of special provisions for the protection and assistance of minors who are witnesses.

### **Educational Assistance**

Beneficiaries in the short-term shelters do not receive extensive educational support, due mainly to the relatively short time they are resident in the shelter. Social workers in the longer-term reintegration shelter provide literacy classes and develop educational plans for beneficiaries, including the formulation of educational goals such as reinsertion in mainstream schools.

Reinsertion into mainstream schools has not happened in large numbers due largely to reluctance on the part of schools to readmit school-leavers. Reinsertion is further hampered by an order from the Ministry of Education that requires students to attend school in their home districts.

While service providers have been able to tackle this issue on a case-by-case basis, this *ad hoc* approach is clearly less than ideal. Comprehensive reinsertion agreements are needed in addition to alternative educational programs. This must be an area of priority.

### **Vocational Training and Employment Assistance**

Vocational training and job placement are critical components of any effective reintegration process. All shelters work to provide some basic vocational training and employment placement, although the scope and quality of the programmes varies. Each shelter is working to develop agreements with employers about employment opportunities for victims, and each has found employment for a small but increasing number of beneficiaries. Some beneficiaries attend the government run professional school after which the government is obliged to help find employment. In addition, one NGO, Reflexione, serves as a centre for employment of women. More resources should be allocated to offer comprehensive vocational and job finding assistance to beneficiaries. This is particularly important when so many victims were trafficked as a by-product of a desire to find work.

In addition, it is critical to assess the success of employment placement as a part of the victim’s reintegration plan. That only a minority of victims are able to keep their jobs in the longer term indicates that trafficked victims may require a longer recovery period before seeking paid employment and that counselling and post-placement support are also needed. In the longer term, it is critical to look beyond statistics of initial placement and verify whether employment has been maintained for at least 12 months.

IOM Tirana observes that many beneficiaries require multiple placements and ongoing counselling in order to stabilize their employment prospects.

### **Family Mediation and Assistance**

Social workers at the shelters and reintegration centre provide family mediation and family reunification assistance to victims who wish to return to their families. This is an essential component of the assistance work given that most victims express a desire to return home to their families.

Prior to reintegration, shelter social workers contact the family to facilitate the return. A family assessment is undertaken and reintegration is pursued only when it is deemed safe and advisable by shelter staff. Social workers at the reintegration shelter conduct what appears to be a more comprehensive and lengthy family assessment,<sup>96</sup> leading, it is hoped, to more sustainable reintegration. It remains to be seen whether in the long term these beneficiaries have been more successfully reintegrated into their families.

Return to families is not without its own problems. One service provider reported that some women were locked away by their families because of shame at their exploitation. In other instances, service providers report being contacted by the family to take the woman back. Families might do this when they have difficulty in assisting and supporting the victim, feel shame at what has happened or when the victim is facing difficulty and stigma in the community and they wish to shield her from this. A telling finding is that when social workers of one organization attempted to follow up with the beneficiaries, over 40 per cent no longer lived with their families and were presumed re-trafficked. This raises questions as to whether assistance providers conducted a comprehensive family assessment, considered other placement options, provided enough recuperation and recovery time to the beneficiary and regularly monitored reinsertion within the family. It also raises questions about the feasibility of successful reintegration without accompanying community and family intervention and socialization. Further, it highlights that even where reintegration support is excellent, it can never be sufficient when there are no economic opportunities for victims in home communities.

In some cases, families reject their daughter's return perhaps because of shame at her sexual violation, because they feel it is not safe for her to return to the community or because they cannot support her. There is a need to consider other options for these victims, such as placement with extended family or integration into a new social environment. However, given the primacy of family relations in Albania, exclusion from one's family cannot help but have a lasting and debilitating affect on victims. Finally, where families have been complicit in the trafficking, the advisability of reintegration as a safe and viable assistance option is questionable.

### **Case Monitoring/Follow-up**

Government has limited capacity to run social services in Albania and this includes case monitoring by government social workers. While social workers at the shelters

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<sup>96</sup> Components of the assessment include: the victim's wish to return to the family; the willingness of the family members to accept the victim; the level of family violence, if any; the likelihood of retaliation from the family, or nearby living trafficker/exploiter; the ability and willingness of the family to provide for basic needs and the likelihood of re-trafficking.

follow up their cases by telephone and are available for consultation when victims seek assistance, there is no comprehensive programme of case monitoring due to a lack of resources and time. Service providers themselves concede that this is a gap in their work. Because so much of the work to date has been emergency response to meet the high numbers of victims, longer-term reintegration has not received sufficient attention. This is an area to which service providers are now planning to turn their attention.

More generally, there are systematic obstacles to case monitoring apart from limited staff and resources. Victims themselves may be reluctant to maintain contact with case workers as it may draw unwanted attention to them in their communities. Further, victims may not be accessible by telephone and they may live in remote, hard-to-reach areas. Some victims move frequently, which also impedes ongoing contact.

### **Housing Assistance**

Very few housing and independent living opportunities exist for trafficked victims who do not wish or cannot return to live with their families. Rental prices for private accommodation are prohibitive for most victims and it is socially unacceptable for an Albanian woman to live alone. Alternative housing options in Albania are therefore needed. Three of the shelters maintain some subsidized apartments for beneficiaries who do not wish to return home and have obtained employment. For example, 49 of 159 victims assisted by IOM since 2001 were accommodated in private apartments as a first step toward independent living. However, the sustainability of such subsidized apartments is in question. Governmental resources and support for subsidized housing is needed to provide a longer-term option for working beneficiaries.

### **Material Assistance**

A small amount of material assistance is available upon reintegration. IOM provides a re-installation grant in two instalments. In addition, NGOs provide material assistance to facilitate the victim's return to the family. Material assistance is valuable as a means to mitigate the poverty that is often a contributor to trafficking. However, service providers also highlight the delicate balance between assistance and dependency. Attention to this issue is essential.

### **Foster care**

A few organizations have arranged foster family placement for trafficked victims. Foster placement is *ad hoc* and dependent upon donor funds. With the passage of a new family code in 2004, foster care is now theoretically an alternative housing/reintegration option for minors. However, there are currently no provisions for foster care, which means that it is seldom pursued in practice. Given the lack of foster care legislation and implementation mechanisms, the process of identifying potential foster families, assessing them and reaching agreements for foster care is a long and difficult.

Nevertheless, in seven cases since 2001, IOM placed victims in a foster care system. In these circumstances, IOM supported foster families financially for the care given to beneficiaries. Foster care represents a valuable alternative in situations where reintegration is not in the best interests of the child. Where foster care is pursued, special training is needed for foster families as victims of trafficking require specific care and support and can manifest very complicated behaviour for which foster families must be prepared.

### **Assistance for Minors**

While minors are assisted by a range of NGOs, there is little indication that any of the programmes have provisions tailored to their specific needs. There is a need for specialized assistance for minors, including the development of skills in communicating with minors and encouraging child participation in the reintegration process. There is also a need for training of shelter staff (as well as for service providers more generally) on the subject of the different needs and rights of minors. Further, some consideration should be given to the needs of minors at different ages and stages of development. The number of organizations working directly with minors through the BKTF coalition provides a valuable opportunity for discussion and cross-pollination of ideas among the different assistance frameworks.

#### **3.2.2 Assistance for Albanians Trafficked for Begging, Delinquency and Labour**

Below are details of the assistance available to Albanians trafficked for begging and labour exploitation. For the most part, these victims were minors.

### **Shelter**

There are no shelters in Albania dedicated to victims of trafficking for labour, begging or delinquency, nor any geared to meet the needs of male children and youth. Instead, return involves the immediate return and reintegration with the victim's family. While this is usually accompanied by family assistance, mediation and reintegration support, in some instances, immediate reintegration of victims may not be in the best interest of the child. Further, when minors are deported, short-term accommodation is needed so that family and security assessments can be undertaken prior to return. Such assessments take time that some short-term accommodation options for this target group would allow. As most of these victims are male minors, this requires a dedicated accommodation. To mix male and female victims in the existing shelters is probably inadvisable.

To some degree, the short-term shelter needs of this target group could be met by the National Reception Centre in Tirana, as fewer foreign victims have been identified in Albania in 2003 and 2004. To date, one minor has been accommodated there and separate facilities are available for minors. However, this would require a tailoring of services to minors as well as specific training of staff in assisting minors. Alternatively, minor victims might be assisted within the framework of Albanian social service institutions. However, given the current limitations of this structure, significant investment would be required to assure the appropriate care of minor trafficking victims.

### **Family Reunification for Trafficked Minors**

Given the limited capacity and low functioning level of the Albanian social service structure, the reintegration of minor trafficking victims is generally undertaken by NGOs. This includes family reunification, reintegration, mediation and assistance for trafficked minors. Assistance includes meeting with the family, conducting a social assessment, mediating the minor's return to the family and identifying the specific assistance that can secure the placement and reduce the likelihood that the child (or siblings and relatives) will be re-trafficked. Assistance may include material support for the family, family counselling, and vocational training or job finding assistance for family members.

Some service providers express concern about the advisability of family reunification in some cases, particularly those in which the family has been complicit in trafficking. As one service provider observed, “We need to start recognizing that some victims can get back and some cannot. And we need other options when they cannot go back. Right now there are very few alternatives to family reunification.” Given that this is a concern expressed by a number of different actors, it is an essential topic for discussion in the assistance framework.

#### Educational and Vocational Assistance for Trafficked Minors

Reinsertion into mainstream schools is a critical area of need. Schools are generally reluctant to readmit children who have been absent from school and are educationally behind their age group. An order from the Ministry of Education requiring students to attend school in their home districts introduces further difficulties.

In the absence of more comprehensive and clearly needed reinsertion programmes, local NGOs have developed various models of education programmes to meet the needs of minors who were or are at risk of being trafficked. Programmes include integrated classes targeted at school leavers with the objective of mentoring them to a level where they can be reinserted into regular schools. Another programme is a school support programme, which tutors students in their weak areas to ensure that they do not fall behind in school or drop out. Also important are the relationships that many NGOs have built with school staff, enabling them to monitor the progress of the student. Most of these programmes have taken place in urban areas (such as Tirana, Elbasan, Berat, Korca). An expansion of these education programmes across the country and into rural areas would be beneficial.

In addition, vocational assistance is provided to older minors. This includes specialized vocational activities, such as sewing, hairdressing, carpentry, bicycle and tire repair, cobbling, plumbing and welding. Attention is paid to matching the training of the minor with the demands of the labour market, an essential component of effective vocational training. While NGOs and the government may provide some assistance with employment placement, this area requires greater attention.

This form of assistance should be seen not only as assistance to trafficking victims but also as a component of trafficking prevention. It targets not just victims who have been trafficked but also those deemed “at risk” and so seeks to prevent trafficking of the socially vulnerable as well as re-trafficking. Prevention efforts such as this should be employed more widely in source areas and for all forms of trafficking.

#### **Material Assistance and Support to Trafficked Minors and Their Families**

Given that so many victims are minors, another important intervention is engaging parents and families in the reintegration process. NGOs run information meetings for parents to engage them on a range of issues, including violence, birth registration, drug and alcohol use and, crucially, the need to prioritize their children’s education.

As many victims are trafficked in the context of migrating abroad for work, monthly material assistance is provided by some NGOs. This assistance – provided “in-kind” to ensure it is used to benefit the child – includes food, clothing, heating materials and school materials. This material assistance is essential to prevent both school drop out and migration without being so extensive as to create dependency. It covers the basic

essentials for survival and allows minors to study and parents to work beyond bare survival. This strategy is also used by some organizations as a prevention tool, with material assistance available to families and children deemed to be “at-risk”. In a further effort to stem the flow of minors to Greece during the school breaks, one NGO organizes summer camps for children at high risk of being trafficked or re-trafficked.

### **Legal Assistance**

A striking number of assisted Albanian minors trafficked abroad are not officially registered. While parents are legally obliged to register their children at birth, in practice this does not always happen. A minor’s lack of legal status not only contributes to vulnerability to trafficking but also compromises their ability to access services (i.e. health, education) upon return. In response, a few NGOs assist their beneficiaries with this legal issue, supporting and accompanying them through the registration process. This is a valuable service for this target group and efforts to ensure the registration of all Albanian citizens should be expanded. Legal assistance is also available for victims who require legal representation when they have committed a crime, on issues of guardianship, in terms of witness protection and accessing municipal services (hospital, electricity).

### **Psychological Assistance**

No agency specializes in psychological assistance for minors trafficked for begging and labour exploitation. While most service providers have social workers and, in some cases, psychologists on staff, there are no specific programmes. While social workers play an important role in the support and assistance to victims, there is a need for this more specialized psychological assistance in some instances. More attention to the psychological well-being of victims is needed, including counselling services available throughout the country, especially when so many victims are minors and trafficked for long periods of time so that the psychological affect of trafficking is likely to be pronounced.

### **Case Monitoring/Follow-up for Trafficked Minors**

Given the limited capacity of government run social services in Albania, the role of regular case monitoring and follow-up assistance for trafficked (or at-risk) minors is undertaken by NGOs. NGO social workers regularly visit children in their homes, schools and neighbourhoods and provide basic social assistance that aims to alleviate some of the economic burden due to loss of income earned by working/trafficked children.

The case monitoring performed by NGOs in Albania constitutes an example of comprehensive case follow-up. Case monitoring must be a long-term effort, with ongoing contact with the family for periods longer than a few months. This is particularly important for this target group in which family members have often been found to be complicit in trafficking. The assumption of these responsibilities by government social workers is an essential next step.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> For a discussion of some of the general obstacles to effective case monitoring, see *Case monitoring* in Section 3.2.1: *Assistance for Albanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.



### **Foster care**

Foster care represents an alternative to family reintegration in the long term. This strategy is not unique to minor victims trafficked for labour and begging but rather could be used to protect all minor victims of trafficking. For a discussion see *Foster care* in Section 3.2.1: *Assistance for Albanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

### **3.2.3 Assistance and Protection for Foreign Victims of Trafficking**

Assistance for foreign victims is geared toward their voluntary return. Victims are provided with a package of assistance while in Albania and then referred through IOM missions upon return, linking them to reintegration assistance in their home country.

### **Shelter**

The National Reception Centre for Victims of Trafficking (NRC) in Tirana is the designated shelter for foreign victims in Albania. The NRC is managed and operated by the government with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs managing the daily operations and the Ministry of Public Order providing security. IOM continues to cooperate, fund and provide technical assistance to the NRC and is still responsible for the initial screening interview of victims. The NRC provides short-term lodging and services to foreign victims.<sup>98</sup> The facility houses foreign trafficked victims in a separate building within a complex for irregular foreign migrants awaiting return. The official capacity of the centre is about 100. The facility is closed and victims can only leave the shelter accompanied by a designated escort. The victim's period of stay at the shelter relates to the time it takes to finalize identity and travel documents.

At present, there are no shelters in Albania offering dedicated long-term lodging and services for foreign victims who wish to reside in Albania for extended periods or who do not want to return home. With the impending passage of the temporary residence permit for foreign trafficking victims, it remains to be seen what accommodation will be provided to foreigners who do not wish to return home.

### **Medical and Psychological Assistance**

The medical and psychological care provided to foreign shelter beneficiaries does not differ substantially from care provided to national beneficiaries. See *Medical Care* and *Psychological Assistance* in Section 3.2.1: *Assistance for Albanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

### **Legal Assistance**

As most victims lack proper identity documents, IOM obtains necessary identification and travel documents for foreign victims. In addition, foreign beneficiaries receive legal consultations pertaining to providing testimony in court procedures as well as assistance for other issues. One foreign beneficiary who gave birth to a child in Albania received assistance regarding her child's identity documentation and legal status. Foreign victims are less likely than national victims to provide legal testimony. This

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<sup>98</sup> Due to the significant decrease in the number of foreign trafficked victims identified and referred to for assistance, the NRC also assists national victims. This is particularly the case for Albanian victims of trafficking at high risk and in need of witness protection.

may be because most foreign victims wish to return home as soon as possible, and they do not wish to delay their departure with lengthy legal proceedings.

### **Temporary Residence Permit (TRP)**

The Albanian government signed the Tirana Commitment in December 2002. There is currently a law – *Law on Foreigners No. 8492* – that includes provisions for temporary residence permits for foreigners, albeit with no specific mention of victims of trafficking. This law needs to be amended to include trafficking victims, an amendment process that is currently underway. The draft law – *On Some Additions and Amendments to Law No 8492* – allows for temporary residence permits for trafficking victims for one year and is currently before the Parliament for approval. It is expected to pass before June 2005.

While the amendments are a critical step toward the protection of victims of trafficking, one significant omission is the exclusion of male trafficking victims. Rather, the draft law specifically targets female and minor foreigners vulnerable to trafficking. On a positive side, temporary residence permits are to be included as a requisite step service to foreign victims. In addition to defining rules and standards for the issuance of the temporary visa, the government and service providers must develop an appropriate assistance framework, including medium-term shelters and rehabilitation programmes for foreign victims who reside in Albania under the temporary visa. Nevertheless, no foreign victims in Albania have yet expressed an interest in applying for a TRP.

# COUNTRY REPORT

## BOSNIA – HERZEGOVINA

This section analyzes the current situation of trafficking victims and victim assistance and protection in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The report is divided into three sections: 1) Number of Foreign and BiH Trafficking Victims Identified and Assisted, 2) Profiles of Trafficking Victims and 3) Overview of the Assistance Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The total number of foreign victims identified and assisted in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) between January 2000 and 31 December 2004 was 846.
- The total number of BiH victims identified and assisted between January 2000 and 300 December 2004 was 54.
- Bosnia-Herzegovina is a destination country for trafficking victims. There are also indications that Bosnia-Herzegovina is becoming a country of origin, with a number of nationals trafficked both abroad and internally.
- To date, no male victims of trafficking have been identified and assisted in BiH.
- Minors were represented among assisted victims. Among BiH nationals in particular, minors were prevalent. A spike in the number of assisted minors was seen in 2004, with minors accounting for 58.6 per cent of assisted BiH victims and highlighting the particular vulnerability of minors to trafficking.
- Victims, both foreign and national, were exploited primarily for sexual purposes. Only 2.5 per cent of foreign victims and 3.5 per cent of national victims in 2004 were trafficked for a purpose other than sexual exploitation.
- Many victims of sexual exploitation, it is important to note, were simultaneously exploited for labour, accounting for 7.6 per cent of foreign victims in 2003 and 15.2 per cent in 2004. Some women were required to be both dancer/entertainer and prostitute, while others were required to wash dishes, clean bars and restaurants or work as waitresses in addition to providing sexual services. At times, victims were also required to undertake domestic work for the bar owner or employer in their private homes. National victims were also exposed to dual forms of exploitation.
- A multiplicity of factors, including economic background, family relations, education and employment inform victims' vulnerability to trafficking. Both foreign and national victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina report work as the central catalyst in their migration.
- A small percentage of foreign trafficking victims had higher education; 4.8 per cent in 2003 and 2.6 per cent in 2004 had attended college or university. In both years, these victims generally originated from Moldova. This suggests that it is a misperception that only the poorly educated are trafficked.
- In 2004, there was a rise in the number of foreign victims who came from "average" economic circumstances, from 14.5 per cent in 2003 to 24.3 per cent in 2004. Further, 2.7 per cent of foreign victims in 2004 were "well-off". These findings reinforce the importance of looking beyond economics for an explanation of trafficking.

- Traffickers employed new strategies in 2003 and 2004 to regularize foreign victims' status in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Victims were in some cases required to marry their traffickers, while others were pressured to apply for asylum. Both strategies serve as a means to camouflage trafficking.
- Foreign victims reported improved living and working conditions, with many victims receiving some payment. By contrast, national victims report poor living and working conditions and received no payment. Both foreign and national victims suffered multiple forms of abuse while trafficked.
- A growing number of foreign and national trafficking victims were recruited with offers to work in prostitution.
- Whereas in 2003 the majority of recruiters of national victims were men (64.7 per cent), by 2004, the majority of recruiters were women, accounting for 57.2 per cent. Efforts at awareness raising must be cognizant of women recruiters to ensure that potential migrants are equipped with information about risks and potential traffickers.
- Members of ethnic minorities were among the assisted national victims; Roma individuals stand out as particularly vulnerable to trafficking.
- Pregnancy was an issue for many victims. One shelter reported that up to one-third of foreign victims were pregnant at identification. The number of women who were pregnant and chose to terminate the pregnancy was unknown. Pregnancy signals the need for a broader menu of services and assistance for victims – both for those who chose to terminate the pregnancy as well as those who chose to keep and raise the child. Also critical is that services for this target group are available in the countries of origin.
- A number of women were also dependent on drugs and alcohol at identification. Such victims also require specialized assistance and support.
- In terms of medical assistance, there is a need for greater sensitivity on the part of medical personnel. While service providers do not report discrimination against victims by medical care providers with whom they established informal agreements, many in the medical profession continue to confuse prostitution and trafficking, and consequently treat victims insensitively.
- The majority of foreign and national victims were identified and referred for assistance by law enforcement authorities. Other identification agencies include NGOs, citizens, clients, and self-referrals.
- Most law enforcement authorities have been trained in identifying only victims of sex trafficking, which has the practical effect of reducing or eliminating attention to identification of trafficking for labour and begging/delinquency. There is a need to develop identification signals for all forms of trafficking and profiles of victims.

- The number of assisted victims declined for several reasons, including an end to the common practice of bar raids, a shift in responsibility from the International Police Task Force (IPTF) to local authorities that temporarily created an institutional vacuum and a change in traffickers' methods.
- There is an operational referral mechanism for identifying and assisting victims, including the provision of safe houses throughout the country. The recently articulated MOUs between the government and NGOs further map out roles and responsibilities in terms of victim services.
- Overall, recreational and educational opportunities offered to beneficiaries in the shelters are limited and could be expanded to include exercise and other stress-relieving activities. It is also important to develop strategies for educational and vocational assistance for victims who reside in the shelter for longer periods.
- The assistance and protection framework for trafficking victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been geared mainly toward return assistance for adult foreign victims of sexual exploitation. With the identification of more BiH nationals, reintegration assistance is needed and should include housing assistance, job placement, educational/vocational training, counselling, etc.
- The lack of specialized assistance and protection services for minors represents a gap in the assistance framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina. While there are some provisions for minors, these should be expanded and used in greater profile.
- As of 2004, temporary residence permits (TRPs) were available to foreign trafficking victims. BiH is one of the few countries in the region with this option. While a valuable initiative, there is a need to organize assistance options for victims who receive TRPs.

## 1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND BIH TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is primarily a destination country for trafficking in women and girls for purposes of sexual exploitation. There are also recent indications that Bosnia and Herzegovina is also becoming a country of origin, with a number of BiH nationals having been trafficked in recent years both abroad and internally.

Statistics and information about assisted trafficking victims in BiH was compiled according to primary data provided by the following organizations: Lara, La Strada BiH, Foundation for Local Democracy, International Forum for Solidarity (IFS), Zena BiH, IOM Mission in Sarajevo, and Young Generation (Romania).<sup>99</sup> These figures

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<sup>99</sup> Other organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina that participated in and provided information for the RCP research include: Buducnost, State Coordinator, Ministry of Internal Affairs, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations Office of the High Commission for Human Rights (UNOHCHR).

pertain to foreign and BiH women and girls primarily trafficked for sexual exploitation, although other forms of trafficking were also documented. Examination of victim profiles is essential in considering interventions that address their needs and redress their trafficking experience.<sup>100</sup>

TABLE 1  
NUMBER OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO OR ORIGINATING FROM BIH, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign trafficking victims	200	200	275	92	79	846
BiH trafficking victims	0	0	8	17	29	54

The figures presented in the table above comprise the number of trafficked foreign victims assisted in BiH and voluntarily returned to their countries of origin. Victims who were identified as trafficked but refused return assistance were not included. In addition, the table includes the number of BiH victims identified abroad as well as those identified within the country. To capture the full scope of trafficking in BiH nationals, there is a need to access information from destination countries outside of SEE. While the RCP sought to collect victim data from a range of destination countries within the European Union, for the most part these efforts were met with reluctance or resistance due to limited resources, insufficient staff time or internal regulations about information sharing.

The decrease in the number of foreign victims identified and assisted in BiH over the past two years is striking. Of particular note is the decrease from 275 in 2002 to 92 in 2003, a decrease of 66.6 per cent. While 2004 also represents a decrease from previous years, the number of assisted victims (79) was not a substantial decrease from 2003.

To some degree, the spike in identification and assistance of victims in 2002 is due to increased referrals resulting from bar raids by the International Police Task Force (IPTF) STOP teams. As such, the decline in the number of identified and assisted victims can be linked partly to the dissolution of IPTF in December 2003. The sudden shift in responsibilities – from UN to local authorities – temporarily created an institutional vacuum, with local authorities lacking the capacity and resources to immediately assume all responsibilities. This transition had a direct effect on the identification of victims, with fewer counter-trafficking operations conducted during the first several months of 2003. In addition, police tactics in BiH shifted from raids to more systematic and time-consuming investigations, which in the short-term yield fewer identified victims. Simultaneously, use of more sophisticated methods by traffickers has resulted in victims increasingly being kept in private houses and apartments, with clients using taxi drivers privately hired by traffickers. Traffickers are also exerting less overt control over victims, instead using psychological pressure as a means of control. The combination of these changes in Bosnia and Herzegovina has translated into a decreased number of trafficking victims being identified and referred for assistance.

While there is clearly a decrease in identified and assisted victims, most counter-trafficking actors maintain that the number of victims trafficked to and, increasingly,

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<sup>100</sup> For a full discussion of how data was collected and the methodology used, please see: *Introduction*.

from BiH remains high. The number presented in the table above refers only to victims identified and assisted by service providers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Secondary information, however, indicates the continued presence of trafficking victims throughout the country. A recent IOM assessment found that in one motel in Tuzla, the European Police Mission (EUPM) were aware of approximately 50 trafficking victims (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 47). Further, victims themselves reported other victims being held at locations where they had been working. In 2003 and 2004, only 13.9 per cent and 18.2 per cent of victims respectively reported that they worked in a location where they were the only victim. Some victims – 33.3 per cent in 2003 and 25 per cent in 2004 – reported that ten to 15 other women worked at that location.<sup>101</sup>

While the number of identified and assisted foreign victims of trafficking declined significantly in 2003 and 2004, there was simultaneously a dramatic increase in the identification and assistance of national victims, from eight in 2002 to 29 in 2004. It is unclear whether the spike in national victims is due to the emergence of BiH as a country of origin or to the increased recognition of BiH national victims. The visibility of service providers may also serve to explain in part why growing numbers of national victims were identified in the country, especially through self-referral.<sup>102</sup>

Some indirect indicators of trafficking cast light on potential arenas in which trafficking may occur. In 2003, 957 migration-related border apprehensions of both BiH and foreign nationals were made by BiH authorities, 25 of whom were women. This represents a dramatic increase from 390 in 2002, of which four were women (Futo and Jandl, 2004: 35). In 2003, 22 minors (BiH and foreign nationals) were apprehended at the border due to border violations, three of whom were female (Futo and Jandl, 2004: 35). Between 1 January and 31 July 2004, a minimum of 529 illegal migrants were identified in BiH, of whom 42 were women, 41 were men and 446 whose sex was undocumented. Seven were minors.<sup>103</sup> Similarly, in 2003, 264 female illegal aliens registered at Sarajevo airport, 114 from Moldova, 75 from Ukraine and 76 from Romania. Analysis of Sarajevo airport departures of citizens of Moldova, Ukraine and Romania between March and December 2003 shows that most were females who had been residing illegally in BiH (UNOHCHR, 2004: 8). The continued prevalence, even rise, of illegal migration (especially female) signals the possibility, if not probability, that trafficking in persons continues to, through and from BiH.

## 2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

In this section, we analyze the profiles and experiences of both foreign trafficking victims (see Section 2.1) and BiH trafficking victims (Section 2.2). Victim needs are

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<sup>101</sup> In 2003, 86.1 per cent of victims were exploited alongside other victims – 19.4 per cent were kept with one to five other victims, 13.9 per cent with five to ten other victims, 33.3 per cent with ten to 15 other victims, 5.6 per cent with 15 to 20 other victims and 13.9 per cent with more than 20 victims. In 2004, 81.8 per cent of victims were exploited alongside other victims – 15.9 per cent with one to five other victims, 38.6 per cent with five to ten other victims, 25 per cent with ten to 15 other victims and 2.3 per cent with 15-20 other victims.

<sup>102</sup> This trend is not unique to BiH but rather is part of a regional trend in which traditional countries of destination and transit, such as Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia and Macedonia, are increasingly being recognized as countries of origin.

<sup>103</sup> Information collected from Ministry of Internal Affairs from Livno, Sarajevo, Tuzla and Lukavica.



intimately informed by their specific trafficking experience. Understanding victims' backgrounds as well as the precise nature of recruitment, transportation and exploitation is an essential starting point in the development of appropriate assistance and services for victims.

## 2.1 Foreign Victims of Trafficking Assisted in Bosnia-Herzegovina

There have been substantial decreases in the number of foreign victims identified and assisted in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). A sharp decline was witnessed in 2003 and while the decline continued in 2004, it was far less pronounced.

TABLE 2  
MINIMUM NUMBER OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Trafficked victims	200	200	275	92	79	846

The vast majority of assisted foreign victims were trafficked to BiH for sexual exploitation. However, a number of victims were exploited both sexually and for labour purposes. In addition, a handful of instances involved trafficking for labour. See *Forms of Trafficking* in the subsequent section: *Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked to BiH*.

### 2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked to Bosnia-Herzegovina

The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of foreign victims assisted in BiH who had been trafficked primarily, although not exclusively, for sexual exploitation.

#### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics<sup>104</sup>

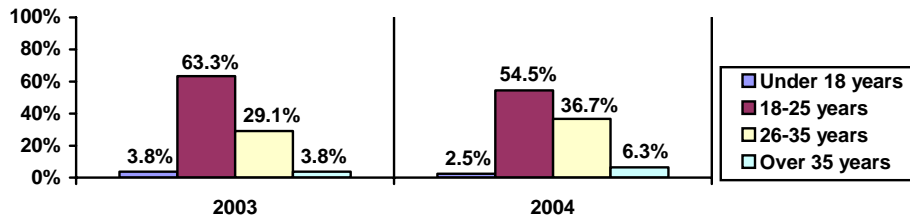
**Sex:** All foreign trafficking victims assisted in BiH were women. This is generally consistent with the profile throughout the region.<sup>105</sup>

**Age:** The majority of victims were between 18 and 25 years when identified in Bosnia-Herzegovina. This is consistent with findings between 2000 and 2003, in which the majority of foreign victims were between 18 and 25 years old.

<sup>104</sup> The analysis of victim profiles for 2003 is based on the profiles of the 79 victims for whom there was comprehensive data available. In 2004, the victim profile is based on all 79 assisted victims. Nevertheless, even where comprehensive profiles are documented not all questions were responded to by all victims.

<sup>105</sup> There are signals to the contrary, including two Moldovan men trafficked to Macedonia for labour and sexual exploitation but never assisted (see *Moldova and Macedonia country reports*); BiH male minors being sexual exploited (see *Sex* section: *Victim Profiles for BiH Victims of Trafficking*); and Romanian male minors trafficked for sexual exploitation to the EU (see *Romania Country Report*).

GRAPH 1  
AGE OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004



Victims between 26 and 35 years of age accounted for the second largest group – 29.1 per cent in 2003 and 36.7 per cent in 2004. This increase over the past two years occurred alongside a slight decrease of victims in the 18 to 25 year category, attributable either to a change in victim profiles or to long periods spent trafficked. Of note is the small percentage of minors trafficked to BiH. At identification, minors accounted for only 3.8 per cent of victims in 2003 and 2.5 per cent in 2004. Minors were from Serbia, Montenegro and Romania.<sup>106</sup> Still, it is likely that some victims identified as adults were, in fact, minors when they were recruited, as most service providers do not systematically record the victim’s age at recruitment.

**Country of origin:** In both 2003 and 2004, victims of sexual exploitation in BiH originated primarily from Moldova, Ukraine and Romania, as outlined in the table below.

TABLE 3  
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2000 TO 2004

Country of Origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Belarus	1	4	1	1	1	8
Bulgaria	0	0	1	0	1	2
Germany	0	0	0	1	0	1
Hungary	1	0	0	0	2	3
Moldova	97	80	109	38	27	351
Romania	65	89	92	12	14	272
Russia	2	6	11	4	1	24
Serbia and Montenegro	2	6	6	9	9	32
Ukraine	32	15	32	15	24	118
Unknown <sup>107</sup>	0	0	23	12	0	35
Total	200	200	275	92	79	846

<sup>106</sup> The Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro are constituent states of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. However, they are analyzed here as separate republics in an effort to better understand the specifics of trafficking. This should in no way be read as a political statement by the RCP. Similarly, while Kosovo is a province within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, it is also considered separately to better pinpoint trafficking patterns and risks. This, too, should not be read as a political statement on the part of the RCP.

<sup>107</sup> In some instances, the victim’s country of origin was not recorded by the service provider. This was generally the case when the victim was assisted for only a very short time.

While the number of Moldovans has been relatively constant over time – representing 39.6 per cent of assisted victims in 2002, 41.3 per cent in 2003 and 34.2 per cent in 2004 – other nationalities have decreased. Romanian victims accounted for 32.5 per cent of victims in 2002, but only 13 per cent in 2003 and 19.2 per cent in 2004. The number of Russians identified in BiH also decreased, with only one case in 2004, or 1.3 per cent. Other nationalities represented in previous years, such as Bulgarian, Belorussian and Serbian and Montenegrin, were not represented among assisted victims in 2004.

These findings signal the possibility that routes and destinations are changing, consistent with findings from other countries in the region. For example, there are suggestions that Romanian victims were trafficked directly to the EU as a consequence of the waiving of *Schengen* visa. This might also account for the decrease in Romanian victims assisted in BiH.

Also striking is the presence of victims from some less usual countries of origin in 2003 and 2004. One German was assisted in 2003 and two Hungarians in 2004. While Hungary was a country of origin for trafficking victims in the past, Hungarians have not generally been trafficked to the Balkans.

**Ethnicity:** As service providers do not systematically document the ethnicity of assisted victims, there is limited information available on this subject. One service provider reported assisting one victim of Roma ethnicity, which suggests the possibility that some foreign victims in BiH have been from ethnic minorities. Case management should ideally capture this indicator in the future to accurately record risks of trafficking as well as identify any needs for tailored assistance.

**Area of origin:** In both 2001 and 2002, 84 per cent of victims were from urban areas, including capital cities. This trend continued in 2003 and 2004, with 80.9 per cent and 78.9 per cent of victims respectively originating from urban areas. While the majority urban dwellers in 2003 and 2004 were from towns, some were also from capital cities (five in 2003 and three in 2004).

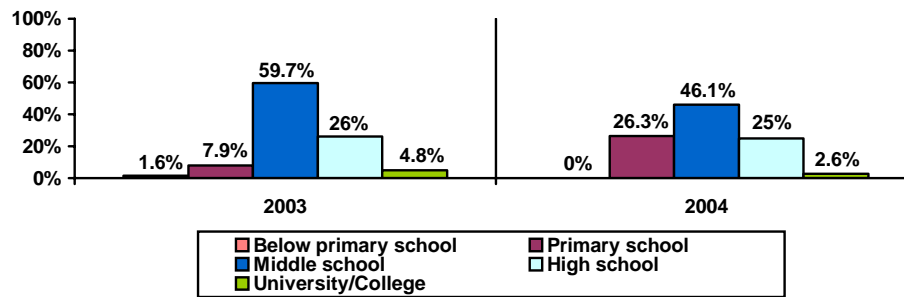
As the majority of victims in 2003 and 2004 originated from Moldova, Romania and Ukraine, these percentages are consistent with the demographic composition of Romanian and Ukrainian society in which 55.1 per cent and 67.9 per cent of the population respectively are urban dwellers. It is also consistent with data from Romanian organizations, which have noted a higher rate of recruitment of victims in urban areas. Nevertheless, the majority of the population in Moldova (58.4 per cent) reside in rural areas and it is these areas that are generally perceived to be the main recruitment grounds. This finding seemingly contradicts this and signals the need for awareness raising and prevention efforts in urban as well as rural areas in countries of origin.

**Education:**<sup>108</sup> The majority of assisted foreign victims in BiH had middle school education in both years, while a significant minority had high school education.

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<sup>108</sup> Primary school refers to grades one to four, middle school refers to grades five to eight, and high school refers to grades nine through twelve.

GRAPH 2  
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004



Perhaps most striking, however, is the percentage of victims who had higher education; 4.8 per cent in 2003 and 2.6 per cent in 2004 had attended college or university. In both years, these victims mostly originated from Moldova. In Moldova, the female net enrolment<sup>109</sup> at tertiary level is 33 per cent (UNDP, 2004), which means that these victims are among a minority of women in Moldova with higher-level learning. Such findings seems to belie assertions that it is only the poorly educated who migrate. It also speaks to the reality of limited economic options as catalysts for trafficking/migration in countries such as Moldova, Ukraine and Romania,<sup>110</sup> even among those with high levels of education. Relatively high educational attainment in many countries of origin, such as Romania and Moldova, does not translate into good economic and professional opportunities, making even highly-educated individuals vulnerable to trafficking.

Still, the number of victims with only primary school education in 2004 increased substantially, from eight per cent in 2003 to 26.3 per cent in 2004. Women with lower education are clearly especially vulnerable. For this group, it is important to consider not only prevention efforts but also their specific educational and training needs when developing reintegration plans upon their return home.

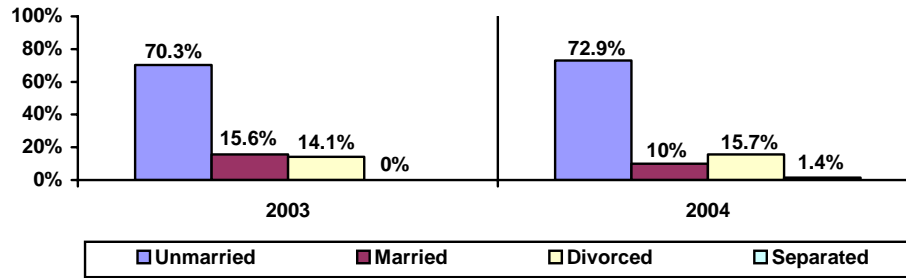
**Mental or physical disabilities:** None of the service providers in 2003 and 2004 reported victims trafficked for sexual exploitation with mental or physical disabilities.

**Marital and family status:** Most assisted foreign victims were unmarried, consistent with findings throughout destination countries in SEE. Victims' unmarried status (implying a degree of personal freedom when the victim is without both spouse and children) may increase willingness to accept work abroad.

<sup>109</sup> Female net enrolment is the number of students enrolled in a level of education who are of official school age for that level, as a percentage of the population of official school age for that level.

<sup>110</sup> In Romania and Ukraine, most women attend secondary school. The female net enrollment at secondary level in these countries is 81 per cent and 91 per cent respectively (UNDP, 2004).

GRAPH 3  
MARITAL STATUS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004



Of the 38 victims who responded to this question, 42.1 per cent in 2003 were mothers of either one or two children, while the remaining 57.9 per cent were childless. Mothers have some specific assistance needs, including the option of accommodation with their children, programmes that support the development of good parenting skills, family counselling to help reconcile families separated by trafficking/migration, etc.

While the limited responses make it difficult to calculate the precise rate of single motherhood, available information suggests quite high rates in 2003 and 2004. According to data from IOM (which accounts for approximately 60 per cent of foreign victims assisted in BiH), 11.5 per cent of mothers in 2003 were either single or divorced. In 2004, this number increased dramatically, to 32 per cent.

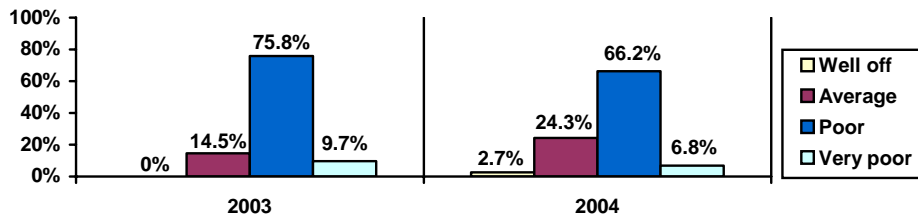
The rate of single motherhood is important in that it may signal a site of vulnerability to trafficking where the woman is the family's primary source of income and has limited economic options in the country of origin. In both years, these single or divorced mothers were primarily from Moldova, Ukraine or Romania. There is likely a special need to support the reintegration of single mothers, who are often socially and economically vulnerable. As a corollary, consideration of victims with other dependents is valuable. As women are responsible for the care and support of parents, siblings and elderly relatives in many countries, systematically documenting a victim's dependents could serve as another, at least partial, explanation of trafficking victimization.

**Economic Status:**<sup>111</sup> The majority of victims in both 2003 (75.8 per cent) and 2004 (66.2 per cent) reported being "poor". This is consistent with the common assertion that poverty is one of the primary push factors for trafficking. However, given the overall poor economic conditions in many countries of origin, this may not be a distinguishing characteristic. There are many "poor" families and individuals who are not trafficked, making poverty *per se* an insufficient explanation.<sup>1</sup> This aspect of trafficking should be examined in more depth; focusing on the characteristics and behaviours of at risk groups who avoid victimization as well as those of victims can be valuable in developing more effective prevention strategies.

In addition, a minority of victims come from what they describe as "very poor" economic circumstances, although there was a slight decrease in this category in 2004.

<sup>111</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim's self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of "poor" or "average" vary accordingly.

GRAPH 4  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004



Also notable is the rise in victims who come from “average” economic circumstances, up from 14.5 per cent in 2003 to 24.3 per cent in 2004. Further, 2.7 per cent of assisted victims in 2004 came from “well-off” economic circumstances. Material aspirations, as much as need, can be an important push factor for trafficking.

Family and social relations:<sup>112</sup> Another presumed contributor to trafficking is poor family relations and conflict. Among assisted victims in BiH, domestic violence was a problem for some. In 2003, 20.3 per cent of victims reported domestic violence in their homes. This number decreased substantially in 2004 with only 1.3 per cent of victims reporting domestic violence and 7.6 per cent reporting alcohol abuse in the family.

However, this is a difficult indicator to interpret for a number of reasons. First, abuse is subjective and what a victim perceives to be “normal family relations” may be considered abusive by a service provider. Second, information about abuse is quite intimate and victims may not feel comfortable speaking about this until some time has passed and/or they have developed a trusting relationship with the counsellor. This may not be possible in a destination country like BiH, where stays tend to be short. As such, it is useful to cross-correlate these findings with those of service providers in Moldova and Romania, where the majority of assisted victims originate and receive longer-term assistance and reintegration. This data reveals that violence and problems within the home are not uncommon among many assisted victims. This difference in data supports the idea that victims may be reluctant to divulge experiences of abuse before establishing a relationship of trust with a counsellor.

The rate of single-parent families among foreign trafficking victims in BiH was 10.1 per cent in 2003 and 12.7 per cent in 2004. While single-parent families are often socially and economically vulnerable, they are not necessarily the most vulnerable nor are they necessarily more conflictual. More detail is also needed to disentangle how, when and whether single-parent families are sites of vulnerability.

Vulnerability to trafficking may lie in more subtle family tensions and behaviours.<sup>113</sup> Vulnerability might also be increased by the normative nature of migration from some

<sup>112</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims’ self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim’s individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim’s relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

<sup>113</sup> In Romania, the source of a number of foreign victims in BiH, one survey of risk factors noted that parents of vulnerable girls were less likely than parents of average girls to talk to their daughter about her problems or discuss sexual matters or intimate problems (Alexandru and Lazaroiu, 2003: 31).

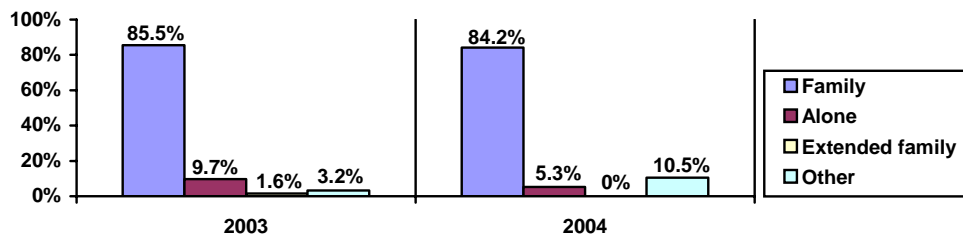
source countries such as Moldova and Romania, as parents may pressure their daughters to migrate to find work. In addition, women or girls who are rebellious, adventurous or independent minded may be particularly at risk, given their willingness to break with social convention. Also salient may be social relations more generally. It is possible that victims are less integrated socially than their peers, lack a social safety net, or the like. In any case, it is important to consider trafficking within context of the victim's broader social terrain and to look beyond economics and more deeply at the myriad aspects of victims' life stories.

At the same time, a number of foreign victims in both years reported normal family relations and no conflict in the home. It is also important not to assume that family relations are the singular contributor to trafficking vulnerability.

### Recruitment Experiences

**Living situation at recruitment:** The vast majority of assisted victims were living with family at recruitment, highlighting that family environments often do not protect against trafficking and, in some circumstances, may even contribute to vulnerability. This statistic flags the need for prevention programmes in BiH, as in many countries in the region, that target families as a whole alongside those for specific target groups.<sup>114</sup> It also raises questions about the return and reintegration of the victims, including the feasibility and sustainability of the return environment. Reintegration efforts must take into account the specificities of family living situations, including the need for family assessment, family mediation and counselling, material assistance, etc.

GRAPH 5  
LIVING SITUATION AT RECRUITMENT OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004



In both 2003 and 2004, a number of victims were also living alone when recruited (9.7 per cent and 5.3 per cent respectively). This can indicate a problematic family background, which the victim has sought to escape, or having been raised in an institution without a family or other social support network.<sup>115</sup> It may also signal a victim's independence or adventurism. Victims not residing with families at recruitment will likely require reintegration assistance that includes help accessing alternative housing as well as support in the process of social integration.

<sup>114</sup> However, to undertake such prevention efforts, more specific information is needed, such as the composition of the family at recruitment. It would also be useful to cross-correlate this information with other indicators, such as economic background and family relations.

<sup>115</sup> A childhood spent in institutions informs individual's development and negotiation skills. Further, individuals leaving institutions lack a safety net or social support, which in most societies is provided by the family or extended family, perhaps making them particularly vulnerable to trafficking.

One limitation of the data presented is that it is reflective only of the victim's living situation at recruitment. In many instances the individual may have lived previously in another environment, such as an institution, that may have contributed to trafficking. More information is needed about past and present living arrangements to accurately pinpoint trafficking risk.

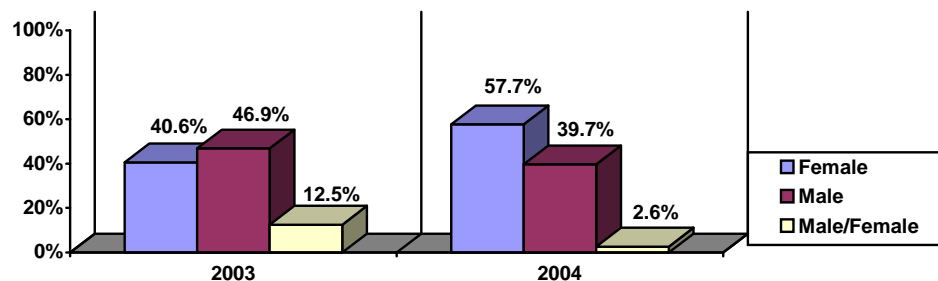
**Working situation at recruitment:** Information about the working situation of victims is limited for both 2003 and 2004. Of those who provided responses, 97.6 per cent in 2003 and 94.7 per cent in 2004 were employed at recruitment, as industrial workers, as waitresses, domestic workers, entertainers, *au pairs*, laundry worker and self-employed.

These numbers suggest that among victims trafficked to BiH, employment was not the critical push factor. Even in circumstances where a person is employed in the home, s/he may be willing to migrate, including taking substantial risks in the migration process, in an effort to realize personal and material aspiration. When combined with generally poor (and, at best, "average") economic circumstances or limited life options, employment alone is not a sufficient deterrent to trafficking/migration.

Available data does not indicate whether victims were working in their fields of expertise, the level of pay relative to the cost of living or whether victims of trafficking were underemployed. Such details would extend our insight into what serves as an impetus for migration as well as forcing us to think beyond the unemployed as our target group for trafficking prevention.

**Recruiter:** A noteworthy trend is the increase in victims recruited by a female recruiter. Female recruiters accounted for 57.7 per cent of victim recruitment in 2004, an increase from 40.6 per cent in 2003. Female recruiters were primarily responsible for the recruitment of Moldovan, Romanian and Ukrainian victims, and were apparently more common in these countries than in neighbouring Serbia and Montenegro. In addition, a decreasing percentage of victims were recruited by male/female pairs, accounting for 12.5 per cent in 2003 and declining to 2.6 per cent in 2004.

GRAPH 6  
SEX OF RECRUITER OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004

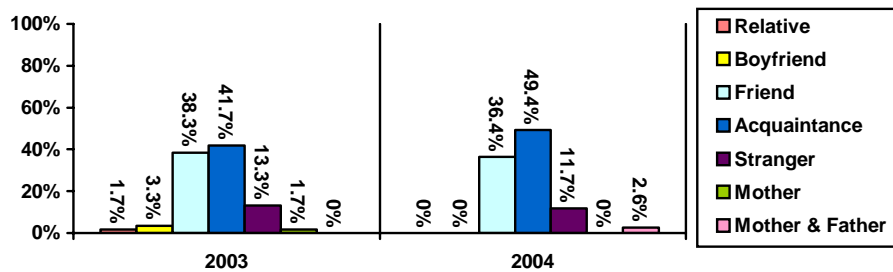


In 2003, most victims were recruited by someone known to them. In some cases, this was by someone very close to them – a friend (38.3 per cent), relative (1.7 per cent),



boyfriend (3.3 per cent)<sup>116</sup> or mother (1.7 per cent). In other cases, the relationship was more distant, as in an acquaintance (41.7 per cent). Nevertheless, that so many victims (86.7 per cent) were recruited by a person they knew signals the ease of manipulation by trusted persons. This finding is relatively consistent with information from 2004 when few victims (11.7 per cent) were recruited by strangers. The vast majority of recruiters had a personal relationship with the victim – as a friend (36.4 per cent), parent (2.6 per cent) or acquaintance (49.4 per cent).

GRAPH 7  
RELATIONSHIP TO RECRUITER OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004

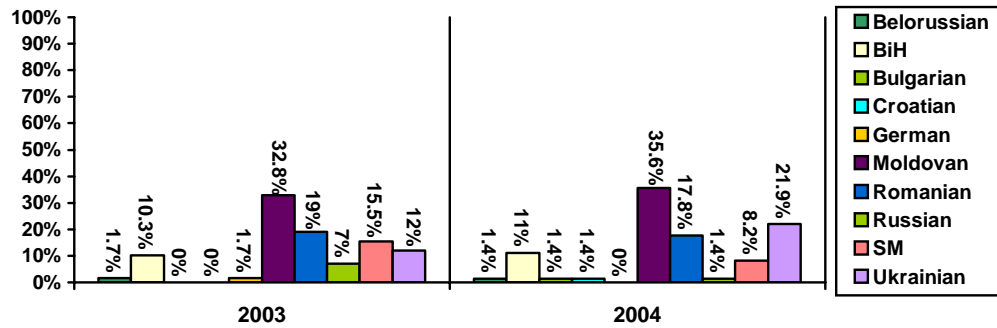


In a noteworthy number of instances, the recruiter had been or continued to be a victim of trafficking. Victims returned home for a visit under instruction to recruit other women (their friends and acquaintances), often under the scrutiny of persons who work for the traffickers at the destination to prevent escape. This recruitment technique has implications for prevention, prosecution, and reintegration strategies. In terms of prevention, it implies the difficult task of warning women not to trust their own friends and peers. It has legal implications for the victim/recruiter who becomes complicit in the crime. It indicates the reach of some traffickers into home communities of victims, affecting the feasibility of reintegration programmes as well as willingness and advisability of victims serving as witnesses in court proceedings. Traffickers' close links to victims and/or their families serves to deter the victims' participation in criminal proceedings.

In 2003, the largest number of recruiters (32.8 per cent) were from Moldova, with Romanian nationals (19 per cent) and Serbian and Montenegrin nationalities (15.5 per cent) also featuring prominently. This is generally consistent with the nationality of foreign victims assisted in 2003. In 2004, 35.6 per cent of recruiters were from Moldova, with Ukrainian and Romanian nationalities at 21.9 per cent and 17.8 per cent respectively. This is also relatively consistent with the nationality of identified victims in 2004.

<sup>116</sup> In 2003, only a few victims report being recruited by a boyfriend. While only a small percentage of cases (3.3 per cent) in BiH, this recruitment method (known as the the “lover boy” phenomenon) has been noted in other countries in the region. The “lover bo” method, noted in the Netherlands and other EU countries, is one in which the man initiates a relationship with the girl/woman with the intention of exploiting and trafficking her. For further explanation of this specific recruitment technique, see Noten and van den Borne, 2004. See also *Serbia and Romania Country Report* for further detail of this strategy in SEE.

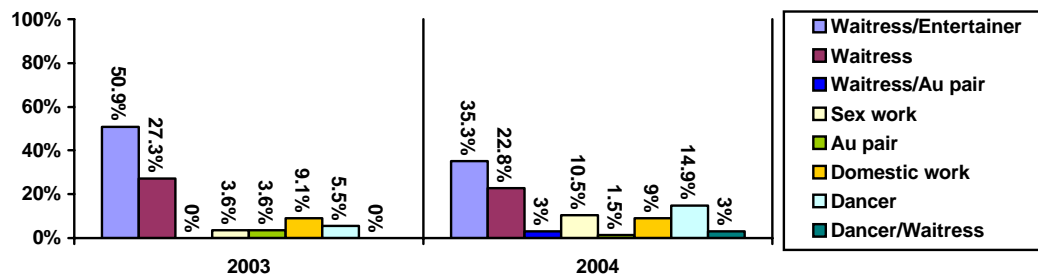
GRAPH 8  
NATIONALITY OF RECRUITER OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004



While the majority of recruiters were of the same nationality as victims, service providers in BiH reported an increasing percentage of foreign victims recruited in their home countries by Bosnian traffickers. In 2003 and 2004, 10.3 per cent and 11 per cent respectively were recruited by BiH nationals. It appears that this is an emerging trend and awareness-raising efforts should take this into account.<sup>117</sup>

**Reasons for leaving home country and type of work promised:** Victims assisted in BiH left home seeking primarily employment abroad. As one service provider explained, the women were grateful to receive an offer of work because the salaries offered were often unattainable in their home country, especially relative to their general education level. The lack of opportunities in home countries is a central issue for many victims of trafficking. In all instances, the type of work offered was in the service sector – as a waitress, dancer, domestic worker and au pair/babysitter.

GRAPH 9  
TYPE OF WORK PROMISED TO FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004



Worth noting is the number of victims in both 2003 and 2004 who were offered and accepted work in prostitution at recruitment – 3.6 per cent in 2003 and 10.5 per cent in 2004. As well, work as a dancer was increasingly accepted and, given the increased awareness of trafficking for sexual exploitation in the region, many women may have suspected the possibility of sex-related activities at recruitment. Indeed, nine of the 49 foreign victims assisted by IOM in 2003 (or 18.4 per cent) were aware that they would work in this arena. This number spiked in 2004 to 37.7 per cent. That women were increasingly cognizant at recruitment of the type of work to be performed raises questions about the focus of many prevention efforts and suggests that these might be

<sup>117</sup> Similarly, while Hungarians were among the assisted victims in 2004, no recruiters originated from this country. In addition, one recruiter was Croatian in 2004, despite no victims originating from Croatia.

more appropriately tailored toward safe migration and mitigating trafficking risks, rather than on prevention of prostitution.

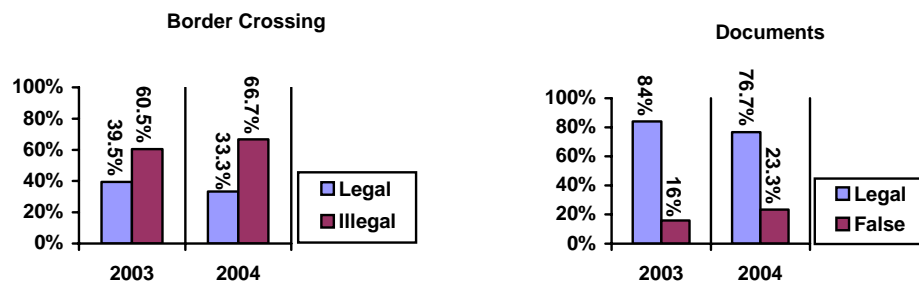
In a few cases – 6.7 per cent in 2003 and 4.3 per cent in 2004 – victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were made promises other than work. A number of victims were promised marriage (3.4 per cent in 2003 and 2.9 per cent in 2004). Other more unusual promises were also made. In 1.7 per cent of cases in 2003 and 1.4 per cent in 2004, victims were recruited through the promise of tourism. In addition, in 2003, one victim (or 1.7 per cent) was recruited by friends who offered to assist her in entering a drug rehabilitation programme in Medjugorje in BiH.

Other reasons for leaving home may be tied to the victim’s social and family context. In a handful of cases, victims came from violent homes, which may have contributed to their willingness to migrate or accept an offer of work abroad.

### Transportation and Movement

**Border crossings and documents:** In both 2003 and 2004, the majority of foreign victims identified and assisted in BiH crossed at illegal border crossings.

GRAPH 10  
BORDER CROSSING AND DOCUMENTS – FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004



By contrast, many victims carried legal documents in both years. Of those who responded to this question, the majority used legal documents – 84 per cent in 2003 and 76.7 per cent in 2004. Those victims who travelled on false documents were primarily Moldovan. The use of legal documents in the transportation process is an emergent strategy of traffickers to subvert identification of victims by law enforcement and to camouflage the trafficking process in a guise of legal travel. This method is effective not only in averting suspicion from law enforcement but also with victims who, until their arrival at the destination, may not recognize that they are being trafficked.

While these victims left home with legal documents, most had their travel documents confiscated by traffickers or they never received them from the recruiters who had arranged the necessary documents in their home country. Lack of documents amplifies the vulnerability of victims as, even when they escape trafficking, they are without the means to cross borders and return home.

**Transportation Routes:** As most of the foreign victims came from Moldova, Romania and Ukraine, they were usually transported by car. Almost all victims entered Bosnia-Herzegovina overland through Serbia *via* Belgrade or Vojvodina. The total travel time ranged from a couple of days to a couple of weeks. Some victims entered BiH through

the Sarajevo International Airport, which served to further camouflage the transportation process.

In 2003, most women were trafficked to BiH in small groups, with 40.6 per cent of victims travelling in groups of more than one person, while 34.4 per cent travelled with just one other victim. Only 25 per cent of victims travelled alone. This changed somewhat in 2004, with 42.6 per cent of victims trafficked alone. The remaining victims were trafficked with one other person (38.3 per cent) or in a group of more than one person (19.2 per cent). It is unclear why this has changed but may be linked to law enforcement authorities' increased suspicion of one man travelling with many women.

A recent criminal assessment found that BiH is also used as a transit country for foreign trafficking victims *en route* to the EU. Victims were trafficked from Nigeria, the Middle East and China (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 49).

**Intended destination:** The majority of victims in both 2003 and 2004 were aware of their final destination – 70 per cent in 2003 and 68.7 per cent in 2004. It is perhaps not surprising that many victims were aware that BiH was their final destination, as BiH is often seen as an “acceptable” destination country within the region, when compared to destinations such as Serbia, Montenegro and The Province of Kosovo.

TABLE 4  
INTENDED DESTINATION OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004

Intended Country of Destination	2003	2004
BiH	42	46
Czech Republic	1	1
Greece	0	1
Hungary	0	1
Italy	11	12
Serbia and Montenegro	4	6
Slovenia	1	0
Spain	1	0
Unknown	32	12
Total	92	79

### Victims Trafficking Experiences

**Forms of Trafficking:** The majority of foreign victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 were trafficked for sexual exploitation, as detailed in the chart below. These victims accounted for 89.1 per cent in 2003 and 82.3 per cent in 2004. Nevertheless, their specific experiences varied substantially.

TABLE 5  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Sexual exploitation	82	65
Sexual and labour exploitation	7	12
Labour exploitation	3	2
Begging	0	0
Total	92	79

Sexual exploitation in BiH takes place in a variety of venues. In the past, victims were sexually exploited in bars and nightclubs where clients came to solicit sexual services. More recently, these services tend to be offered in more private locations in an effort to thwart law enforcement. Two Romanian sisters were forced to work as striptease dancers in a bar in a private house located in a forest. In addition, women worked through escort agencies and were driven to the client in taxis.<sup>118</sup> A recent IOM criminal assessment reported victims kept in private locations where, in addition to providing sexual service to clients, they were obliged to perform live sex shows over the Internet (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 46). While assisted victims in 2003 and 2004 were not exploited in this way, it is worth remaining alert to this potential manifestation of trafficking.<sup>119</sup> These less visible locations are also an effort to camouflage trafficking victims and possibly a response to increased awareness of trafficking among law enforcement as well as among the public more generally.

Many victims of sexual exploitation were simultaneously exploited for labour, accounting for 7.6 per cent of victims in 2003 and 15.2 per cent in 2004.<sup>120</sup> Some women were required to be both dancer/entertainer and prostitute, depending on the demands of the clients. Where women worked in a nightclub or bar, they were often required to wash dishes, clean the bar and restaurant, or work as a waitress in addition to providing sexual services. At times, victims were also required to undertake domestic work for the bar owner or employer in private homes. In one striking instance of dual forms of exploitation, albeit from 2002, six women were forced to work in agriculture, labouring in the fields during the daytime and subsequently providing sexual services in a bar in the night. The precise nature of these dual forms of exploitation in BiH in 2003 and 2004 are detailed in the table below.

TABLE 6  
DUAL FORMS OF EXPLOITATION OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004

Forms of Trafficking/ Exploitation	2003	2004
Sex work/dancer	4	8
Sex work/dancer/waitress	1	3
Sex work/dancer/ <i>au pair</i>	1	0
Sex work/housekeeper	1	0
Sex work/waitress	0	1
Total	7	12

Sometimes a woman, after working in a bar for some time, was “bought” by a client and moved into his home where she was required to provide both sexual and domestic services.<sup>121</sup> This pattern was first noted in 2003. Generally, the victim is at the disposal

<sup>118</sup> In 2003, 34.4 per cent of foreign victims were exploited in these private locations. Of interest, far fewer assisted victims in 2004 – only 12 per cent – were exploited in these private locations.

<sup>119</sup> A similar phenomenon has been noted in Moldova and Romania. See *Moldova and Romania Country Reports*.

<sup>120</sup> Dual forms of exploitation – for labour and sexual purposes – have been noted in other countries/entities in the region, including Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Croatia and Macedonia.

<sup>121</sup> This example differs from another trend noted in 2003 and 2004 in which women were “bought” or helped to escape by a man, generally a client and subsequently lived with him in a genuine relationship. In 2004, two women, who had initially been trafficked to BiH but were now in this type of relationship, approached IOM for assistance in

of one man, although there were also instances in which the victim was obliged to provide sexual service to his friends. One woman married one of her clients and was then forced to work around the house as well as provide him with sexual service. In principle, this arrangement may appear preferable to sexually servicing multiple men in the bar. However, it does amplify the victim's isolation and vulnerability as she has little or no contact with anyone apart from the man. Moreover, a number of victims were abused while living in this situation.

Also striking is the recent tactic of forcing the woman to marry the bar owner to regularize her status in the country. This was done after a length of time when the victim might be at risk of seeking assistance and was intended to exert additional control over her. In most cases, she stayed at the bar and continued her work, although sometimes she was required to serve as "wife" to the owner. In 2003 and 2004, three such cases were documented. Another strategy was pressuring the woman to request asylum as a means to regularize her status. While the victim's application was processed, she continued to be exploited by her trafficker. Three such cases were documented in 2004.

While sexual exploitation was the main reason for which assisted foreign victims were trafficked, other forms of exploitation were documented. In a handful of cases – three in 2003 and two in 2004 – foreign victims were trafficked for labour exploitation. In one case in 2003, a Ukrainian woman lived temporarily in BiH and started a relationship with a Bosnian man. After she returned to Ukraine he contacted her, promising marriage. When she returned to BiH, she was taken to his home where she was forced to take care of his elderly mother as well as clean the house and prepare meals. She was later also required to care for his ailing uncle. If she did not perform her duties to his satisfaction, she was physically abused. In 2003, victims of labour exploitation worked as seamstress/waitress, domestic worker, caregiver and waitress; in 2004, the two victims were waitresses.

In addition, recent UNICEF research on trafficking in minors found that a number of minors engaged in begging and labour fit the trafficking definition as articulated in the Palermo Protocol. An estimated five to ten per cent of minors were moved in organized groups across national borders primarily for forced labour and begging. The majority originated from Serbia and Montenegro (UNICEF and STC, 2004: 35). However, it must be stressed that to date there have been no such cases identified and assisted by service providers. The degree to which this gap is reflective of identification procedures requires consideration.

The experiences of victims trafficked to BiH were quite diverse and there was no "typical" trafficking victim. This makes vivid the need to tailor assistance to individual cases. Understanding victims' experiences of exploitation, both singular and multiple, is valuable in developing appropriate assistance. Victims trafficked for labour but who have also been sexually exploited require many of the same forms of assistance as victims trafficked for prostitution. Victims exploited for criminal activities may require tailored legal assistance to avoid prosecution. Attention to the precise forms of exploitation is an appropriate starting point in both the development and assessment of assistance frameworks.

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acquiring documents to return legally to their home countries. Their intention was to legally re-enter BiH and continue the relationship.

**Length of time trafficked:** The length of time trafficked varied from a few months to several years. Increasingly, however, victims were trafficked for longer periods. The majority of victims assisted in 2004 were trafficked for two to three years. Six victims were trafficked for four years.

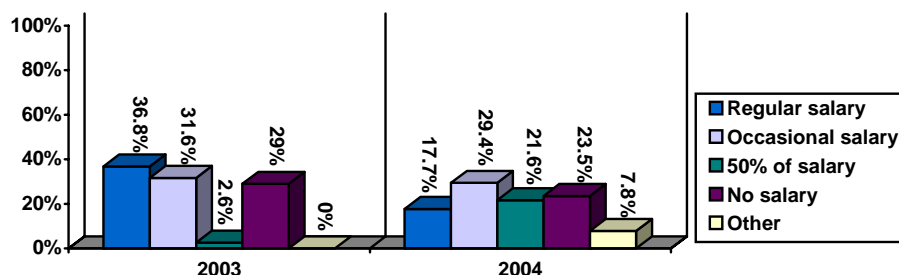
Time spent trafficked fluctuates according to a number of factors, including the level of repression endured by the victim, identification skills and priorities of law enforcement at the destination and the accessibility of services and assistance. Where victims are trafficked for shorter times, this may be due to amplified and improved identification efforts. Further analysis of this indicator, cross-correlated with details of the identification process, would be valuable in assessing the effectiveness of law enforcement's identification efforts as well as the efficacy of outreach measures by social services and civil society.

There is a correlation between the length of time trafficked and trauma. While trauma is also informed by the extent of abuse suffered, it seems reasonable to conclude that the longer time spent trafficked, the greater the trauma and risk of dependency on the trafficker. Such considerations must be built into efforts to assist victims. The length of time trafficked may also affect victims in other ways. Long periods spent separated from family and friends, being forced to live outside of their family environment and living under extreme stress can impede victims' recovery and reintegration.

**Living and working conditions:** Service providers in BiH reported improved living and working conditions among assisted victims in both 2003 and 2004, with a large number of victims receiving a (modest) salary and many accommodated in locations separate from their workplace. In 2003, data from 38 victims revealed that 14 (36.8 per cent) received a regular salary, 12 (31.6 per cent) received salary occasionally, and one victim (2.6 per cent) received 50 per cent of the promised salary, with her trafficker keeping the other 50 per cent. As such, 71.05 per cent of foreign assisted victims received some salary while trafficked.

In 2004, this changed somewhat, with more victims receiving a partial salary (50 per cent of what was promised) and fewer receiving a regular salary. Slightly fewer victims received no salary at all.

GRAPH 11  
SALARY RECEIVED BY FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004



While victims received modest pay, this did not necessarily result in an ability to save and/or remit substantial earnings; a portion of the salary was returned to traffickers through payment for accommodation, lodging, condoms, clothes, medical care and

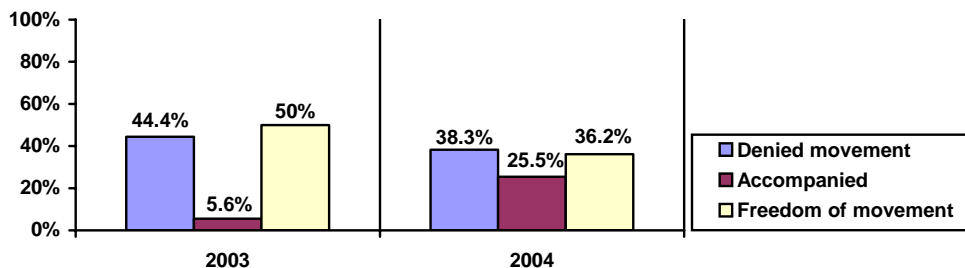
drugs. Sums remitted from abroad can be a barometer of a victim's willingness to remain in an exploitative work situation and should be examined more closely.

The slightly improved conditions and earnings may partly explain the fewer victims seeking or accepting assistance in 2003 and 2004 (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 37). In addition, service providers note that earning money – albeit substantially less than promised – results in a form of psychological pressure. By paying modest salaries to the victim and providing slightly better living and working conditions, traffickers aim to prevent victims from exiting trafficking situations. As well, the earnings must be measured against what can be earned in the home country, which also serves as a means of control. In addition, control continues to be exerted more overtly by threatening the victim's family. With more victims recruited by someone known to them, this is a realistic threat.

On the other hand, not all victims enjoyed improvements in conditions. One Romanian victim trafficked with her sister reported being kept in a small room attached to the bar where they worked with other trafficked victims, prevented from leaving. In addition, they were deprived of adequate food and clothing.

Another valuable barometer of a victim's willingness to remain in an exploitative work situation is her freedom of movement. While there was insufficient data about all victims, available information indicated that in 2003 and 2004 levels of freedom of movement varied more than in the past.

GRAPH 12  
FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004



In 2004, fewer victims (38.3 per cent) were denied all freedom of movement, a decrease from 44.4 per cent in 2003. In addition, more women (25.5 per cent in 2004 as compared to 5.6 per cent in 2003) were permitted freedom of movement when accompanied by the bar owner, waiter or bodyguard. Still, the 36.2 per cent of victims in 2004 who enjoyed total freedom of movement represents a decline from 2003, when 50 per cent of victims reported total freedom of movement.

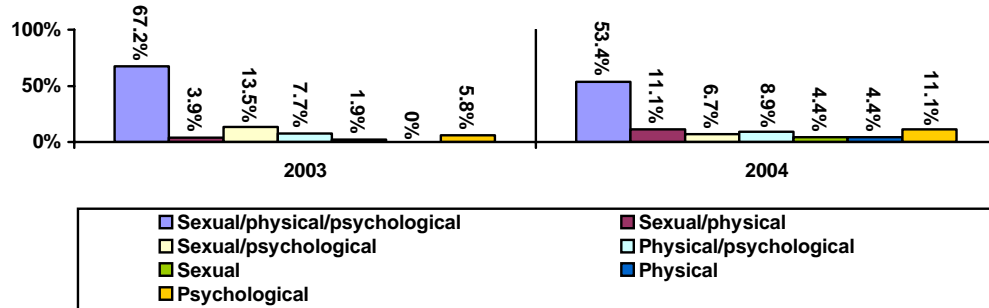
**Abuse:** Data about this indicator is incomplete so that the number of victims who suffered violence and abuse during trafficking cannot be determined with accuracy. Furthermore, different service providers reported radically different experiences of abuse among beneficiaries. Data from one BiH service provider indicated that in 2003 almost equal numbers of foreign trafficking victims in BiH had (55 per cent) and had not (45 per cent) suffered abuse while trafficked. Similarly, in 2004, 57.7 per cent of victims reported suffering abuse while trafficked, while 42.3 per cent reported no abuse. By contrast, in 2003 and 2004, two other service providers reported that 100 per



cent of assisted victims suffered some form of abuse. The information presented below must be read against this backdrop.

An examination of the data available indicates that victims who were exposed to abuse suffered it multiple forms. In 2003, 67.2 per cent suffered all three forms of violence – sexual, physical and psychological abuse. Other victims (25 per cent) reported dual forms of abuse, some combination of sexual, physical or psychological. Only 7.7 per cent suffered either sexual or psychological abuse.

GRAPH 13  
ABUSE OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004



While violence was prolific in 2004, fewer victims suffered all three forms of abuse, a decrease from 67.3 per cent in 2003 to 53.4 per cent in 2004. Similarly, more victims suffered only one form of abuse – from 7.7 per cent in 2003 to 19.9 per cent in 2004. This change may be indicative of the professionalization of the trafficking industry, with victims treated less violently as a strategy to maximize business profit and prevent victims from seeking assistance. When traffickers operated with greater impunity, fearing neither authorities nor consequences, conditions were akin to slavery. More recently, traffickers have provided greater motivation for victims to remain in their “employment”, which also provides an added layer of discretion.

Whatever the type of abuse suffered, the use of force and abuse serves to control and restrain victims. Said one victim of her first “owner”, “He used to threaten and beat me regularly... He held a pistol to my head, threatening to kill me.” Her second “owner” was equally violent, “During that time I was beaten and raped regularly by the bar owner, even within the kitchen area. He forced me to expose my breast in front of customers and used to bite them for fun.” Abuse was perpetrated against trafficking victims by a range of different actors, including clients, recruiters, traffickers, partners and “owners”.

It is important to note that the forms of abuse outlined above provide no measure of the severity of abuse, perhaps the most important variable. Attention to this measurement is needed to ensure that medical and psychological services are appropriate and meet the needs of victims.

In addition, service providers reported an increased use of psychological pressure, with traffickers persuading victims that present conditions were better than those at home. For victims from countries such as Moldova and Romania, this argument has strong resonance and can prove highly persuasive. When victims continued to cause problems for their traffickers, “experienced” prostitutes who gave “friendly advice” to the

victims were used. Victims were warned that their families back home might be harmed or their children kidnapped and sold if they refused to provide sexual services. Such psychological pressure is seldom sufficiently factored into the damage suffered by victims of trafficking.

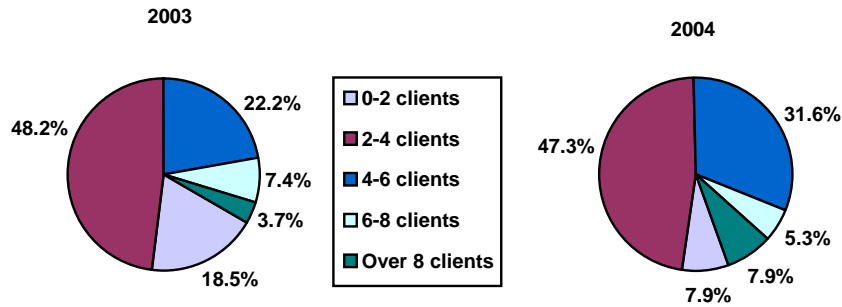
**Mental and physical well-being:** Most victims were denied access to medical care while trafficked, except in emergencies. As such, they were often in poor physical and mental condition at identification.

- *General health:* One NGO shelter explained that victims suffered from a range of medical ailments, such as abdominal pains, chronic headaches, anxiety and insomnia as well as more serious ailments.
- *Psychological well-being:* In 2003, one client engaged in self-mutilation, while three required psychiatric treatment. In 2004, two victims required psychiatric care.
- *Drug and alcohol dependency:* A number of victims were addicted to drugs or alcohol, a trend also noted in other countries of the region. In 2004, two of the 79 assisted victims (2.5 per cent) were addicted to narcotics, a decrease from 2003 when four victims (4.3 per cent) suffered from addictions. In 2003, three of four were using heroin, while other victims became addicted to pills. Creating addiction is not unique to SEE and serves as a means to control victims as well as create dependency on the trafficker.
- *Pregnancy:* One NGO shelter reported that about one-third of assisted foreign victims were pregnant at identification. The number of women who were pregnant and chose to terminate the pregnancy is unknown.<sup>122</sup> Pregnancy signals the need for a broader menu of services and assistance for victims – both for those who chose to terminate the pregnancy as well as those who chose to keep and raise the child. Also critical is that services for this target group are available in countries of origin.
- *Sexual and reproductive health:* Many foreign victims identified and assisted in BiH suffered from STIs. This is not surprising given that the majority of victims suffered some form of trafficking for sexual exploitation, serving as many as nine clients each day. In addition, more than 80 per cent of victims were not allowed to use condoms with clients, as the price for sexual services without condoms was higher. This practice contributes to the poor sexual health of victims and may amplify feelings of violation.

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<sup>122</sup> Abortion is legal in BiH. Some service providers facilitate abortion, while others do not.

GRAPH 14  
 NUMBER OF CLIENTS SERVED DAILY BY FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004



The lack of information and analysis regarding the long-term health implications of trafficking is a gap that can be narrowed by more information sharing among service providers on this subject as well as long-term follow-up health care for victims. However, such measures must be conducted in ways that do not further stigmatize trafficking victims and that guard the privacy of victims.

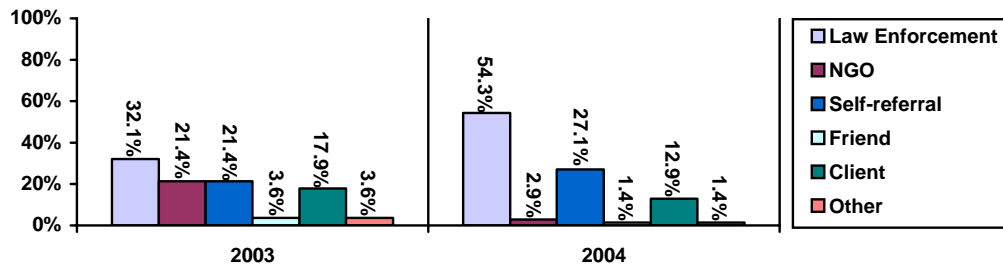
### Post Trafficking Experience

**Victim identification and referral:** In 2004, a majority (54.3 per cent) of assisted victims were identified by law enforcement, an increase over the number identified by law enforcement in 2003 (32.1 per cent).

The number of victims identified by law enforcement fluctuated over time. Whereas in 2002, most identification was made by law enforcement authorities, this dropped to 32.1 per cent in 2003. In 2004, the number of law enforcement identifications increased but were still not the majority. Instead, a range of actors were involved in victim identification and referral. This stands in contrast to most SEE countries where the majority of assisted victims were identified by law enforcement authorities.

Perhaps most striking is the number of self-referrals. In 2004, 27.1 per cent of victims referred themselves for assistance, an increase from 21.4 per cent in 2003. Generally, self-referrals in BiH occurred when victims were helped to escape by a BiH national, sometimes even a client. These victims were generally afraid to turn to the police for fear of being arrested (for illegal stay and/or prostitution) or returned to the bar owner (who had generally warned them against escape and threatened reprisals). As well, some self-referral may be cases in which victims declined assistance initially but returned at a later stage to access needed services.

GRAPH 15  
IDENTIFICATION OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004



Also striking is that 12.9 per cent of victims in 2004 were identified by a client. While this is a slight decrease from 2003 (when 17.9 per cent were identified by clients), it signals that consumers of sexual services can also play a role in identifying victims. One Romanian victim trafficked to BiH explained: “One night one of the customers helped us to escape with his car. As he was afraid he was being followed, we first had to stay in a cottage in the woods for some days... He took us to his home from there, bought us some clothes and told us we could stay there.” The victims were then referred for assistance.

**Re-trafficking:** In 2003 and 2004, a significant number of assisted victims had been trafficked previously. Of 92 victims assisted in 2003, at least 13 (14.1 per cent) had been trafficked previously. Six of the 13 had been trafficked twice and seven had been trafficked three times. In 2004, the number of re-trafficked victims decreased to five, or 6.3 per cent. However, in three cases, victims had already been trafficked twice previously. It is unclear why rates of re-trafficking in BiH declined. It merits further examination as it may signal increased effectiveness of reintegration programmes in countries of origin. Alternatively, it may signal changes in destination countries. Between 1999 and 2003, 12 victims assisted by IOM (approximately two per cent of victims) were returned and subsequently re-trafficked to and assisted in BiH. A similar pattern was noted by La Strada. This signals a gap in terms of sustainable reintegration upon return to the victim’s home country as well as lack of protection for returned victims from traffickers. The stigma attached to trafficking and/or prostitution creates barriers to successful reintegration that can contribute to re-trafficking and must be addressed by the assistance frameworks of both destination and countries of origin.

Tied intimately to the issue of re-trafficking is that of returning victims. According to some service providers, there are victims who, having been returned once, return to BiH because the material situation there is preferable to home.

More generally, the issue of re-trafficking must necessarily raise questions about the assistance needs of victims and the assistance framework itself. That is, in situations of return, where little has changed for victims, the risk of re-trafficking is great.

**Assistance declined:** Also important to consider is the trend of victims declining assistance offered by shelters and police officers. The IFS Safe House in Dobož estimated that approximately 20 foreign and national victims declined assistance in the last two years. To date, 160 women (both foreign and national) have declined IOM assistance since 2000. However, it should be noted that the number of victims declining

assistance has decreased over time. In 2003, 15 foreign women declined IOM assistance and in 2004, the number decreased further, to one.

In BiH, when victims declined assistance, they often returned to their work situations. This is mainly because BiH authorities lack the resources (detention centres and financial means) to deport illegal migrants.<sup>123</sup> Therefore, declining assistance in BiH, in many cases, can be interpreted as a desire or a strategic, economic choice to return to work and earn money. This stands in contrast to most SEE countries where victims who decline assistance are deported.

## 2.2 BiH Trafficking Victims

As is clear from the table below, there has been a notable increase in the number of BiH trafficking victims assisted in 2003 and 2004. While only eight national victims were identified and assisted in 2002, this number more than doubled in 2003 and rose again in 2004, a further increase of 70.6 per cent.

TABLE 7  
NUMBER OF ASSISTED BIH NATIONAL VICTIMS, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Trafficked Victims	0	0	8	17	29	52

This trend was noted as early as 2002, when NGOs began to assist national victims. Some argue that the increased identification of national victims is tied to a burgeoning sex market in BiH and that the demand for sex workers is met increasingly by BiH women due to difficulties faced when transporting foreign women across borders. Others argue that the increase in national victims has more to do with the increased identification and recognition of national victims by counter-trafficking actors. In either event, the result is that national victims in BiH accounted for an increasing percentage of assisted victims. Whereas in 2002, national victims were a mere 2.9 per cent of victims, this increased to 18.5 per cent in 2003. In 2004, national victims were 36.7 per cent of assisted victims.

With few exceptions, national victims identified and assisted in 2002, 2003 and 2004 were trafficked for sexual exploitation, either within BiH or abroad. Some victims (5.9 per cent in 2003 and 20.7 per cent in 2004) were exploited for sexual and labour purposes, and a handful were trafficked for labour exploitation (3.5 per cent) and begging (3.5 per cent). See *Forms of Trafficking* (below).

### 2.2.1 Profiles and Experiences of BiH Victims of Trafficking

To follow is an exploration of profiles and experiences of assisted BiH trafficking victims.

#### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics

<sup>123</sup> Due to lack of resources, illegal migrants were generally issued with a decision on deportation and either deported at the border, sent to the next canton or released to leave on their own. During 2005, the BiH government is working to address this gap and aims to undertake deportations, according to international standards (Email correspondence with Amela Effendic, IOM Sarajevo, BiH, April 2004).

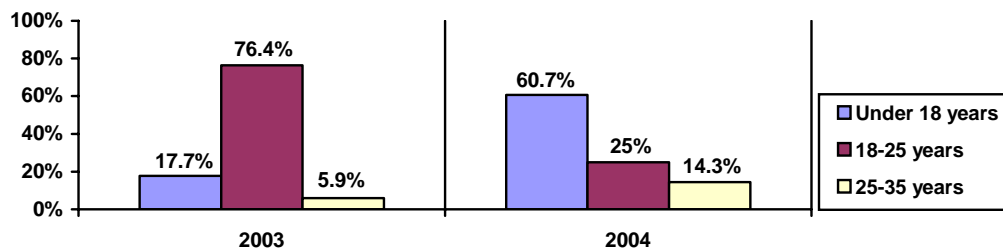
**Sex:** All assisted victims in 2003 and 2004 were women or girls. This was consistent with trends throughout the region.<sup>124</sup>

**Age:** The majority of BiH victims identified and assisted in 2003 and 2004 were under the age of 25. However, the age composition changed substantially from 2003 to 2004. A dramatic spike was seen in 2004 in the number of assisted minors, to 58.6 per cent of assisted BiH victims. This finding underscores the particular vulnerability of minors to trafficking. In addition, the figures reflect the victim's age at identification rather than at recruitment, raising the likelihood that some adult victims were, in fact, minors when trafficked. Unfortunately, most service providers in the region do not systematically record the victim's age at recruitment, making it difficult to calculate accurately the number of trafficked minors.

This high representation of minors is consistent with findings from other Balkan countries/entities that had previously been areas of destination and transit but increasingly show signs of becoming countries/entities of origin. This included Serbia, Montenegro, The Province of Kosovo and Macedonia.<sup>125</sup> Similarly, this finding contrasts with the age of foreign victims assisted in BiH, the majority of whom were adults at identification.

Social care actors stress the acute vulnerability of minors not only to being trafficked but also in terms of the impact of trafficking. Psychologists argue that such serious trauma in the development stages of life informs the individual's perceptions in all areas of human relationships, posing obstacles to victim recovery and reintegration.

GRAPH 16  
AGE OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BIH, 2003 AND 2004



Notable is the rise, in 2004, in the number of victims between 26 and 35 years. This group more than doubled between 2003 and 2004, from 5.9 per cent to 13.8 per cent.

**Ethnicity:** Most service providers did not systematically record this information, making it difficult to accurately note the rate of ethnic minorities among assisted victims prior to 2004. In 2004, this changed and four of the 29 assisted victims (13.8 per cent) were documented as being of Roma ethnicity. As approximately one per cent

<sup>124</sup> However, while no male BiH victims of trafficking were documented by service providers, there were indications of BiH male victims of sexual exploitation from other sources. The International Forum for Solidarity (IFS) reported that BiH males were being trafficked within the country for sexual exploitation, the majority of whom (66 per cent) were minors (Email correspondence with Emir Nurkic, International Forum for Solidarity, BiH, 29 January 2005).

<sup>125</sup> See individual country reports for specific information about this finding.

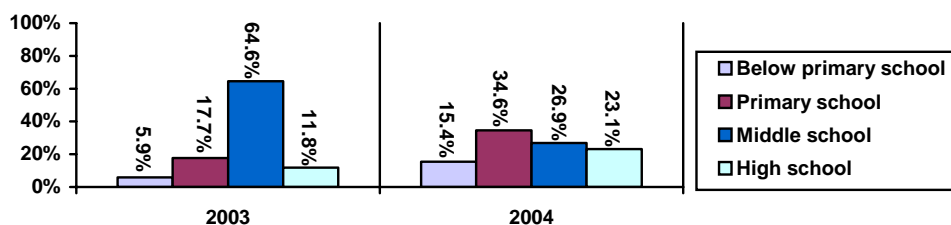
of the population in BiH is of Roma ethnicity (World Bank, 2001), Roma are disproportionately represented among assisted victims, suggesting a link between ethnicity and trafficking vulnerability in BiH.<sup>126</sup>

It has been argued elsewhere that Roma may be particularly vulnerable to trafficking given their general social and economic vulnerability. There is reason to believe this is also the case among BiH trafficking victims. Special attention to the vulnerability of Roma is merited, both in terms of prevention efforts and the tailoring of protection programmes that address specific reintegration needs.

**Area of origin:** In both 2003 and 2004, assisted BiH victims came primarily from urban environments. In 2003, 64.71 per cent were urban dwellers, a percentage that increased to 74.07 per cent in 2004. Further, some originated from capital cities as well as towns, accounting for at least 20 per cent of urban dwellers in 2003 and 15 per cent in 2004. This finding should be considered in the development of prevention and awareness campaigns specifically targeting BiH nationals. In addition, national victims originated from throughout the country. As such, the geographical distribution of reintegration assistance must be considered in service provision.

**Education:**<sup>127</sup> Most BiH victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 have quite limited educational attainment. In 2003, 88.2 per cent of victims had less than high school education; only 11.8 per cent of BiH victims had a high school education and no victims had education beyond high school level.

GRAPH 17  
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF ASSISTED BIH NATIONAL VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004



Similarly, the majority of victims in 2004 also had less than a high school education, although the composition changed. Fewer victims had a middle school education (26.9 per cent), while more had primary school (34.6 per cent) or less than primary school (15.4 per cent). This suggests a decreasing educational attainment. To some degree, this is explained by the young age of victims since more than half of victims in 2004 were minors. However, the majority of non-minor victims in 2003 also had low education levels. This limited educational attainment raises a number of critical issues, not the least of which is the need to consider educational needs in reintegration. For minors, school reinsertion is critical and adults require programmes that address educational and vocational training needs.

<sup>126</sup> This is consistent with findings from neighbouring countries, where a high percentage of victims were from ethnic minorities. In Serbia in 2004, 38.1 per cent of assisted victims were from an ethnic minority, an increase from 23.1 per cent in 2003 and 20 per cent in 2002. See *Serbia Country Report* for further detail.

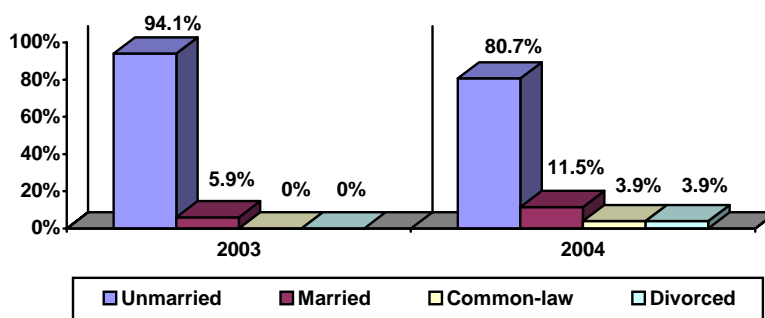
<sup>127</sup> Primary school refers to grades one to four, middle school refers to grades five to eight, and high school refers to grades nine through 12.

Nevertheless, an increased number of victims (23.1 per cent) had high school education, almost twice as many as the year before. The simultaneous increase and decrease in education levels makes it difficult to see education as a primary determinant in trafficking risks in BiH.

**Mental and physical disabilities:** No assisted BiH victims of trafficking had any mental or physical disabilities.

**Marital and family status:** The majority of victims assisted in both 2003 and 2004 were unmarried at identification. This finding is to be expected as most BiH victims were young – either minors or below 25 years.

GRAPH 18  
MARITAL STATUS AT RECRUITMENT OF ASSISTED BIH NATIONAL VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004



In 2003, only one assisted BiH victim (5.9 per cent) was a mother at recruitment. In 2004, the number of mothers increased despite the relatively young age of victims. Of the 29 victims, three (or 10.3 per cent) were mothers at identification. One of the mothers in 2004 (3.5 per cent) was a single mother. Although based on relatively few victims, these statistics are suggestive of the need to support family as well as the vulnerability of female-headed households (FHH) in the region as potential reasons for the victims' migration/trafficking. The rate of motherhood and single motherhood among national victims is, to be sure, quite low relative to foreign victims assisted in BiH, as well as national victims in many countries. Nevertheless, it indicates a potential entry point for intervention in trafficking prevention.

**Family and social relations:**<sup>128</sup> Family conflict was quite prevalent among BiH victims assisted in 2003 and 2004. In 2003, 64.7 per cent of victims reported both domestic violence and alcohol abuse within the family, both of which likely contributed to trafficking. In 2004, the rates of domestic violence and alcohol abuse decreased but were still prevalent, with 27.6 per cent reporting domestic violence and 13.8 per cent reporting alcohol abuse within the home. In some particularly difficult cases, there were multiple forms of abuse within the home including, in the case of one minor, abuse, incest and family complicity in trafficking. Such family environments are significant obstacles to successful reintegration and raise questions about the risks

<sup>128</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims' self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim's individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim's relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.



involved in reintegration in these environments as well as the ethics of this strategy. At the same time, the lack of long-term assistance and alternative housing options often makes return to the family inevitable.

In addition, where minor victims suffered extreme violence during formative years, it has inevitably affected their sense of normalcy and notions of relationships. Of note is that a number of victims (during or following their tenure in the reintegration programme) entered abusive relationships with boyfriends, which continued the cycle of violence. It may also create vulnerability to re-trafficking as victims might be trafficked by partners or they might accept work to escape abusive relationships.

Another finding was the prevalence of single-parent families. In 2003, 70.6 per cent of victims were from single-parent families, although this number decreased substantially in 2004, to 6.9 per cent. At this stage, the relationship between single-parent families and trafficking is unclear. It is sometimes assumed that such families are more prone to either poverty or conflict, either of which can contribute to trafficking. However, this supposition is unproved and more consideration is needed before conclusions can be drawn, especially when examining data from Europe generally where rates of divorce are high and single-parent families do not necessarily imply social exclusion or economic problems.<sup>129</sup>

**IDPs/refugees:**<sup>130</sup> While it is widely recognised that IDPs (and refugees) are potentially at risk of trafficking given their social vulnerability, this is not a topic about which there is substantial primary data. However, it is a potential site of vulnerability among BiH nationals trafficked for sexual exploitation. One organization reported that a significant number of national victims were IDPs or refugees. It is an area that merits further study, particularly in BiH and countries of the former Yugoslavia. This group also poses some significant challenges in assistance and reintegration. Without identity documents or legal status, victims cannot access the needed social services, such as medical assistance. One service provider highlighted the substantial burden that the medical costs for IDP victims places on the organization. Further, reintegration is complicated by social and geographic dislocation.

**Economic status:**<sup>131</sup> In 2003, the majority of victims were “poor” (52.9 per cent), while equal numbers were from “average” (23.5 per cent) or “very poor” (23.5 per cent) economic backgrounds.

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<sup>129</sup> For further discussion of the link between family relations and trafficking, see *Family Relations* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked to Bosnia and Herzegovina*.

<sup>130</sup> The terms “internally displaced person” (IDP) and “refugee” are used interchangeably in this section as the fragmentation of Yugoslavia into various nation states problematizes their usage. Depending upon when the person was displaced, they can be considered either a refugee or IDP. What is essential for the purpose of this research are not the political issues surrounding their displacement but rather how this displacement has (or has not) contributed to trafficking vulnerability. Also salient is how displaced status affects access to resources, such as health care or education.

<sup>131</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim’s self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

While being “very poor” is assumed by many to be a precondition for trafficking, the equal numbers of victims who came from “average” economic backgrounds belies this assertion. As such, while poverty is a causal contributor to trafficking, it cannot be understood in isolation from the other socio-economic circumstances in a victim’s life history.

In 2004, assisted victims were increasingly drawn from “poor” backgrounds, accounting for 71.4 per cent of victims. As in 2003, equal numbers of victims were from “very poor” and “average” economic backgrounds, albeit in far fewer numbers, 7.4 per cent in both instances. Strikingly, 14.3 per cent of victims came from “well-off” families. A number of these victims left home not out of economic need but because of abuse. This finding reinforces the importance of looking beyond economics to other contributors to trafficking.

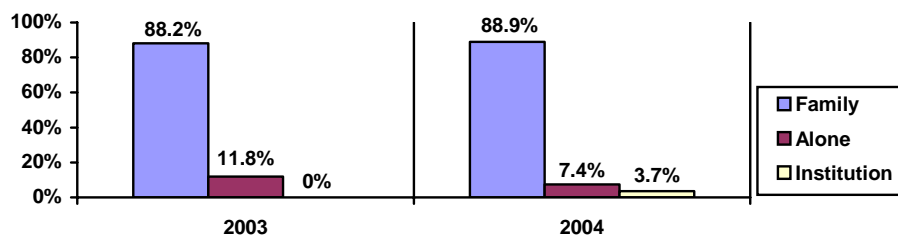
### Recruitment Experiences

**Living situation at recruitment:** In 2003 and 2004, the majority of victims were living with family at recruitment. This is consistent with the overall youth of assisted victims as well as with the general social pattern whereby young women live with parents before, and sometimes even following, marriage.

Given the problematic family relations of many national victims, it is perhaps not surprising that residence with family did not serve as a safeguard against trafficking. Further, in some cases family members were complicit in trafficking, raising questions about risks in reintegration.

A small minority of victims were living alone at recruitment. This is an unusual living arrangement for young BiH women and may serve to explain vulnerability, implying as it does a tenuous social and economic position. Victims may live alone because of problems in the home. However, they may also do so because they are more adventurous, independent minded and wish to live independently.

GRAPH 19  
LIVING SITUATION AT RECRUITMENT OF ASSISTED BIH NATIONAL VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004

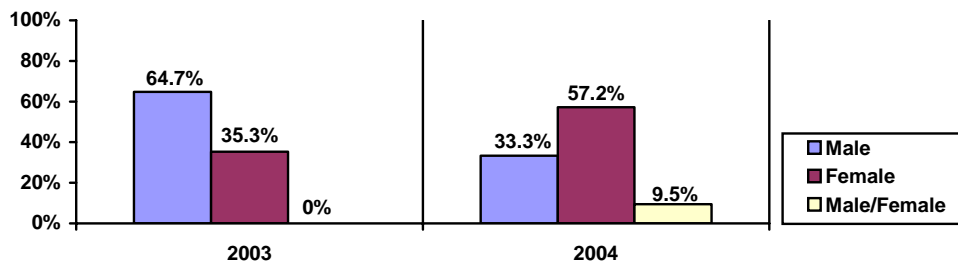


While only one victim – in 2004 – resided at an institution at recruitment, this is a site of vulnerability identified in other countries. The acute vulnerability of this group of minors – lacking as they do family support, economic security, substantive life skills and emotional support – is an important entry point for action. As the rate of residential care in BiH is not insignificant – at 231.4 per 100,000 population, aged 0-17 (UNICEF, 2004a: 86) – it is an area for targeted intervention.

**Working situation at recruitment:** While there is incomplete data about this indicator, the information available for 2003 indicates that equal numbers of victims were employed and unemployed at recruitment. In 2004, far more victims (94.1 per cent) were unemployed than employed when recruited. Further, the high unemployment of women is likely tied to their young age as much as to broader unemployment issues. Still, given the high unemployment rate in BiH – (the annual registered unemployment rate in 2002 was 42.5 (UNICEF, 2004a: 94) – it is difficult to attribute trafficking to unemployment. Those victims who were employed at recruitment worked in industry, as waitresses and as dancers.

**Recruiter:** The sex of recruiters changed between 2003 and 2004, with far more victims in 2004 recruited by women than in previous years.

GRAPH 20  
SEX OF THE RECRUITER OF ASSISTED BIH NATIONAL VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004

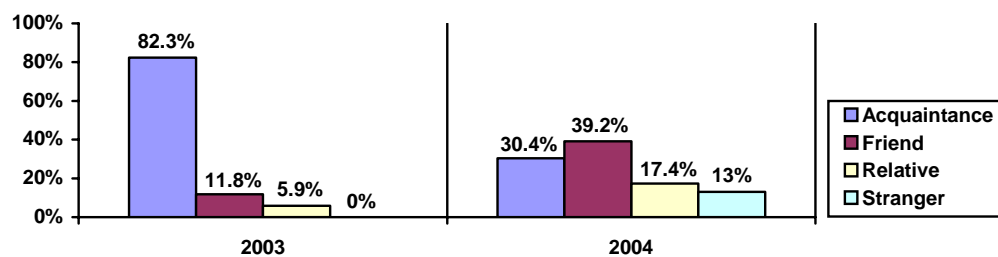


Whereas in 2003, the majority of recruiters were men (64.7 per cent), by 2004, the majority of recruiters were women, accounting for 57.2 per cent. Women recruiters have been noted in other countries of the region, although generally in countries of origin, such as Moldova. Recruiters in newly emerging countries of origin like BiH were generally men. Efforts at awareness raising must be cognizant of women recruiters to ensure potential migrants are equipped with information about risks and potential traffickers.

Also of note is the 9.5 per cent of victims in 2004 recruited by a male/female pair, a composition not noted in the recruitment of BiH nationals prior to 2004.

In 2003, the majority of victims (82.3 per cent) were recruited by an acquaintance. In 2004, the victim's relationship to the recruiter changed, with more victims recruited by a friend than an acquaintance. Recruitment practices that implicate persons intimately known to the victim are particularly difficult to combat. As such, this finding is valuable in the development of prevention efforts, flagging as it does an arguably new *modus operandi* in the recruitment process.

GRAPH 21  
RELATIONSHIP TO RECRUITER OF ASSISTED BIH NATIONAL VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004



All recruiters were BiH nationals in 2003. In 2004, BiH recruiters were still the majority, although some recruiters were also from Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro.

**Reasons for leaving home and type of work promised:** The main reason BiH nationals left home in 2003 and 2004 was work.<sup>132</sup> In 2003, all but one victim was promised work as a waitress and/or dancer. In some cases, the victim was to work both as a waitress and dancer, while, in other cases, she was to work as one or the other. Only one victim was offered another type of work, that of selling. In 2004, 76.9 per cent of victims were promised work when recruited. The type of work promised included waitress/dancer (50 per cent), waitress (30 per cent), salesperson (10 per cent) and sex-related activities (ten per cent). Being offered sex-related work was a new development in 2004, with no national victims before this date reportedly aware of their intended involvement in prostitution.

A number of victims in 2004 (23.1 per cent) left home after being promised marriage and, hence, their migration may be tied to the ambition to set off on a new life. In 2003, no victims were recruited in this way. This accounts for a noteworthy minority of victims and more attention is needed to this recruitment technique.<sup>133</sup>

Finally, there is reason to believe that the prevalence of violence and conflict in many of the victims' homes contributed to the decision to leave home.

### Transportation and Movement

**Border crossings and documents:** As most national victims were trafficked within BiH, the use of legal documents and border crossings was irrelevant.

**Destination:** Most victims were trafficked internally. Generally, this is consistent with the location of work promised.

### Victim's Trafficking Experiences

<sup>132</sup> This is consistent with findings among the youth population generally, according to which 62 per cent of young people would leave BiH if given the opportunity – 39 per cent of women would migrate due to low standards of living, 21 per cent due to lack of any options, 17 per cent due to unemployment and 14 per cent for further education (UNDP, 2002).

<sup>133</sup> Recruitment through marriage promises were also noted among victims in other parts of the region, including Bulgaria and Albania.

**Forms of trafficking:** The vast majority of BiH victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 were trafficked for sexual exploitation, as outlined in the chart below. Victims of sexual exploitation accounted for 100 per cent of victims in 2002 and 2003 and 93.1 per cent in 2004.<sup>134</sup>

National victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were exploited in bars and nightclubs, although in fewer numbers over time. In 2004, more victims were kept in private locations and some also worked through escort agencies, delivered to the home or hotel of the client. In 2003 and 2004, 20 per cent and 14.29 per cent of victims respectively were exploited in such locations. In general, national victims were exploited in the same ways and in the same locations as foreign victims.

TABLE 8  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING OF ASSISTED BIH NATIONAL VICTIMS, 2002 TO 2004

Form of Exploitation	2002	2003	2004	Total
Sexual exploitation	8	16	22	46
Sexual and labour exploitation	0	1	6	7
Labour exploitation	0	0	0	0
Begging and delinquency	0	0	1	1
Total	8	17	29	54

In addition to sexual exploitation, a number of victims were required to perform other labour-oriented tasks. This dual form of exploitation is consistent with the experiences of foreign victims trafficked to BiH. Victims worked as waitresses, singers and/or entertainers in bars or nightclubs and also provided sexual services to clients. In other instances, women were required to undertake domestic labour – cleaning, cooking and care giving – at the bar/restaurant or for their employer.

In addition, one victim (6.9 per cent) assisted in 2004 was trafficked for begging. This victim came from a negative family environment and once married also suffered abuse by her husband and in-laws. Her husband forced her to beg and steal.<sup>135</sup>

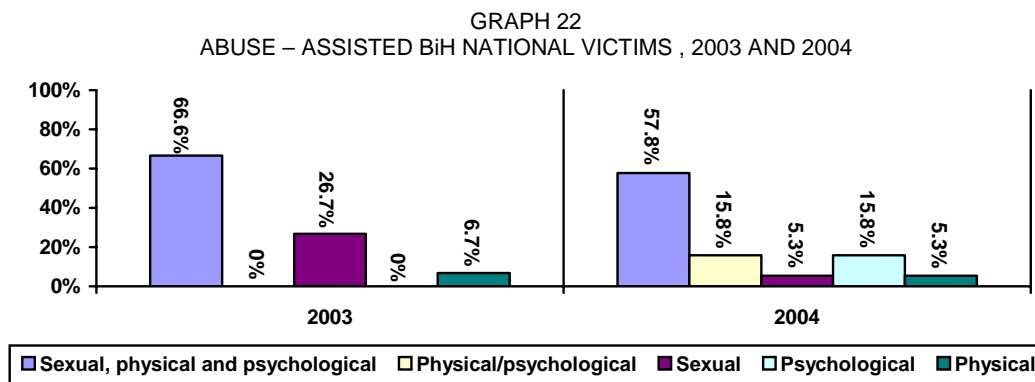
**Length of time trafficked:** There is incomplete information about this indicator, which inhibits reliable conclusions. However, from the information available, it appears that national victims were trafficked for shorter periods than their foreign counterparts. In 2003, 70 per cent of victims were trafficked for a period of less than three months, 20 per cent were trafficked for six months and one victim for one year. In 2004, most victims (80 per cent) were trafficked for periods of less than five months. Only 20 per cent were trafficked for longer, although for a substantial period of two years. This contrasts with foreign victims in BiH who were generally trafficked for periods of between one and five years.

<sup>134</sup> In 2003, 5.9 per cent of the victims exploited for sexual exploitation were also exploited for labour purposes. In 2004, 72.4 per cent of victims were exploited solely for sexual exploitation, while an additional 20.7 per cent were exploited for sexual and labour purposes, accounting for 93.1 per cent of all assisted victims in that year.

<sup>135</sup> This is consistent with findings from a recent UNICEF survey, which flagged evidence of trafficking in BiH boys and girls (generally under the age of 12) for begging and labour (UNICEF and STC, 2004: 4). Further, a recent UNOHCHR report highlighted that focusing on the identification and protection of foreign victims trafficked for sexual exploitation makes the identification of victims for other forms of trafficking – for labour or begging – more difficult (UNOHCHR, 2004: 10).

**Abuse:** National victims suffered extensive abuse while trafficked, including multiple forms of abuse (sexual, physical, psychological) in many cases. While data was incomplete about this indicator, all victims in both years who answered this question reported some form of violence or abuse while trafficked.

In 2003, 66.6 per cent of victims suffered three forms of violence – sexual, physical and psychological; 26.7 per cent reported suffering sexual abuse and 6.7 per cent reported only physical abuse.



While violence remained ubiquitous in 2004, with all victims reporting some form of violence or abuse, slightly fewer victims (57.8 per cent, down from 66.6 per cent in 2003) reported all three forms of abuse. Only 15.8 per cent of victims suffered both physical and psychological abuse. More victims suffered only one form of abuse – psychological (15.8 per cent), physical (5.3 per cent) or sexual (5.3 per cent).

The use of physical pressure and sexual violence by traffickers decreased, with a significant minority of national victims being only psychologically abused. This marks a change in behaviour of traffickers perhaps due to the professionalization of the trafficking industry; violence tends to push victims to escape or seek assistance and is therefore a less than desirable business practice.

Although forms of abuse have been documented, the severity of abuse, which may be the most important variable, has not. Attention to this measurement is essential toward an appreciation of violence and abuse suffered by BiH victims and in terms of providing medical and psychological services.

It is difficult to gauge whether the use of abuse differs between national and foreign victims. However, given the high proportion of minors in the 2004 caseload, the perpetration of abuse will necessarily have substantial physical and psychological impact on girls who are still in a developmental stage.

**Living and working conditions:** Living conditions for most victims (84.6 per cent) were “poor” in 2003, with 13.7 per cent of victims reporting “very poor” conditions. There is reason to believe that living conditions for national victims improved somewhat in 2004. While 73.3 per cent reported “poor” conditions and 6.7 per cent reported “very poor” living conditions, 20 per cent of victims reported that living conditions were “good”. This is fairly consistent with the working and living conditions of foreign victims, who generally worked and lived in the same locations as national

victims. There is insufficient information about victims' working conditions to draw conclusions.

Freedom of movement varied for national victims between 2003 and 2004. In 2003, most victims were denied all freedom. In 2004, the majority – 62.5 per cent – were also denied freedom of movement. However, a significant minority – 37.5 per cent – enjoyed total freedom of movement while trafficked.

In contrast to foreign victims, most national victims received no salary while trafficked in both 2003 and 2004. It is unclear why this is the case, as the payment of salary has emerged as a strategic tool to control foreign victims of trafficking.

**Mental and physical well-being:** Trafficking for sexual exploitation necessarily has significant impact on a victim's mental health and well-being.

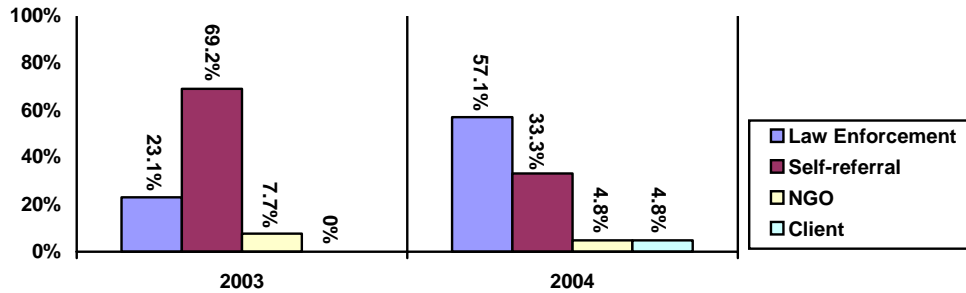
- *Reproductive health:* STIs were prominent among the medical problems faced by national victims trafficked for sexual exploitation. No victims were pregnant at identification.
- *Drug and alcohol dependency:* In 2003, two victims were addicted to narcotics at identification.
- *Psychological condition:* Victims manifested psychological problems, including hallucinations and, in some cases, suicidal tendencies. Two victims in 2004 required psychiatric care as a result of trafficking. However, as many victims had suffered violence in the home since childhood, it is difficult to disentangle what harms were caused by trafficking or by childhood trauma.

Because so many victims assisted in 2004 were minors, the perpetration of abuse will necessarily have substantial physical and psychological impact on girls who are still in developmental stages of life. Further, sexual violence can have a long-term impact on their reproductive health. Medical and psychological assistance must be tailored to meet their specific needs, both as minors and as victims of chronic abuse.

### **Post Trafficking Experience**

**Victim identification and referral:** Identification of BiH victims differs from that of foreign victims, with fewer victims identified by law enforcement authorities. In 2003, the majority of BiH victims (69.2 per cent) were identified and assisted after self-referral. A minority of victims (23.1 per cent) were identified by law enforcement authorities and a handful (7.7 per cent) were identified by an NGO.

GRAPH 23  
IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL OF ASSISTED BIH NATIONAL VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004



In 2004, significantly more national victims were identified by law enforcement authorities, increasing to 57.1 per cent from 23.1 per cent in 2003. This was due, at least in part, to increased recognition on the part of law enforcement authorities of BiH as a country of origin. The limited number of national victims identified by police in 2003 makes vivid the need for a focus on national victims.<sup>136</sup>

Self-referrals accounted for 33.3 per cent of victims. This may be due to the visibility of services as well as helplines.

A few victims were identified by a client (4.8 per cent), while an equal number of victims were identified by an NGO (4.8 per cent).

**Re-trafficking:** There is insufficient information on this topic to draw conclusions. However, it is a valuable indicator for service providers to consider and document, since it serves as a proxy gauge of the success of reintegration programmes. It is also a valuable measure of the efficacy of prevention efforts.

**Assistance declined:** There is no data on the number of national victims who declined assistance. The only available information is from IOM, which noted that one national victim identified in 2004 declined assistance and none were identified as having done so in 2003.

However, accepting assistance poses a significant risk in a small country like BiH where so much stigma is attached to trafficking and prostitution. Similar problems have been faced in Montenegro. According to one service provider, when BiH victims resided in the shelter it was difficult for them to keep their trafficking experience a secret from their friends and schoolmates who know that they live in a shelter for violence victims. Further, for those trafficked internally (as most national victims in BiH were) it is possible that neighbours and friends will learn about their trafficking and exploitation.

One trend noted in Croatia was of national victims initially declining assistance but then requesting help at a later stage. Sometimes victims accessed assistance independently, while others were encouraged to do so by their family or friends. It is essential therefore that all victims receive assistance and referral information for later use. Further, service providers should follow up with the victim at a later stage to see if

<sup>136</sup> A recent UNOCHR report noted the importance of “the identification of victims who are citizens of BiH since all the measures for protection adopted so far were undertaken only for foreign citizens” (UNOCHR, 2004: 10).



assistance can be provided. Ideally, this is the role of state social workers.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In this section, we analyze the identification and referral mechanism in BiH (Section 3.1) as well as the assistance and protection available to foreign and national victims of trafficking (Section 3.2).

#### 3.1 Victim Identification and Referral in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The official identification and referral of victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina operates according to an informal national referral system. Initial contact with the victim is through various actors, including law enforcement, NGOs, helplines and clients. Those who come into contact with potential victims refer them to one of the temporary safe houses located throughout BiH, where they are interviewed and offered assistance based on their trafficking status. Details of this identification and referral process are outlined below.

##### **Law Enforcement**

The number of trafficking victims identified by law enforcement in BiH has fluctuated over time. Particularly noticeable was the spike in the identification of victims in 2002 (275 in 2002, as opposed to 92 in 2003 and 79 in 2004), primarily due to bar raids by the STOP teams of the International Police Task Force (IPTF). These accounted for majority of identified victims. In contrast, in 2003, only 32.1 per cent of foreign victims and 23.1 per cent of national victims were identified by law enforcement authorities. Institutional factors appear particularly significant here. In December 2002, the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) ended and the IPTF, which had been conducting raids on bars and brothels, ceased operations. All responsibilities related to the identification and referral of trafficked victims was transferred to the local authorities whose activities are monitored by the European Union Police Mission (EUPM), which also provides technical support to the local authorities. This sudden shift in responsibility temporarily created an institutional vacuum, as local authorities did not immediately have either the capacity or the resources to assume all responsibilities. The transition had a direct impact on the identification of victims, with fewer counter-trafficking operations conducted by law enforcement authorities in BiH during the first several months of 2003. In addition, the reorganization of the Ministries responsible for assistance to trafficking victims (including the appointment of a State Coordinator for Counter-Trafficking and Illegal Immigration and a Ministry of Security at the state level) affected identification.

Traffickers' methods have also become more sophisticated and their activities more difficult to detect. Victims were kept in private apartments and clients taken to them by privately hired taxi drivers. The combination of these factors has translated into lower identification of victims by law enforcement.

Nonetheless, 2004 saw significant increases in the number of victims identified by law enforcement, 54.3 per cent of foreign trafficking victims and 57.1 per cent of national victims. This signals improvements in the skills of BiH law enforcement authorities and

also suggests that the more systematic investigative approach is starting to yield results.

### **Helplines**

In 2004, four helplines operated in BiH, receiving calls related to trafficking in persons. These are run by the NGOs Lara, La Strada, Zena BiH and Foundation for Local Democracy and were located throughout the country. Two of the helplines (La Strada and Lara) are dedicated to trafficking, while the other two (Zena BiH and Foundation for Local Democracy) receive calls about all forms of violence and exploitation, including trafficking. In spite of the availability of helplines, very few victims were identified in this way.

The La Strada helpline, which operates out of Mostar, was launched in August 2002. The helpline is accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week and the service is toll free. The majority of calls – 274 of the 450 calls received in 2004 (60.9 per cent) – were directly from victims. In 2003, 280 of 470 calls were directly from victims. Calls were received from victims requesting assistance and from those who had already escaped trafficking. In instances where victims want to escape and provide details of their location, La Strada mobilizes a social team or a police team, depending on the circumstances, to assist the victims.<sup>137</sup>

The Lara helpline operated out of Bijeljina and was open daily from 3:00 to 10:00 p.m. From 1 December 2003 to 31 December 2004, the helpline received 66 calls: 39 directly from victims, two from victims' families and one requesting information about working abroad. The calls from victims were, for the most part, related to 13 Moldovans who had previously been assisted by the NGO and wanted information about how to participate in the legal proceedings against trafficker. The use of the helpline was not linked to the identification of victims. The remaining calls were related to family violence, requests for legal assistance and misuse of the helpline. This helpline was discontinued on 31 December 2004 due to lack of funds. In 2005, the organization will not operate a helpline.

The two helplines geared toward violence generally also received calls related to trafficking, although in lesser numbers. The helpline of Zena BiH received only three calls related to trafficking in 2004, one of which was directly from a victim. This represents a decrease in trafficking related calls from the previous year. The Foundation for Local Democracy only recently began operating its helpline within Sarajevo Canton. The helpline was established in June 2004 and between 16 June and 26 December 2004 the helpline received 640 calls. The majority of calls were related to domestic violence (61.4 per cent), while other callers requested legal assistance (12 per cent), medical assistance (5.9 per cent) and various other forms of assistance (20.6 per cent). Only a fraction of these calls were related to trafficking.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Calls were also received from victims' families. In 2004, 37 of 450 calls were from victims' families and, in 2003, 55 of 470 calls were from victims' families. Where girls and women were reported by callers to be at risk or trafficked, information was passed to relevant law enforcement representatives. A similar number of calls were deemed preventative calls with callers requesting information about work abroad – 40 of 450 (8.9 per cent) in 2004 and 37 of 450 (7.9 per cent) in 2003. In addition to trafficking related calls, a large number of calls were related to family violence – 98 of 450 in 2004 (21.9 per cent) and 95 of 470 calls in 2003 (20.2 per cent).

<sup>138</sup> In addition to the helplines mentioned above, there are other helplines throughout the country for a range of different problems, including violence and crime generally. To avoid confusion caused by a large number of helplines, various stakeholders are currently discussing how to coordinate their activities and work.

### **Self-referral**

In both 2003 and 2004, many victims were self-referred, accessing assistance on their own or at the suggestion of family. This was particularly true of national trafficking victims, 69.2 per cent of whom in 2003 were self-referred. While the number of self-referred national victims declined in 2004 (to 33.3 per cent), this remains a significant means of identification and referral. Foreign victims also self-referred in many instances – in 27.1 per cent in 2003 and 21.4 per cent in 2004.

Self-referrals generally occur when victims seek escape from trafficking. They are generally helped to escape by a BiH national, sometimes even a client. As well, some self-referrals may be cases in which victims identified in raids initially declined assistance but returned for assistance at a later stage.

### **Citizens**

Unlike many destination countries in South-eastern Europe, in BiH private citizens have identified trafficking victims and referred them for assistance. In both 2003 and 2004, a number of foreign victims were recognized as trafficking victims by residents of BiH. A small number of foreign victims (1.4 per cent in 2003 and 3.6 per cent in 2004) were identified and referred by a friend. However, far more common was identification by clients. In 2003, 12.9 per cent of foreign victims were identified in this way, a percentage that rose to 17.9 per cent in 2004. Similarly, 4.8 per cent of national victims in 2004 were identified by a client. This signals a greater awareness of trafficking among the general public at large in BiH. It also underlines the identification role to be played by a range of citizens, including consumers of sexual services.

### **NGOs**

In a number of instances, NGOs were involved in the identification of both foreign and national victims. In 2004, 21.4 per cent of foreign victims were identified this way, an increase from 2.9 per cent in 2003. Among national victims, 7.7 per cent in 2003 and 4.8 per cent in 2004 were identified in this way. Since 1999, IOM and local NGOs have been working in partnership to establish a network of shelters and safe houses for the assistance of trafficked victims. Safe houses are managed by local NGOs. This structure has been promoted across BiH by IOM, NGOs and the government. The visibility of these NGOs services may help to explain the number of victims directly accessing them.

## **3.2 Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in BiH**

The assistance and protection framework for trafficked victims in BiH has been geared mainly toward return assistance for foreign victims of sexual exploitation. IOM and local NGOs operating safe houses in the various regions of BiH have provided most of the return assistance to foreign victims in BiH over the last few years. Local NGOs are actively involved in counter-trafficking activities and services, and service providers have made efforts to broaden the assistance framework to include foreigners who do not wish to return immediately as well as BiH trafficked victims.

Despite their increased identification, national victims have not been the focus of services provided for trafficking in BiH. While shelters do assist national victims, their

services are not tailored to the needs of these victims or toward reintegration, representing a gap in the assistance framework.

Attention is currently being paid to the formalization of the assistance framework. In cooperation with NGOs and IOs, the government drafted the *Rulebook for the Protection of Alien Victims of Trafficking*, adopted in June 2004. In December 2004, the government met with and began drafting MOUs with NGOs about assistance to trafficking victims, including which organizations are able to provide victims assistance and are entitled to government funding. The government signed MOUs with four local NGOs in the beginning of 2005 for sheltering foreign victims of trafficking. An MOU between IOM and the government is currently being drafted, regarding cooperation on the return and reintegration of trafficking victims to countries of origin.

Victims assisted in BiH in 2003 and 2004 were provided with a range of services to meet their immediate and longer-term needs. Details of the various services are outlined below.

### **Shelter**

Upon identification, trafficking victims are referred to one of the temporary safe houses located throughout the country where they are accommodated, allowing for a reflection period during which time they can be interviewed by shelter staff and their status as trafficking victims be determined. Each of the shelters accepts adult and minor victims as well as foreign and national victims. These safe houses are operated by different NGOs throughout the country – IFS, Lara and La Strada. The overall distribution and availability of shelters is quite even geographically, which is important for ease of referral by law enforcement. Victims receive emergency assistance – medical, legal and psychological – and are provided with an opportunity for reflection before making decisions about the future. The primary option offered for foreign victims is assisted return to their country of origin and referral to a reintegration programme. Foreign victims who do not accept return are either referred to a local NGO for further assistance, or to law enforcement agencies for further legal procedures. In the case of national victims of trafficking, these shelters also offer assistance, although this is generally quite short-term.

Foreigners who accept assistance (return assistance, temporary residence, asylum request, etc.) are transferred from the various safe houses to the dedicated shelter for trafficking victims in Sarajevo, managed by the NGO International Forum for Solidarity (IFS) and supported by IOM. In this shelter they are provided with further assistance determined on a case-by-case basis. The BiH government provides 24-hour security. The long-term intention, however, is that the shelter be handed over to the government. The network and referral systems described above are currently being changed in accordance with the recently adopted legal framework and the newly signed MoUs between NGOs and the government. When victims request temporary residence or asylum, requests are coordinated with the state or UNHCR and victims are transferred accordingly and accommodation often arranged through an NGO.

The shelter is a closed facility where foreign victims are assisted and accommodated while their documents are processed and return organized. In addition, national victims also stay here prior to reintegration, or in one of the safe houses in the field. Shelter staff report that one of the difficulties faced by the beneficiaries is lengthy periods of

stay endured in the closed shelter facility. This is often necessary due to the illegal status of foreign citizens as well as the security concerns attendant in trafficking. In the absence of an open facility, alternatives should be explored to mitigate this additional stress on victims. This might include regular (escorted) field trips and activities or a garden within the shelter compound, which would allow victims fresh air and exercise. As an alternative, La Strada operates an open facility. Ideally, national victims should not be kept in a closed facility except when deemed necessary for protection reasons.

The length of stay for foreign victims depends primarily on the time required to procure travel documents, exits visas and complete any necessary investigations by authorities. Generally, foreign victims are resident at the shelter for one to two months. Victims with proper documentation stay in the shelter as little as three days. The duration for BiH victims depends mainly on whether they have families to which they can return and whether that family environment is safe. In situations in which the family was complicit in trafficking, victims stay longer as alternatives are sought. Overall, there is a lack of longer-term assistance and reintegration support for national victims, which represents a deficiency to be addressed, particularly given the increased identification of national trafficking victims.

Other shelters for victims of violence have provided *ad hoc* assistance to trafficking victims during the last few years. This includes the Foundation for Local Democracy, which runs a shelter for BiH minors who are victims of violence and, since 2003, has increasingly assisted victims of trafficking. Between 2002 and 2004, the shelter assisted 50 abused girls, 18 per cent of whom were trafficking victims. The shelter is supported in part by the canton level Department of Social Affairs, which pays for the assistance provided to all beneficiaries who originate from that canton. Assistance includes basic needs (accommodation, food, clothing) as well as education, medical care, psychological assistance, life skills training, etc. This shelter/programme provides mainly short to medium-term assistance, with most victims staying between 30 and 180 days. However, longer-term accommodation is available as needed and, in some cases, victims stayed in the shelter for four years.

IOM, the government and NGOs have collaboratively developed a set of realistic, yet effective, minimum standards for the management of shelters for trafficked victims, both national and foreign, in BiH. These standards provided the basis for the MoUs developed between the government and local NGOs operating the shelters.

There is no longer-term alternative accommodation option for foreign victims who have been granted temporary residence. Apart from high-risk cases, restricted-movement shelters are not appropriate housing options. Alternative shelter options are needed for foreign victims wishing to stay in Bosnia and Herzegovina under a temporary residence visa.

### **Medical Assistance**

Shelters provide confidential and free-of-charge medical care for all victims of trafficking. Most foreign and national victims request and receive gynaecological examinations and a general health check-up at private clinics, including gynaecological examinations, STI tests and pregnancy tests conducted on confidential terms. The gynaecological examinations and laboratory tests reveal that almost all of the victims

test positive for some forms of STI. Service providers do not report substantial difficulties in obtaining treatment and medication for victims with gynaecological disease.

In contrast to many service providers in neighbouring countries, shelters in Bosnia and Herzegovina offer to arrange free-of-charge HIV testing and pre and post-test counselling for foreign and national trafficking victims on a voluntary basis. Service providers reported that a handful of foreign victims have tested positive for HIV. The issue of HIV/Aids infection became a high-profile issue in 2004 when a Ukrainian victim of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Bosnia and Herzegovina died of the disease.

Service providers report a high rate of drug and alcohol dependency, including among minor victims. This flags the need for both skills in identifying drug and alcohol dependency as well as the identification of facilities for treatment of victims with dependencies.

Medical care for foreign victims is generally paid for by the NGO or assisting organization. National victims are technically entitled to medical care as long as they have identity papers. However, one NGO reports that a number of assisted national victims lacked proper legal documentation and so were required to pay for medical assistance. The government provides complimentary medical assistance to foreigners only in emergency situations or in cases where there is a reciprocal agreement with the victim's country of origin, which is generally not the case for countries from which trafficking victims originate. Most service providers face financial difficulties when victims – especially foreign victims – require more extensive medical assistance and hospitalization. Complimentary medical assistance for both foreign and national victims of trafficking is needed, in adherence to international standards as outlined in the UN Convention on Transnational Crime and the associated Protocols.

In terms of medical assistance, there is a need for greater sensitivity on the part of medical personnel. While service providers do not report discrimination against victims by medical care providers with whom they established informal agreements, there continues to be confusion between prostitution and trafficking in the medical profession more generally, which can translate into insensitivity when treating victims.

### **Psychological Assistance**

Psychological assistance is a critical need for most victims assisted in BiH. Service providers report that most trafficking victims present signs of stress, anxiety, depression and, in a striking number of cases, suicidal ideations.

Psychological counselling for victims is offered at all shelters and includes both individual and group counselling. Shelters have either a psychologist on staff or an external psychologist who provides counselling. The scope and depth of the counselling varies considerably, usually according to the length of time a beneficiary spends in the shelter. Most service providers state that victims need at least two to three days of initial rest before they are able to engage in in-depth conversations with psychologists and counsellors. Experiences from other countries in the region highlight the importance of counselling being carried out in the victim's own language and shelters provide translation as needed.

A few beneficiaries required hospitalization for psychiatric disorders. NGOs do not report difficulties in obtaining psychiatric care and hospitalization for national victims, however they face difficulties doing so for foreign victims. Some psychiatric facilities refuse to accept foreign victims, and others demand high fees.

### **Educational and Recreational Activities**

Recreational activities vary from shelter to shelter. In Sarajevo, recreational activities are organized by local NGOs and associations who provide training in English language, computers and handicrafts. In addition, beneficiaries play games, cards and watch television with NGO staff. Staff at safe houses are generally responsible for the activities of the residents, although with a similar repertoire of activities. Overall, recreational and educational activities offered to beneficiaries in the shelters are limited and should be expanded to include exercise and other stress-relieving activities. It is also important to develop strategies for educational and vocational assistance for victims who reside in the shelter for longer periods. This might involve individualized educational assistance in cooperation with NGOs that offer educational, social and/or economic empowerment assistance to victims.

### **Legal Assistance**

Four categories of legal assistance are provided to victims in the shelter, as outlined below:

1) *Documentation assistance necessary for return*: IOM is primarily responsible for obtaining the identity and travel documents that foreign victims require to return home. IOM arranges for the issuance of these documents through the victim's embassy or consulate in BiH or in the nearest diplomatic office. The process takes approximately four weeks if victims possess no form of valid identity documentation, as is the case for the majority of foreign victims.<sup>139</sup>

2) *Legal information regarding the victim's overall status as a victim of trafficking*: Most assisted victims receive some form of legal information from NGOs or IOM regarding their overall status and rights as a victim of trafficking in BiH. Once in the shelter, victims receive information from a legal representative regarding their status, their possibilities to seek asylum and their rights and obligations with respect to criminal investigation and court proceedings against their traffickers. Since 2004, this service has been provided by the legal NGO *Vasa Prava* (Your Rights), which has an MOU with the BiH government. The NGO provides advice about victims' legal rights and obligations, their status in BiH (legal or illegal), implications of testifying in legal proceedings and what assistance they are entitled to receive (i.e. TRP, asylum).

3) *Individualized legal advice and representation for those participating in legal proceedings against traffickers*: The majority of victims at the shelter do not receive direct assistance from a lawyer. The minority who do are generally willing to testify against traffickers in legal proceedings. Service providers maintain that more would be

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<sup>139</sup> In addition, in some unique cases in 2003 and 2004, IOM assisted trafficking victims who, following their escape from trafficking, entered stable relationships with BiH nationals. As trafficking victims, IOM assisted them to return to their home country where they obtained the necessary documentation to get married to their BiH partner. In 2004, there were two such cases – one Romanian and one Moldovan.

willing to do so if the legal process were faster.<sup>140</sup> Many victims wish to return home within a relatively short period. Some victims have expressed a willingness to return to Bosnia-Herzegovina for future court hearings, as happens in other countries of the region, such as Macedonia. However, there are currently no systematic programmes in place to facilitate the safe and secure return of witnesses, nor are there funds available to compensate them for time and expenses incurred. This option merits consideration, as it would support criminal proceedings against traffickers, an important deterrent in trafficking.

Prosecutorial and judicial treatment of victims and witnesses varies among cities and cantons/entities. Service providers report that victims receive better treatment when they are accompanied by their own legal representatives, which is consistent with findings throughout the region. Prosecutors do not always act in the best interest of the victim. OSCE's field staff and court monitors have noted some progress regarding treatment of victims and collection of evidence, but, in other cases, prosecutors and judges treated victims insensitively. An additional complication is the lack of official legal interpreters for court. Overall, service providers recommend more specialized training and resources for prosecutors, judges and lawyers representing trafficked victims, especially in applying rules of confidentiality and protection of privacy and dignity.

4) *Legal assistance for national victims in acquiring legal documents*: Many national victims are without identity papers and require assistance in accessing documents. These documents are essential for victims to access medical and other social services. This can be particularly problematic when the victim is an internally displaced person (IDP). The government should try to facilitate this process in the case of trafficking victims, especially as it may affect access to medical care, educational reinsertion and possible employment.

#### **Witness Protection**

*The Law on Witness Protection*, which came into force on 1 March 2003, has been adopted at state and entity levels with harmonized provisions. The provisions cover two categories of witnesses: witnesses under threat and vulnerable witnesses, the latter including all child witnesses.<sup>141</sup> Witnesses are entitled to receive psychological and social assistance as well as various other protective measures including providing testimony by means of image and sound, removal of the accused during testimony and additional measures to protect anonymity. However, the practical application of the law

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<sup>140</sup> In spite of the continued presence of trafficking in persons in BiH and the reform of the criminal law in 2003 (March at state level and August at entity level), there have been a limited number of proceedings and prosecutions as of July 2004. The Office of the BiH Prosecutor registered 26 cases of criminal acts relating to human trafficking and smuggling, all of which are in different stages of prosecution. In FbiH, seven criminal reports were filed for the act of mediation in prostitution involving ten accused. According to information obtained from the Office of the RS Prosecutor, there were no registered criminal reports on trafficking based on the new Criminal Code. Moreover, in the Republika Srpska between 2000 and 2002, there have been five cases in which nine people were charged, 21 cases of trafficking in persons at the indictment level involving 44 person and four cases under investigation. The United Nations Office of the High Commission for Human Rights has argued that procedures are too long and too frequently end with light sentences (UNOHCHR, 2004).

<sup>141</sup> "Witnesses under threat" refers to anyone whose personal security or the security of the family is endangered through his participation in proceedings, as a result of threats, intimidation, or similar actions pertaining to his testimony. "Vulnerable witnesses" refers to anyone who has been severely physically or mentally traumatized by the events of the offence or otherwise suffers from a serious mental condition rendering him unusually sensitive, and a child, and a juvenile.



has been limited, given the lack of resources and guidelines for implementation. In the absence of a comprehensive and implementable witness protection programme, many victims will remain wary of the serious repercussions of testifying against their traffickers, reducing the rate of prosecutions in BiH.

### **Temporary Residence Permit (TRP)**

BiH is one of only a handful of countries in SEE that allows for temporary residence permits for victims of trafficking.<sup>142</sup> The permit allows victims to stay in Bosnia and Herzegovina for three months at which point they may apply for an additional extension, contingent upon their cooperation with law enforcement authorities. Ideally, the length of stay should be extended to a minimum of six months, in adherence with EU standards. To date, some trafficking victims have been issued a temporary residency visa, while others are awaiting the processing of their TRP application.

In addition to defining rules and standards for the issuance of the temporary visa, the government and service providers must develop an appropriate assistance framework, including medium-term shelters and corresponding rehabilitation assistance programmes for foreign victims who reside in Bosnia and Herzegovina under temporary visas. Also important is to ensure freedom of movement of victims with temporary residence visas.

### **Voluntary Return of Trafficked Victims**

At present, IOM is the primary organization responsible for facilitating the return of foreign trafficking victims willing to return to their home countries. IOM secures identity papers, travel documents and an exit visa as well as contacts IOM or NGOs in the origin country, regarding the beneficiary's case file, transportation arrangements and reintegration possibilities. Victims returning to neighbouring countries usually return home by car or air. IOM or NGO personnel meet all returning victims at the airport (or other point of arrival within the home country) and typically offer overnight accommodation and transportation to the victim's desired destination. Most victims enrol in an assistance programme at least for a short period. This includes shelter, medical care, psychosocial assistance, a material assistance package and referrals for vocational and employment assistance. Detailed information about reintegration programs within specific countries of origin in SEE are found in individual country reports.

In some situations, returns are undertaken directly by NGOs. This is possible when victims hold appropriate documentation and necessary visas. In such cases, it is critical that service providers be familiar with specific aspects of reintegration programmes and assistance possibilities in the victim's country of origin so that the victim can be returned and assisted appropriately.

### **Reintegration Assistance for BiH Victims of Trafficking**

There are currently no programmes dedicated specifically to the reintegration of national victims of trafficking. Various organizations, particularly those operating safe houses located throughout the country, provide short-term assistance to national victims

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<sup>142</sup> Other countries with temporary residence permits are Croatia and Serbia, while Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania are currently in the process of making legislative changes that would allow for TRP options for trafficking victims.

as needed. In some instances and as needed, shelters will provide medium to long-term assistance. However, these programmes are not tailored to reintegration and responses are on a case-by-case basis. Further, local NGOs possess little funding for reintegration services, which necessarily affects their ability to formulate and implement appropriate reintegration programmes. Local NGOs have tried to enlist cooperation and support for services from local Social Work Centres, but the Social Work Centres usually state that they do not possess the funds or expertise to handle such cases.

While the Foundation for Local Democracy does not manage a formal reintegration programme for minor victims of violence (of whom a number are trafficking victims), it does include reintegration aspects. This includes longer-term accommodation as needed, educational reinsertion and a formal structure for case follow-up, including a mobile team. The programme, it should be noted, is funded in part by the cantonal Department of Social Affairs and works closely with the Centres for Social Work. As many of the national victims of trafficking have also suffered domestic violence, the programme meets multiple assistance needs. That so many of national trafficking victims have been victims of domestic violence is a serious obstacle to family reintegration. To date, only one of the nine victims assisted by the organization in 2003 and 2004 has been reintegrated, with the remaining victims still residing at the shelter.

The overall lack of reintegration assistance and rehabilitation for BiH constitutes a gap in victim assistance and protection. Comprehensive reintegration assistance programmes are needed for national victims, especially for vocational training, job-finding assistance and long-term housing. Service providers report that BiH victims are most interested in receiving medical care, job-finding assistance and obtaining long-term housing possibilities. Accordingly, such programs should be developed by local NGOs in cooperation with appropriate governmental authorities, such as the Ministry of Labour and Employment and Social Work Centres. Further, there is a need to train and sensitize a geographically disparate network of social assistance actors. An associated gap is the lack of long-term assistance and rehabilitation options for foreign victims who wish to reside in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Some thought should be given to the development of integration assistance for foreign victims who decline to be returned to their home countries.

### **Assistance for Minors**

There have been a few initiatives aimed at more specialized treatment of foreign and trafficked minors. The *Law on Movement and Stay of Aliens and Asylum* introduced several victim-friendly provisions, including granting temporary residence permits for child victims of organized crime and unaccompanied children. Also critical is the *Rulebook on Protection of Alien Victims of Trafficking in Persons* from July 2004,<sup>143</sup> which specifically outlines measures for the protection of minors.<sup>144</sup> Further, according to the law, any individual found in a bar or nightclub without documents must be

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<sup>143</sup> This supercedes the *Temporary Instruction on Treatment of Victims of Trafficking*, issued by the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees in 2002 and contains a section on special protections for minors. Under this instruction, minors without valid documents and minors with valid documents found in locations suspected as trafficking venues are referred to the shelter, as well as minors who do not meet the above categories but who might be mistreated by a caretaker. The Instruction calls for minors to be accommodated in separate children's departments of shelters and a social worker to prepare a report for submission to appropriate authorities.

<sup>144</sup> These are Article 19 regarding protection, Article 20 regarding accommodation in shelters and Article 21 regarding safe return of minors.

considered a minor whenever there is reasonable doubt about his/her age, and assisted accordingly. Also valuable are the procedures outlined in UNICEF's *Recommendations for Special Measures to Protect Children Victims of Trafficking in South Eastern Europe*.

However, in practice, procedures for the identification, referral and assistance of foreign and BiH minors have been handled on an *ad hoc* basis, without specific attention to the needs and rights of minors. According to a recent survey, the majority of police stations were unable to explain how procedures differ for minor victims. Only one-third of stations/administrations were able to provide at least one detail about how they treated minor victims of trafficking differently from adult victims (UNICEF and STC, 2004: 30).

Further, in the various shelters no specific assistance or services are offered to minors. Rather, the adult assistance options are adapted and tailored to the individual minor. In a recent survey, service providers gave little specific information about any special procedures for minors apart from general information about a respectful and pedagogical approach. As the number of minors was quite low, many service providers consider the approach offered to adult women to be sufficiently suitable for girls (UNICEF and STC, 2004: 30). One exception is the programme run by the Foundation for Local Democracy where all beneficiaries are minors and programmes are developed specifically for this target group.

Generally, local NGOs and IOM provide assistance for trafficked minors, with little assistance or support from the local Social Work Centres. Many centres currently do not possess the requisite training or funds to work with trafficked minors. While this has changed in recent years, it remains a significant obstacle to the protection of minors in BiH. Both IOM and local NGOs cooperate with social services when dealing with minor victims of trafficking. The cooperation between the Foundation for Local Democracy and the Sarajevo Centre for Social Work involves the social work centres. Similarly, the NGO Your Rights was appointed by the government to assist victims free of charge.

UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Social Welfare to forge a larger role for the Ministry and its corresponding local Social Work Centres in counter-trafficking activities. This will depend significantly on availability of funds for training and service provision. Future training programmes and funding allocation for service provision to minors should be conducted in cooperation with experienced local NGOs. In the case of all BiH minor victims of trafficking, social services are contacted immediately for the appointment of a legal guardian.

It is important to note that laws on social protection provide the framework for the protection of children from abuse and violence. However, one obstacle is that eligibility for social protection is that the victim be a permanent or temporary resident in a given canton or municipality. This raises an issue with regard to minors who cannot prove residence and are non-resident or unregistered foreigners (UNICEF and STC, 2004: 23). Attention must be paid to how social protection legislation can develop specific provisions to regulate the status of child victims of trafficking or the assistance they should receive in accordance with international standards.

More generally, some consideration should be given to the needs of minors at different ages and at different stages of development. Assistance that is appropriate for younger minors may not be appropriate or effective for older minors.

# COUNTRY REPORT

## BULGARIA

This section analyzes the current situation of trafficking victims and victim assistance and protection in Bulgaria. The report is divided into three sections: 1) Number of Foreign and Bulgarian Trafficking Victims Identified and Assisted, 2) Profiles of Trafficking Victims and 3) Overview of the Assistance Framework in Bulgaria.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The total number of Bulgarian victims identified and assisted between January 2000 and 31 December 2004 was 621.
- The total number of foreign victims identified and assisted in Bulgaria between January 2000 and 31 December 2004 was 86.
- Bulgaria is a country of origin as well as of transit and, to a lesser degree, of destination.
- Bulgarian victims have been trafficked for a range of different purposes – sexual exploitation, labour, begging, delinquency and adoption. In a number of instances, victims have also been exposed to dual forms of exploitation while trafficked.
- Bulgaria is the first country in SEE where victims of trafficking for adoption were identified and assisted. To date, there have been nine such cases. The government and service providers have been active in identifying and addressing the specific assistance needs of this profile of victim.
- While the majority of Bulgarian trafficking victims were female, a number of male victims, trafficked for begging or labour, were assisted.
- Minors were highly represented among assisted victims of all forms of exploitation. Minor victims were particularly represented among trafficking for labour, begging and delinquency, accounting for 69.2 per cent in 2003 and 45.5 per cent in 2004.
- A multiplicity of factors, including economic background, family relations, education and employment, inform victims' vulnerability to trafficking. In Bulgaria, no single factor can account for trafficking in foreign or national victims.
- Members of ethnic minority communities were particularly vulnerable to trafficking for sexual and labour, begging, delinquency and adoption. In 2003 and 2004, 76.9 per cent and 81.8 per cent of victims of labour, begging and delinquency were from ethnic minorities. Similarly, 35.4 per cent of victims of sexual exploitation in 2003 were ethnic minorities and 42.6 per cent in 2004. Prevention and protection efforts must be tailored to these target groups and more cooperation is needed among counter-trafficking actors and organizations already working with ethnic minorities. Further, differences between and within ethnic minority groups must be noted to ensure interventions are appropriate and effective.
- The majority of Bulgarian victims were recruited by someone known to them. In a number of cases of trafficking for labour, begging or delinquency, victims' families were complicit in recruitment.

- Knowing areas of origin is valuable for targeted prevention efforts as well as to map areas where additional reintegration services are needed. Current reintegration efforts are located throughout the country. However, there is a need to monitor source areas, which may fluctuate over time, as a means to identify gaps in reintegration programmes and assistance available.
- Bulgarian trafficking victims reported “poor” living and working conditions. Many victims suffered various forms of abuse while trafficked. However, 2004 saw decrease in the use of violence against victims and no cases of multiple forms of abuse.
- Bulgarian victims of sexual exploitation were trafficked to as many as 20 different destination countries in 2003 and 2004, most outside of the SEE region. Victims of labour, begging and delinquency were primarily sent to EU countries.
- In addition, a number of Bulgarian women were identified within the country – 19.2 per cent in 2003 and 11.9 per cent in 2004. Some victims were trafficked and exploited internally, while others were identified by border officials while in the trafficking process. This reflects improvement in the identification practices of law enforcement agencies on Bulgarian soil geared toward trafficking prevention.
- Most victims of sex trafficking – 85.1 per cent in 2003 and 82.4 per cent in 2004 – were without children at recruitment. This is not surprising given the high number of unmarried victims. A number of victims, however, were mothers and single mothers. The rate of single mothers in the IOM caseload was 15 to 20 per cent. This is generally consistent with overall household composition, in which single mothers made up 15 per cent of Bulgarian households.
- The economic status of Bulgarian victims of sexual exploitation is relatively diverse, with victims originating from the full range of economic strata. While most victims originated from “poor” or “very poor” backgrounds, in 2003 and 2004, a number of Bulgarian trafficking victims were from more affluent economic backgrounds. By contrast, victims of trafficking for labour, begging, delinquency and adoption were primarily “poor” or “very poor”.
- Victims of all forms of trafficking crossed borders at legal crossings and with legal documents. This is likely due to the increased ease with which Bulgarian victims can enter EU countries. This façade of legality can serve to deceive both border officials and victims themselves that trafficking is occurring.
- The majority of victims were identified and referred for assistance by law enforcement authorities. Other identification agencies include NGOs, IOM, self-referral, embassies and hospital staff.
- There is a lack of middle to long-term accommodation options for trafficking victims who do not wish to return to their families. More housing assistance is required.

- The recently developed and implemented return procedures for minors stands as a good practice in the region, including as it does security and family assessments, temporary shelters and specialized procedures for interacting with minors. Further, Bulgarian police have specialized police officers who conduct the initial interview with the child trafficking victim, a positive practice for police working with children in the region.
- Deportation of trafficking victims to Bulgaria continues, contravening international standards. Destination countries must be obliged to identify and assist trafficking victims.
- Bulgarian law enforcement authorities work in cooperation with counterparts in various destination countries. This includes joint investigations and posting Bulgarian officers in destination countries to identify and interview Bulgarian victims. This is a positive practice.
- Comprehensive case monitoring and follow-up assistance constitutes a gap in services for trafficked victims in Bulgaria. While IOM and NGOs monitor cases for a number of months, overall, follow-up is limited.
- Bulgarian embassies and consular offices abroad are recognized as valuable identification agencies for trafficking victims. Their staff received substantial training on trafficking and referral mechanisms mandatory for all embassies/consulates were developed.
- Lack of data from destination countries can camouflage the extent of trafficking in Bulgarian nationals. There is a need to access information from both origin and destination countries to measure the scope of trafficking.
- International networks for victim services should be expanded further. Ideally, victims should not be limited in the choice of assistance only to cooperating organizations, but should be informed about the full range of assistance possibilities to ensure that these meet their individual needs and interests.



## 1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND BULGARIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED

Bulgaria is a country of origin for trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation. Bulgaria has also recently emerged as a country of origin for victims trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency and, in a handful of cases, for illegal adoption. Also documented are cases of foreign nationals trafficked to or through Bulgaria for both sexual and labour exploitation.

Statistics and information were compiled according to primary data provided by the IOM Mission in Sofia, Nadja Centre, Animus Association – La Strada, National Service to Combat Organized Crime (NSCOC) – Ministry of the Interior, National Border Police Service (Ministry of the Interior), Médecins sans Frontières Reproductive Health Clinic (MSF), Bulgarian Red Cross, Caritas Bulgaria, Koofra (Germany) and Poppy Project (UK).<sup>145146</sup> The data generally relate to experiences of trafficking for sexual exploitation, although other forms of trafficking have been noted, particularly in 2003 and 2004. Through an examination of the profiles and experiences of Bulgarian and foreign victims, we are better equipped to consider interventions that can address their needs and redress their trafficking experience.

In Bulgaria, there is currently no formal centralized data registry for victims of trafficking or a uniform methodology for the collection of victim information. Each organization collects data based on cases assisted and maintains its own database. However, systematic data collection on trafficking is foreseen under the umbrella of the National Commission established in 2005. According to its mandate, Bulgaria’s State Agency for Child Protection (SACP) will also maintain a registry of minor trafficking victims, which is currently being developed and will be operationalized in 2005.

TABLE 1  
NUMBER OF VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO OR ORIGINATING FROM BULGARIA, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign Trafficking Victims	24	41	4	6	11	86
Bulgarian Trafficking Victims	46	96	164	172	142	621

These figures comprise the number of Bulgarians trafficked abroad who either voluntarily returned through organized return programs or were identified upon extradition. These figures also comprise cases of Bulgarian victims trafficked within Bulgaria and identified by law enforcement or service providers.

With two exceptions, these figures do not include trafficked Bulgarian victims identified and assisted by NGOs or governmental social assistance programs in transit and destination countries who have not been subsequently returned to Bulgaria. While the RCP sought to collect information from service providers in destination countries, only two organizations – the Poppy Project (UK) and Koofra (Germany) – provided individual victim profiles for assisted Bulgarian trafficking victims. As such, Bulgarian

<sup>145</sup> Other organizations in Bulgaria that participated in and provided information for the RCP research include: State Agency for Child Protection (SACP), Ministry of Justice, Central Commission for Combating Child Delinquency, Child Crime Unit (Ministry of the Interior) and the National Police Service (Ministry of the Interior).

<sup>146</sup> For a full discussion of how data was collected and the methodology used, please see: *Introduction*.

victims enrolled in Italy's (Article 18) social assistance schemes are not quantified in this report. Nor does this report include data from service providers in key destination countries like Austria, Poland, Germany or France. Further, Bulgarian trafficking victims assisted by STV La Strada in the Netherlands in 2003 and 2004 (47 and 55 victims respectively) have not been included in these numbers except where they have been referred to and assisted by Animus Association upon return.<sup>147</sup> The RCP stresses that the lack of data about victims identified and assisted in destination countries represents a gap, particularly when victims are increasingly being trafficked to locations outside of South-eastern Europe. Data from these sources is necessary to highlight: a) the extent of victims trafficked to various destinations, b) various forms of trafficking and c) the specific profiles of a wider range of victims to ensure effective prevention and protection efforts. RCP attempts to collect information from service providers in destination countries were largely unsuccessful as many organizations lacked time and resources to assist in the research or were prevented from doing so because of institutional regulations on information sharing between organizations. Such hurdles must be overcome to provide a more holistic picture of trafficking to, through and from South-eastern Europe as well as further a field.

In addition, other data highlights both the extent of trafficking in Bulgaria as well as the serious response to it by the relevant Bulgarian counter-trafficking authorities. Since 2003, there has been an increase in the number of cases against traffickers, signifying improvements in systems of identification and prosecution. In 2004, 116 cases were investigated by the National Border Police alone, 55 of which were finalized and are now before the prosecutor. These cases involved at least one and generally more than one trafficker.<sup>148</sup> Further, the number of deportations provides some (indirect) insight into trafficking. Large numbers of Bulgarian women have been extradited; 2978 were deported from EU countries in 2003 and 2908 were deported in 2004, a percentage of whom were likely victims of trafficking.<sup>149</sup>

Moreover, there are other patterns that might indicate the continuation of trafficking to, through and from Bulgaria. In 2003, there were 5133 migration-related border apprehensions of both foreigners and Bulgarians, including 1188 women and 246 minors (Futo and Jandl, 2004: 40).<sup>150</sup> In addition, through its assisted voluntary return programme, IOM Bulgaria returned 62 irregular migrants in 2004 and 96 in 2003 from countries such as Belgium, Norway and the Netherlands, many of whom may have been victims of trafficking for labour exploitation but were not recognized as such or were unwilling to represent themselves as trafficking victims.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Correspondence with Suzanne Hoff, La Strada, Netherlands, 26 April 2005.

<sup>148</sup> Further, this number does not include the cases being pursued on foreign soil. (Interview with Svetoslav Tanev, Head of Sector, National Border Police Service, Ministry of the Interior, Bulgaria, February 2005).

<sup>149</sup> According to Mr. Svetoslav Tanev, Head of Sector of the National Border Police Service, as many as ten per cent of deported women could be trafficking victims but were not identified as such prior to extradition (Interview with Svetoslav Tanev, Head of Sector, National Border Police Service, Ministry of the Interior, Bulgaria, February 2005).

<sup>150</sup> These figures are also arguably indicative of the strengthened border control mechanisms by the Bulgarian authorities in the context of EU accession.

<sup>151</sup> Interview with Nikolay Nenkov, IOM, Bulgaria, February 2005; cf. IOM Sofia, 2003.

## 2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

This section explores the profiles and experiences of victims trafficked from, to and through Bulgaria. In this section, we analyze the profiles and experiences of Bulgarian victims trafficked – for sexual exploitation (Section 2.1.1), for labour, begging and delinquency (Section 2.1.2) and for adoption (Section 2.1.3). We also consider the profiles of foreign victims trafficked to Bulgaria (Section 2.2). Victims’ needs are determined by the specific dynamics of their trafficking experience. Better understanding of victims’ backgrounds as well as of the nature of recruitment, transportation and exploitation is an essential starting point in the development of appropriate assistance and services for victims.

### 2.1 Bulgarian Trafficking Victims

In what follows, we examine the context of trafficking in persons from Bulgaria. The table below outlines the number of Bulgarian nationals trafficked abroad.

TABLE 2  
NUMBER OF ASSISTED BULGARIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Bulgarian Trafficking Victims	46	96	164	172	142	621

Bulgarian nationals have been trafficked for a range of purposes, as outlined in the table below. While sexual exploitation remains the predominant manifestation (92.4 per cent in 2003 and 85.3 per cent in 2004), it is by no means the only form of trafficking suffered by Bulgarian citizens.

TABLE 3  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG BULGARIAN VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Sexual exploitation	159	122
Labour exploitation, begging and delinquency	13	12
Adoption	0	9
Total	172	143

In a few cases Bulgarians were trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency. While most cases involved begging, there were also instances of trafficking for waitressing and domestic work. In some cases, victims were subjected to multiple forms of exploitation, most commonly for a combination of begging and stealing, although sometimes for labour and sexual exploitation.

Perhaps most striking were the cases of trafficking for adoption, first noted in 2004. While only a fraction of assisted victims – 6.3 per cent in 2004 and 1.5 per cent of victims since 2000 – they constitute the first documentation of this form of trafficking among assisted victims in the region.

#### **2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Bulgarian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation**

The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of Bulgarian victims trafficked for sexual exploitation and subsequently assisted.

TABLE 4  
BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004

Form of Trafficking	2003	2004
Sexual Exploitation	159	122

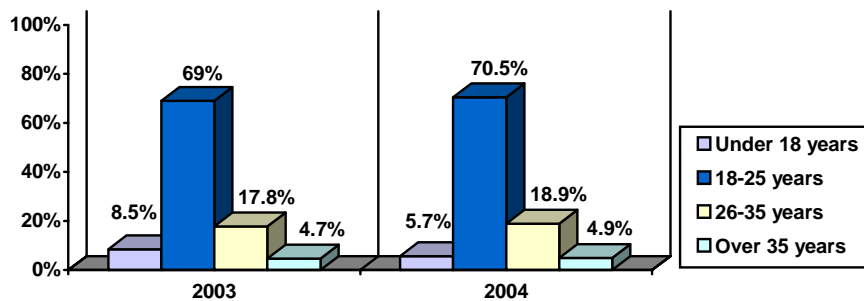
### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics<sup>152</sup>

**Sex:** Without exception, victims trafficked for sexual exploitation from Bulgaria since 2000 were women.

**Age:** Bulgarian victims of sexual exploitation were generally between 18 and 25 years.

In addition, a significant minority of victims – 22.5 per cent in 2003 and 23.8 per cent in 2004 – were over the age of 26 at identification and roughly 25 per cent of this group were over 35 years of age. This finding is striking as vulnerability to trafficking for sexual exploitation is often assumed to be closely related to youth.

GRAPH 1  
AGE OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



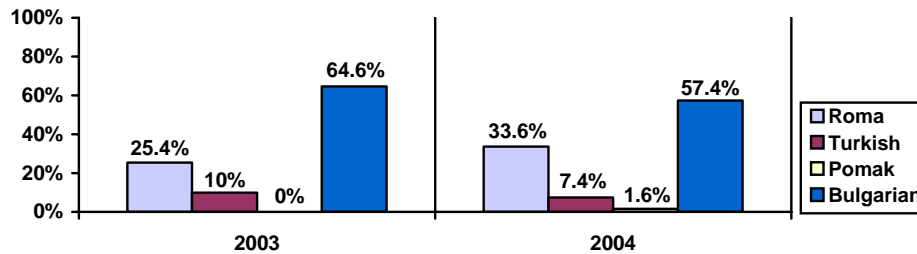
Worth noting are the relatively low numbers of minors trafficked for sexual exploitation – 8.5 per cent in 2003 and 5.7 per cent in 2004. This stands in sharp contrast to trafficking from countries such as Serbia and BiH where minors were a significant percentage of assisted victims. It also marks a change from 2002 in which almost half of victims were minors at identification. While this percentage may be an underestimation as it records the victim’s age at identification rather than at recruitment, it is nevertheless a decrease from previous years, perhaps reflecting also the coordinated response of Bulgarian authorities, IOM, and NGOs to counteract trafficking in minors.

**Ethnicity:** There is seemingly a strong link between ethnicity and trafficking for sexual exploitation among Bulgarian victims. In both years, a significant minority of victims were from an ethnic minority – 35.4 per cent in 2003 and 42.6 per cent in 2004. The high representation of ethnic minorities is particularly striking since only an estimated

<sup>152</sup> Profiles of Bulgarian victims of sexual exploitation presented herein are drawn from cases for which there is comprehensive data. In a number of cases – generally those where victims stayed a short time at the shelter or declined further assistance – it was not possible to collect comprehensive data. Comprehensive data was available for 130 of 159 victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in 2003 and all 122 victims in 2004. Indicators for which there was comprehensive information about all 159 victims in 2003 include: forms of trafficking, age, gender, and country of destination.

4.7 per cent of the population in Bulgaria are Roma, 9.4 per cent are Turkish and three per cent are Pomak (National Statistical Institute 2001, US Embassy, 2003).

GRAPH 2  
ETHNICITY OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Socio-economic vulnerability and social disenfranchisement may make individuals from ethnic minorities particularly vulnerable to trafficking. In addition, among Roma, cultural traditions and practices such as arranged marriage may intersect with trafficking vulnerability.

Counter-trafficking efforts should pay special attention to the high representation of ethnic minorities among Bulgarian victims both in terms of prevention and protection strategies. To achieve both, more cooperation is needed between counter-trafficking actors and organizations already working with ethnic minorities.

**Area of origin:** Most victims of sexual exploitation assisted in 2003 (93.5 per cent) and 2004 (89.6 per cent) originated from urban settings, both small and large towns. This is generally consistent with the overall residence pattern of the Bulgarian population, 67.5 per cent of whom live in urban areas (UNDP, 2002: 163). In both years, more victims came from large, rather than small towns – 75 per cent in 2003 and 58.2 per cent in 2004.

TABLE 5  
AREAS OF ORIGIN OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEX EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004<sup>153</sup>

Regions of Origin	2003	2004
Belene	0	1
Blagoevgrad	3	1
Burgas	13	8
Dimitrovgrad	0	1
Dobrich	3	3
Dinevo Haskovo	0	1
Dolni Dabnik	0	1
Dulovo	0	1
Gabrovo	0	2
Galata village	0	1
Gorna Mitropolia	0	1
Haskovo	2	1
Kableshekovo	0	1
Kazanlak	0	1
Kyustendil	0	2
Lovech	1	1
Lukovit	0	1

<sup>153</sup> These areas of origin are not specific to trafficking for sexual exploitation but represent the area of origin for all victims of trafficking assisted by IOM in 2003 and 2004.

Montana	2	1
Novi Pazar	0	2
Omurtag	0	1
Parazdzhik	1	4
Pernik	1	0
Pleven	3	2
Plovdiv	5	4
Pomorie	0	1
Radomirski Pleven	0	1
Razgrad	1	2
Ruse	8	2
Sandanski	0	1
Sevlievo	0	2
Shumen	1	0
Silistra	3	0
Sliven	5	1
Sofia	6	7
Sredets	0	4
Stara Zagora	3	0
Svetovrachane	0	1
Svishtov	0	1
Varna	7	1
Veliko Turnovo	4	1
Vidin	0	1
Vratsa	7	1
Yambol	1	3
Total	80	72

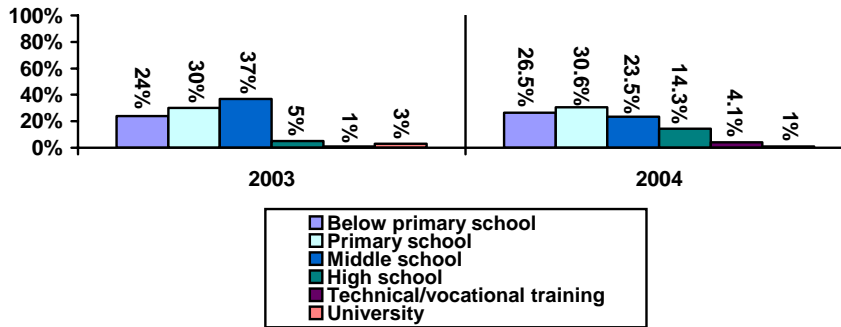
Information about areas of origin is valuable not only for targeted prevention efforts, but also to map the areas where additional reintegration services are needed. Current reintegration efforts have sought to address the geographic distribution of source areas and are located throughout the country. As source areas may fluctuate over time, this exercise should ideally be ongoing to enable service providers to identify any emerging gaps in reintegration programmes and assistance available.

**Education:**<sup>154</sup> Bulgarian victims trafficked for sexual exploitation had low education levels, consistent with other source countries in the region. Most victims had only basic education – primary or middle school – and therefore limited economic opportunities and earning potential. In addition, a notable 24 per cent of victims in 2003 and 26.5 per cent in 2004 had less than primary school education. Education levels of assisted trafficking victims were below the average education level for Bulgarian women.<sup>155</sup> These findings indicate that in Bulgaria limited education correlates with trafficking vulnerability, although it cannot be read in isolation from other contributors.

<sup>154</sup> Primary school is the first four years of schooling, while middle school refers to grade five through eight and high school refers to grade nine through twelve.

<sup>155</sup> School life expectancy for Bulgarian women was 13 years (UN Statistics Division 2004).

GRAPH 3  
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



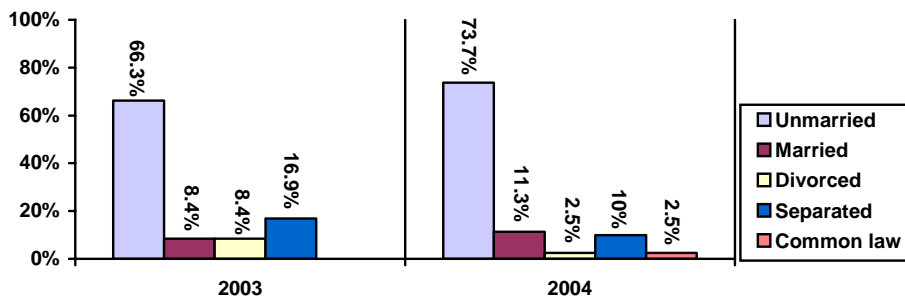
Only a small number of victims had higher than middle school education, although this increased in 2004. Indeed, the number of victims with education at the high school, vocational school or university level more than doubled in 2004 to 19.4 per cent, from nine per cent in 2003.

Overall victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation were drawn from a wide range of educational levels and efforts to prevent this type of trafficking must seek to target all levels. This also highlights the need for expanded prevention activities in non-formal venues that target early school leavers. Also essential is an assessment of the effect of awareness programmes, including recommendations to enhance their efficiency.

**Mental and physical disabilities:** Only a handful of Bulgarian victims of sexual exploitation assisted in 2003 and 2004 had a mental disability – two victims in 2003 (1.5 per cent) and three victims in 2004 (2.5 per cent). None had physical disabilities. As such, in the Bulgarian context, this does not appear to be a significant site of vulnerability. Nevertheless, where this profile of victim is identified, assistance must be tailored to meet their specific needs.

**Marital and family status:** An increasing majority of victims of sexual exploitation were unmarried at recruitment, making it clear that unmarried women were acutely vulnerable to trafficking. However, marital status is not a contributor that can be read in isolation – victims of different marital status were also vulnerable to trafficking.

GRAPH 4  
MARITAL STATUS OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Most victims – 85.1 per cent in 2003 and 82.4 per cent in 2004 – were without children at recruitment. This is not surprising given the high number of unmarried victims. A number of victims, however, were mothers and single mothers. The rate of single mothers in the IOM caseload was 15 to 20 per cent. This is generally consistent with overall household composition, in which single mothers make up 15 per cent of all Bulgarian households (Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, 1995). Mothers have some specific assistance needs, including the option of accommodation with their children, programmes that support the development of good parenting skills, family counselling to reconcile families separated by trafficking/migration, *etc.* In addition, there may be a special need to support the reintegration of single mothers who are often especially socially and economically vulnerable.

It is critical to consider what happens to a child when a mother, particularly a single mother, migrates abroad. Many mothers left their children in the care of family members, while others were left in state childcare institutions. Upon return, service providers may need to support the fostering of a relationship between mother and child as well as the development of good parenting skills. Guardianship may also prove an issue for some returning mothers who have relinquished their guardianship rights, requiring legal assistance and advice.

In addition to dependent children, many victims were also responsible for the care of other family members at recruitment – parents, siblings and elderly relatives. This, too, can serve as a push factor for trafficking. Systematically documenting victim dependents would be valuable and may provide additional insight into trafficking risk.

**Economic status:**<sup>156</sup> The economic status of Bulgarian victims of sexual exploitation is relatively diverse, with victims originating from the full range of economic strata. Still, most victims originated from “poor” or “very poor” backgrounds. Of note in 2004 was the shift from “poor” to “very poor”, although the number of victims from “average” or “well off” backgrounds remained relatively constant.

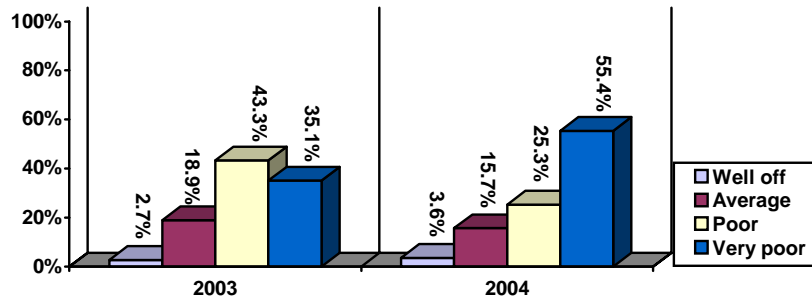
While poverty was undoubtedly an important contributor to trafficking, it is not an explanation in and of itself. Many poor individuals and families avoid trafficking and it would be valuable to identify and seek to replicate strategies and behaviours used by such families to guard against trafficking.

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<sup>156</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim’s self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.



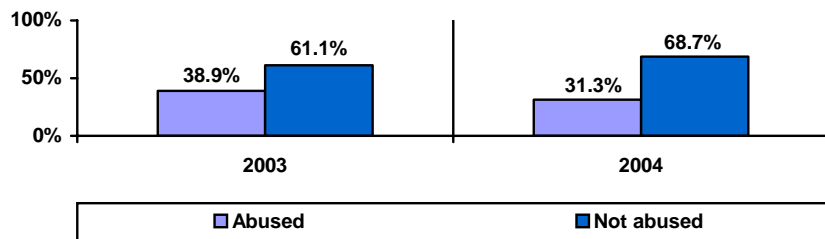
GRAPH 5  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004



In 2003 and 2004, a number of Bulgarian victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation were from more affluent economic backgrounds. While a small minority, this reminds us that even victims with opportunity at home may seek to live abroad. Where the overall economic situation is bad and opportunities limited, the more affluent may seek to escape to realize personal and/or professional aspirations. It is essential that we further investigate profiles of victims from average and affluent economic backgrounds<sup>157</sup> as well as the precise dimensions of their recruitment in an effort to pinpoint these alternative contributors to trafficking for sexual exploitation.

**Family and social relations:**<sup>158</sup> Available information<sup>159</sup> indicates that a large number of victims were subjected to domestic violence in their homes and that this probably contributed to their willingness to migrate. Further, violence and conflict in the home creates significant obstacles to the long-term reintegration of victims. Other problems mentioned by victims, which may be read as contributors to trafficking, include alcoholism in the home (13 per cent in 2003 and 14.1 per cent in 2004), illness or death in the family (6.3 per cent in 2004) and being adopted (3.1 per cent in 2004).

GRAPH 6  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE – BULGARIAN VICTIMS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



<sup>157</sup> These economic variables must be seen in context. Bulgaria is a transition country and most economic indicators are comparatively low; what is “poor” or “average” in Bulgaria is likely to be below what is deemed “poor” and “average” in EU countries.

<sup>158</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims’ self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim’s individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim’s relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

<sup>159</sup> This information was collected from Animus Association, Nadja Centre, Koofra (Germany) and Poppy Project (UK).

At the same time, it is important to point out that the majority of victims did not suffer domestic abuse, which means explanations for trafficking must be located elsewhere. This finding is consistent with information from IOM which reported generally “good” family relations, with only 25 per cent of victims in 2003 and 27.8 per cent of victims in 2004 reporting “bad” or “difficult” family environments.

Another variable flagged by service providers is that many victims came from single-parent families – 20.4 per cent in 2003 and 20.3 per cent in 2004. The degree to which single-parenthood is a factor in trafficking is unclear. While some single-parent families are socially and economically vulnerable and/or fraught with conflict, others are stable and healthy. To more effectively pinpoint trafficking risks, more attention needs to be paid to this variable, while at the same time taking care to avoid stigmatizing this group. Where single-parent families are deemed particularly vulnerable to trafficking, efforts should be made to provide economic support and opportunities as a means of trafficking prevention.

Attention should also be paid to more subtle family and social tensions that may contribute to trafficking vulnerability. Feelings of alienation and exclusion, whether personal or social, may heighten trafficking risk. Lack of communication or bonding within the family may also play a role in trafficking. Such issues may be particularly pressing when considering minors without parental care. Another risk is that since migration is a widely accepted migration strategy, parents may pressure their daughters to migrate to find work, pressure that can translate into trafficking vulnerability. In addition, women or girls who are rebellious, adventurous or independent minded may be at particular risk, given their willingness to break with social convention. In short, it is important to consider victims’ broader personal and social terrain to understand their vulnerability to trafficking.

Even where family relations have been good, the experience of trafficking often strains these relationships. Victims manifest their trauma in different ways and upon returning home can be violent, anxious, depressed, etc., reactions with which families may have difficulty coping. Tension can be particularly acute when the victim has been sexually exploited and feels guilt and shame. Where the family and/or husband blame the victim for their sexual exploitation, trauma can be exacerbated. Thus, family mediation and counselling needs to be firmly incorporated into all reintegration programmes.

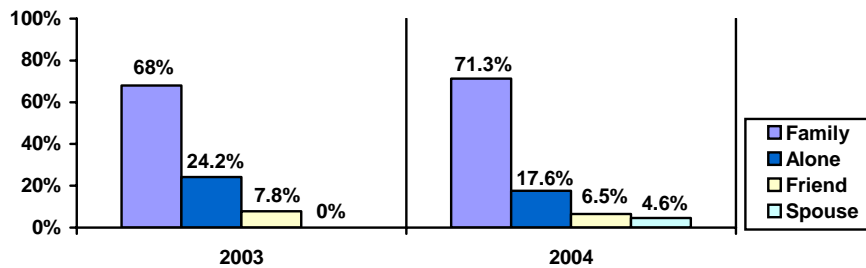
## **Recruitment Experiences**

**Living situation at recruitment:** Most Bulgarian victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation resided with their families at recruitment. As so many victims are unmarried at recruitment and most unmarried women in Bulgaria live with their families until marriage, the result is not surprising. Of those living with family at recruitment, roughly equal numbers were living in a nuclear family and an extended family setting.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> In 2003, 47.1 per cent of victims were living in an extended family setting, while 52.9 per cent were living in a nuclear family setting. In 2004, 45.7 per cent were living in an extended family environment, while 54.3 per cent were in a nuclear family setting.

GRAPH 7  
LIVING SITUATION AT RECRUITMENT OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



In contrast to other countries in the region, a large number of victims in Bulgaria were living alone or with a friend at recruitment. Some attention should be paid to how these living arrangements intersect with trafficking vulnerability. For example, were these victims young girls away at school for the first time, divorcees whose families would not accept them back, women living on their own for the first time, girls who had run away from home or been expelled by their family? Answers to such questions would help in prevention as well as reintegration efforts required when victims do not have a family support system (social and economic) to which they can return. Finally, victims with alternative living arrangements at recruitment will likely require housing assistance in the medium to long term.

More generally, the data is reflective only of the victim's living situation at recruitment. However, some individuals may have lived in other environments earlier in life that may have contributed to trafficking. One victim was orphaned at 12 years and placed in a childcare home. There she described feeling depressed and lonely, which led her into a relationship with her "lover"/trafficker. More information is needed about victims' past and present living arrangements to accurately assess trafficking risk.

**Working situation at recruitment:** In 2003 and 2004, 57 per cent and 64.8 per cent of victims were unemployed at recruitment. In these cases, this lack of economic opportunity was a central rationale for seeking and/or accepting work abroad.

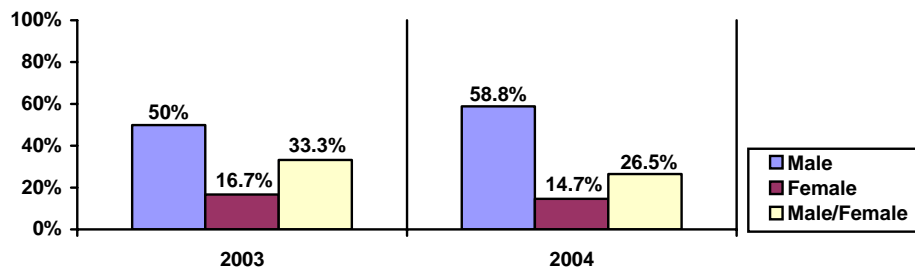
Nevertheless, a significant minority of victims were working when recruited and accepted work in spite of this employment. As such, underemployment (were victims working in fields for which they were trained?), employment satisfaction and adequacy of compensation (could they support themselves and/or to realize their material aspirations?) also need to be taken into account.<sup>161</sup> These are critical components of victims' employment status that must be examined when seeking a correlation between trafficking and employment.

<sup>161</sup> One employment survey found that 35 per cent of women felt discriminated against in the workplace because of their sex, ten per cent experienced questions of a sexual nature during a job interview and 15 per cent experienced unwelcome sexual contact from co-workers and/or supervisors (Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, 1999).

Of those employed at recruitment, occupations included agricultural worker, waitress, seller, labourer, prostitute,<sup>162</sup> domestic worker, factory worker, singer/piano player, hairdresser, industrial worker and shop assistant.

**Recruiter:** Most Bulgarian victims of sexual exploitation were recruited by men. A number were also recruited by a male/female pair acting together. In this situation, the woman usually recruited the victim, while the man dealt with escort/ transportation.

GRAPH 8  
GENDER OF RECRUITER OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Overall, Bulgarian victims of sexual exploitation were recruited by someone known to them, although their relationship to the recruiter ranged from close (friend and family) to more distant (acquaintance). According to IOM, many traffickers make contact with victims directly or through peers. In countries like Moldova, recruitment by a friend may involve a victim or former victim who returns home to recruit women into trafficking.<sup>163</sup> While this does not appear prevalent in Bulgaria, it is a recruitment method of which to be aware. More detailed information is needed about recruitment through peer groups to formulate effective prevention efforts.

Only 15 to 20 per cent of victims were recruited by strangers in 2003 and 2004. The category of stranger can include recruitment through job advertisements and employment agencies. However, in 2004, recruitment through job advertisements and job placement agencies was not common among assisted victims. This may reflect the success of prevention efforts that specifically targeted this form of recruitment, the effective operation of the Bulgarian labour regulating authorities and the effective control of all advertisements for the recruitment of personnel by the Ministry of the Interior and the National Service for Employment.

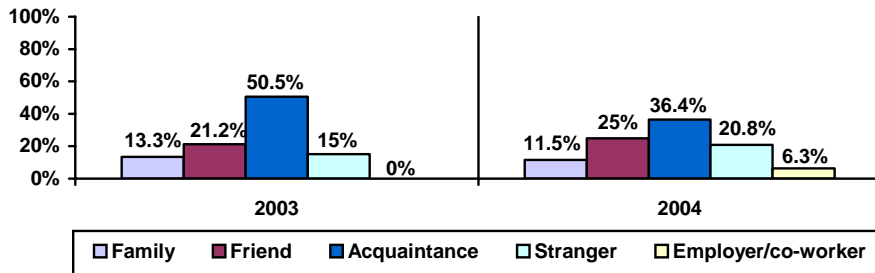
In addition, some Bulgarian victims migrated for work independently and with recruitment occurring only upon arrival. This was the case in 2003 for several

<sup>162</sup> It is important to note that this finding is of no relevance in terms of an individual's status and right to be treated as a victim of trafficking. It does, however, highlight the need for prevention efforts that take into account the potential vulnerability of this group.

<sup>163</sup> These victims were pressured by the trafficker to take on the role of recruiter, often with promises of being released. This strategy not only serves to protect the trafficker (as the victim was the recruiter) but her complicity may also prevent her from leaving trafficking. The victim may also suffer feelings of guilt or shame for having recruited another person into trafficking. In practice, this strategy can have long-term effects on victims, as they can be arrested and prosecuted for trafficking involvement in spite of the duress under which the crime was committed. This has happened in Moldova. See *Moldova Country Report*.

Bulgarian women who travelled to Macedonia to work as waitresses where they were then trafficked (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 75).

GRAPH 9  
RECRUITER'S RELATIONSHIP TO BULGARIAN VICTIMS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



In most cases (82.9 per cent in 2003 and 83.3 per cent in 2004), recruiters originated from Bulgaria. In all countries where Bulgarian victims were trafficked, law enforcement authorities registered organized crime groups that included Bulgarian citizens. They also report ethnically based crime groups that target victims of the same ethnicity. One ethnic Turkish women trafficked to Germany was exploited within the Turkish community there and forced to work in a teashop.<sup>164</sup> A handful of recruiters were from Albania, Macedonia, Turkey, Cyprus and Romania.

**Reasons for leaving home country and type of work promised:** Most victims left home for economic reasons, having accepted work. Low salaries and limited employment options in Bulgaria translate into willingness to look abroad for economic opportunities.

Even when victims migrated abroad for work, there were often different rationales. Some did so because they could not find work in Bulgaria, while others saw it as an economic survival strategy. Still others did so in response to an immediate crisis. One Bulgarian woman accepted work abroad because she needed money to pay for her daughter's eye operation.

Work offered included waitress, salesperson, domestic worker and *au pair*/babysitter. In five cases in 2003 (or 3.9 per cent) and 21 instances in 2004 (or 17.2 per cent), the work offered and accepted was prostitution. Of those women who accepted such work, some had worked in prostitution previously and others had not. Interestingly, a number of victims assisted by IOM were aware of the possibility of sex-related activities – 30.3 per cent in 2003 (as well as 9.2 per cent who were partially aware) and 29.3 per cent in 2004 (as well as 8.6 per cent who were partially aware).

In addition, in one instance in 2003 and five instances in 2004, victims were promised marriage as a means of recruitment. Such cases had been noted in the past with one per cent of assisted victims between 2000 and 2002 recruited in this way. This recruitment

<sup>164</sup> Interview with Vasil Krastev and Vanje Nestorova, National Service to Combat Organized Crime, Ministry of the Interior, Sofia, Bulgaria, February 8, 2004; Interview with Svetoslav Tanev, Head of Sector, National Border Police Service, Ministry of the Interior, Sofia, Bulgaria, 8 February 2005.

strategy has also been noted in other countries. Attention is needed to combat this insidious recruitment method.

### Transportation and Movement

**Border crossings and documents:** Most Bulgarian women trafficked for sexual exploitation used legal border crossings and legal documents when moving across borders. While there is insufficient information to present statistical conclusions, what information is available suggests that the vast majority of crossings were undertaken legally.

The increased used of legal documents and border crossings posed difficulties in the identification process. It may also deceive victims about the legality of their migration by lending an impression of legality and normalcy.

**Transportation routes:** Land travel was the predominant means by which victims of sexual exploitation were transported from Bulgaria. Data from the 2003 IOM caseload found that 89.5 per cent of victims travelled either by shuttle, bus or car (roughly in equal numbers), while only 10.5 per cent travelled by air. In 2004, victims travelled by bus (45.8 per cent), car (37.3 per cent), train (8.5 per cent) and air (8.5 per cent). Victims traveled either through Macedonia to Greece or through Romania and/or Serbia to Hungary and Western Europe.

**Destination country:** Bulgarian victims of sexual exploitation were trafficked to as many as 20 different destination countries in 2003 and 2004. Most of these were outside of the SEE region. Given the range of destination countries, there is a need for Bulgarian service providers to disseminate information to ensure that these victims have access to assistance upon return.

TABLE 6  
DESTINATIONS OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004

Country of Destination	2003	2004
Albania	3	3
Austria	1	8
Belgium	4	2
Bulgaria <sup>165</sup>	25	14
Canary Islands	0	1
Czech Republic	0	2
France	10	8
Germany	11	26
Greece	1	3
Guinea	0	1
Italy	3	8
The Province of Kosovo <sup>166</sup>	4	2
Lebanon	1	0

<sup>165</sup> This designates cases of internal trafficking. In some cases, victims were trafficked only internally, while in other instances victims were trafficked internally as a first step in international trafficking.

<sup>166</sup> While Kosovo is also a province within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, it is separated out as a distinct entity in an effort to analyze the specific trafficking context of the province as well as to provide a more detailed picture of trafficking patterns, trends, and profiles within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro as well as the SEE region more generally. This should in no way be read as a political statement by the RCP.

Macedonia	13	5
Netherlands	4	6
Poland	13	5
Spain	2	1
Sweden	0	1
Switzerland	1	0
Turkey	0	1
Unspecified EU country	29	21
Unknown <sup>167</sup>	34	4
Total	159	122

For the most part, victims of sexual exploitation were trafficked to EU countries, although no one country stands out as the primary destination. Rather, Bulgarian victims were trafficked to 11 different EU countries, accounting for 60 per cent of victims in 2003 and 82.2 per cent in 2004. Also interesting is the emergence of some unusual destination countries in 2003, including the Canary Islands, Guinea, Lebanon and Turkey.

It must be noted that, in both 2003 and 2004, Bulgarian women were trafficked for sexual exploitation within the country – 19.2 per cent in 2003 and 11.9 per cent in 2004. Some were trafficked only internally, while others were trafficked internally as a first step in international trafficking. Still others were identified in the trafficking process by Bulgarian law enforcement, generally at the borders and prior to exploitation. These numbers reflect improvements in the identification practices of law enforcement agencies on Bulgarian soil and the progress made in effectively preventing a considerable number of victims from being trafficked externally.

Finally, given the increased number of victims trafficked to EU countries, there is a need to collect victim data from these destinations. With fewer Bulgarian victims returning home due to temporary residence options in some EU countries, this lack of data inhibits understanding of the scope of trafficking. The decreased number of victims returning to Bulgaria can camouflage the extent of trafficking from the country.

### **Victims' Trafficking Experiences**

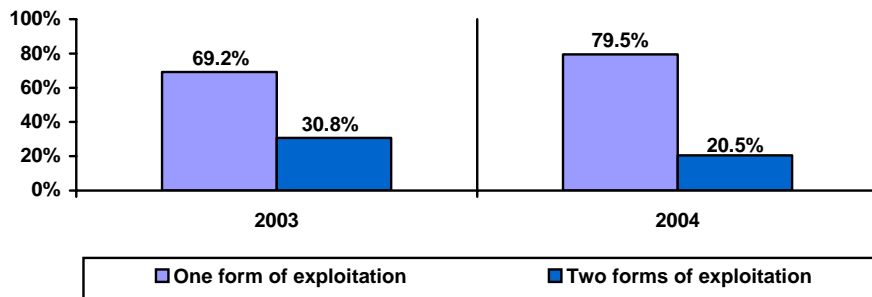
**Forms of trafficking:** Generally, victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were engaged in prostitution. Many victims sexually exploited in Italy and France were forced to work in street prostitution, although some victims in Italy were also exploited in private apartments. In Germany and Austria, victims were based in bars and brothels. By contrast, women trafficked to the Balkans were exploited in bars and nightclubs as well as kept in private apartments and transported to clients. Victims also reported being moved around to numerous different locations within a country while trafficked.

In addition, a number of victims suffered dual forms of exploitation – forced to undertake labour tasks or begging, in addition to providing sexual services.

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<sup>167</sup> In some cases the victim's country of destination was not recorded by the service provider. This was generally the case when the victim was assisted for only a very short time and it was difficult to document comprehensive case files.

GRAPH 10  
FORMS OF EXPLOITATION OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Some victims working as prostitutes in bars were also required to undertake labour tasks, such as waitressing, cleaning, or domestic work. Other victims forced to beg were also often sexually exploited, either by the boss or by clients. In some circumstances, the victim started out begging, but once older or if she proved inadequate at begging, was transferred to prostitution. In other circumstances, the victim was required to undertake both tasks simultaneously.

The form a victims' exploitation takes shapes her specific assistance needs. Victims trafficked for labour but who have also been sexually exploited will require many of the same services as victims trafficked for prostitution. Victims exploited for criminal activities may require tailored legal assistance to avoid prosecution in some countries. Attention to the precise forms of exploitation is a valuable starting point in both the development and assessment of assistance frameworks.

**Length of time trafficked:** Trafficking experiences ranged from periods of less than a month to five years. In 2003, most victims (65 per cent) were trafficked for less than six months, while 20 per cent were trafficked for six to 12 months, five per cent for one to two years, five per cent for just over two years and five per cent for five years. In 2004, time spent trafficked generally decreased, with 63.6 per cent trafficked for six months or less and 36.4 per cent for seven to 12 months.

Time spent trafficked fluctuates according to a number of factors, including the level of repression endured by the victim, identification skills and priorities of law enforcement at the destination and the accessibility of services and assistance. Where victims are trafficked for shorter periods, it may be due to amplified and improved identification efforts. Further analysis of this indicator, cross-correlated with details of the identification process, would be valuable in assessing law enforcement's identification efforts as well as the efficacy of outreach measures by social services and civil society.

The length of time trafficked can reasonably be expected to correlate with the length of time required for victim recovery. Long periods spent trafficked create pronounced trauma as well as, in some cases, dependency on and affection for the trafficker.<sup>168</sup>

<sup>168</sup> Many psychologists referred to this phenomenon, a trend akin to "Stockholm Syndrome". Stockholm Syndrome describes the behaviour of kidnap victims who over time become sympathetic to their captors. The name derives from a 1973 hostage incident in Stockholm, Sweden at the end of which several kidnap victims resisted rescue attempts and refused to testify against their captors.



Attention to how this relationship and dependency affect victims' recovery is essential. Long periods spent trafficked may also affect victims in other ways. Separation from family and friends, being forced to live outside of a family environment and being under extreme stress can impede victims' recovery and reintegration.

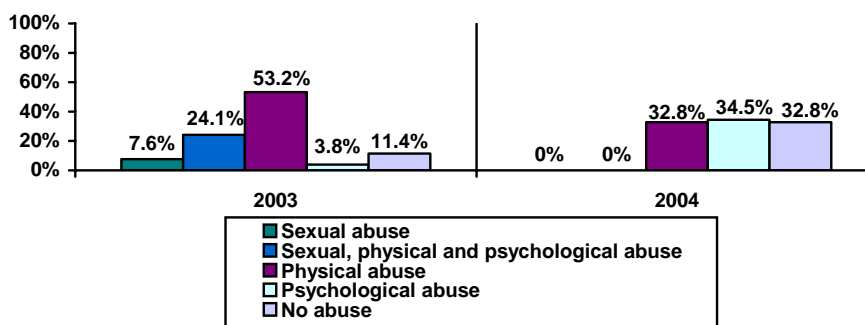
**Living and working conditions:** Overall victims reported “poor” working and living conditions. This involved abuse and limited payment. In 2003, 82 per cent of victims assisted by IOM Sofia received no payment, while 12 per cent received incidental payment and only six per cent were paid regularly. Similarly, freedom of movement was largely denied, with only 6.6 per cent of victims enjoying total freedom of movement and 43.4 per cent denied all freedom of movement.

Of note, working and living conditions seem to have improved slightly in 2004. In 2004, a handful of victims reported “good” living and working conditions and more victims (31.5 per cent) enjoyed freedom of movement. On the other hand, fewer victims in 2004 had access to medical care (12.1 per cent in 2004 compared to 35.7 per cent in 2004), which means a greater need for medical services and long-term care once victims enter the assistance framework.

**Abuse:** Available information suggests a decrease in the use of violence in 2004. A striking 32.8 per cent of victims suffered no abuse while trafficked. It is important to note that financial dependency is a strong factor keeping the victims in their unfavourable position. According to the National Service to Combat Organized Crime, many victims suffered no physical or psychological abuse, but did not escape due to the imposed financial dependency.<sup>169</sup>

Also noteworthy is that the type of abuse suffered in 2004 was physical and psychological, with no victims suffering multiple forms of abuse.

GRAPH 11  
ABUSE – BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Some service providers observe that abuse is linked to destination countries. Those trafficked to the Balkans suffered abuse more commonly and at more severe levels than those trafficked to European Union countries. Understanding of this indicator is important for its implications for assistance that can respond to victims' needs.

<sup>169</sup> Correspondence for Nikolai Nenkov, IOM Bulgaria, 28 May 2004.

**Mental and physical well-being:** Victims' mental and physical well-being is significantly affected by their trafficking experience. Service providers estimate that it takes one to two weeks to stabilize most victims' physical health and some months to stabilize victims psychologically. Attention to these indicators are essential in providing appropriate services and assistance.

- *Sexual and reproductive health:* Generally, victims do not return with serious STIs, most likely because they have been treated prior to their return. One victim assisted in 2004 was suffering from syphilis, and another victim –17 years old when trafficked – was made infertile by the violence she sustained while trafficked. However, in general, victims had minor gynaecological infections and inflammations.
- *General health:* Overall, many victims have weak immune systems, due to poor health while trafficked and limited access to medical care. As well, a number of victims returned with physical injuries – 11.8 per cent victims of sexual exploitation assisted by IOM in 2004 and 12.1 per cent of assisted victims in 2004.
- *Pregnancy:* Some victims were pregnant upon return. IOM assisted two pregnant victims in 2003 and three pregnant victims in 2004. Some decided to deliver their babies and chose to raise them. This profile of victim – young mothers who have been severely traumatized – require tailored and longer-term assistance not only in terms of their own recovery but also toward equipping them with parenting skills.<sup>170</sup> In addition, consideration should be given to how the victim may feel about the child over the long term, given the violent circumstances of conception. In the short term, it is important to flag that many shelters are unable to accommodate mothers with children, making it difficult to assist them. Other pregnant victims opt for abortions, although many service providers do not provide this assistance. It is likely that far greater numbers of victims are pregnant than those noted upon return, as abortions were provided by some service providers in destination countries.
- *Psychological well-being:* Victims' overall psychological state can be quite fragile, with most victims suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder as well as more generalized stress and fear. Most victims received some medication for depression and anxiety and there were also serious cases of depression. Some psychotic cases were referred to the hospital and three schizophrenics were assisted in 2003 and 2004. However, in the case of schizophrenic victims, it is unclear if they suffered from schizophrenia before or as a result of their trafficking experience.

In Bulgaria, as in the rest of the region, there is a lack of information about the long-term health implications of trafficking. Also under-considered is the effect of trafficking on public health generally. More attention is needed to long-term follow-up

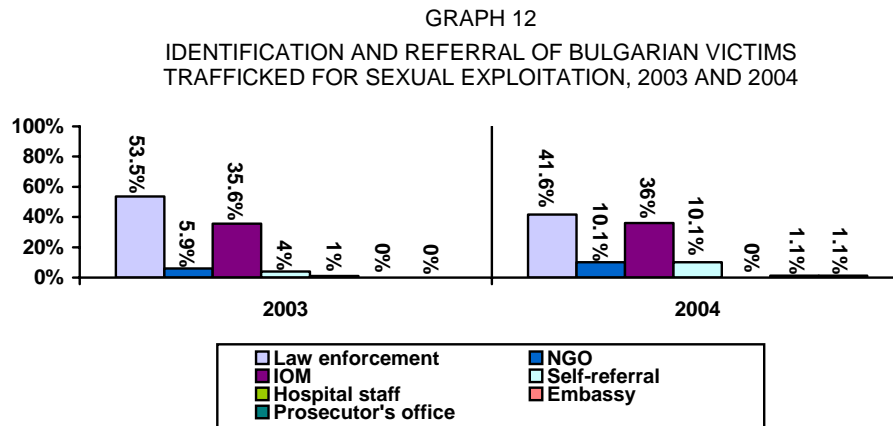
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<sup>170</sup> One victim, assisted by Animus, was seven months pregnant upon her return and opted to raise her child. Over time, it became clear that the girl – who was a minor – was deeply traumatized and, despite her best intentions, was inconsistent and unreliable in her behaviour. She forgot to feed and change the baby and often left her at home alone. In addition, she entered abusive relationships (ICCO, 2004: 14).

health care for trafficking victims, in ways that do not stigmatize them or violate their privacy. In addition, public health studies of the effect of trafficking are needed.

### Post Trafficking Experience

**Victim identification and referral:** The largest proportion of victims in both years were initially identified and referred for assistance by law enforcement authorities. This includes the various law enforcement bodies in Bulgaria, which specialize in trafficking as well as law enforcement agencies in countries of destination.



Of note, in 2004, more victims were identified and referred by NGOs and IOM, signalling improved outreach by many service providers.

Self-referrals accounted for a number of cases in both years and increased from four per cent in 2003 to ten per cent in 2004. Generally, these victims escaped their trafficking situations and sought assistance from IOM, NGOs or through the police.

In addition, one victim of sexual exploitation in 2004 was identified by the Bulgarian embassy abroad. It is valuable to consider embassy staff as potential identifiers of trafficking cases, embassies being an obvious entry point for intervention and assistance. The Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and IOM have conducted a series of training exercises for Bulgarian consulate staff abroad, including the development of a referral and consular support mechanism. Under law, Bulgarian consulates are obliged to provide support to victims of trafficking, an important initiative that can be replicated in other countries of origin.

Finally, it is worth noting that 1.9 per cent of victims in 2003 were identified by hospital staff. This, too, signals a potential entry point for identification and referral, particularly given that many victims reported being allowed access to medical care while trafficking.

**Re-trafficking:** In Bulgaria, 17.1 per cent of victims in 2003 and 17.2 per cent in 2004 were trafficked previously.

Documenting the precise rate of re-trafficking is difficult. Case monitoring by service providers lasts no more than one year. Further, re-trafficking rates are based on statements made by trafficked victims, who may not choose to reveal that they had

been trafficked before if they feel it might diminish possibilities for assistance. To obtain more reliable estimates of re-trafficking rates, assistance providers must increase the length and scope of the monitoring component within reintegration programmes, as well as establish mechanisms for exchange of information on shared caseloads. Further investigation into predominant push factors to re-trafficking is critical in developing appropriate, sustainable reintegration programmes.

Re-trafficking poses serious risks to women trafficked for sexual exploitation. Some victims attempted to migrate again shortly after their return because of the need to earn money, lack of opportunity or problems in the home. Another contributor to re-trafficking may be difficulties faced in the reintegration process, including stigma and shame associated with sexual exploitation. Another trigger might be dissatisfaction with the material conditions at home, which may be poorer than those faced while trafficked. Also salient is whether the victim has incurred debt because of trafficking; the need to recoup this money can fuel the decision to migrate again. In addition, re-trafficking may be due to limitations in existing reintegration programmes. Reinstallation grants are generally small, long-term assistance options are limited, as are programme resources to monitor a victim’s reintegration progress.

**Assistance declined:** There is insufficient information about this indicator to draw conclusions about all assisted victims. However, data from IOM provides some insight. Very few Bulgarian victims declined assistance. Only four victims in 2003 and four in 2004 accepted only IOM return assistance, safe transportation and escort. They chose to return to their families immediately and did not accept any referrals for reintegration. Declining assistance may be linked to fear of being recognized as a trafficking victim, with the attendant issues of shame and stigma

### **2.1.2 Profiles and Experiences of Bulgarian Victims Trafficked for Labour, Begging and Delinquency**

The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of 25 victims trafficked for labour, begging, and/or delinquency. Given the limited number of assisted victims, it is impossible to draw statistical conclusions. Nevertheless, the figures shed some light on the phenomenon among Bulgarian victims as well as establish some baseline information, which will allow us to chart changes and developments over time.

TABLE 7  
BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR, BEGGING, AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Labour exploitation, begging, and delinquency	13	12

### **Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics<sup>171</sup>**

**Sex:** Most victims of trafficking for labour, begging and delinquency were female. In 2003, 100 per cent of victims were women. However, in 2004, three males were among the victims, accounting for 25 per cent of victims.

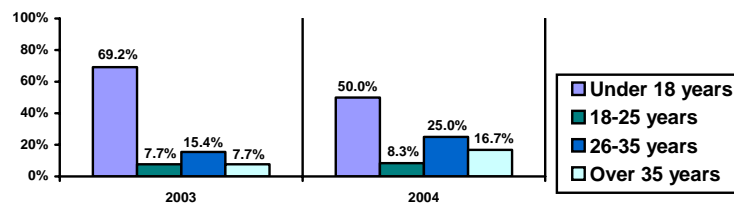
<sup>171</sup> Profiles of victims trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency were drawn from the cases for which there is comprehensive data. In 2004, comprehensive data was available for eleven of the twelve assisted cases. Indicators for which comprehensive data was available for twelve cases in 2004 were sex, age, form of trafficking and destination country.

That the majority of victims were women is consistent with data from Moldova and Romania but contrasts sharply with Albanian victims who were, for the most part, male minors. One possible explanation for the gender difference is that identification in most countries has largely targeted female victims. That service providers in 2004 have identified male victims signals the emergence of a more nuanced identification procedure in both countries of destination and Bulgaria.

**Age:** In contrast to cases of trafficking for sexual exploitation, very few victims were between 18 and 25 years. Rather, the age profile for this type of work tended to be either older or younger.

Most Bulgarian victims trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency were minors at identification. This indicates that Bulgarian female minors were a particularly vulnerable target group for these forms of trafficking.

GRAPH 13  
AGE AT IDENTIFICATION OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR LABOUR, BEGGING, AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004



In addition, a noteworthy and increasing minority of victims were drawn from the over-25 age category. This finding also merits some consideration in the development of prevention activities and efforts. Efforts must be made to effectively convey that trafficking can occur in the migration of many different profiles of victims.

Generally, there was a correlation between age and type of work/exploitation. Victims of trafficking for begging and delinquency were minors (with the exception of two adult men in 2004), and most adults were trafficked for labour.

**Ethnicity:** Strikingly, in both 2003 and 2004, victims from ethnic minorities comprised the majority of assisted victims for these forms of trafficking. Indeed, 76.9 per cent of victims in 2003 and 81.8 per cent in 2004 were Roma, most of whom were female minors trafficked for begging and delinquency. This suggests that ethnicity is a site of vulnerability for trafficking in Bulgaria, particularly given that only an estimated 4.7 per cent of the population in Bulgaria are Roma (National Statistical Institute, 2001).<sup>172</sup>

However, this finding is simply a starting point for intervention. Attention must be paid to the specific situation of the Roma trafficking victims. There are as many as 15 sub-groups within the Bulgarian Roma community and not all are equally vulnerable to trafficking. While prevention efforts in these communities are essential, these must go beyond awareness raising and tackle the more systemic issues of socio-economic

<sup>172</sup> For more detail see *Ethnicity in: Profiles and Experiences of Bulgarian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

disenfranchisement. There is also a need to consider what assistance could best meet the needs of already trafficked victims and how reintegration can be supported and made most effective. As so many of the victims in both years were minors, there is a critical role for social workers and the social welfare system in this process.

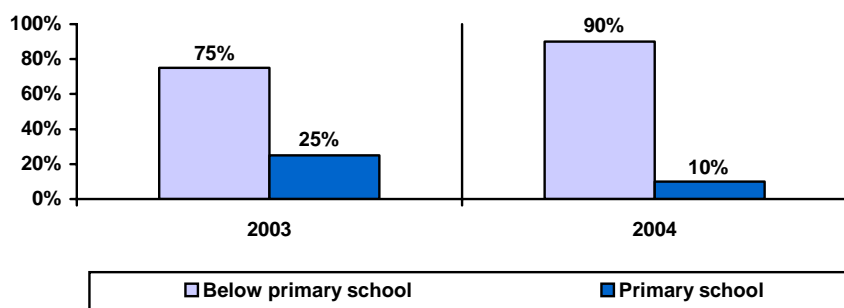
The degree to which it is socially acceptable for children to work abroad and even be “sold” or “rented out” for work must also be considered. One minor trafficked for begging to Vienna came from a family of eight children, five of whom had been “sold” for work abroad. In environments where bonded labour is socially acceptable, efforts to redress this practice must have a firm understanding of the conditions that foster its continuation.

**Area of origin:** Victims of these forms of trafficking were almost exclusively from rural areas, although some also came from small towns. This contrasts with victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, who were generally from large cities and towns. Most victims came from north-eastern and central Bulgaria.

**Education:** Education levels were very low, with most victims having less than primary school education. While this is not surprising given the very young age of most victims, it is a factor that is bound to affect successful reintegration.

Educational reinsertion programmes are required to counteract the months and years victims were not in school. This is problematic in Bulgaria where the educational system does not permit older children to be taught alongside younger children or provide individual education programmes for children who have not yet completed eighth grade (ICCO, 2004: 13).<sup>173</sup> A new pilot project of the Bulgarian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, to be launched in three municipalities in September 2005, will address this gap in part.<sup>174</sup>

GRAPH 14  
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR,  
BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004



Low educational attainment applies to all victims – even the adults – and may have been a central contributor to their willingness to accept work abroad. These educational

<sup>173</sup> One victim trafficked for stealing and assisted by Animus in 2003 had only two years of education and was willing to continue her education. However, the organization faced problems in attempting to re-insert her into the school system. As a stop-gap measure, the girl’s counsellor gave her home lessons (ICCO, 2004: 13). More durable, systemic solutions are essential.

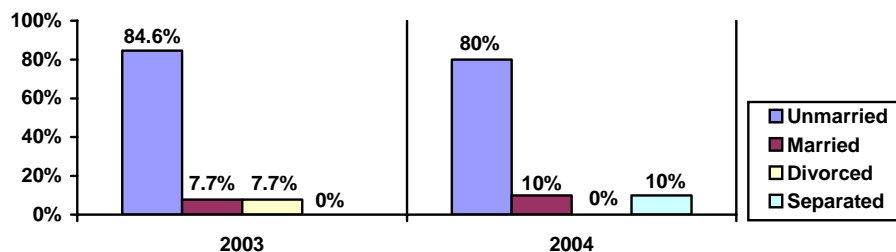
<sup>174</sup> For further detail, see *Educational Assistance* in Section 3.2: *Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in Bulgaria*.

levels were far below the average educational levels in Bulgaria and need to be addressed in the context of reintegration. Adult education as well as vocational programmes should be considered to ensure that victims are literate and with adequate education to receive training and find appropriate employment.

**Mental or physical disabilities:** Two victims in 2004 (18.2 per cent) suffered from physical disabilities. Both men were trafficked for begging.

**Marital and family status:** Victims were primarily unmarried at recruitment, due in large part to their youth. Interestingly, even most “older” victims were unmarried, although some were also divorced or separated.

GRAPH 15  
MARITAL STATUS OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS OF  
LABOUR, BEGGING, AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004



Also salient is family composition. Generally, minor victims came from very large families, which seems to have been a catalyst for trafficking in a number of cases. One minor trafficked to Vienna came from a very poor family of eight children. In such large families, older children may be required to work to support and help educate their younger siblings. Age order, then, may also influence trafficking risk.

A number of minors came from female-headed households. As well, two of the adult victims in 2003 were mothers, and one was a single mother. Motherhood has been noted elsewhere as a push factor in some cases. Attention to indicators such as family size as well as family composition (extended or nuclear, female-headed households) may serve to further illuminate key factors in trafficking.

**Economic status:**<sup>175</sup> Without exception, victims of these forms of trafficking were either “poor” or, more commonly, “very poor”. Unlike the victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, who came from more diverse economic backgrounds, all victims trafficked for begging and delinquency had a “very poor” economic status.

There can be no question that this poverty is a central contributor in trafficking. However, many poor people (within these specific communities as well as more generally) are not trafficked. It is important to consider what strategies these poor families use to mitigate such risks. Further, in a number of cases it appears that poverty

<sup>175</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim’s self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

combines with other factors – such as education, social exclusion, ethnicity – to create trafficking vulnerability. As such, strategies must consider multilayered causes.

**Family and social relations:**<sup>176</sup> Information about this indicator is limited, making it difficult to draw correlations with trafficking risks. One victim in 2003 (7.7 per cent) and one victim in 2004 (9.1 per cent) reported abuse in the home. In other contexts, this has served as a contributor to trafficking. However, the majority of victims reported normal family relations. This is a reminder that trafficking cannot be explained by a single factor.

### **Recruitment Experiences**

**Living situation at recruitment:** Most victims lived with their families at recruitment, accounting for 84.6 per cent of victims in 2003 and 90 per cent of victims in 2004.

Many minor victims lived in extended family environments in communities where they had many relatives in the neighbourhood. This signals that living with family is not sufficient protection against trafficking and flags the need for prevention programmes that target families as a whole alongside those for specific target groups. Indeed, some family environments contributed to trafficking, something that merits consideration in terms of prevention and toward sustainable recovery and reintegration.

Other victims lived with a friend (7.7 per cent in 2003 and 10 per cent in 2004) as well as alone (7.7 per cent in 2003 and none in 2004). This is broadly consistent with victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

**Working situation at recruitment:** Adult victims of trafficking were unemployed at recruitment, suggesting that unemployment was a central contributor in migration.

In the case of minors, none in either year were attending school at recruitment. Rather, they were begging on the street, a task that they were recruited to undertake abroad.

**Recruiter:** Most victims trafficked for begging, labour and delinquency were recruited by a male/female pair. This differs substantially from recruitment for this form of trafficking in other countries where a couple was seldom involved. It is, however, consistent with recruitment for sexual exploitation in Bulgaria.<sup>177</sup>

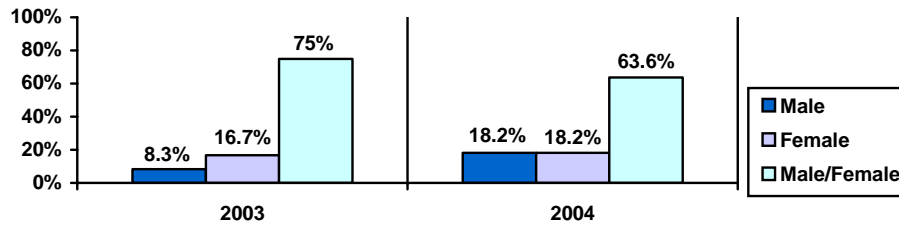
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<sup>176</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims' self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim's individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim's relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

<sup>177</sup> For further detail, see *Recruiter in Profiles and Experiences of Bulgarian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

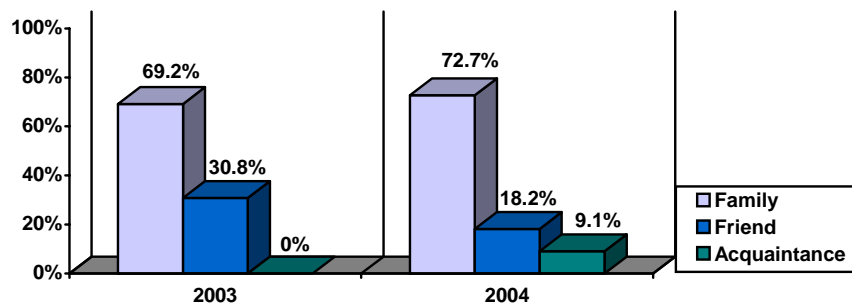


GRAPH 16  
SEX OF RECRUITER OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR LABOUR, BEGGING, AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004



Without exception, victims of these forms of trafficking were recruited by someone close to them. The majority involved a family member, although it is unclear whether of close or extended family. The precise relationship and recruitment dynamic merits investigation as it affects reintegration efforts and options.

GRAPH 17  
RECRUITER'S RELATIONSHIP TO BULGARIAN VICTIMS  
TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR, BEGGING, AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004



Victims trafficked for begging and delinquency were generally recruited by family, Bulgarian nationals of Roma ethnicity. The recruiter pays the parents a sum of money (EUR 200 to 300) and when the victim earns double the amount paid to his or her parents, he or she can keep a portion of the money earned. According to one service provider, these minors are generally aware of the amount that was paid for them and, sometimes, are even a little proud of the amount of money they command. The normalcy of such arrangements makes “rescue” problematic. Family complicity in trafficking poses serious obstacles to successful reintegration. That family and security assessments are a requisite component of the return of all Bulgarian minors stands as a good practice by Bulgarian authorities and serves to anticipate some of the problems of return to family in such circumstances.

Recruitment for labour was most commonly through a friend or an acquaintance.

**Reasons for leaving home country and type of work promised:** In all instances, victims left home to work and earn money. Generally, victims were not deceived about the tasks to be undertaken. All victims who begged were told in advance that this was the task to be undertaken abroad. The other victims were offered domestic work, waitressing and factory work, which they did at recruitment.

## Transportation and Movement

**Border crossings and documents:** In 2003 and 2004, all victims crossed at legal border crossings and used legal documents. This is not surprising as Bulgarian citizens are able to enter the *Schengen* region without visas. However, as minors cannot leave Bulgaria without a notarized declaration by both of their parents, it can be assumed that parents were not only aware of recruitment for work abroad but had also sanctioned it.

**Transportation routes:** Transportation routes for these forms of trafficking do not differ substantially from other forms of trafficking. For more detail, please see: *Transportation routes in: Profiles and Experiences of Bulgarian Victims of Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation.*

**Destination Country:** All victims were trafficked to EU countries. To some degree, the destination country was determined by the type of work undertaken. Victims trafficked for labour went to Poland, Sweden, Belgium and France, while those trafficked for begging and delinquency went to Greece, Belgium, Italy, Austria and Germany.

TABLE 8  
DESTINATIONS OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004

Destination Country	2003	2004
Austria	6	3
Belgium	1	2
Belgium and France	3	0
France	0	2
Germany	0	1
Greece	0	1
Italy	2	1
Poland	1	0
Serbia	0	1
Sweden	0	1
Total	13	11

## Victims' Trafficking Experiences

**Forms of trafficking:** The chart below outlines the tasks to be undertaken while trafficked, including dual forms of exploitation endured. Of significance, there is an overall age composition to the tasks, with all minors employed in begging and stealing and adults generally employed in labour tasks. The only exception was two adult males in 2004 who were trafficked for begging.

TABLE 9  
TYPE OF WORK – BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Domestic work and sexual exploitation	3	1
Waitress and sexual exploitation	0	1
Factory work and sexual exploitation	0	1
Sexual exploitation and petty crime	0	1
Agriculture	1	0
Begging	0	3
Begging and petty crime	9	5
Total	13	12

While victims of labour exploitation were not prominent among assisted victims, there is information from the National Service to Combat Organized Crime to suggest that this form of trafficking is more prevalent than it appears at first glance. In one case investigated in France, 25 Bulgarian women were identified as trafficked for work in a sewing factory. These victims – generally married and over 25 – were not assisted but rather returned to Bulgaria with funds sent by their families. Similarly, there have been investigations into cases of trafficking to Germany and Holland by ethnic Turkish networks for work in teashops, flowers shops or factories.<sup>178</sup> One victim accessing the Animus Association helpline in 2004 was trafficked to Greece and Turkey for agriculture and domestic work. In a case in Israel in 2004, four foremen for one manpower agency were convicted on charges of threats, assault and aggravated assault in the treatment of Bulgarian migrant worker employees, charges which rendered these migrant workers victims of trafficking (Kav LaOved, 2004c).

Also striking is the number of victims who suffered dual forms of exploitation. One adult was forced to steal and provide sexual services. Minors trafficked for begging were also required to steal and adult women trafficked for labour were often required to provide sexual services. The nature of exploitation suffered will colour victims' assistance needs.

**Length of time trafficked:** Time spent trafficked ranged from a few months to one year. This was generally shorter than for victims of sexual exploitation.<sup>179</sup> It may be worth examining further whether length of time trafficked is related to forms of trafficking and might affect services to be offered and developed.

**Living and working conditions:** Victims trafficked for begging and delinquency reported living together in large numbers in one house, furnished only with mattresses, where their “supervisor” organized food and transport to their begging locations. Once victims repaid their debts, they were told that they could keep a portion of the money earned and generally victims returned with some money. One young girl, forced to beg in Vienna, returned home with a kilogram of gold that she had “earned” by begging and stealing. However, it cannot be ignored that conditions for victims were very hard – victims were forced to work long hours, had limited recreation and no educational opportunities.

Victims of labour exploitation reported generally “poor” and “very poor” living and working conditions. Information is insufficient to draw conclusions, however.

**Abuse:** The extent of exploitation and abuse is also related to the form of trafficking and the destination to which victims were trafficked.

Victims trafficked for begging and delinquency generally suffered violence when the trafficker felt they were too independent and feared they would try to escape. Apart from this, victims reported few problems and no physical abuse on a day-to-day basis.

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<sup>178</sup> Interview with Vasil Krastev and Vanja Nestorova, National Service to Combat Organized Crime, Ministry of the Interior, Sofia, Bulgaria, 8 February 2004. The border police also reported cases of trafficking for labour, including one in 2004 in Russen, Bulgaria in which traffickers were convicted (Interview with Svetoslav Tanev, Head of Sector, National Border Police Service, Ministry of the Interior, Sofia, Bulgaria, 8 February 2005).

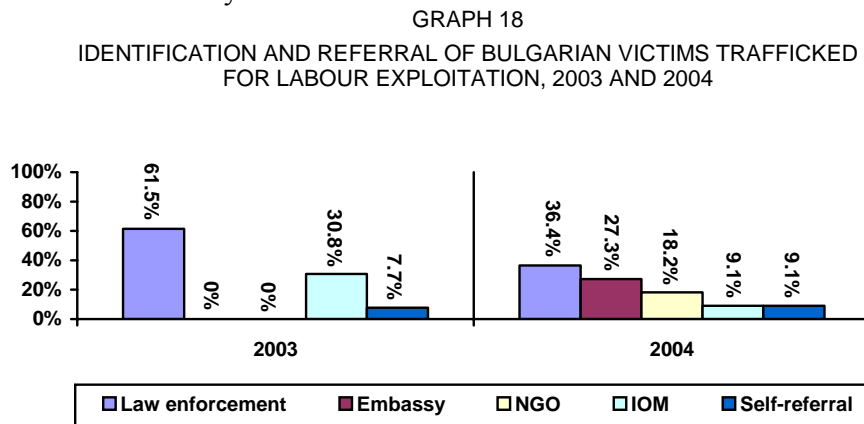
<sup>179</sup> This is consistent with foreign victims trafficked to Serbia where victims trafficked for labour were trafficked for shorter periods than those trafficked for sexual exploitation. See *Serbia Country Report*.

There is insufficient information to draw conclusions for victims of labour exploitation. However, it must be noted that most women trafficked for labour were also sexually exploited, which has implications for the assistance required.

**Mental and physical well-being:** There is insufficient information about this indicator to draw conclusions. It would be valuable to document the effect of these forms of trafficking to determine the medical and psychological assistance needed by victims. Where victims trafficked for labour were also sexually exploited, they will manifest many of the same problems as victims of sexual exploitation. For further details, see *Mental and physical well-being in: Profiles and Experiences of Bulgarian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

### Post Trafficking Experience

**Victim identification and referral:** In 2003, most victims were identified by law enforcement authorities. Most commonly, cases of begging and delinquency were identified by the police when victims were arrested for stealing. By contrast, victims of labour trafficking tended to access services independently, accounting for the number of self-referrals in both years.



Also, noteworthy was the 27.3 per cent of victims identified by the embassy, a valuable entry point for identification that can be used to a greater extent.

**Re-trafficking:** There is insufficient information about rates of re-trafficking to draw any conclusions. However, given that minors were trafficked during such formative years, there is a risk that they will conceptualize this type of “work” and abuse as normal. Further, where there was family complicity in trafficking, special attention must be paid in reintegration efforts to mitigate the risk of re-trafficking. As critical is that traffickers may seek to re-traffic these victims and families may be without the power to stop them.

It is unclear if re-trafficking is more or less likely among victims trafficked for labour exploitation than for other forms of trafficking. This is an area worth investigating both as a measure of the success of reintegration programmes as well as an assessment of how different forms of trafficking affect successful reintegration.<sup>180</sup>

<sup>180</sup> For further discussion, see *Re-trafficking in: Profiles and Experiences of Bulgarian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

**Assistance declined:** There is currently insufficient information available on this subject. However, in some cases, when the victim’s family expressed the capacity to support the child, assistance was declined. Unfortunately, in such cases, the family may have been aware or even involved in trafficking. The recently implemented mechanisms for family and risk assessment should, in future, identify where there has been family involvement in trafficking and develop a reintegration plan for the minor that takes these risks into account.

### **2.1.3 Profiles and Experiences of Bulgarian Victims Trafficked for Adoption<sup>181</sup>**

The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of nine cases in which babies were trafficked for adoption.

TABLE 9  
BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR ADOPTION, 2003 AND 2004

Form of Trafficking	2003	2004
Adoption	0	9

These are the first assisted cases of trafficking for adoption documented by the RCP, with all cases identified in the latter part of 2004. In addition to assisted cases, there were other signs of this form of trafficking. The Bulgarian border police investigated 30 cases of trafficking for adoption to EU countries.<sup>182</sup> In addition, one victim, assisted by Animus Association, reported that her traffickers had threatened to sell her baby for adoption. She escaped before this could happen.<sup>183</sup>

Below we provide an outline of this form of trafficking to illuminate both risks and assistance needs.<sup>184</sup>

#### **Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics**

**Sex and age:** In all cases, it was the mother who was directly involved in trafficking process. Seven of these mothers were between 18 and 25 years, while two were between 25 and 26 years of age. Babies of both sexes were trafficked for adoption as newborns. Mothers went to the destination country while pregnant; the baby was born there and immediately adopted.

<sup>181</sup> We refer to these cases as adoption for ease of presentation. However, the practice is somewhat different and might be referred to as “owning/fathering” a child. That is, the father in the destination country “recognizes” the child as his own and declares himself his biological father. The mother refutes her parenting rights and returns to the country of origin. This procedure, unlike the one for adoption, is not regulated by the Bulgarian authorities. The Ministry of Justice regulates the complicated procedures for adoption, which involve intermediation by specially licensed firms. This form of trafficking relied on the “owning” method to traffic the babies and in so doing evaded legislation and the attendant complications (Correspondence with Nikolai Nenkov, IOM Bulgaria, 28 May 2005).

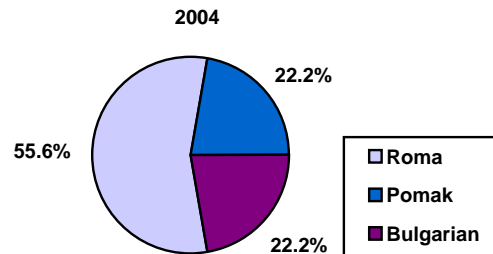
<sup>182</sup> Interview with Svetoslav Tanev, Head of Sector, National Border Police Service, Ministry of the Interior, Sofia, Bulgaria, 8 February 2005.

<sup>183</sup> Interview with Nadia Kozhouharova, Animus Association, Sofia, Bulgaria, 9 February 2005.

<sup>184</sup> In the presentation of these cases, one caveat is essential. The main source of information was the mothers. Those who have been complicit in trafficking their child will have a vested interest in conveying their experience in ways that diminish their criminal complicity. This is not meant to imply that all mothers were or will be criminally complicit, only that the information must be read against this possible backdrop.

**Ethnicity:** There may be an ethnic component to this form of trafficking, with the majority of victims – 77.8 per cent – originating from an ethnic minority. How ethnicity and trafficking intersect in these cases is unclear since poverty and social disenfranchisement is closely associated with being an ethnic minority in Bulgaria.

GRAPH 19  
ETHNICITY OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR ADOPTION, 2004



**Education:** Education levels of mothers were very low – 33.3 per cent had no education, 33.3 per cent had less than primary school education and 33.3 per cent had only primary school education. These education levels were lower than for victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, but consistent with victims of trafficking for labour, begging and delinquency.

**Marital, family, and economic status:**<sup>185</sup> Six of the mothers were unmarried, two were married and one was a widow. In seven of the nine cases, the women were (or would become) single mothers. Many of the women already had children. One mother – a woman of just 24 years – was the mother of ten children already when she became pregnant.

Most victims (66.7 per cent) were “very poor”, while equal numbers (16.7 per cent) were “poor”, and from an “average” economic background.

**Family and social relations:**<sup>186</sup> Family relations were variable. Most victims reported “good” or “normal” family relations, while a minority reported “difficult” relations. Although only one victim had suffered domestic violence, three victims had suffered some form of abuse prior to trafficking, by a friend or an acquaintance. As such, four of nine mothers were victims of abuse or violence prior to trafficking.

### Recruitment experiences

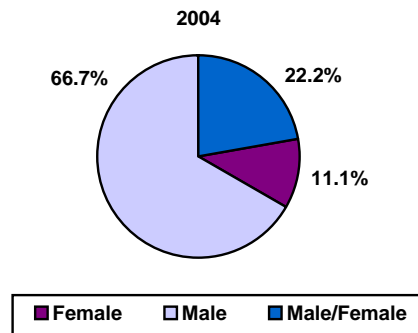
Seven mothers lived with their families when they were approached to adopt out their child, while one lived alone, and one lived with a friend. None were employed.

<sup>185</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim’s self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

<sup>186</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims’ self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim’s individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim’s relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

Recruitment was generally by men and generally by strangers or acquaintances, although one woman was recruited by a friend. Among victims assisted by IOM, the recruiters were mainly Roma, both from Bulgaria and the destination country. There were also victims recruited by ethnic Turkish recruiters.

GRAPH 20  
RECRUITERS OF BULGARIAN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR ADOPTION, 2004



Recruitment experiences varied. Most victims were pregnant when they were recruited, although one victim became pregnant as a result of recruitment. The precise sequence was difficult to ascertain in all cases. Further, mothers' complicity in trafficking for adoption can sometimes be difficult to establish. Some women may be genuinely deceived, lured by the promise of money. Others may have been semi-aware of what was to take place and still others agreed to the trafficking but subsequently changed their minds. In these nine cases, the mothers were complicit in trafficking and were aware of the purpose of their journey to the destination country. The level of threat or coercion used by traffickers/recruiters was also unclear. More information is needed about the full recruitment dynamic if we are to prevent the proliferation of this phenomenon as well as identify means by which such victims can be assisted and reintegrated.

In all cases, the mother was promised money for the adoption,<sup>187</sup> and in at least three cases these women were also offered the possibility of work abroad. But this was often not the mother's only motivation. Most mothers felt that the child would have a better life if it were adopted and living abroad. As many of the mothers already had children, adoption was also a means to support the children they already had. At least one mother was ill during her pregnancy and feared being unable to care for her child.

### Transportation and Movement

All mothers crossed borders legally and with legal documents. They generally travelled overland, by car or bus, although one victim travelled by air. Usually the women travelled in the early stages of their pregnancy, making it difficult for border authorities to identify anything suspicious. The two destination countries for trafficking for adoption were France and Greece. In addition, information from police sources indicated that Italy was also a country of destination, although not among assisted victims.

<sup>187</sup> Police sources report that mothers receive between EUR 1,000 and 1,500 from the trafficker who then sells the baby for EUR 10,000 to 12,000 (Interview with Svetoslav Tanev, Head of Sector, National Border Police Service, Ministry of the Interior, Sofia, Bulgaria, 8 February 2005).

### Victim's Trafficking Experiences

Women trafficked to Greece were accommodated in places owned by the recruiters. The mothers remained at these premises for several months, the duration of their pregnancy. After giving birth, the women received a small amount of money and were returned to Bulgaria. Several months later they returned to Greece to receive the rest of the promised sum and to finalize the adoption procedure.

The women generally reported “normal” living conditions and receiving regular prenatal medical consultations and examinations. They did, however, complain about receiving poor quality food and being denied freedom of movement. In addition, a number of women complained about abuse – mental (2), physical (1), mental and physical (1) and sexual (1).

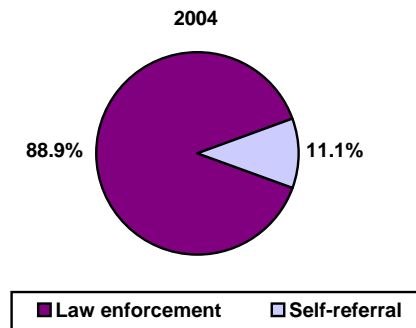
Once the baby was born, the child was immediately adopted. The adoption was legalized through an adoption company. In many cases the adoptive parents were not only aware of the trafficking process, but were also involved in the operation, most often providing the means of transport from the destination country.<sup>188</sup>

### Post Trafficking Experience

Most cases of adoption were identified by law enforcement authorities. In both instances – in France and in Greece – this was the result of joint law enforcement efforts of the Bulgarian police and their Greek and French counterparts.

In one instance the mother, who had originally agreed to the adoption, changed her mind and approached the police in France for assistance.

GRAPH 21  
IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL OF BULGARIAN  
VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR ADOPTION, 2004



Following identification, various actors, including law enforcement, NGOs, IOM and child protection authorities, cooperated in the provision of assistance and protection. A critical task was to acquire Bulgarian documents for the babies. The Bulgarian government is currently developing an official procedure for such cases.

Another pivotal challenge is the issue of reintegration. In all cases in which the babies were identified and returned, the baby was returned to the mother. Efforts were made to mobilize the support of the local level commissions and child protection agencies throughout the country to support reintegration. The risk that the babies will be re-

<sup>188</sup> Correspondence with Nikolai Nenkov, IOM Bulgaria, 28 May 2005.



trafficked either for adoption or when they are older for other purposes remains a concern. Unless the material and social conditions that contributed to trafficking are addressed, re-trafficking poses as serious threat to the protection of these children.<sup>189</sup> From a criminal perspective, determining the mother's complicity is both essential and problematic. Excessive focus on the criminal prosecution of mothers poses serious problems for reintegration efforts. It also ignores the mother's own social victimization which, based on preliminary victim profiles, appears pronounced. At the same time, the criminal complicity of parents cannot be ignored, if for no other reason than it affects directly the care and safety of the child.

## 2.2 Foreign Victims of Trafficking Assisted in Bulgaria

In what follows, we briefly explore the profiles and experiences of foreign nationals trafficked to and/or assisted in Bulgaria.

TABLE 11  
NUMBER OF ASSISTED FOREIGN VICTIMS IN BULGARIA, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign trafficking victims	24	41	4	6	11	84

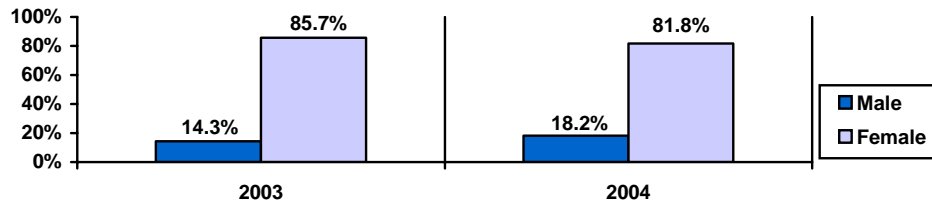
The figure includes all foreign trafficking victims initially assisted within Bulgaria and thereafter voluntarily returned to their countries of origin. To date, these figures do not indicate that Bulgaria is a major country of destination. Rather, victims were en route to destinations within the EU and Balkans. Foreign victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation as well as for labour.

### 2.2.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims of Trafficking in Bulgaria

#### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics<sup>190</sup>

**Sex:** Foreign victims of trafficking assisted in Bulgaria were both men and women. However, two of the three males assisted in 2003 and 2004 were the male children of victims, trafficked alongside their mothers.

GRAPH 22  
SEX OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BULGARIA, 2003 AND 2004

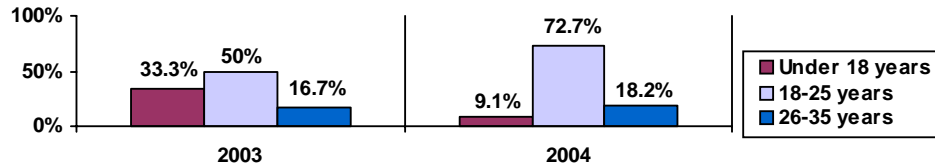


<sup>189</sup> One of the nine mothers had been a victim of trafficking herself, trafficked as a minor for delinquency.

<sup>190</sup> Profiles of foreign victims trafficked to Bulgaria were drawn from the cases for which there is comprehensive data – six cases in 2003 and nine cases in 2004. Indicators for which there was comprehensive data about all victims are: sex, age, form(s) of trafficking and country of origin.

**Age:** Most foreign victims in 2003 and 2004 were adults, between 18 and 25 years. In only a few cases were adult victims over 25.

GRAPH 23  
AGE OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BULGARIA, 2003 AND 2004



While minors were assisted in 2003 and 2004, they were the children of trafficking victims, trafficked alongside their mothers. Statistics about minors must be read with this caveat. Other foreign victims were only recently over 18 years and may have been recruited and trafficked while still minors.

**Country of origin:** Victims' nationality changed over time. Most recently, victims originated from countries such as Lebanon, Armenia, Czech Republic and Uzbekistan. Romania and Moldova – two countries proximate to Bulgaria and recognized as source countries for trafficking – were also represented in 2002 and 2004.

TABLE 12  
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN BULGARIA, 2000 TO 2004

Country of Origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Armenia	0	0	0	0	2	2
Czech Republic	0	0	1	0	0	1
Georgia	0	3	1	0	0	4
Latvia	1	0	0	0	0	1
Lebanon	0	0	0	0	2	2
Moldova	1	7	0	0	2	10
Romania	0	0	2	3	3	8
Russia	0	4	0	0	2	4
Ukraine	22	27	0	0	0	49
Uzbekistan	0	0	0	3	0	3
Total	24	41	4	6	11	84

Essentially Bulgaria is a transit country for victims *en route* to either the Balkans or the EU. In 2003 and 2004, victims were *en route* to Albania, Macedonia and Italy. In only two cases – one in 2003 and one in 2004 – were victims trafficked to Bulgaria. One woman from Uzbekistan (with her son and daughter) was trafficked by her Bulgarian husband for sexual exploitation, while one Armenian woman (with her son) was trafficked to Bulgaria to work in a factory.

**Education:** There is insufficient information about the education of foreign victims to draw conclusions.

**Marital and family status:** In 2003, most victims (83.3 per cent) were unmarried, although these findings were informed by the inclusion of two (unmarried) children. Only the mother of these children (16.7 per cent) was married. In 2004, 66.7 per cent of victims were unmarried at recruitment (including the son of the Armenian victim),

while 22.2 per cent were married (a Lebanese couple trafficked together) and 11.1 per cent (the Armenian woman) divorced. Only one victim in 2004 was a single mother.

**Refugees:** While no assisted foreign victims were refugees, information from one service provider cited three cases in 2003 of female asylum seekers from Ethiopia who manifested strong indications of having been trafficked. While these are not confirmed cases of trafficking, they flag the possibility of trafficking within asylum structures. Attention to this possibility is needed throughout the SEE region.<sup>191</sup>

### **Recruitment experiences**

Foreign victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 were recruited by both men and women. In many cases, the recruiter was known to the victim (a husband, friend or acquaintance). Some recruiters were of the same nationality as the victims, while others were Bulgarian.

All victims were unemployed at recruitment. In 2003 and 2004, all victims, apart from the Uzbek woman, were recruited with promises of work – as waitresses, labourers and factory workers. In the Uzbek case, she and her children were trafficked by her husband under the guise of moving to Bulgaria as a family.

### **Transportation and movement**

With the exception of the Lebanese couple, who were trafficked without documents, all foreign victims in 2003 and 2004 travelled with legal documents and crossed at legal border crossings.

### **Victim's Trafficking Experiences**

Victims were trafficked both for labour and sexual exploitation. In addition, both years, some victims were trafficked with their children, making the children potential victims. While the three children were not exploited alongside their mothers, there were indications that the exploitation of the children was imminent. In both years, these children were assisted alongside their mothers.

TABLE 12  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG FOREIGN VICTIMS  
ASSISTED IN BULGARIA, 2003 AND 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Sexual exploitation	4	7
Labour exploitation	0	3
Potential victim <sup>192</sup>	2	1
Total	6	11

### **Victim identification and referral**

In 100 per cent of cases in both 2003 and 2004, victims were identified by law enforcement authorities. These cases were referred to IOM, which is the referral agency assisting foreign women in Bulgaria to return to their countries of origin.

<sup>191</sup> From January to November 2004, Bulgaria received 1025 asylum seekers from 41 countries (Interview with Tsveta Georgieva, Head of Migration Service, Caritas, Sofia, Bulgaria, 9 February 2005).

<sup>192</sup> This designation is used when the individual was assisted for an insufficient time to clearly establish his/her trafficking experience or when the individual was identified and assisted before being exploited but showed strong signs of being in the trafficking process.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN BULGARIA

In this section, we analyze the identification and referral mechanism in Bulgaria (Section 3.1) as well as the assistance and protection available to foreign and national victims of trafficking (Section 3.2).

#### 3.1 Victim Identification and Referral in Bulgaria

The majority of Bulgarian trafficking cases are identified through one of the following mechanisms: (1) voluntary return programmes from transit and destination countries (IOM and NGOs), (2) returns through extradition, (3) law enforcement and, increasingly, through (4) embassies.

Although in Bulgaria there is no formal centralized mechanism for the screening, identification and referral of adult trafficking victims, in practice, there is strong cooperation among all relevant national and local authorities, IOM and NGOs. This translates into a well-functioning referral network of support at an operational level. Under the newly established National Committee, a centralized identification and referral mechanism is envisaged along with a central database to register victims of trafficking. In addition, commissions will be established to operate at a local level and ensure that victims are identified and assisted. The government has developed and adopted a comprehensive National Programme for Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Human Beings and Protection of Victims of Trafficking, which is under implementation in partnership with all stakeholders, including IOM and NGOs. There will be six local commissions, two in Northern Bulgaria and four in South Bulgaria

#### **Voluntary Return Programmes from Transit and Destination Countries**

Trafficked persons returning to Bulgaria via official channels are referred to IOM Sofia, as per the *Memorandum of Understanding* approved in 2000 between IOM and the Bulgarian Government, and an agreement signed by IOM and SECI in 2001. In addition, IOM Sofia receives referrals directly from NGOs as well as referrals from various partners through IOM missions in destination countries. For foreign victims identified in Bulgaria, IOM is the agency tasked with assistance as well as return to their countries of origin.

In addition to assisted voluntary returns through IOM and Bulgarian diplomatic and consular representatives abroad, there has been an increase in returns conducted according to cooperation agreements between Bulgarian NGOs and NGOs in destination countries. Animus Association supports the return of victims identified through the La Strada Network. Nadja Centre cooperates with Bulgarian border police to support victims returning from France as per a cooperation agreement between French authorities and a Bulgarian platform of support organizations, including IOM. Returns are undertaken according to each organization's internal procedures.

Such NGO networks and contacts should be further expanded. Ideally, victims should be informed about the full range of assistance possibilities in Bulgaria and not limited in the choice of assistance to only cooperating organizations. This will help to ensure that the assistance and re-integration programme meets the victim's individual needs and interests.

### **Returns upon Extradition**

Large numbers of Bulgarian women are extradited.<sup>193</sup> Bulgarian police have been trained and sensitized to trafficking and screen the returned deported to identify victims of trafficking. Where the police suspect that an individual is a victim of trafficking, this is explained to him or her and assistance offered. In such cases, IOM Sofia is also contacted to conduct an interview and offer further support. Bulgarian police estimate that as many as ten per cent of the deportees could, in fact, be victims of trafficking.<sup>194</sup> However, many go unidentified. Correct identification of victims of trafficking is subject to their willingness to identify themselves as victims and accept assistance offered. As well, the atmosphere and timing of the screening – in police facilities, with authorities and immediately following a trafficking experience – is not especially conducive to self-identification. Where victims decline immediate assistance, they are offered contact information for assisting organizations. However, assistance providers report that even when law enforcement bodies provide suspected victims with details and contacts for direct assistance service providers, many victims do not automatically contact them because they are unable to overcome their fears or they do not necessarily believe that they will receive meaningful assistance.

### **Law Enforcement**

Bulgaria has a high rate of identification and assistance of Bulgarian victims while abroad. This is made possible through the international cooperation agreements with the various police services within the Ministry of the Interior, primarily the Bulgarian Border Police and National Service to Combat Organized Crime. Bulgarian police services cooperate with their counterparts in France, the Netherlands, Germany, Greece, Czech Republic, etc. and have played a critical role in the identification of many victims of trafficking. In addition, a Europol representative is based in Sofia, which facilitates counter-trafficking efforts by law enforcement. It has been through these cooperative efforts that the less visible forms of trafficking were identified. The National Service to Combat Organized Crime (NSCOC) identified 25 female victims of trafficking for labour in France. Similarly, the Bulgarian Border Police identified 30 cases of pregnant women trafficking babies for adoption.

When police authorities work in destination countries, they do so in international teams. The presence of Bulgarian police officers, speaking the victim's native language and with a similar culture, can contribute to a victim's feelings of safety and comfort, which, in turn, may yield better results for law enforcement, both in the destination country and upon return to Bulgaria.

The police have special procedures for identifying and referring minor trafficked victims. A specialized police officer (having pedagogical or psychological training as well as skills in interviewing a child) conducts the initial interview with the victim. This should be considered a best practice for police working with children in the region.

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<sup>193</sup> In 2003, 2978 Bulgarian women were deported from EU countries, while 2908 Bulgarian women were deported from EU countries in 2004 (Interview with Svetoslav Tanev, Head of Sector, National Border Police Service, Ministry of the Interior, Bulgaria, February 2005).

<sup>194</sup> Interview with Svetoslav Tanev, Head of Sector, National Border Police Service, Ministry of the Interior, Bulgaria, February 2005.

## **Embassies**

In some cases, Bulgarian trafficking victims have been identified by embassy and consular staff in destination countries. To further enhance this identification and referral process, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and IOM have trained Bulgarian consular staff abroad in the identification and referral procedures for victims of trafficking. Further, Bulgarian embassies and consulates, together with IOM, have developed a referral mechanism that is mandatory for all embassies/consulates. This is a positive example of government supporting trafficking victims and, crucially, adhering to international obligations to identify and assist victims of trafficking.

## **Helplines**

There are various helplines in Bulgaria that address issues of violence, including trafficking. These are located throughout the country. None of the helplines are toll free, due to the difficulties in acquiring and the costs involved in maintaining such a line. This may constrain potential users.

Two of the helplines are run by Sofia based organizations that have long histories of assisting trafficking victims – Animus Association and Nadja Centre. The helplines also offer a range of preventative information and counselling, including details of the licensed agencies offering job abroad, employment conditions abroad and details of the Bulgarian embassies and consulates.

The Animus helpline – which operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week – received 1698 calls in 2003, of which 113 were related to trafficking. This included 45 prevention/information calls, 40 calls from relatives about missing persons and suspected victims of trafficking and 19 calls directly from victims.<sup>195</sup> In 2004, trafficking related calls more than doubled, to 303 calls. The vast majority were information/prevention calls, although there was also an increase (to 51 calls) in calls from relatives of missing persons and suspected victims of trafficking and an increase in calls directly from victims, from 19 to 24.

The second helpline is operated by the Nadja Centre in Sofia. The helpline operates from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday. In 2004, the helpline received 1849 calls, of which 137 were related to trafficking. Of these, 28 were directly from victims. In 2003, the helpline logged a total of 1905 calls, of which 173 were related to trafficking. Of this 173, 69 calls were directly from victims of trafficking.

In addition, the Bulgarian Red Cross operates a helpline in four regions of the country – Sofia, Russe, Plodiv and Yambol. Since November 2003, the helpline has received 4323 calls, 108 of which were related to trafficking. The majority (104 calls) were related to prevention – to request legal advice, receive information about migration and working abroad, to check on labour recruitment firms and to ask for information about human trafficking. The helpline received only two calls directly related to victims, while two calls were requesting assistance in locating relatives working abroad.

There is also a helpline in Balevgrad, operated by the municipality. The target group of this helpline is children and youth. While this helpline is not dedicated to trafficking, it did receive a number of trafficking calls in 2003 and 2004. Between November and December 2003, the helpline received approximately 100 calls; in 2004, the helpline

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<sup>195</sup> This number does not represent 19 individual victims but may include the same victim(s) calling the helpline multiple times. This is also the case for the 24 calls from victims in 2004.

received 950 calls. While most calls were focused on trafficking prevention and accessing information about work abroad, there was one registered call that signalled a potential trafficking case.

### **Information Centres**

IOM operates a network of Information and Consultancy Centres in seven cities throughout the country. These centres provide up-to-date information on the conditions for stay, work and study in foreign countries, on bilateral treaties and existing possibilities for labour migration. Consultants advise citizens on the possibilities of legal migration and raise awareness of the risks and dangers of illegal migration and trafficking. The centres are also alert to signals for possible cases of trafficking and direct callers to the relevant authorities, while victims are referred to the safe houses where they receive social, psychological and medical support.

## **3.2 Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in Bulgaria**

The assistance and protection framework for trafficked victims in Bulgaria has mainly been geared toward the reintegration of Bulgarian victims who have been returned from abroad.

Local NGOs and IOM provide most of the assistance and protection services for national and foreign trafficked victims in Bulgaria, with the existing protection and assistance programme largely dependent on funding from donor countries. However, the government is increasingly involved in assisting victims. Overall, Bulgaria possesses a diversified group of direct service providers for trafficked victims. However, many services, particularly in terms of specialized medical and psychological care, are concentrated within Sofia. The geographical distribution of victim services and identification of possible partner organizations throughout the country need further consideration. Details of the various services are outlined below.

### **Shelter**

In Sofia, there are two shelters for victims of trafficking – one operated by IOM and one crisis centre/shelter by Animus Centre. The Animus shelter is a short-term shelter, while the IOM shelter is for short to medium-term accommodation of victims. Until October 2003, there was a third shelter, operated by Nadja.

In addition, there are six IOM run safe houses located in various regions in Bulgaria aimed at longer-term assistance and reintegration. These safe houses are located outside of Sofia – in key areas of origin – to provide longer-term assistance to victims of trafficking. They are managed by IOM, in partnership with local organizations and in cooperation with the government. The property is municipal and the contribution of municipal space by local governments in Bulgaria represents a positive commitment by local authorities that should be emulated in the region.

All of the shelters possess counsellors who work in rotating shifts to provide 24-hour coverage for shelter beneficiaries, and all of the shelters are licensed to provide social services and shelter according to Bulgaria's social assistance regulations. The shelters accept Bulgarian and foreign victims of trafficking and minors, if formal permission is granted by natural parents or child protection authorities.

Shelters for minor victims of trafficking fall within the purview of the Bulgarian government's victim assistance framework. There are five shelters under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior specifically for minors, including street children, juvenile delinquents and trafficking victims. IOM has supported the Ministry of the Interior's renovation of the shelter in Sofia and has created two special rooms for boys and girls who have been trafficked abroad and returned through IOM assistance. During their temporary stay at these shelters, minor victims of trafficking are offered special police protection, after which they are relocated to other shelters under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, which runs shelters for children without parental care.

In addition, thought should be given to accommodation options for other profiles of victims, particularly male victims, victims trafficked for other purposes apart from sexual exploitation and minors. Accommodation within the existing shelter programmes may be inadvisable because of mixed genders, ages and assistance needs.

### **Medical Care**

Each of the shelters arranges for voluntary, confidential, free-of-charge medical care for trafficked victims. The provision of medical care is distinguished from other countries in the region because health care professionals employed by local and international health care NGOs and public hospitals provide most of the medical care according to written agreements with shelters. This approach constitutes a promising, sustainable model of health care provision. Organizations such as the Family Planning Association in Sofia and Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) provide free-of-charge services to socially vulnerable clients on an ongoing basis.

Service providers report that almost all assisted victims request medical care, especially routine medical check-ups and gynaecological examinations. Service providers estimate that it takes one to two weeks to stabilize most victims' physical health. Health care providers report that only some of the victims test positive and require treatment for STIs. This is likely due to treatment received in destination countries.

Most victims request and receive pregnancy tests. All service providers report that some of the assisted victims were pregnant when they arrived at the shelter, and many decided to deliver and raise the babies. This highlights the need for services tailored specifically for pregnant women. Some pregnant women chose not to have the child. Access to abortion is facilitated only by some service providers.

Many victims request and receive HIV tests. Health care providers refer beneficiaries for free-of-charge, anonymous HIV tests. Pre and post-test counselling is provided. However, treatment is currently available at only one hospital in Sofia.

Service providers do not report a high incidence of alcohol or narcotic dependency among programme beneficiaries. Victims who develop dependencies while trafficked generally receive detoxification treatment while assisted in the destination country.

One problem in the provision of medical assistance is that many Bulgarian victims do not have access to state medical insurance because they have been outside of the country for more than six months. The reinstatement of medical insurance is time consuming and, in the meantime, medical costs must be covered by service providers, which is expensive. There is a need to expedite the process for reinstating medical



assistance for victims of trafficking. Further, state medical assistance should be available to all victims of trafficking, regardless of nationality.

### **Psychological and Psychiatric Care**

The quality and availability of psychological and psychiatric care for trafficked victims in Bulgaria, particularly in Sofia, is among the highest in South-eastern Europe. Voluntary counselling is provided by experienced psychologists and social workers at Animus, Nadja Center, Médecins sans Frontières and the IOM shelter. Psychologists and social workers with these organizations possess, on average, several years of experience working with trafficked victims and other victims of violence and trauma, and have designed models of assistance and numerous training seminars for state social workers and health care providers. Therefore, these service providers could serve as a resource for other psychological and social service providers in the region.

Initial assessment interviews are undertaken by psychologists and social workers upon referral. Both individual and group counselling sessions are available and generally take place at the shelter. Psychological service providers report that all of the assisted trafficked women exhibited some signs of PTSD as well as anxiety and sleep disorders. However, many of the psychologists note that trafficked women who received some direct assistance abroad, appear less traumatized and are more receptive to services than those who were directly returned or deported by the police. This highlights the importance of developing high-quality psychosocial services for victims in transit and destination countries.

When the victim returns home, the provision of appropriate psychological services is more complicated. Most specialized counselling services for victims are located in Sofia, whereas most victims originate and return to areas and regions outside of Sofia. This poses a problem for meaningful reintegration, as it is generally agreed that most victims require at least three to six months of intensive counselling before they are stabilized. As such, the provision of longer-term psychosocial services within other communities, in particular communities of origin and at-risk communities, must be increased. Future regulations regarding implementation of assistance for victims *via* local councils should establish such services as a priority. In addition, these councils should build upon existing networks of NGOs that have already received some initial training in psychosocial assistance for victims. Animus has trained a network of women's NGOs to include services for trafficked victims within their portfolio of services for female victims of violence. These organizations could potentially act as service providers for victims who come to the attention of local councils.

### **Educational Assistance**

Given the relatively low educational attainment of many victims of trafficking, there is a need for education assistance. However, at present, there are no comprehensive educational assistance programmes for adult trafficked victims in Bulgaria. Local councils and service providers should develop formal education and alternative education programmes for trafficked victims. Such educational programmes should be developed in conjunction with (rather than instead of) vocational and employment training programmes.

Further, while IOM and a few NGOs assisting minor victims of trafficking do cooperate with the Ministry of Education and the Agency for Social Protection

regarding educational programmes for minors, no formal reinsertion programs are currently in place for these minors. The new legislation requires that child victims of trafficking receive education within state schools, but this law does not contain specific reintegration and reinsertion measures for child trafficking victims. Local councils and other service providers should develop more formal education and non-formal or alternative education programmes for trafficked minors. These programmes should be developed in conjunction with vocational and employment training programmes for older (teenage) victims. Further, within the Child Protection Act and its rules and regulations there are various reintegration programmes for children at risk—a category within which minor victims of trafficking fall.

A pilot project of the Bulgarian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, to be launched in three municipalities in the Burgas region in September 2005, will partly address the lack of education programmes. In line with an Agreement for Cooperation between the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and IOM, all victims of trafficking assisted by IOM will be referred to this programme and will receive 600 hours primary education, vocational training and job placement.

### **Vocational Training and Employment Assistance**

To date, there has been inadequate employment assistance developed and implemented for trafficking victims. Only a few organizations in Bulgaria offer job-finding assistance. Employment placement requires funding, trained professionals and cooperative agreements with labour institutions. It also relies greatly upon general economic opportunities, which in Bulgaria are heavily constrained. Nevertheless, there have been some positive developments in this regard. For example, one NGO has developed a cooperative agreement with a local factory employing trafficking victims. Further, IOM facilitates access to programmes run by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy for socially disadvantaged groups. These include vocational training and “start-your-own-business” programmes. All IOM Information Consultancy Centres provide consultation, advice and job-orientation with a view to finding the most suitable employment opportunities. Each assisted case has an individualized plan for sustainable reintegration.

### **Family Mediation and Assistance**

Family mediation is offered by all shelters and psychosocial service providers. Contact with the victim’s family and family counselling is only initiated with the victim’s consent. As most victims choose to return to live with their families or, at the very least, wish to re-establish contact with them, this is an essential reintegration service. Psychologists and social workers note that considerable effort is spent in helping families to develop appropriate emotional responses and support for victims. Upon agreement of the trafficking victim and her or his family, some psychologists and counsellors also provide counselling and social assistance to the victim’s family members. However, these services are mainly available only in Sofia in spite of the need elsewhere in the country.

There is a clear need to expand these mediation and counselling services to rural and at-risk areas and to share the skills of NGO service providers with state authorities. Experienced NGOs’ service providers can serve as a training resource for state social service providers. In particular, local councils and state social service providers must receive training in areas of family risk assessment and mediation. As many of the

victims grew up in abusive and dysfunctional families, service providers must pay attention to this issue. Finally, as some of the victims are mothers themselves (and in some cases, new mothers, having given birth while trafficked), service providers should expand counselling and supportive services for mothers as well as explore the possibility of good parenting courses.

The identification of victims of trafficking for adoption flags the need for specialized assistance and family mediation for this profile of victim. Here, too, issues of violence and risk must be critical components of family assessment and return.

### **Housing Assistance**

A noteworthy number of victims cannot or choose not to return to live with their families upon return, some because their families will not accept them back. Others come from abusive and dysfunctional family environments that may have contributed to their desire to migrate. Where victims cannot return to their families, service providers urge victims to locate other relatives or friends with whom they can stay, at least for a short period. This is necessary in the absence of alternative housing options. Mid and long-term alternative accommodation options need to be explored as a measure to prevent the re-trafficking of victims.

Mid and long-term housing assistance possibilities are scarce in Bulgaria, although not as scarce as in some countries of SEE. However, a significant obstacle is that most victims would need to work and save for several months before they had sufficient funds to rent an apartment. This is addressed to some degree with the provision of mid to long-term shelter accommodation in the six safe houses. However, more housing is needed, particularly for the longer-term.

### **Legal Assistance**

Shelters and service providers work with lawyers as well as local legal NGOs to provide complimentary legal counselling to victims. However, the majority of victims do not receive individualized consultations with lawyers unless they are to be involved in legal proceedings against their traffickers or have specific legal needs. Instead, victims receive much of their legal advice and support from social workers at the shelter. These service providers support victims through the legal process, escorting them when testifying, accompanying them throughout legal proceedings and monitoring the development of cases. While these caregivers are well versed in legal issues and serve an important role as victim advocates, they are not legal professionals and there is a need for more expanded professional legal assistance. In large part, this will be addressed by the coming into force of the Witness Protection Act, which includes among its provisions comprehensive legal services for victims of trafficking. It is hoped that this new law will encourage testimony and trials within Bulgaria.

Legal assistance is also needed to normalize the status of the victim and acquire legal documentation. On arrival in Bulgaria, many victims are without their identity papers. However, issuing new identity papers requires time and money. Service providers are actively involved in facilitating intermediation with Bulgarian authorities in such cases. The government should formalize procedures in the case of trafficking victims as well as facilitate the process to ensure that victims are able to access all needed services.

### **Witness Protection**

In late 2004 in Bulgaria, a formal witness protection law (Witness Protection Act /Prom. SG 103/23 Nov 2004) was promulgated for victims of organized crime (including trafficking victims who testify against their traffickers). The law entered into force on 25 May 2005. The law includes victims as well as witnesses and their families.<sup>196</sup> This law allows for a number of measures aimed at protecting the witness, including protection during court proceedings as well as change of identity, resettlement in another area of Bulgaria and, in extreme cases, third country resettlement. This final component is an essential aspect in the Bulgarian context, as it is difficult to provide long-term protection and anonymity within such a small country.

This is an essential development as many victims fear for their safety and have been unwilling to provide testimony in court as a result. As well, in the past some special protection and security has been granted to trafficked victims for the duration of criminal proceedings, but this was *ad hoc* protection and rarely consisted of more than escorted transportation to criminal proceedings and an extended stay at shelters for trafficked victims.

To date, this law has not been implemented in Bulgaria and there is a need to elaborate the rules and procedures of its implementation. Toward the eventual implementation of this new law, IOM will initiate a pilot project for witness protection in five trafficking cases. Significantly, the provision of assistance is regulated by the new Witness Protection Act, which provides for social, medical, psychological, legal or financial assistance for trafficking victims.

### **Case Monitoring/Follow-up**

Comprehensive case monitoring and follow-up assistance constitutes a gap in services for trafficked victims in the SEE region, including Bulgaria. IOM and NGOs monitor cases for a number of months following the beneficiary's departure from the shelter and some victims receive longer-term attention and assistance through NGOs in their home region but, overall, follow-up is limited. This is partly due to limited resources and partly to many victims' preference to remain anonymous upon return to home communities.

Case monitoring mechanisms and longer-term follow-up services need to be further developed with attention to both of these limitations. Ideally, follow-up services would be provided by organizations already working in communities but not associated with service provision to trafficked victims. Fearing stigmatization, victims may be reluctant to maintain contact with trafficking organizations. Community or regionally-based service providers could assess the beneficiary's progress, while offering supportive services, specialized counselling and technical assistance, as needed. Service providers specialized in trafficking should be mobilized to train organizations in areas of origin to ensure that these groups tailor their services to the needs of trafficking victims. Case monitoring mechanisms could be linked to vocational, educational and/or income-generation programmes.

Case monitoring and follow-up is especially important for minors, who are less able than adults to avoid risks and negotiate negative family or community environments.

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<sup>196</sup> Previously witness protection was feasible under a provision in the penal code (Article 98). However, it applied only to witnesses. This new law embraces witnesses and their families and, overall, is more practicable.

Without case monitoring, it is impossible to gauge the minor's level of safety and the success of reintegration. Further, family assessments, family crisis counselling and supportive services should be expanded to rural and at-risk areas, and the new regulations on implementation of victim assistance should include specific provisions for family and child mediation and counselling. Experienced NGOs should be used as a training resource for state social service providers working with trafficked minors, at-risk minors and their families.

Case monitoring and follow-up is essential in supporting the reintegration of victims as well as measuring service providers' programmatic success. Some service providers postulate that substantial numbers of assisted trafficking victims are eventually re-trafficked. For example, Nadja Centre reported that six of 11 victims returned from France in 2004 had disappeared by the end of the year, assumed to be re-trafficked. However, in the absence of factual data and case monitoring, it is impossible to estimate the rate or causes of re-trafficking or to gauge the effect of assistance and reintegration measures.

More generally, case monitoring is beset with obstacles. In addition to limited staff and resources, victims themselves may be reluctant to maintain contact with case workers as it may draw unwanted attention to them in their communities. Further, victims may not be accessible by telephone and they may live in remote, hard-to-reach areas, which demand time and resources to access. Some victims move frequently, which also complicates ongoing contact.

### **Material Assistance**

Service providers generally offer material assistance and/or a reintegration grant for beneficiaries as a means to support reintegration into the community or begin a new life in a new community. This assistance comprises financial support to cover the victim's everyday costs for the initial months upon return. According to individualized reintegration programmes, IOM provides victims with additional material assistance to meet specific needs. In many cases, grants cover clothing, medicine and document procurement expenses, all of which are crucial for the victim's successful reintegration. These various forms of material assistance are valuable as a means to mitigate the poverty that is often a factor in trafficking. However, service providers also highlight the delicate balance between assistance and dependency.

### **Assistance for Trafficked Minors**

Any organization that encounters a trafficked minor must notify Bulgaria's State Agency for Child Protection (SACP), the chief governmental agency responsible for minors according to the Child Protection Act. This Agency, which became operational in January 2001, has local structures falling under the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. The Agency is responsible for governance, coordination and control of child protection activities and aims to implement a unified state policy with respect to Bulgarian children. The Agency also provides policy guidance and oversight to the municipal social assistance services and their child protection activities.

An important standardized mechanism for the screening, identification and referral of minor trafficking victims is soon to be legally enshrined. These procedures, developed by the Government of Bulgaria in cooperation with IOM and NGOs, include requisite risk assessments and exploration of assistance options to ensure that the best interests

of the child are taken into account. According to this mechanism, when a minor is identified as a potential victim of trafficking, the social welfare department and police are notified and required to conduct a security/risk assessment (by the police) and a social assessment (by the social worker). Based on these assessments, social workers develop an assistance and reintegration plan for the minor. The state has various options including: returning the minor to the family, sending the child to extended family, accessing foster care and placement of the minor in social care institutions.

In terms of shelters, trafficked minors are initially placed within one of five transit shelters for minors administered by the Ministry of Interior.<sup>197</sup> There are five shelters specifically for minors, including street children, juvenile delinquents and trafficking victims. These five transit centres are located in Sofia, Varna, Burgas, Plovdiv, and Gorna Oriahovitsa. IOM has supported the Ministry of the Interior 's renovation of the shelter in Sofia and has created two special rooms for trafficked boys and girls. Minor victims of trafficking stay temporarily at these shelters and are then relocated to other shelters for children without parental care, under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. In other cases and where deemed appropriate and safe for the minor, the minor may be returned to his/her family. Each shelter has specialized procedures and service plans for minors. Most minor victims are referred for a general medical examination, gynecological examination, pregnancy testing, STI testing and HIV testing. Shelter staff refer each minor for a medical check-up and an initial counselling session before departure. These transit shelters have agreements with state clinics that provide follow-up medical attention if needed.

All service providers offer psychological counselling to minor victims of trafficking, although the scope and length of the counselling varies considerably. Most trafficked minors within the state's five transit centres only receive a few counselling sessions and some minors who were not accommodated at any shelter receive no counselling at all. It is uncertain whether these victims declined services because they did not want them, because their parents did not grant permission for such services, or a combination of both.

There are also a number of provisions designed to support minors in the legal process. For example, unlike adult victims, minors are not obliged to provide a written statement to law enforcement and when they do so, they receive legal counsel regarding these statements. In the process of taking witness testimony, the minors are interviewed in the presence of inspectors from the Child Pedagogical Unit or, where such a person is unavailable, in the presence of a psychologist. Another valuable procedure is Bulgaria's law providing that a minor may testify in a closed session of court, where only a judge questions the minor, obviating the need to face the alleged perpetrator in court. This procedure applies to all cases involving sexual violence against a minor, including trafficking. Finally, some Bulgarian courts and prosecutors have invited specialized forensic experts to provide testimony regarding abuse sustained by minors in child trafficking cases. This provides a mechanism whereby experienced professionals can explain injuries sustained by trafficked minors to a court, which both increases the

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<sup>197</sup> Although placement of minors technically falls under the responsibility of the State Agency for Child Protection, the Ministry of Education, or the Ministry of Social Work, trafficked children come under police protection and the Ministry of Interior if: (1) the child has become a subject of a crime, (2) the child is lost or in a helpless condition or (3) the child has been left without supervision.

amount of information provided to a court and decreases the emphasis on the minor's testimony.

Regarding longer-term assistance to minors, foster care programmes are being developed as an alternative to family reintegration where reintegration is not in the best interest of the child. To date, there are only a handful of foster care families in the country and it is not a widely used strategy. However, there is currently funding available for the programme and it will be developed further in the coming months. Foster care was pursued in the case of one minor victim of trafficking assisted by Animus in 2003 who was also a new mother. Unfortunately, the foster family found the situation extremely difficult due to the victim's psychological state and her self-destructive behaviour (ICCO, 2004: 14). If foster care options are to be pursued, attention must be paid to the sensitization and training of these foster families. Fostering is a difficult care option in all circumstances and trafficking victims face additional problems and traumas, which may undermine the suitability of the foster care option.

### **Specialized Assistance**

In the past two years, two very specific profiles of trafficking victims were identified requiring specialized services and assistance. One is "trafficked mothers" – either women who were mothers when trafficked or victims who had a child as a result of trafficking experience. Mothers have some specific assistance needs, including the option of accommodation with their children, programmes that support the development of good parenting skills, family counselling to reconcile families separated by trafficking/migration, etc. In addition, there is probably a need to support the reintegration of single mothers, who are often socially and economically vulnerable.

Another category of victims requiring special assistance are victims of trafficking for adoption. In most cases, these are children trafficked by their mothers. This represents a very specific type of trafficking that requires specific assistance and protection responses. While many of their protection needs are met through child protection efforts, others – for example, securing the necessary documentation to be included in the Bulgarian civic status registers – are not. IOM provides grants and assistance for obtaining all relevant documents for the child and facilitates the inclusion of the newborns into the health insurance system. Further, the mothers are enrolled in the IOM victim reintegration programs. It is important to mention the strong response of all Bulgarian authorities. Bulgaria has adopted a specific amendment in its Penal Code, penalizing exclusively parental complicity in trade with unborn/newborn babies as a response measure to counteract this specific form of trafficking. As well, the Child Protection Agency monitors each case and upon evidence of threat to the child, a procedure for the deprivation of parental rights is launched.

### **Victim Assistance and Protection Services for Foreigners**

Dedicated housing and assistance services do not exist for foreign victims in Bulgaria. Rather, they receive assistance within the existing assistance schemes for national victims. The legislation specifies that these services should be tailored and provided in a language that the victim understands. IOM is the main organization assisting foreign victims and provides interpretation in the victim's native language, assists in establishing contacts with family and provides intermediation between the victim and Bulgarian authorities.

### **Temporary Residence Permit**

In the Bulgarian *Law on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings*, there are three articles (Articles 25 to 27) that allow for the temporary stay of foreign victims of trafficking (30 days for adults and 60 days for minors) as an initial measure of protection. However, this legislation conditions the visa, special protection and assistance upon the foreigner's willingness to cooperate with law enforcement for detecting perpetrators of trafficking crimes. The legislation provides that a foreign victim must make a decision regarding cooperation with law enforcement within 30 days of initial identification, during which the right of safe accommodation does not depend on willingness or reluctance to cooperate. This *Law on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings* entered into force on 23 May 2003. To date, however, no foreign victims have requested temporary visas/extended stays. No plans are currently underway to initiate a temporary residence permit for victims of trafficking. Nevertheless, the Bulgarian government and service providers must develop an appropriate assistance framework for foreign victims who temporarily reside in Bulgaria under the temporary visa.



# COUNTRY REPORT

## CROATIA

This section analyzes the current situation of trafficking victims and victim assistance and protection in Croatia. The report is divided into three sections: 1) Number of Foreign and Croatian Trafficking Victims Identified and Assisted, 2) Profiles of Trafficking Victims and 3) Overview of the Assistance Framework in Croatia.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The total number of foreign victims identified and assisted in Croatia between January 2000 and 31 December 2004 was 26.
- The total number of Croatian victims identified and assisted between January 2000 and 31 December 2004 was 8.
- Croatia is primarily a country of destination and transit. However, recently, there are indications that Croatia is also an emerging country of origin for trafficking victims.
- Both foreign and national victims in Croatia were primarily trafficked for sexual exploitation. However, other forms of exploitation were also been noted – namely, labour and begging. Indeed, 26.9 per cent of foreign victims and 12.5 per cent of national victims were trafficked for purposes other than sexual exploitation
- A number of victims assisted between 2002 and 2004 were also exploited for dual purposes. Of the 26 foreign victims assisted since 2002, eight (or 30.8 per cent) were trafficked for sexual exploitation and labour. None of the national victims suffered dual forms of exploitation.
- National victims accounted for a noteworthy 23.5 per cent of all victims assisted since 2002. In 2004, six of the 19 assisted victims (or 31.6 per cent) were national victims. Croatian victims were trafficked both internally as well as abroad.
- A handful of male foreign victims were identified in Croatia, trafficked for begging or labour. However, the vast majority of all foreign victims were female. None of the eight national victims was male.
- A multiplicity of factors, including economic background, family relations, education and employment, informed victims' vulnerability to trafficking. In Croatia, no single factor explains trafficking in foreign and national victims.
- Many foreign victims were trafficked to Croatia with legal documents and crossed at legal border crossings, as many as 50 per cent in 2004. This is an important finding for law enforcement, as it flags the urgency of identification of more subtle manifestations of trafficking as well as trafficking with façades of legality. Croatian victims also increasingly crossed legal borders using legal documents.
- Foreign victims of trafficking travelled primarily overland – by car, bus or train. In only a few cases were the victims transported by air. The specific overland routes were difficult to identify, as most victims were unaware of the route or border crossing used. Generally, Moldovan victims trafficked to Croatia crossed overland through Serbia and Romania, while Ukrainian victims crossed through Hungary and/or BiH.

- The majority of victims, both foreign and national, reported poor living and working conditions and suffered physical and/or sexual abuse in the process of trafficking.
- Foreign victims trafficked to Croatia were increasingly recruited by someone known to them, accounting for 90 per cent in 2004. Croatian victims were also recruited by someone well known to them.
- Among assisted Croatian victims, a number of IDPs/refugees were represented, signalling the potential vulnerability of this group.
- Croatian victims were primarily from poor and very poor economic backgrounds. However, a number of victims were also from average and well-off families, signalling that economics alone is not an explanation of trafficking risk.
- Most victims were identified and referred for assistance by law enforcement authorities. Other identification and referral agencies included the Ministry of Social Welfare, IOM, NGOs and the Romanian Embassy. Identification by a diverse group of actors and increased skills in identification are positive developments in Croatia.
- Croatia has a national referral system, including mobile teams, through which victims are identified and referred for assistance. This includes protocols for the identification and treatment of trafficking victims such as: *Protocol on Detection and Care for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Instructions for Interviewing Illegal Migrants and Other Persons Who Are Suspected Victims of Trafficking in Persons* and *Rules of Procedure in the Shelter*.
- The assistance framework available to trafficking victims in Croatia has been geared primarily toward return of foreign nationals. However, given the number of Croatian victims identified (23.5 per cent of all assisted victims), there is a need to develop reintegration programmes that include vocational training, job placement, alternative housing options, family mediation/counselling and case follow-up and monitoring. Attention to the geographic distribution of services is essential.
- The lack of specialized assistance to minors constitutes a gap in the assistance framework in Croatia. Assistance required includes a shelter for minors, tailored medical and psychological care and provisions for the appointment of a legal guardian. There is discussion underway for the establishment of a shelter for minor victims of trafficking (foreign and national) to meet their specific assistance and protection needs. In addition, service providers require skills in how to interview and support minors victims of trafficking, both in the short term for foreign victims and toward sustainable reintegration of national victims.
- A number of legal provisions are in place to protect trafficking victims, including a law on witness protection and temporary residence permits. Ideally, these will be used more broadly.

## 1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND CROATIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED

Croatia is primarily a country of transit for trafficking in persons *en route* to the European Union. To some degree, Croatia can also be considered a country of destination with regular reports of foreign nationals, primarily Bosnian, being trafficked for sexual exploitation to tourist destinations within the country. To date, a number of Croatian nationals have also been trafficked internally and abroad, accounting for a significant portion of assisted victims.

Statistics and information about assisted trafficking victims in Croatia were compiled according to primary data provided by Organization for Integrity and Prosperity (OIP), Croatian Red Cross, Women’s Association Vukovar, Centre for Women War Victims – Rosa, Centre for Disaster Management and IOM Mission in Zagreb.<sup>198</sup> The figures pertain to foreign and Croatian victims assisted in Croatia as well as Croatian nationals trafficked both internally and abroad. The data presented in this report generally relates to experiences of trafficking for sexual exploitation, although some other forms of trafficking have been noted.<sup>199</sup> Through an examination of victim profiles and experiences, we are better equipped to consider interventions that can address their needs and redress their trafficking situation.<sup>200</sup>

TABLE 1  
NUMBER OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO  
OR ORIGINATING FROM CROATIA, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign trafficking victims	0	0	6	7	13	26
Croatian trafficking victims	0	0	1	1	6	8

The figures presented in the table above comprise the number of trafficked foreign victims identified and assisted within Croatia and voluntarily returned to their countries of origin. Victims who were identified as trafficked but refused return assistance were not included. In addition, the table includes the number of Croatian victims identified abroad as well as those identified within the country. To capture the full scope of trafficking in Croatian nationals, there is a need to access information from destination countries outside of South-eastern Europe. While the RCP sought to collect victim data from a range of destination countries within the European Union, for the most part these efforts were met with reluctance or resistance due to limited resources, insufficient staff time or internal regulations about information sharing.

The numbers presented above include only those cases identified and/or assisted by service providers in Croatia, although data from the judiciary also exists on the subject. Between 1998 and 2000, five criminal offences were reported relating to slavery and prostitution, involving 24 female victims of trafficking – ten from Hungary, seven from

<sup>198</sup> Other organizations in Croatia that participated in and provided information for the RCP research include: National Coordinator (Office for Human Rights), Ministry of Interior and the Croatian Law Centre.

<sup>199</sup> There is no formal centralized data registry for victims of trafficking or a standard methodology for the collection of information on victims. The Croatian government maintains a national database on trafficking victims in the Secretariat of the National Committee at the Office of Human Rights. In addition, the IOM database is used for the documentation and case management of all victims assisted by IOM and its partner organizations.

<sup>200</sup> For a full discussion of how data was collected and the methodology used, please see: *Introduction*.

Ukraine, five from Romania, one from Bulgaria and one from Slovakia. Of these victims, 22 were adults while three – from Romania – were minors (Marinovic *et al.*, 2002: 18). More recently, a number of human traffickers were apprehended, four in 2002 and seven in 2003 (Futo and Jandl, 2004: 52).

Some potential indirect indicators also serve as barometers of trafficking, pointing to possible arenas in which trafficking may occur. These potential indicators include illegal migration, deportations and numbers of unaccompanied minors.

In terms of illegal migration, it is worth considering the number of migration-related border apprehensions by Croatian authorities. In 2003, 3,755 males and 459 females were apprehended, while, in 2002, 4,771 males and 157 females were apprehended (Futo and Jandl, 2004: 50). The number of women apprehended in 2003 is three times higher than the previous year. Also striking is the change in composition of irregular migration. Alongside the decrease in migrants from Turkey, Iran and China was an increase in migrants from the Balkans – from Serbia and Montenegro, Macedonia and BiH (Limanowska, 2003b: 123). The number of illegal entries into Croatia from BiH has increased to 56 per cent in 2003 from 43 per cent in 2001 and 44.2 per cent in 2002. Kosovar Albanians also comprised a significant percentage of migrants crossing illegally at this border (Futo and Jandl, 2004: 44). Further, an increasing percentage of migrants were women who generally migrate alone without family members.

Between 1 January 1998 and 31 December 2000, the Ministry of the Interior reported 6,219 illegal border crossings, 4,151 by women. Indeed, women from the Balkans and Central and Eastern Europe carried out 42.5 per cent of all illegal crossings (Marinovic *et al.*, 2002: 18). By proxy, this may signal a significant proportion of female trafficking victims misidentified as illegal migrants. Also salient is the number of illegal entries into Croatia between 1996 and 2000 that have been documented by the Ministry of the Interior. These numbers rose annually from 3,200 in 1996 to 8,303 in 1997; 10,556 in 1998; 12,340 in 1999; and 24,180 in 2000 (Marinovic *et al.*, 2002: 22).

Deportations also often overlap with trafficking cases. This is particularly salient in Croatia where women arrested for prostitution may go unrecognized as victims of trafficking and are generally fined and given 24 hours to leave the country (Marinovic *et al.*, 2002: 54).<sup>201</sup> In 2000, 116 women from the Balkans and Central and Eastern Europe were expelled from Croatia. Of these, 77 came from Romania, 16 from FRY, nine from Moldova, nine from BiH, three from Bulgaria and one from Macedonia (Marinovic *et al.*, 2002: 19). In the same year, no victims of trafficking were identified by authorities.

Another illuminating potential indirect indicator is the number of unaccompanied minors detected in Croatia. In many situations unaccompanied minors are, in fact, trafficking victims, although often not identified as such. The number of unaccompanied minors climbed from 132 in 1991 to 180 in 2000 and 93 were detected in the first five months of 2001. Further, of the 93 minors detected in 2001, 30 were female, from China (10), Bulgaria (8), Romania (5), Moldova (3), BiH (2) and Macedonia (2) (Marinovic *et al.*, 2002: 19). Recent statistics about the number of

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<sup>201</sup> Such practices can potentially lead to re-trafficking, with traffickers able to intercept deported/exiting women. Cf. Marinovic *et al.*, 2002: 54.

minors (Croatian and foreign nationals) apprehended at the border are 261 in 2002<sup>202</sup> and 224 in 2003 (Futo and Jandl, 2004: 50).

## 2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

Below is an exploration of profiles for victims trafficked to, through and from Croatia. In this section, we analyze the profiles and experiences of both foreign victims of trafficking (Section 2.1) and Croatian trafficking victims (Section 2.2). Victims' needs are intimately informed by the specific dynamics of their trafficking experience. Understanding victims' backgrounds as well as the precise nature of recruitment, transportation and exploitation is an essential starting point in the development of appropriate assistance and services for victims. Because of the limited number of victims, it is difficult to quantify statistics, patterns and trends. These profiles should therefore be read as a summary of available data on victims trafficked to, through and from Croatia. The information is presented in a statistical format for ease of presentation, with the essential caveat that these are not quantitative findings.

### 2.1 Foreign Victims of Trafficking Assisted in Croatia

To date, there have been only a limited number of identified and assisted foreign trafficking victims. All victims have been identified since 2002.

TABLE 2  
NUMBER OF ASSISTED FOREIGN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IN CROATIA, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign trafficking victims	0	0	6	7	13	26

Since 2002, the majority of assisted foreign victims of trafficking in Croatia were trafficked for sexual exploitation. This form of trafficking accounted for 19 of the 26 assisted cases (or 73 per cent), however, a number of cases involved labour as well as sexual exploitation. These can more accurately be described as dual forms of exploitation.

TABLE 3  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG VICTIMS ASSISTED IN CROATIA, 2002 TO 2004

Forms of trafficking	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Sexual exploitation	0	0	3	3	5	11
Labour exploitation	0	0	0	0	3	3
Sexual and labour exploitation	0	0	0	3	5	8
Delinquency	0	0	0	1	0	1
Potential victims <sup>203</sup>	0	0	3	0	0	3
Total	0	0	6	7	13	26

In addition, different forms of trafficking have been noted in 2003 and 2004, including trafficking for delinquency and labour exploitation. These include one case of trafficking for delinquency in 2003 and three cases of trafficking for labour in 2004. In 2004, three of the 13 assisted foreign victims (23.1 per cent) were in fact trafficked for

<sup>202</sup> In 2002, illegal migrants originated from Serbia and Montenegro (110), Turkey (42), BIH (41), FYR Macedonia (23), Albania (10), Romania (8) and Moldova (4) (Limanowska, 2003: 131).

<sup>203</sup> This designation is used when the individual was assisted for an insufficient time to clearly establish his/her trafficking experience or when the victim was identified in transit and manifested strong signs of being in the trafficking process but was not yet exploited.

labour exploitation, signalling the presence of other forms of trafficking in the country. These victims – one female and two males – originated from a poor, rural community in Romania and had primary education only. Victims belonged to the same family (a couple, each over 35 years and their minor child) and had migrated together to escape unemployment at home. The family was recruited by a male Croatian stranger and were transported to Croatia using legal border crossings and with legal documents. They were subsequently trafficked into agricultural labour (on a pig farm) and suffered physical abuse and poor working and living conditions. When the employer refused to pay them, the family approached the Romanian embassy for assistance, at which point they were identified as victims of trafficking.

In 2003, one of the seven assisted foreign victims (14.2 per cent) was trafficked for begging. The victim, a 36-year-old Romanian male widower and father of one, had a middle school education and was unemployed at recruitment. He originated from a rural community and his economic situation was poor. The victim was also physically disabled, which contributed both to his unemployment and his willingness to accept work abroad. In addition, this physical disability was probably an incentive for the recruiter. He was recruited by a male stranger, promising him work in the tourism sector in Croatia. The victim crossed at legal border crossings and entered into Croatia legally using his own documents. During his time in Croatia, he suffered physical abuse at the hands of his traffickers. He was identified as a trafficking victim by the Romanian Embassy.

In addition, three potential victims were identified and assisted in 2003 and provided with accommodation, medical assistance, legal assistance and return support. These three victims were believed to be in transit, *en route* to Italy.

These cases demonstrate that trafficking in Croatia can and does occur for different forms of exploitation with implications for identification procedures as well as in terms of the assistance required by victims. In terms of assistance, victims trafficked for labour but who have also been sexually exploited require many of the same forms of assistance as victims trafficked for prostitution. Victims exploited for criminal activities may require legal assistance to avoid prosecution. A clear understanding of the forms exploitation takes is therefore a logical starting point in both the development and assessment of assistance frameworks.

### **2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation**

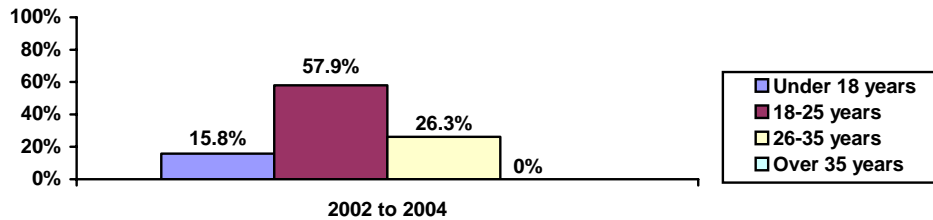
The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of the 19 foreign victims assisted in Croatia who were trafficked for sexual exploitation between 2002 and 2004.

#### **Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics**

**Sex:** All assisted victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation to Croatia were female.

**Age:** Overall, the majority of victims (52.6 per cent) fell between the ages of 18 and 25, although some victims were older or younger.

GRAPH 1  
AGE OF ASSISTED FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION,  
2002 TO 2004<sup>204</sup>



Of the 19 victims trafficked for sexual exploitation, three (15.8 per cent) were minors, identified in 2003 (one case) and 2004 (two cases). However, the small number of cases makes it difficult to draw any meaningful conclusions. Also important, this number may under-represent the actual number of minors as it indicates the victim's age at identification. Unfortunately, most service providers do not systematically record the victim's age at recruitment, making it difficult to calculate accurately the number of trafficked minors.<sup>205</sup>

In addition, approximately one-quarter of assisted victims were slightly older women, over the age of 25. This age category was, in some years, more prevalent than the representation of minors.

**Country of origin:** A striking feature in Croatia is that the nationality of victims identified and/or assisted is quite eclectic. No one nationality predominates. Between 2002 and 2004, almost equal numbers of victims originated from Ukraine (4), Serbia (4), BiH (3) and Moldova (3), as outlined in the table below.

TABLE 4  
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN OF ASSISTED FOREIGN VICTIMS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004

Country of Origin	2002	2003	2004	Total
BiH	0	1	2	3
Italy	1	0	0	0
Moldova	0	1	2	3
Morocco	0	0	1	1
Russia	0	1	0	1
Serbia	0	1	3	4
Slovakia	0	1	0	1
Ukraine	2	0	2	4
Unknown	0	1	0	2
Total	3	6	10	19

In addition to victims from known countries of origin, such as Moldova and Ukraine, one victim was from Slovakia in 2003. This is unexpected given this country's proximity to the European Union and that many victims identified in Croatia were

<sup>204</sup> In 2002, of the three victims, two (67 per cent) were between 18 and 25 years of age and one (33 per cent) was between 26 and 35 years of age. In 2003, one of the six assisted victims was a minor (16.7 per cent), while three (50 per cent) were between 18 and 25 years and another two (33.3 per cent) were between 26 and 35 years. In 2004, of the ten assisted victims, two (20 per cent) were minors, six (60 per cent) were between 18 and 25 years and two (20 per cent) were between 26 and 35 years.

<sup>205</sup> In one instance in 2002 and two instances in 2004, victims identified as adults were believed to have been recruited and trafficked while minors.

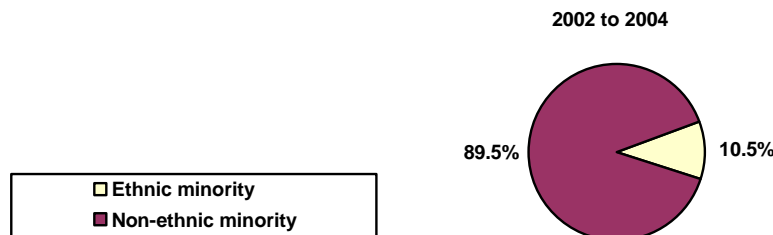


indeed *en route* to the EU. Also of note is the identification of a Moroccan victim in 2004, a nationality which to date has not featured prominently in any destination country in SEE.

It is, perhaps, not surprising that nationals of both Serbia and BiH were represented among assisted trafficking victims in Croatia given shared borders, linguistic similarities and geographic proximity. This meshes with recent evidence that both countries, which have been destination countries, are seeing a rise in the trafficking of their own nationals.<sup>206</sup> This data also corroborates a 2002 report that documented a new trafficking trend in Croatia of seasonal or temporary employment of women trafficked from BiH (Marinovic *et al.*, 2002: 2) as well as statistics that note an increase in the number of illegal entries into Croatia from BiH, comprising 56 per cent of all entries to Croatia in 2003 (up from 43 per cent in 2001 and 44.2 per cent in 2002) (Futo and Jandl, 2004: 44).

**Ethnicity:** Among foreign victims assisted in Croatia, three of 19 (16 per cent) were from ethnic minorities, specifically Roma. While only three such cases have been noted among foreign victims, they, nevertheless, constitute a significant percentage of assisted victims. This is consistent with findings in other countries in the region, where ethnic minorities appear to be acutely vulnerable to trafficking. The degree to which ethnicity informs vulnerability to trafficking from, through or to Croatia requires further examination.

GRAPH 2  
ETHNIC MINORITIES AMONG FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN CROATIA,  
2002 TO 2004



**Area of origin:** Foreign victims originated from both rural and urban settings in almost equal numbers. In 2002, all three foreign victims of sexual exploitation originated from urban environments. Of the six victims assisted in 2003, three were from a rural background and three from an urban environment. Similarly, in 2004, five of the ten assisted victims were from rural backgrounds and five from urban environments. These findings stand in contrast to the common assumption that trafficking victims are primarily from poor, rural environments.

**Education:**<sup>207</sup> Available information indicates relatively low education levels among assisted foreign victims. No assisted victims from 2002 to 2004 had more than a middle

<sup>206</sup> In Serbia, 21 Serbian trafficking victims were assisted in 2004, an increase from 13 in 2003, ten in 2002, and one in 2001. Similarly, 29 BiH trafficking victims were assisted in 2004, an increase from 17 in 2003.

<sup>207</sup> Primary school is the first eight years of schooling, while middle/secondary school refers to grades nine through 12.

school education. This is striking as a number of victims originated from countries like Ukraine where female secondary school enrolment is almost universal<sup>208</sup>.

TABLE 5  
EDUCATION LEVELS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN CROATIA, 2002 TO 2004

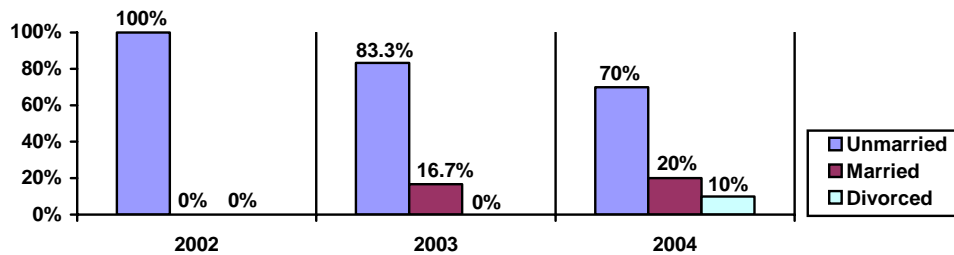
Education Levels	2002	2003	2004
Less than primary school	1	1	1
Primary school	1	1	3
Middle/Secondary school	1	4	6
Total	3	6	10

Given these findings, it seems reasonable to propose that limited education and attendant limited economic opportunities contributed to trafficking in these cases. Limited education can also imply limited negotiation and life skills, which may equally have been contributors to trafficking.

**Mental or physical disabilities:** Prior to 2004, no assisted foreign victims were physically or mentally disabled. However, in 2004, one of ten victims had a mental disability. Mentally disabled victims can be more easily manipulated and have limited skills at negotiating and assessing risk. This poses a serious challenge for prevention efforts. Awareness raising must target this profile of victim and service providers must consider how they can meet their specific assistance needs.

**Marital and family status:** The majority of victims in this reporting period were unmarried at recruitment. Of the 19 assisted cases between 2002 and 2004, 15 (78.9 per cent) were unmarried. The remaining four victims were either married, in three cases (15.8 per cent) or divorced in one case (5.3 per cent).

GRAPH 3  
MARITAL STATUS OF ASSISTED FOREIGN VICTIMS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004



While victims were primarily unmarried, victims' marital status was slightly more diverse over time, with more married victims in 2003 and 2004. It is unclear if this constitutes a change in victim recruitment or vulnerability.

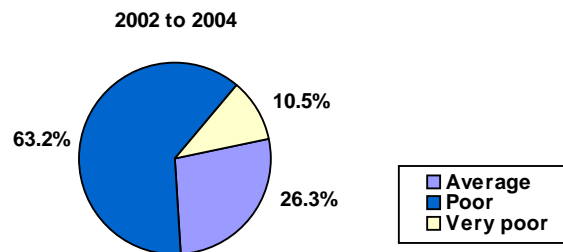
In general, victims did not have children. In 2003, one victim was a single mother, while there were no single mothers in 2002 and 2004 among assisted victims in Croatia. This finding differs from some countries in the region where single mothers tend to be heavily represented among victims, presumably partly due to their socio-economic vulnerability.

<sup>208</sup> In Ukraine, the female net enrolment at secondary level is 91 per cent (UNDP, 2004). Female net enrolment is the number of students enrolled in a level of education who are of official school age for that level, as a percentage of the population of official school age for that level. Similarly, the school life expectancy among Serbian and Moldovan women was 12 and ten years respectively (UN Statistics Division, 2004)

As well, consideration of victims with dependents other than children is worthwhile. As women are responsible for the care and support of parents, siblings and elderly relatives in many countries in the region, systematically documenting a victim's dependents could serve as another, at least partial, explanation of trafficking. One Moldovan victim, for instance, accepted work abroad precisely because she was responsible for the care of her elderly parents and could not earn enough to support them on a Moldovan salary.

**Economic status:**<sup>209</sup> The majority of foreign victims of sexual exploitation – 63.2 per cent – came from a poor family background. The remaining came from an “average” economic background (26.3 per cent) and a “very poor” family background (10.5 per cent).

GRAPH 4  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF ASSISTED FOREIGN VICTIMS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004



Each year since 2002 has seen the identification of victims from “average” economic backgrounds, belying assertions that poverty explains trafficking vulnerability. This finding shows that while poverty is a significant push factor for trafficking, it is not the only one. Also of note is the high number of “poor”, as opposed to “very poor” victims. The “very poor” might seem to be most in need of work and therefore most vulnerable to recruitment. In fact, however, being “very poor” may militate against migration abroad, representing a lack requisite capital to cover the initial costs of migration. The distinction between poor and very poor and how this may affect trafficking vulnerability is worth examining.

**Family and social relations:**<sup>210</sup> It is commonly argued that conflict within the home is a key contributor to trafficking in persons. Among foreign victims assisted in Croatia, the degree to which this assertion is borne out is unclear.

Of the 19 victims assisted between 2002 and 2004, one victim, assisted in 2003, reported a very difficult family environment with the father in prison. Another victim, assisted in 2002, reported domestic violence. No other victim reported any violence or abuse within the family. Nevertheless, information about abuse is quite intimate and

<sup>209</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim's self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

<sup>210</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims' self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim's individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim's relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

victims may not feel comfortable in speaking about this after a short stay in a transit or destination country with insufficient time to develop a trusting relationship with a social worker or counsellor.

These points are supported by analysis of data collected by service providers from countries of origin, such as Moldova and Ukraine, in the context of longer-term assistance. This data reveals that violence and problems within the home are rife among assisted victims. As most victims came from these countries, it would not be surprising if these findings change over time, with victims more willing to reveal negative experiences once they have established a trusted relationship with a service provider.

Six victims came from a single-parent home. While this cannot be read directly as a problematic family environment and many single-parent homes are healthy affirming environments, one-parent households are potentially more economically vulnerable as well as socially stigmatized in some countries and communities. As such, this family composition may intersect in important ways with trafficking vulnerability.

More subtle family tensions may also serve to increase a victim's vulnerability to trafficking. Limited communication with parents and siblings, feelings of alienation within the family environment, etc., can serve to create feelings of stress and exclusion. As well, some victims may have been pressured by family or spouses to migrate to earn money. This is particularly probable in countries where migration is a survival strategy. We might also need to think beyond the family environment and consider social relations more generally. In Romania it was found that vulnerable girls/women were generally weakly integrated in social circles, which can create feelings of insecurity and abandonment. It is important to consider the victim's broader social terrain and interactions in seeking to explain trafficking vulnerability.

### **Recruitment Experiences**

**Living situation at recruitment:** Between 2002 and 2004, 18 of the 19 victims assisted lived with their families at recruitment. One victim did not respond to this question. Clearly, family environment in some countries of origin does not automatically provide protection against trafficking. Prevention efforts must, therefore, target parents and a range of family members as well as at-risk individuals.

More generally, the data presented is reflective only of the victim's living situation at recruitment. However, in many circumstances the individual may have lived in another environment earlier in life, such as an institution, that contributed to trafficking. More information is needed about past and present living arrangements to accurately pinpoint trafficking risk.

**Working situation at recruitment:** Of the foreign victims assisted in Croatia between 2002 and 2004, all victims were unemployed at recruitment. Prevention efforts that aim to address the limited economic options of migrants in their home country, particularly women, would be a valuable measure, reducing victims' willingness to accept recruitment offers. Measures such as this that move beyond awareness raising campaigns to address the causes of trafficking are vital.

**Recruiter:** The majority of victims (73.7 per cent) trafficked to Croatia between 2002 and 2004 were recruited by men, while 26.3 per cent were recruited by women. Of note is that recruitment by male victims increased over time. In 2002, one of the three victims (33.3 per cent) was recruited by a man, in 2003, four of six victims (66.7 per cent), and, in 2004, nine of ten victims (90 per cent) were recruited by men.

Victims' relation to recruiters changed over time, with more victims recruited by someone known to them than in the past. In 2002, two of the three victims were recruited by a stranger and the other one by a relative. In 2003, five of the six victims were recruited by a stranger and one by her partner. By contrast, in 2004, only one of the ten victims was recruited by a stranger. The remaining victims were recruited by an acquaintance (4), employer (3), relative (1), and advertisement (1).

TABLE 6  
RELATION TO RECRUITER OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN CROATIA, 2002 TO 2004

Victim's relation to recruiter	2002	2003	2004
Stranger	2	5	1
Relative	1	0	1
Partner	0	1	0
Employer	0	0	3
Advertisement	0	0	1
Acquaintance	0	0	4

Recruiters were from a diverse pool of countries – BiH (4), Ukraine (4), Moldova (2), Serbia and Montenegro (2), Italy (2), Macedonia (1), Croatia (1), Slovakia (1), Russia (1) and unknown (1). In many cases, recruiters were from the victim's country of origin, although there were also instances in which the recruiter travelled to victim's country of origin.

**Reasons for leaving home country and type of work promised:** Foreign victims assisted in Croatia primarily left their home countries to find employment abroad to improve their living standards. In sending countries like Ukraine and Romania with relatively low salaries and limited employment options, there was a willingness to look abroad for economic opportunities. One victim trafficked from Moldova had previously had legitimate work with an employer/trafficker in Croatia and faced no problems. Upon accepting a second job with him, she was trafficked.

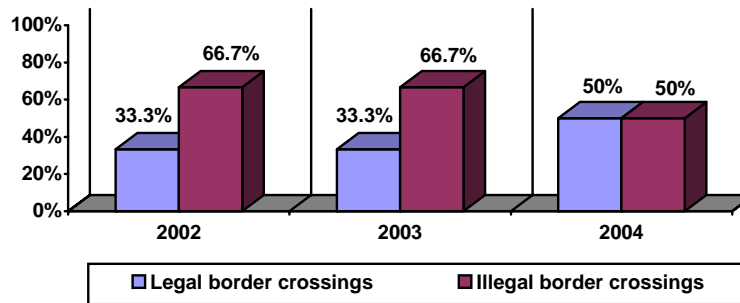
The type of work promised to victims was primarily in the service sector. Of the 19 assisted foreign victims, work promised included waitress (4), *au pair* (3), domestic work (2), tourism sector (2) and sales (1). None of the victims reported being aware that they would work in prostitution. Four victims did not respond to this question.

In addition, three victims were promised marriage as a means of recruitment, a strategy that has been noted in other countries in the region.

### Transportation and Movement

**Border crossings and documents:** Between 2002 and 2004, a slight majority of the 19 foreign victims assisted in Croatia crossed borders illegally when trafficked.

GRAPH 5  
BORDER CROSSINGS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN CROATIA,  
2002 TO 2004



Still, there was a noteworthy annual variation in this trend, with 2004 seeing a spike in the number of legal border crossings. While only a minority of victims in 2002 and 2003 (33.3 per cent) crossed legal borders, by 2004, 50 per cent of assisted cases had crossed legally. This finding is consistent with findings from some other countries in the region that have seen a rise in the number of legal border crossings in the trafficking process. Another valuable finding is that many victims used their own documents when trafficked to Croatia, contrary to the assumption that trafficking involves false or forged documents. Of the 19 victims assisted between 2002 and 2004, 42.1 per cent used legal documents. In 2004, this number was higher, with 50 per cent of victims using legal documents.

This is an important finding for law enforcement as it flags the urgency of identifying victims in transit under a façade of legality, a difficult proposition to which some thought must be given.

**Transportation routes:** Foreign victims of trafficking travelled primarily overland – by car, bus, or train. In only a few cases were the victims transported by air. The overland routes were more difficult to identify, as most victims were unaware of the route or border crossing used. Generally, however, Moldovan victims trafficked to Croatia crossed overland through Serbia and Romania, while Ukrainian victims crossed through Hungary and/or BiH (Cf. Marinovic *et al.*, 2002: 47).

**Intended destination:** Foreign victims assisted in Croatia reported various intended destinations, as outlined below. Two victims did not have a specified destination at recruitment. Of note, three of the ten victims assisted in 2004 were aware that their destination was Croatia. This shows that in some circumstances, and increasingly over time, Croatia is also a destination country – due in part perhaps to Croatia’s imminent accession to the EU.

TABLE 7  
INTENDED DESTINATION OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN CROATIA, 2002 TO 2004

Intended Country of Destination	2002	2003	2004
BiH	1	0	0
Croatia	0	0	3
Cyprus	0	1	0
Great Britain	0	1	0
Italy	0	2	6
Serbia and Montenegro	2	1	0
Any country	0	1	1
Total	3	6	10

## Victims' Trafficking Experiences

**Forms of trafficking:** All nineteen victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation. Victims worked in different locations, although increasingly in private locations, hidden from the police. This is a change from previous years in which victims were exploited in more public places such as bars, nightclubs and brothels. It is widely agreed that this change is due to police operations throughout Croatia whereby public locations featuring prostitution were raided and closed. In addition, one woman from Moldova was kept privately by a man for whom she was forcibly required to provide sexual services.<sup>211</sup>

While sexual exploitation was the primary reason for which these victims were trafficked, in some cases foreign victims in Croatia were exploited for labour tasks as well. This pattern of dual exploitation has been noted among victims assisted in 2003 and 2004, as outlined in the table below.

TABLE 8  
FOREIGN VICTIMS OF DUAL FORMS OF EXPLOITATION IN CROATIA, 2002 TO 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Sexual exploitation	0	0	3	3	5	11
Sexual and labour exploitation	0	0	0	3	5	8

Indeed, eight of the 19 victims (or 42.1 per cent) suffered dual forms of exploitation. Victims of dual forms of exploitation generally worked as waitresses, bartenders or cleaners in the bar or nightclub where they were sexually exploited. This was consistent with the experiences of many victims in the region who reported dual forms of exploitation.

With a burgeoning tourism industry, one might expect to see the development of a prostitution sector in Croatia. Currently many actors note that seasonal prostitution is not uncommon in the tourist areas and that a percentage of the foreign and national women engaged in it have been trafficked. As the tourism industry in Croatia develops further, demand for sexual services can reasonably be expected to increase, and along with it trafficking.

**Length of time trafficked:** There is insufficient data about the length of time trafficked for 2003 and 2004. Five trafficking victims interviewed in a piece of 2002 research were trafficked for less than a year (Marinovic *et al.*, 2002: 51). It is unclear from the available information whether victims spend more or less time trafficked in the present.

It is also valuable to consider if the length of time spent trafficked is in any way related to the form of trafficking for which victims were exploited. Preliminary data from foreign victims of labour exploitation trafficked to Croatia suggests that victims of this form of trafficking may be exploited for shorter periods. This in turn suggests that such victims will have less, subject to the extent of abuse suffered, trauma and risk of dependency on the trafficker. The length of time trafficked may also affect victims in other ways. Long periods spent separated from family and friends, forced to live

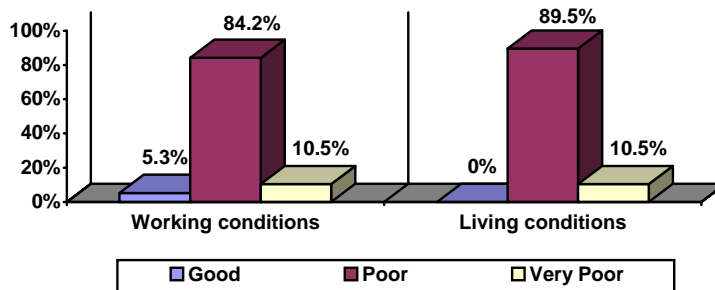
<sup>211</sup> Keeping women as "private slaves" for sexual and/or domestic services is a pattern of exploitation noted in other parts of the region, including BiH, Macedonia, and Kosovo. Cf. Andreani and Raviv, 2004.

outside of their family environment and being under extreme stress can negatively affect recovery.

Finally, time spent trafficked may fluctuate according to a number of factors, including the level of repression endured by the victim, identification skills and priorities of law enforcement at the destination and the accessibility of services and assistance. Where victims are trafficked for shorter times, it may be due to amplified and improved identification efforts. Further analysis of this indicator, cross-correlated with details of the identification process, would be valuable toward an appreciation of improvements in this area and possibly serve as a means to assess law enforcement's identification efforts and the efficacy of outreach measures by social services and civil society.

**Living and working conditions:** Overall, both living and working conditions of foreign victims exploited in Croatia were quite poor. Those suffering “very poor” living and working conditions were assisted in 2002 only. In 2003, one victim reported “good” working conditions. These findings may signal a slight improvement (cf. Marinovic *et al.*, 2002: 51).

GRAPH 6  
LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF ASSISTED FOREIGN VICTIMS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004



Conditions of work varied from victim to victim. However, overall they can be termed poor. One Moldovan woman was required to provide sexual service for one man, but she was locked in a motel room and denied all freedom of movement. Her trafficker strictly monitored where she went and how she dressed. She was also forced to consume alcohol. She did earn a small amount of money during her captivity and was able to wire some of her earnings to her family in Moldova. Another woman from Ukraine was forced to have sexual intercourse with approximately six clients a day, retaining a portion of the money earned. She was also obliged to pay off her US\$ 3,000 debt, incurred for transportation. Only one victim, assisted in 2003, reported conditions that might be termed “good”.

**Abuse:** Victims trafficked to Croatia reported high levels of abuse throughout the reporting period. All victims reported sexual abuse and physical abuse was common. One woman was severely beaten when she refused to provide sexual services. Another woman reported being beaten whenever she asked to go home.

It is important to note that the forms of abuse outlined provide no measure the severity of abuse, to some degree is the most significant variable. Victims who have suffered extensive abuse require medical and psychological support. There are also residual



health issues, both mental and physical, to be considered and addressed. This places a burden on the healthcare services in countries of origin.

**Mental and physical well-being:** Service providers report that victims are quite diverse in terms of their physical and mental well-being at identification.

- *General health:* Some victims had physical injuries. Of the three victims assisted in 2002, one had a broken arm and another had a ruptured eardrum. Many victims were physically exhausted at identification as well as sleep deprived.
- *Sexual and reproductive health:* Most victims had sexually transmitted infections for which they required treatment.
- *Drug and alcohol dependency:* A number of victims – roughly one-third – were dependent on drugs or alcohol at identification, and many had abused substances while trafficked. In some cases, hospitalization was required to support the victim in the detoxification process.
- *Psychological well-being:* Victims were severely traumatized at identification, manifesting post traumatic stress disorder, severe anxiety and paranoia. A number of victims required psychiatric hospitalization and care.

The lack of information and analysis regarding the long-term health implications of trafficking is a gap in our understanding. There is a need for more information sharing among service providers as well as long-term follow-up health care for victims. However, such measures must be conducted in ways that do not further stigmatize trafficking victims and which guard their privacy.

### **Post Trafficking Experience**

Victim identification and referral: Foreign victims trafficked for sexual exploitation assisted between 2002 and 2004 were primarily identified by law enforcement authorities. This was the case in 13 instances (68.4 per cent). The remaining were identified by the Ministry of Social Affairs (two in 2004 and one in 2003), IOM (two in 2002), and NGOs (one in 2002). This differs from victims trafficked for labour and begging in Croatia, all of whom were identified by their embassy.<sup>212</sup>

**Re-trafficking:** To date, in Croatia, only one of the foreign victims trafficked for sexual exploitation between 2002 and 2004 had been trafficked previously.

The issue of re-trafficking is an important one. Many victims attempted to migrate again shortly after their return because of the need to earn money, lack of opportunity, problems in their homes and/or dissatisfaction with the material conditions at home, which can be poorer than those faced while trafficked. Indeed, the socio-economic conditions that initially sparked migration often remain the same with limited options to remedy this. Another contributor to re-trafficking may be stigma and shame associated with the victim's sexual exploitation. Others may have incurred debt as a

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<sup>212</sup> Identification by embassy staff signals increased awareness and sensitivity on the part of embassy personnel. Embassy staff can be a valuable source of information about potential trafficking victims as well as a valuable source of referral.

result of trafficking and the need to recoup this money can fuel the decision to migrate again.

Re-trafficking rates can also serve, to some degree, as a gauge of the success of reintegration programmes in countries of origin. The lack of opportunity toward sustainable reintegration upon return as well as the lack of protection for returned victims *vis-à-vis* their traffickers must be considered in efforts to prevent re-trafficking.

It would also be valuable to consider whether there are differences in re-trafficking rates among countries of origin as well as relative to the form of trafficking. For example, it is interesting that none of the foreign victims of trafficking for labour exploitation or delinquency had been trafficked previously.

## 2.2 Croatian Trafficking Victims

The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of assisted Croatian victims of trafficking.

TABLE 9  
NUMBER OF ASSISTED CROATIAN VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
National trafficking victims	0	0	1	1	6	8

The statistics presented in the table above include the number of Croatian victims identified as trafficked within Croatia or in neighbouring countries and assisted either in the destination country or within Croatia. While Croatian trafficking victims have not been identified in large numbers, they are nonetheless vulnerable.<sup>213</sup> As is clear from the chart below, the majority of Croatian nationals assisted since 2002 were trafficked for sexual exploitation. This form of trafficking accounted for seven of the eight national cases of trafficking, or 87.5 per cent.

TABLE 10  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING OF ASSISTED CROATIAN NATIONALS, 2000 TO 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Sexual exploitation	0	0	1	0	6	7
Labour exploitation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Delinquency	0	0	0	1	0	1
Total	0	0	1	1	6	8

The only exception to this trend was a victim trafficked for delinquency/begging and assisted in 2003. While unusual, it still suggests that victims may be vulnerable to other forms of trafficking. Further, one victim of sexual exploitation trafficked to Italy was kept in an apartment where others were forced to beg and steal, signalling that this form of trafficking may be more common than it appears from a consideration only of assisted victims.

The victim – a Croatian female in her early twenties – was from a rural, poor household. She had only primary school education and was unemployed. She was unmarried and lived with her family, reporting no conflict at home. She was recruited by a female stranger, also from Croatia, who promised her work as an *au pair* in another part of Croatia. Instead, she was trafficked to Austria where she was forced to

<sup>213</sup> This trend is not unique to Croatia, but rather is part of a regional trend in which traditional countries of destination and transit, such as Serbia, Montenegro, BiH and Macedonia, are increasingly emerging as countries of origin.

beg. She was abused sexually, mentally and physically, and endured poor working and living conditions. The victim was raped while trafficked and there was a risk of her being also forced into prostitution had she not escaped. She was identified and referred by a journalist who helped her to access assistance.

### **2.2.1 Profiles and Experiences of Croatian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation**

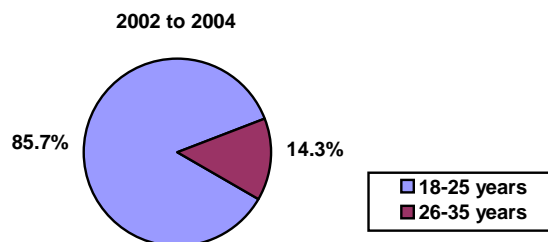
The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of Croatian victims trafficked for sexual exploitation. It excludes the case of trafficking for begging described above. Given the limited number of Croatian victims who have been identified, it is impossible to draw statistical conclusions. This section instead should be read as a sketch of Croatian victims and as a means to identify possible sites of vulnerabilities within Croatian society.

#### **Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics**

**Sex:** All seven national victims trafficked from or within Croatia for sexual exploitation were female.

**Age:** Of the seven Croatian victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, all were adults at identification. Six were between 18 and 25 years and one was between 26 and 35 years. It is impossible to speak of any changes over time as six of the seven Croatian victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were assisted in 2004.

GRAPH 7  
AGE AT IDENTIFICATION, CROATIAN VICTIMS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004



Moreover, this data refers to the victim's age at identification, which raises the likelihood that some victims who are identified as adults were, in fact, minors when trafficked. One of the victims, between 18 and 25 years at identification, is believed to have been recruited and trafficked while still a minor. Unfortunately, most service providers do not systematically record victim's age at recruitment, making it difficult to calculate accurately the number of trafficked minors.

**Ethnicity:** One of the Croatian victims trafficked internally and abroad belonged to an ethnic minority, of Serbian ethnicity. This victim was also a displaced person making it difficult to determine the degree to which her ethnicity did (or did not) contribute to trafficking.

Roma comprise one per cent of the population and are not among the assisted national victims. This stands in sharp contrast to data from neighbouring countries such as BiH and Serbia, where victims from ethnic minorities comprised a significant percentage of

victims. Given the generalized social vulnerability of ethnic minorities in the region, counter-trafficking actors should consider this a site of vulnerability to trafficking.

**Area of origin:** While only a slight majority (57.7 per cent) of the Croatian population lives in urban environments (UNDP, 2002: 162), the majority of the seven Croatian victims (85.7 per cent) were from urban settings and only one victim, assisted in 2004, was from a rural setting. This raises questions about the particular vulnerability of Croatian urban dwellers to trafficking.

More information on the specific regions of origin would also be of value both for targeting prevention efforts and assessing where additional services are needed to support the reintegration of national victims. Current assistance efforts have sought to address the geographic distribution of source areas and are located throughout the country. Reintegration services must be equally geographically diverse. As source areas may fluctuate over time, this exercise should ideally be ongoing to enable service providers to identify any emerging gaps in reintegration and assistance available.

**Education:**<sup>214</sup> Two of the seven Croatian victims had less than primary school education, while five victims had attended middle/secondary school. Some had completed middle/secondary school, while others had attended only a few years. Overall and relative to the generally high education levels in Croatia, this is a low level of educational attainment.<sup>215</sup> This finding signals the importance of prevention and education efforts for national victims, both within and outside of the formal school system. It also highlights the need for educational reinsertion assistance as part of reintegration services.

**Mental and physical disabilities:** One of the seven victims (14.3 per cent) was mentally disabled. This is consistent with some countries in the region where mentally disabled victims have been represented among assisted victims. This profile of victim signals both a potential site of vulnerability as well as the need for specifically tailored assistance and protection programmes. While it is premature to designate this indicator a site of trafficking vulnerability in Croatia, it is an issue to which service providers should attend.

**Refugees/IDPs:** Three of the seven Croatian victims were IDPs/refugees<sup>216</sup>, flagging the vulnerability of this particular category of persons. One victim was a displaced ethnic Serb of Croatian nationality. Another was a Croatian from BiH who had come to Croatia as a result of her displacement and had since regularized her status as a

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<sup>214</sup> Primary school is the first eight years of schooling, while middle/secondary school refers to grades nine through 12.

<sup>215</sup> In Croatia, female net enrolment at secondary level is 87 per cent and 39 per cent at tertiary level (UNDP, 2004). Female net enrolment is the number of students enrolled in a level of education who are of official school age for that level, as a percentage of the population of official school age for that level.

<sup>216</sup> The terms “Internally displaced person” (IDP) and “refugee” are used interchangeably in this section as the fragmentation of Yugoslavia into various nation states problematizes their usage. Depending upon when the person was displaced, they can be considered either a refugee or IDP. What is essential for the purpose of this research are not the political issues surrounding their displacement, but rather how this displacement has (or has not) contributed to trafficking vulnerability. Also salient is the effect of displaced status on access to resources, such as health care or education.

Croatian citizen. The third was a Croatian refugee with Croatian nationality who was displaced in Serbia.

So far in South-eastern Europe, little attention has been paid to the relation between a person's status as an IDP/refugee and trafficking vulnerability. This sub-group with its various sites of social and economic vulnerability (i.e. lack of legal status, poor economic conditions, social dislocation) requires further attention, both in terms of prevention efforts and options for reintegration.

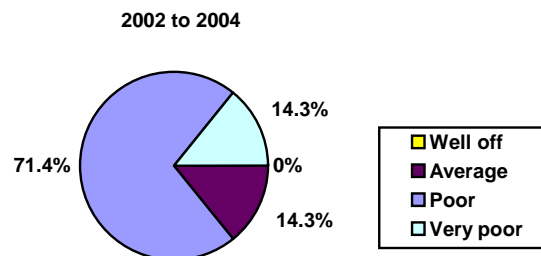
**Marital and family status:** Six of seven Croatian victims were unmarried at recruitment, while one was divorced and the single parent of two children.

While the rate of single mothers is not high, it signals the need to support family as a factor in the victim's migration/trafficking. The vulnerability of female-headed households in the region should be seen as a potential entry point for trafficking prevention.<sup>217</sup>

In addition to dependent children, some victims were also responsible for the care of other family members at recruitment: parents, siblings and elderly relatives. This, too, can serve as a push factor for trafficking. Systematically documenting a victim's dependents, including but not limited to dependent children, would also be valuable for efforts to provide economic support and opportunities as a means of trafficking prevention. Such efforts should ideally target not only vulnerable individuals but also families as a whole. This is particularly important for preventing trafficking in minors.

**Economic Status:**<sup>218</sup> The one victim identified and assisted in 2002 came from a "very poor" family economy. This changed slightly in 2004, with the identification of victims from slightly more affluent backgrounds. No victims assisted in 2004 were "very poor", although a number were "poor". In addition, acquaintances were from "well-off" and "average" backgrounds.

GRAPH 8  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF CROATIAN VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING, 2002 AND 2004



<sup>217</sup> Guardianship may prove an issue if more mothers are among assisted victims. Returning mothers who have relinquished guardianship rights may require legal assistance to address this specific issue. There may also be a need for accommodation options for victims with children who do not conform to the criteria of the reintegration transition house. These are assistance needs to consider in the event that more mothers are identified among assisted victims.

<sup>218</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim's self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of "poor" or "average" vary accordingly.

While the limited number of victims demands caution in drawing substantive conclusions, the relationship between economics and trafficking is worth considering. Although there is a clear correlation between the two, the improved economic status of victims in 2004 signals that it is not an indicator that can be read in isolation.

**Family and social relations:**<sup>219</sup> None of the seven Croatian victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation reported difficult family relations.

While family relations are often thought to be a contributor to trafficking, more information is required to really understand how and when it serves as a catalyst for trafficking. In addition, comprehensive information is needed about the family environment for reintegration purposes. Where family conflict is chronic, serious questions need to be asked about the advisability of the reintegration of the victim without some form of family mediation and long-term monitoring. Where the conditions that contributed to trafficking remain the same, reintegration is neither advisable nor a realistic solution.<sup>220</sup>

However, four of the seven victims were from single-parent homes. The correlation between the two issues is unclear and may have more to do with poverty often associated with single-parent households than anything else. It is a link that merits further examination.

## **Recruitment Experiences**

**Living and working situation at recruitment:** All seven victims were living with their families at recruitment, consistent with findings throughout the region. It would be helpful to learn more about these family environments both in terms of whether they contributed to the victim's vulnerability and the advisability of reintegration upon return. Prevention must target not only the potential victims but also seek to engage the family and community at large.

All Croatian victims of trafficking were unemployed at recruitment. Unemployment in these cases was a contributor to victim's willingness to accept work abroad.

**Recruiter:** Most recruiters of Croatian victims (95.7 per cent) were male. Although the victim's relationship to the recruiter varied, the recruiter was, in all cases, known to the victim. Recruiters were acquaintances (3), relatives (2), friends (1) and boyfriend (1).

A victim's relationship to the recruiter can be a central facilitator in recruitment. Where the victim has an existing relationship with the recruiter, they are less likely to be suspicious of the work offered and promises made. These findings make clear the role that trust and contacts play in both the migration and trafficking process.

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<sup>219</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims' self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim's individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim's relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

<sup>220</sup> For a more thorough discussion of this indicator, see *Family and social relations* in: *Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

**Reasons for leaving home country and type of work promised:** Overall, work was a central reason for leaving home and migrating. Victims were promised work as waitresses (3) and as an *au pair* (1). Two victims did not respond to this question.

In addition, one victim was promised marriage. It would be valuable to learn more about recruitment with marriage promises, as national victims in a number of countries in the region were recruited with this *modus operandi*. Three of the foreign victims identified and assisted in Croatia were also recruited with marriage promises.<sup>221</sup>

## Transportation and Movement

**Border crossings and documents:** Of the five victims who were trafficked abroad, four crossed at legal border crossings and used legal documents. These were assisted in 2004. This contrasts with the one victim assisted in 2002 who did not cross at legal border crossings or use legal documents. This may signal a change in transportation strategy. The limited data, however, makes it difficult to draw any conclusions.

**Destination:** Some Croatian victims were trafficked within the SEE region, while most were trafficked to EU countries – namely, Germany, Italy, and Sweden.

TABLE 11  
DESTINATION OF CROATIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2002 AND 2004

Intended Country of Destination	2002	2003	2004
Bosnia-Herzegovina	0	0	1
Croatia	0	0	0
Germany	0	0	2
Italy	0	0	2
Macedonia	1	0	0
Sweden	0	0	1
Unspecified destination	0	0	0
Total	1	0	6

Croatian victims report a range of intended destinations. Of note is that two of the seven victims were promised work in Croatia, while one was promised work in Macedonia, one in BiH, one in Germany, one in Sweden and one in an unspecified destination. Some victims were sent to the country where they were promised work, while others were not.

## Victims' Trafficking Experiences

**Forms of Trafficking:** Croatian victims trafficked within Croatia were exploited in the same locations as foreign nationals. For a discussion of how trafficking for sexual exploitation is manifested in Croatia, see *Forms of Trafficking*, in *Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*. One difference to note, however, is that unlike their foreign counterparts, Croatian victims of trafficking tended not to be dually exploited – for both sexual and labour tasks. Only one Croatian victim to date, assisted in 2002, was forced to undertake both labour and sexual work.

<sup>221</sup> In Serbia, there were preliminary signals that initiating a relationship with a victim and/or promising marriage is an emergent means of recruitment, similar to the “lover-boy phenomenon” noted in the Netherlands. This finding is critical in terms of the effect that this method has on the victim psychologically while trafficked, serving as a control mechanism, ensuring submission, and preventing her from leaving. If similar recruitment practices are being mobilized in Croatia, prevention and protection efforts must take these into account.

For Croatian victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation abroad, the form of exploitation is very much determined by the country of destination. When trafficked to countries in the Balkans, victims were sexually exploited in bars, nightclubs or through escort agencies. In EU destinations, Croatian nationals worked in bars and brothels and, in Italy, in street prostitution.

**Length of time trafficked:** Generally, Croatian victims were trafficked for short periods – between two to three months.

**Living and working conditions:** All seven victims reported poor working and living conditions when trafficked. One victim trafficked to Italy was required to provide sexual services to six or seven clients each day. She was strictly monitored by her trafficker at all times. However, more information is needed to understand the exact conditions, including the toll these conditions may have taken on mental and physical well-being. Information about hours worked, number of clients served, housing, etc. would be starting points.

**Abuse:** All national victims of trafficking were subjected to sexual abuse while trafficked. In many circumstances, they were also subjected to physical and emotional abuse. One Croatian victim trafficked to Italy for sexual exploitation suffered extreme beatings when she tried to escape. One beating led to her hospitalization.

Abuse suffered may, in some cases, be tied to the victim's destination. Some service providers reported that women trafficked to the Balkans suffered more severe levels of abuse than those trafficked to European Union countries. However, more detail about this is essential. Perpetration of abuse is an important indicator for determining the assistance needs of victims. Victims who have suffered extensive abuse require ongoing medical and psychological support.

**Mental and physical well-being:** Service providers reported that victims were quite diverse in terms of their physical and mental well-being at identification. One commonality was that victims of sexual exploitation manifested health problems, such as sexually transmitted infections, requiring treatment. A number of victims of sexual exploitation were also dependent on drugs or alcohol at identification, with many others using these substances to varying degrees while trafficked. One victim was forced to use heroin while trafficked, a dependency that not only led to a serious addiction, but also fuelled her willingness to accept work abroad a second time. She was trafficked as a result. This victim was admitted into a detoxification programme as a part of assistance. Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were severely traumatized at identification, manifesting anxiety, severe stress and even paranoia.

### **Post Trafficking Experience**

**Victim identification and referral:** All seven Croatian victims were identified by law enforcement authorities and referred for assistance. In some cases, these victims accepted the assistance offered; in others, national victims declined assistance initially and returned to their families. This was generally because they were anxious to return to their families and because they wanted to put the experience behind them. However, three victims subsequently sought reintegration assistance, having been encouraged by their families to request this assistance. This highlights the value in continued



monitoring of cases for a period upon return as victims may change their mind about assistance.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN CROATIA

In this section, we analyze the identification and referral mechanism in Croatia (Section 3.1) as well as the assistance and protection available to foreign and national victims of trafficking (Section 3.2).

#### 3.1 Victim Identification and Referral in Croatia

There currently exists a national referral system in Croatia through which victims are identified and subsequently referred. Once identified, the identifying agency contacts IOM, which coordinates the assistance programme for the victim. This includes contacting a mobile team to conduct official identification and organize appropriate services and temporary accommodation in a reception centre in the region where the victim was identified. At a later stage, it is envisaged that there will be regional coordinators within the national referral mechanism whom the police will notify and who, in turn, will contact the mobile team directly to undertake the identification process. Under the existing referral system in Croatia, victims have been referred by a variety of sources.

Operational and security guidelines for governmental and non-governmental organizations assisting victims are already in place. They include guidelines on communication among partners and the screening and transportation of victims. At present, IOM, NGOs and the government (more specifically the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare) are working on the development of standardized procedures for the identification of victims of trafficking. Relevant actors are also in the process of establishing mobile teams in four regions in Croatia, tasked with quick response and identification of trafficking victims.

#### **Law enforcement**

In Croatia the majority of victims are identified by law enforcement. Of the 34 foreign and national victims assisted in Croatia, 23 were initially identified by law enforcement authorities. Identification is primarily done by anti-trafficking officers – there are 26 such officers throughout the country – although identification is also undertaken by other branches, such as the border police.

According to law enforcement officials, Croatian victims were generally found in the course of raids or investigations, while foreign victims were identified in this way and at border crossings. As Croatia is a transit country for illegal migrants and trafficking victims, it is often difficult to know at identification whether a woman is or will be a trafficking victim.

The increased identification of victims in Croatia can be attributed partly to the intensive training of anti-trafficking police officers, which has been underway since 2002. Police officers state that they had encountered trafficking cases in the past but were not aware of what they were and how to handle them. With intensive, practical training, identification has followed. The limited identification of victims trafficked for

labour exploitation may be due in part to limited law enforcement skills in identifying this form of trafficking.

### **Helplines**

A national helpline was established in Croatia in 2003. The helpline is operated cooperatively by three NGOs located in Vukovar, Split and Zagreb. Calls are routed to the relevant NGO, based on the area code from which they are calling. The number is toll-free to victims with costs covered by the Government of Croatia's Office of Human Rights. The helpline operates 24 hours a day in Vukovar and Split and for ten hours a day in the Zagreb area.

To date, no victims of trafficking have been identified and referred as a result of contacting the helpline. In fact, very few victims have accessed this helpline. Nevertheless, there have been a handful of calls regarding missing relatives and potential victims of trafficking. This stands in contrast to neighbouring countries, such as Serbia and BiH, where victims do use helplines for different purposes related to trafficking – prevention, reporting suspected cases and, to a lesser degree, accessing assistance.

Callers to the helpline called about domestic and family violence, experiences of trauma and to request economic assistance and prevention (educational calls about trafficking). As such, the helpline involves substantial “misuse”, particularly in Vukovar where the organization operating the hotline is a long established community group, well known for its assistance to community members on a range of issues. As such, community members use the helpline to address a range of problems. A large number of the calls were also either threatening, abusive or “joke” calls.

Strikingly few cases of trafficking have come to the attention of helpline staff through their relations with colleagues operating the helpline for domestic violence. One woman called about custody problems. Follow-up assistance revealed that her child was the result of her being trafficked for sexual exploitation in Italy. Another woman contacted the helpline for information about divorce from her abusive husband who, it turned out, was her trafficker. To date, there have been five such cases in the Zagreb region. As of December 2003, the Ministry of the Interior had acted on the basis of 14 reports submitted by means of the helpline (Government of Croatia, 2004: 10).

### **Voluntary Return of Trafficked Victims**

IOM is the primary referral agency assisting foreign women to return from Croatia. IOM Zagreb refers foreign victims to their IOM counterparts in the countries of origin. These referrals are typically conducted upon law enforcement identification and referral for preliminary case assessment, as well as by direct referral by IOM neighboring Missions.

In addition, Croatian victims are identified and referred from IOM missions abroad. A handful of Croatian victims have been identified in this way.

### **Embassy**

Four victims – all from Romania and all in 2003 and 2004 – were identified by the Romanian embassy in Zagreb. Embassy staff should be considered potential identifiers of trafficking cases and trained to distinguish trafficking victims from illegal migrants

when they approach their embassy. Training and awareness raising of the diplomatic corps is an activity currently being considered for implementation in 2005 by the Government of Croatia in partnership with IOs.

### **3.2 Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in Croatia**

The assistance framework has been in development since October 2002 when the IOM, NGOs and government began to work on a project for assistance, protection, return and reintegration of victims of trafficking. The assistance and protection framework for trafficked victims in Croatia has been geared mainly toward return assistance for foreign victims of sexual exploitation. IOM and local NGOs operating safe houses in the various regions of Croatia have provided most of the assistance to foreign victims in Croatia over the last few years. Local NGOs are actively involved in counter-trafficking activities and services, and service providers have made efforts to broaden the assistance framework to include foreigners who do not wish to repatriate immediately as well as Croatian trafficking victims.

Victims assisted in Croatia in 2003 and 2004 were provided with a range of services to meet their immediate and longer-term needs. Details of the various services are outlined below.

#### **Shelter**

In terms of shelters, there are different facilities available to victims, including reception centres and a shelter/safe house. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (formerly the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare), with the technical assistance and logistical support of IOM, have identified regional reception centres for temporary accommodation of victims of trafficking. Three reception centers have been identified in different regions with the intention of accommodating victims for one to two nights/days until transportation to the safe house/shelter can be arranged. A fourth reception centre is to be identified. The reception centres accept both foreign and national adult victims and are operated and managed by the Croatian Red Cross. All victims receive assistance from IOM on *ad hoc* basis, depending on the number of victims and time of identification. NGOs that currently cooperate with IOM in service provision include: the Croatian Red Cross, Croatian Law Centre, Centre for Disaster Medicine, and Organization for Integrity and Prosperity. In the past, this group also included Centre for Women Rosa and Women's Group Step.

One shelter/safe house is currently operational in Croatia, located in the Dalmatia region. It is managed by Organization for Integrity and Prosperity (OIP). The Government of Croatia, NGOs and IOM worked on the criteria for the establishment of the shelter and its standardized operational procedures. Victims are brought to the shelter located at a secret address and receive the following types of assistance: medical, psychosocial, legal, pre-departure (travel documents, reinstallation grant), security escort for high-risk cases, reception and reintegration services. The shelter accepts both foreign and national adult victims and is staffed by social workers and a legal assistance representative. In addition, there is external staff which includes a doctor, psychiatrist and psychologist.

In the coming year, the government, with the support of IOM and NGOs, will establish a high-risk shelter in Zagreb area and identify NGOs who can offer assistance to

victims of trafficking. In addition, discussion is underway for the establishment of a shelter for minor victims of trafficking, both foreign and national, to meet their specific assistance and protection needs. Currently, minor trafficking victims (foreign and national) are accommodated in centres for social work.

### **Medical Assistance**

General medical examinations are provided to all victims upon identification and are generally conducted by the IOM doctor. Gynaecological examinations are also available, which most beneficiaries request. Pregnancy tests are conducted on a voluntary basis.

For shelter residents, medical assistance includes general medical, dental, optometry and gynaecological care. Some shelter beneficiaries required medical treatment and hospitalization. Medical assistance is currently paid for by IOM. However, discussions with the Ministry of Health and Social Work about covering some of these costs toward a more sustainable assistance model are ongoing.

Currently medical services are provided on an *ad hoc* basis and tend to be Zagreb-centred. This has not posed a significant problem to date given the small numbers of identified victims. However, it is critical that victim sensitive services be accessed throughout Croatia. The Ministry of Health has drafted the *Protocol for Determining the Health Conditions of Victims* and their possible further treatment. To date, this protocol has not been fully implemented.

### **Psychological Assistance**

Victims are offered psychological assistance as needed, primarily by the NGO Centre for Disaster Management. Service providers also report that several of the victims require psychiatric treatment. A psychiatrist is on staff at the shelter and cases can also be referred to the psychiatric hospital for treatment, if needed.

To date, psychological assistance has been satisfactory in Croatia and it has been possible to access specialist services, as needed. This is again due largely to the small number of victims assisted to date. In the future, the provision of psychological assistance needs to be more organized with a structure for assistance involving a small group of specialists that are trained and sensitized on the issue.

### **Educational and Recreational Activities**

Staff of the shelter and reception centres tailor services to individual victims based on their needs and interests. One victim currently resident at the shelter attends educational classes and in the coming year will receive assistance in locating a part-time job. A more systematic programme of education and recreation will be needed to respond to an increase in identified victims.

### **Legal Assistance**

Four categories of legal assistance are provided to beneficiaries, as outlined below.

1) *Legal information regarding status as a victim of trafficking*: Legal assistance and advice is provided to victims by the Croatian Law Centre (CLC) with support from IOM. The CLC provides information about victims' legal status, their rights and

obligations and information about possible legal proceedings, including their possible role within this process as well as the implications of participation.

2) *Individualized legal advice and representation for victims who participate in legal proceedings against traffickers*: If victims agree to serve as witnesses in legal cases, they are provided with a lawyer to accompany them through the legal process and serve as their legal representative. Witnesses have certain rights within the legal process and the lawyer advises them and protects their rights. Currently, access to legal representation is facilitated through IOM, although a more durable solution should be pursued. In Croatia, victims are not required to testify and to date only two victims have accepted to serve as witnesses, resulting in a guilty verdict and a nine-year sentence for a trafficker in 2004.

3) *Documentation assistance necessary for return*: IOM is responsible for obtaining identity and travel documents for foreign victims to return to the home country. Many foreign victims assisted in Croatia do not possess proper identity documents, thus requiring IOM's assistance in making appropriate arrangements with embassies or consular sections.

4) *Assistance in acquiring documents for national citizens*: Assistance with the processing of legal documents for national victims is required, according to service providers. Such legal documents are essential in order that national victims can access services, such as medical assistance and re-enter the education system.

### **Witness Protection**

In 2004, the Government of Croatia passed the *Law on Witness Protection (Narodne novine, no. 163/03)*, designed to protect victims serving as witnesses. While not specific to victims of trafficking, the law establishes the conditions and procedures for rendering several forms of protection to imperilled witnesses and their families. This includes four possible measures to ensure the protection of witnesses: 1) technical and physical protection, 2) hiding identity and property, 3) changing of identity and 4) re-settlement. The law has not yet been implemented and it remains to be seen how this will work in practice, given the funds required.

In addition, the amendments to the *Law on Criminal Proceedings (Narodne novine, no. 62/03)* and the *Law on Juvenile Courts (Narodne novine, no. 111/97, 27/98, and 12/02)* establish conditions for witness protection, including for trafficking in persons. For minor victims of trafficking, the *Law on Juvenile Courts* stipulates forms of protection during criminal proceedings before courts, particularly protection from secondary victimization.

### **Temporary Residence Permit (TRP)**

Croatia is among the three countries in SEE that allow for temporary residence permits for victims of trafficking.<sup>222</sup> This was made possible by the *Law on Aliens (Narodne novine, no. 109/03)*, which in Article 37 allows for the temporary residence permits for anyone with justified reasons for stay. Because the law is not specific to trafficking victims, an instruction was issued in December 2004 by the Ministry of the Interior that

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<sup>222</sup> Other countries are BiH and Serbia with Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania currently in the process of making legislative changes that would allow for TRP options for trafficking victims.

outlines specifically temporary stay for trafficking victims. The permit includes a three-month reflection period followed by a one-year permit of stay with the possibility of extension, in line with EU standards. To date, one victim of trafficking has been issued a temporary residency visa.

In addition to defining rules and standards for the issuance of the temporary visa, the government and service providers must develop an appropriate assistance framework, including medium-term shelters and corresponding rehabilitation assistance programmes for foreign victims who reside in Croatia under the temporary visa.

### **Voluntary Return of Trafficked Victims**

At present, IOM is the primary organization responsible for facilitating the return of foreign trafficking victims willing to return to their home country from Croatia. IOM secures identity papers, travel documents and an exit visa on the beneficiary's behalf and contacts other missions or NGOs in the victim's country of origin regarding the beneficiary's case file, transportation arrangements and reintegration possibilities.

Victims returning to neighbouring countries usually do so by car, while some return by air. IOM or NGO personnel meet all returning victims at the airport (or other point of arrival within the home country) and typically offer overnight accommodation and transportation to the victim's desired destination. Most victims are enrolled in an assistance programme for at least a short time and receive shelter, medical care, psychosocial assistance, a material assistance package and referrals for vocational and employment assistance. Detailed information about reintegration programmes within specific countries of origin in SEE are found in the individual country reports.

### **Reintegration Assistance for Croatian Victims**

In the case of Croatian nationals who have been trafficked either abroad or internally, IOM and its local NGOs partners provide assistance in the reintegration process. Local NGOs have been identified to provide a range of services, including psychosocial counseling, medical care and legal assistance. Assistance has also been provided to eight national victims who were returned to Croatia.

Initially, most national victims do not want to join the assistance programme, often fearful that others within their community will learn about their experience and exploitation. However, some victims have returned to their home communities immediately upon return and subsequently accessed reintegration services. One victim stayed in contact with IOM for one year and requested entry into the reintegration programme well after moving home. In fact, three of eight national victims declined reintegration assistance initially upon identification and then subsequently followed up to access these services. In these cases, victims were encouraged by their families and in one case by a boyfriend to request this assistance. This signals that in the coming year service providers in Croatia may be assisting past cases who have never been registered and who come forward for assistance. This trend may also be noted in other countries.

With the identification of more national trafficking victims, longer-term assistance will be required, including vocational training, job placement, alternative housing options, family mediation/counselling and case follow-up and monitoring. Attention to the

geographic distribution of these services is essential and there will be a need for the mobilization of community-based resources.

### **Assistance for Minors**

Currently, when an unaccompanied minor is identified as a victim of trafficking, the identifying agency is obliged to notify the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MofHSW), which then appoints a legal guardian for the minor. The minor – whether a national or foreign victim – is accommodated and assisted within the social welfare system in the region where he or she is identified.

This poses a number of problems. First, social workers in the Centres for Social Work are not trained and sensitized on the issue of trafficking. In addition, centres do not coordinate with service providers equipped in this area of work. Second, data about these victims is not consolidated, which means that the number of minors identified and in care is unknown. Third, foreign victims are likely to have difficulty functioning within the national assistance framework given differences in language and culture. No special measures are in place to address social needs of foreign minors.

One case of a minor victim trafficked from Italy to Croatia was mishandled within the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare due, in large part, to the limited capacity of staff to deal with this issue and recognize the needs and rights of this profile of victim. The minor arrived in Croatia from Italy in 1999 without clear citizenship and was placed in an institution for minors. When she turned 18, she was discharged from the institution with authorities never having established her status. After leaving the institution she was identified as a victim of trafficking and subsequently assisted as such by various organizations including ICMC and Centre for Women Rosa. However, it cannot be ignored that during her three-year tenure in the children's institution, she was neither identified as a victim nor were sufficient efforts made to establish her identity or grant her status as a stateless person<sup>223</sup> with all of the attendant protection measures.

Nevertheless, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare has undertaken a series of activities to enhance the capacity of social workers in social welfare centres and juvenile homes. The objective is to sensitize staff to the issue of trafficking as well as train them in the identification of trafficking victims and their needs. In addition, one NGO – Centre for Initiative in Social Policy – is currently working to build the capacity of Centres for Social Work in the area of assistance for victims of trafficking. The NGO is cooperating with social workers, teachers and others trained in pedagogy in schools for children with behavioural disorders. More attention and training is needed toward the development of a tailored assistance programme for minor victims, both national and foreign, of trafficking in Croatia. In addition and as mentioned above, discussion is underway for the establishment of a shelter for minor victims of trafficking (foreign and national) to meet their specific assistance and protection needs. Alternatively, there is the possibility of accommodating minors at the existing shelter, with input and assistance from the MoHSW.

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<sup>223</sup> The 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, ratified by the Government of Croatia in 1992, guarantees the issuance of identity papers (Article 25) and travel documents (Article 27 and 28). As well, Article 32 calls for the assimilation and naturalization of stateless persons.

Legal protection afforded to minors is outlined in the *Law on Juvenile Courts*, which stipulates forms of protection during criminal proceedings before courts, particularly protection from secondary victimization.

Beyond immediate assistance, there is a need for long-term support and reintegration of national minor victims of trafficking. The needs of foreign minors will largely be met in their countries of origin. Minors have specific assistance needs, which include a safe and healthy home environment, education, basic needs, medical care, etc. Ideally, family reunification should be pursued for national victims, accompanied by family counselling and support. However, the issue of family involvement in the trafficking of minors poses serious issues in reintegration. Minors need a family environment to support their healthy development. However, return to a family that has been complicit in trafficking places the minor in an acutely vulnerable position. As an alternative to reintegration, foster care placements should be considered for trafficked minors, particularly in such cases. Appropriate training and orientation of foster families is essential to facilitate the successful placement of minors.

### **Protocols and Standard Operating Procedures**

The Government of Croatia, in cooperation with local NGO and IO partners, has articulated a set of protocols for the identification and treatment of trafficking victims. These include: *Protocol on Detection and Care for Victims of Trafficking in Persons*, *Instructions for Interviewing Illegal Migrants and Other Persons Who Are Suspected Victims of Trafficking in Persons* and *Rules of Procedure in the Shelter*. These are publicly available in the Government of Croatia's *Report on the Implementation of the National Plan for the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons, November 2002 – December 2003*.

Although the degree to which these standards and protocols are implemented is variable and attention must be paid to this issue, these standards and protocols are clearly articulated as an important component in victim protection.



# REPORT

## THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO

This section analyzes the current situation of trafficking victims and victim assistance and protection in the Province of Kosovo. The report is divided into three sections: 1) Number of Foreign and Kosovar Trafficking Victims Identified and Assisted, 2) Profiles of Trafficking Victims and 3) Overview of the Assistance Framework in The Province of Kosovo.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The total number of foreign victims identified and assisted in The Province of Kosovo between January 2001 and 31 December 2004 was 454.
- The total number of Kosovar victims identified and assisted between January 2000 and 31 December 2004 was 568.
- The Province of Kosovo is both a transit and destination province for trafficking victims. It is also a province of origin, with many Kosovar victims trafficked internally and abroad.
- Both foreign and national victims in The Province of Kosovo are trafficked primarily for sexual exploitation. However, trafficking for labour and begging have also been documented. Further, dual forms of exploitation such as for sexual and labour purposes or for labour and begging were noted.
- The majority of victims identified and assisted in The Province of Kosovo were female. However, a handful of male victims, both foreign and national, were also identified and assisted in 2003 and 2004.
- Among foreign victims identified in The Province of Kosovo, a handful were minors. Minors, female and male, accounted for more than half of all Kosovar victims identified in 2003 and 2004.
- A multiplicity of factors, including economic background, family relations, education and employment, inform victims' vulnerability to trafficking. Desire to work was the central catalyst for migration of foreign victims in The Province of Kosovo. Kosovar victims reported poor family relations as the key factor contributing to their trafficking.
- Moldova remains a primary country of origin among foreign victims, while Romanian victims have decreased in numbers. Increasingly, Albanian victims were identified and assisted in the country.
- The majority of foreign victims reported a slight improvement in living conditions. National victims reported both poor living and working conditions. All victims suffered abuse in the process of trafficking.
- In 2003 and 2004, foreign victims reported receiving around EUR 200 or 300 per month, which was paid regularly. These improvements served as a disincentive for victims to escape trafficking.
- In 2003 and 2004, a number of both foreign and national victims were physically and/or mentally disabled. Victims suffering from mental and/or physical disabilities were trafficked for sexual exploitation, labour and begging, highlighting a potentially emergent site of vulnerability.

- A majority of foreign and Kosovar victims were recruited by someone close to them. Recruiters included friends, partners and sometimes family members. Victims were also recruited with marriage promises.
- A number of foreign victims trafficked to The Province of Kosovo were recruited with false contracts signed by their employer, outlining the work conditions, salary and type of work, generally as a waitress. This façade of legality served to camouflage trafficking.
- High rates of violence in the family contributed to trafficking among Kosovar victims in many cases. Indeed, among assisted victims, 53.1 per cent in 2003 and 57.8 per cent in 2004 faced problems and violence in the home.
- Re-trafficking was an important issue both for foreign and national victims in The Province of Kosovo. Rates of re-trafficking ranged from 11.7 per cent in 2004 among foreign victims to 15.6 per cent among Kosovar victims. That so many Kosovar victims were minors and yet had multiple experiences of trafficking is cause for concern both as a trend and in terms of long-term recovery.
- The majority of foreign victims were identified and referred for assistance by law enforcement authorities. Other identification and referral agencies included Centres for Social Work, IOM, NGOs, a helpline and self-referral. Kosovar victims were referred through a variety of sources including NGOs, family referral and self-referrals.
- The referral process for foreign victims in The Province of Kosovo is outlined in *Standard Operating Procedures for Direct Assistance and Support to Foreign Trafficked Victims*. Standard operating procedures for identification and assistance of Kosovar victims of trafficking are to be developed.
- A helpline was established in 2004 to facilitate the identification process. This helpline can be an important tool in identification and it is hoped that it will be used in greater profile in 2005.
- One valuable medical initiative was the provision of free-of-charge reproductive health service to trafficking victims and prostitutes. Ten gynaecological clinics throughout The Province of Kosovo were provided with the necessary equipment and 508 trafficking victims and prostitutes received medical assistance under this project. Although the project, unfortunately, was discontinued due to lack of funds, it stands as a good practice in terms of medical care for trafficking victims.
- The assistance framework available to trafficking victims in The Province of Kosovo consists primarily of short-term accommodation and short-term services. Reintegration assistance possibilities for Kosovar victims of trafficking are limited at present and most service providers flag this as one of the more pressing gaps in the assistance framework. While all shelters attempt to offer some type of reintegration support, such programmes are presently underdeveloped. More resources are needed to support longer-term

reintegration assistance schemes, including psychological counselling, family mediation, educational assistance, vocational training, job placement and income-generating projects. The geographic distribution on these services should also be considered.

- Given the high rates of family violence noted among Kosovar trafficking victims, there is a clear need for family mediation and counselling services upon reintegration. This is a critical aspect of any assistance for Kosovar victims, creating as it does the conditions for safe and sustainable return. Such efforts should be expanded to involve trained psychologists and social workers in areas of origin.
- The lack of specialized assistance for minors is an issue of concern. More attention is needed to the tailoring of services and assistance to minor victims, including the development of interviewing skills, child-friendly services and sensitized staff.
- There is a lack of specialized assistance for “difficult cases”. Such cases often require assistance that falls outside the scope of the normal assistance package and often service providers are without the skills and/or resources to adequately meet their needs. These cases might include victims with drug or alcohol addictions, disabled victims, victims with psychiatric disorders, etc. More attention is needed to tailoring services and assistance to such victims, including the development of interviewing skills, appropriate services and sensitized staff.

## 1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND KOSOVAR TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED

The Province of Kosovo<sup>224</sup> is both a transit and destination province for foreign victims of trafficking. While primarily trafficked for sexual exploitation, some foreign nationals are also trafficked for purposes of labour as well as begging. In addition, The Province of Kosovo is a significant area of origin, with large numbers of Kosovar victims trafficked for sexual exploitation, labour and begging. Kosovar victims are trafficked both internally and abroad.

The figures in this section were compiled according to primary data provided by the IOM Mission in Pristina, Centre for the Protection of Women and Children (CPWC), Gjakove Women’s Safe House (WSH), Women Wellness Centre (WCC), Interim Secure Facility (ISF), Centre to Protect Victims and Prevent Trafficking (PVPT), Hope and Homes, United Methodist Committee of Relief (UMCOR), Victims Advocacy and Assistance Unit (VAAU) and Centre for Women and Children (ASB).<sup>225</sup> These figures

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<sup>224</sup> While Kosovo is a province within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, it is separated out as a distinct entity in an effort to analyze and better understand the specific trafficking context of the province. This is done in an effort to provide a more detailed picture of trafficking patterns, trends and profiles within and between each country/entity of the region and should in no way be read as a political statement on the part of the RCP.

<sup>225</sup> Other organizations in Kosovo that participated in and provided information for the RCP research, include: Trafficking in Human Beings Services in Pristina (UNMIK/THBS), THBS Prizren, Save the Children, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Prime Minister’s Office, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Pillar 1 – Anti-Trafficking Coordinator and Department of Justice.

largely pertain to women and girls trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation, although more recently there have also been cases of trafficking for labour, begging and delinquency. An examination of victim profiles and experiences drawn from this data will support more considered interventions to better address the needs of victims and redress their trafficking experience.<sup>226</sup>

Currently in The Province of Kosovo, there is no formal centralized data registry for victims of trafficking, nor a uniform methodology for the collection of victim information. Each organization collects and maintains its own data based on cases assisted.

TABLE 1  
NUMBER OF VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO OR ORIGINATING FROM THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO,  
2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign trafficking victims	113	135	86	60	60	454
Kosovar trafficking victims	54	67	165	192	90	568

The figures presented in the table above comprise the number of trafficked foreign victims identified within The Province of Kosovo and voluntarily returned to their countries of origin. Victims who were identified as trafficked but refused return assistance were not included. In addition, the table includes the number of Kosovar victims identified abroad as well as those identified within the province. To capture the full scope of trafficking in Kosovars, there is a need to access information from destination countries outside of South-eastern Europe. While the RCP sought to collect victim data from a range of destination countries within the European Union, for the most part, these efforts were met with reluctance or resistance due to limited resources, insufficient staff time or internal regulations about information sharing

As the table indicates, the annual number of identified and assisted foreign victims has decreased by more than half since 2001. However, this must be juxtaposed with the increase in the number of Kosovar trafficking victims.<sup>227</sup> Several factors have contributed to the development and continuation of trafficking to, through and from The Province of Kosovo. These include The Province of Kosovo's long status as a smuggling corridor due to its proximity to Albania, the deployment of peacekeeping troops and aid workers who are potential consumers of forced prostitution, the rise of a domestic prostitution trade for both foreign and domestic consumption, the lack of entry visa requirements and strict border surveillance as well as the overall poor life conditions of many Kosovars.

In addition, there is reason to believe that the scope of trafficking is greater than is captured in numbers of assisted victims. Border police officers interviewed in the context of a recent UNICEF study on trafficking in minors confirmed the plausibility of traffickers taking people in and out of The Province of Kosovo because of the limited control of the border and boundary lines (UNICEF, 2004b: 42). Further, there are indirect indications of trafficking in The Province of Kosovo that serve to reinforce this

<sup>226</sup> For a full discussion of how data was collected and the methodology used, please see: *Introduction*.

<sup>227</sup> In addition, THBS has documented 56 potential victims within the THBS database who are Kosovar, signaling the increase of Kosovars among trafficking victims (Email correspondence with Ribert Bruce, THBS, Pristina, Kosovo, 1 June 2005).

assertion. The database maintained by UNMIK<sup>228</sup> through its Trafficking in Human Beings Investigations Service (THBS)<sup>229</sup> logs information about women working in “off limits”<sup>230</sup> bars in The Province of Kosovo. Establishments are deemed “off-limits” when police suspect trafficking activities occur there. Therefore, this data can be seen, at least to some degree, as a registration of “potential victims” of trafficking. The number of women registered in this database ranged from 1,028 in 2001, to 1,727 in 2002, 1,096 in 2003<sup>231</sup> and 425 in 2004 (Bruce and Failla, 2004).<sup>232</sup> In addition, migration figures to and through The Province of Kosovo also yield valuable insight. In 2003, while only 262 persons were caught illegally crossing the borders, another 4,015 persons were refused entry and 4,748 denied exit at the border (Futo and Jandl, 2004: 52).

## 2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

Below is an exploration of profiles for victims trafficked to, through from The Province of Kosovo for various forms of exploitation. In this section, we analyze the profiles and experiences of both foreign trafficking victims see (Section 2.1) and Kosovar trafficking victims (Section 2.2). Victims’ needs are intimately informed by the specific dynamics of their trafficking experience. Understanding their backgrounds as well as the precise nature of recruitment, transportation and exploitation is an essential starting point in the development of appropriate assistance and services for victims.

### 2.1 Foreign Victims of Trafficking Assisted in The Province of Kosovo

In what follows, we explore the profiles and experiences of foreign nationals identified and assisted in The Province of Kosovo.

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<sup>228</sup> Kosovo, while technically a province within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, is currently administered under the authority of the United Nations Interim administrative Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) pending a determination of its final status. Since June 1999, UNMIK has provided transitional administration for Kosovo, and retains competency over anti-trafficking roles, such as police and justice.

<sup>229</sup> This unit was formerly called the Trafficking and Prostitution Investigation Unit (TPIU). The unit changed its name in January 2005.

<sup>230</sup> “Off limits” bars refers to establishments that are not to be frequented by international personnel because the premises are suspected of engaging in illicit activities, such as prostitution and trafficking. However, inclusion on the list does not in itself constitute sufficient grounds to initiate criminal investigations. As of December 2004, there were 206 “off limits” premises, eight in Pristina, 99 in Gnjilane, 11 in Mitrovica, 63 in Prizren and 25 in Pec. In addition, THBS closed 76 premises in 2004 as a result of administrative or judicial measures (Bruce and Failla, 2004).

<sup>231</sup> As not all women working in these locations are trafficking victims, this data must be read with that caveat. Further, THBS’s screening process is such that it fails to identify many women in these establishments who are indeed trafficking victims but have been coached by their employers and traffickers on what to say to avoid detection when questioned by authorities. Further, the context in which interviews take place tend not to be conducive to women identifying themselves as victims of trafficking. One woman who was later identified as a victim reported that she was interviewed by the police in the presence of the bar owner’s girlfriend who understood the language and was monitoring her responses (Amnesty International, 2004).

<sup>232</sup> The striking decline in numbers of potential victims in the THBS database in 2004 is tied to the decline in victims generally since 2004. According to THBS, with the increased effectiveness of counter-trafficking actions by a range of different actors (including police, local government, NGOs and international organizations) and the increase in law enforcement control, Kosovo is a less desirable destination for traffickers (Email correspondence with Robert Bruce, Head of THBS, Kosovo, 1 June 2005).

TABLE 2  
NUMBER OF FOREIGN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS ASSISTED IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO, 2000  
TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign trafficking victims	113	135	86	60	60	454

Since 2001, there has been a steady decline in the number of identified and assisted foreign victims in The Province of Kosovo, although the numbers stabilized in 2003 and 2004. Nevertheless, many counter-trafficking actors assert that this decline is attributable to the limited identification of victims rather than a decline in the number of foreign victims being trafficked to and through the province. Limited identification, according to many counter-trafficking actors, is due to the changed *modus operandi* of trafficking within the province<sup>233</sup> as well as the inefficiency of many identification strategies.<sup>234</sup> (cf. Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 52-53).

In addition to the number of identified and assisted victims, it is also essential to consider the forms of trafficking experienced by foreign victims identified and assisted in The Province of Kosovo. To date, sexual exploitation has been the predominant form of trafficking. However, a number of victims were also exploited for labour or for begging. Some victims were also exploited for dual forms of exploitation – sexual exploitation and labour or labour and begging. This will be discussed in further detail (below), see *Forms of trafficking* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked to The Province of Kosovo*.

### **2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked to The Province of Kosovo**

The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of foreign victims assisted in The Province of Kosovo.

#### **Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics**

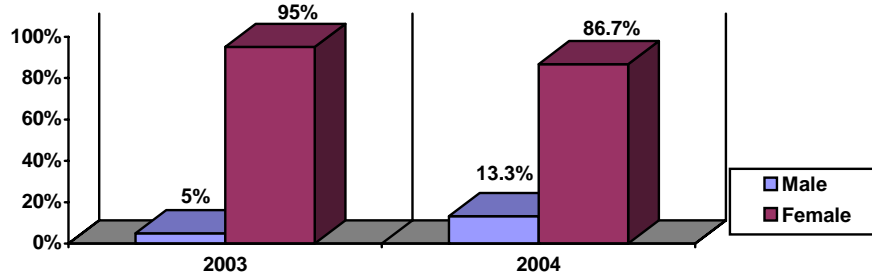
**Sex:** Prior to 2002, all assisted foreign victims in The Province of Kosovo were women. In 2002, one victim, an Albanian male minor, was assisted in The Province of Kosovo (or 1.2 per cent). In 2003, five per cent of victims were male, increasing to 13.3 per cent in 2004.

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<sup>233</sup> The RCP's first annual report noted that "the 40 per cent decrease in the number of identified and referred foreign victims in 2002 can partly be explained by the fact that more victims are kept within private accommodations rather than public establishments, making it more difficult for law enforcement units to reach them using the regular operative methods. Traffickers also began paying women just enough money (around 200-300 Euros) to make it more difficult for law enforcement units and service providers to identify victims, and to make it less likely that victims would accept assistance. Therefore, fewer victims are referred to, and are willing to accept, voluntary return to their home countries" (Hunzinger and Sumner Coffey, 2003). In addition, bar owners are aware of police strategies and have developed means to evade detection, instructing women how to respond to questions and behave with police officers.

<sup>234</sup> Identification can be hindered by limited capacity of border officials, who were often not proactive in the identification process. In addition, police tactics in the past have been reactive (when a woman approaches the police for assistance or provide information and leads) rather than proactive (i.e. undertaking police intelligence). To some degree, both of these limitations have been recognized and are being addressed by the relevant authorities.

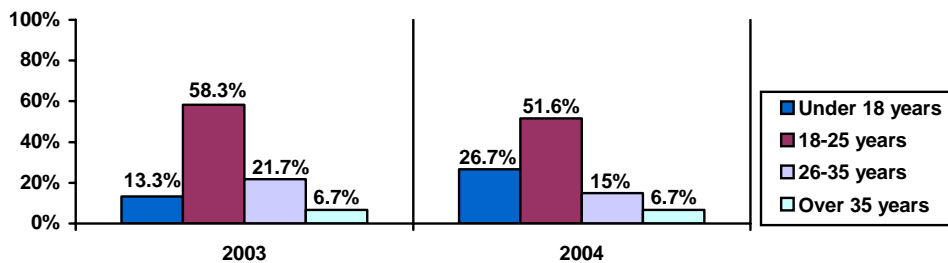
GRAPH 1  
SEX OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO, 2003 AND 2004



The male victims were primarily Albanian minors trafficked for labour and/or begging. This trend was first noted in 2002 and increased in 2003 and 2004. This finding is generally consistent with observations from Albanian organizations that male minors are increasingly entering the EU, having transited through the former Yugoslav republics, including through Slovenia.<sup>235</sup> As such, The Province of Kosovo may be a temporary destination for some victims trafficked along this route.

**Age:** The majority of the foreign victims were between 18 and 25 years of age when identified in The Province of Kosovo. This is generally constant throughout the reporting period as well as consistent with other destinations in the region.

GRAPH 2  
AGE OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO, 2003 AND 2004



Of significance, minor victims accounted for a steadily increasing percentage of foreign victims – seven per cent in 2000, 8.1 per cent in 2001, 11.6 per cent in 2002, 13.3 per cent in 2003 and 26.7 per cent in 2004.<sup>236</sup> The high percentage of foreign minors in 2004 differs from other destinations in the region, where minors generally accounted for 10 to 15 per cent of assisted foreign victims.<sup>237</sup> Social care actors stress the acute vulnerability of minors not only to being trafficked but also in terms of the traumatic

<sup>235</sup> Between January and October 2004, the NGO Slovene Philanthropy Association identified 104 cases of Albanian unaccompanied minors in Slovenia, the majority of whom were boys between the ages of 16 and 18 (BKTF, 2004). While it is unclear how many of these unaccompanied minors were, in fact, trafficking victims, some were identified as such while others manifested signs of being victims or potential victims. See *Profiles and Experiences of Albanian Victims Trafficked for Begging, Delinquency and Labour in Albania Country Report* for further detail.

<sup>236</sup> As this denotes the victim's age at identification rather than at recruitment, it is likely that some victims identified as adults were, in fact, minors when recruited. As most service providers do not systematically record the victim's age at recruitment, it is difficult to calculate accurately the number of trafficked minors. However, service providers stress that a percentage of the adult foreign victims assisted in Kosovo were first trafficked when they were minors.

<sup>237</sup> The only exceptions to this were Montenegro where roughly 25 per cent of foreign trafficking victims were minors and Serbia, where, approximately 25 per cent of foreign victims of labour trafficking were minors in 2004.



impact of trafficking. Psychologists argue that such serious trauma in the developmental stages of life informs the individual's perceptions in all areas of human relationships, presenting obstacles to victim recovery and reintegration.

A noteworthy percentage of victims were over the age of 25, accounting for 28.4 per cent in 2003 and 21.7 per cent in 2004. This contradicts the assumption that only young women are trafficked.

To some degree, victim's age informed the type of exploitation suffered while trafficked. All victims of begging were minors and many of the "older victims" (over 25 years) were trafficked for labour rather than sexual exploitation. However, a number of the older victims were also exploited for both sexual and labour purposes.

**Country of origin:** Foreign victims trafficked to The Province of Kosovo originated primarily from South-eastern Europe. Throughout the reporting period, Moldova remained the primary country of origin, accounting for 49.1 per cent of victims between 2000 and 2004. However, the percentage of Moldovans has decreased slightly since 2000 (63.7 per cent) and 2001 (52.6 per cent), stabilizing at 37.2 per cent in 2002 and 40 per cent in 2003 and 2004. The number of Romanian victims has also decreased, from 26.7 per cent in 2001 to 6.7 per cent in 2004. This is consistent with the overall trend of Romanian victims being increasingly trafficked to EU countries rather than within SEE.

By contrast, the number of Albanian victims increased over the reporting period – from 1.8 per cent of assisted victims in 2000 to 45 per cent in 2004. The most dramatic spike in numbers occurred between 2003 and 2004, from 11.7 per cent to 45 per cent. In part, this may be due to changed trafficking routes, with victims increasingly accessing EU countries through the former Yugoslav republics. Strong links between Albanian and Kosovar trafficking networks might be another contributing factor.

TABLE 3  
COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN OF FOREIGN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS ASSISTED IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO, 2000 TO 2004

Country of Origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Albania	2	1	9	7	27	46
Bulgaria	10	4	6	4	2	26
Moldova	72	71	32	24	24	223
Romania	20	36	19	9	4	88
Russia	1	2	0	0	0	3
Serbia <sup>238</sup>	0	1	0	4	1	6
Slovakia	0	0	0	0	1	1
Slovenia	0	0	0	0	1	1
Thailand	0	0	0	2	0	2
Ukraine	8	20	20	10	0	58
Total	113	135	86	60	60	454

<sup>238</sup> While Kosovo is a province within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, it is separated out as a distinct entity in this report in an effort to analyze the specific trafficking context of the province as well as to provide a more detailed picture of trafficking patterns, trends and profiles within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro and the region. As such, while Serbian and Montenegrin victims in Kosovo are not technically "foreign", they are analyzed in this section on foreign victims in an effort to provide a more detailed picture of trafficking patterns, trends and profiles within and between each country/entity of the region. This also should not be read as a political statement on the part of the RCP.

Strikingly, a number of victims originated from less common countries of origin – two from Thailand in 2003, one from Slovakia and one from Slovenia in 2004. Before this, foreign nationals from these countries were not assisted in The Province of Kosovo.

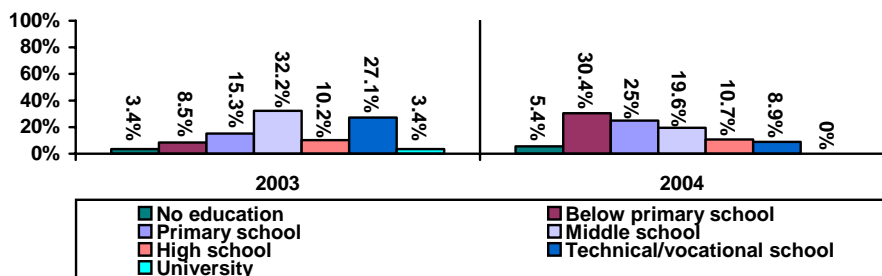
Victims trafficked for labour generally originated from Albania, Bulgaria, Moldova and Romania. As such, there is no substantive difference in countries of origin for sexual exploitation or labour. Victims trafficked for begging were primarily from Albania.

**Ethnicity:** Information on this subject is limited, as most service providers do not systematically record ethnicity as part of case management. However, information from the one organization that documented this variable finds ethnic minorities among assisted foreign victims in The Province of Kosovo. At least one victim in 2003 (1.7 per cent) and three victims in 2004 (five per cent) were Roma. The degree to which ethnicity informs vulnerability to trafficking from, through or to the region is unclear and requires further examination. Case management should ideally capture this indicator in future to record accurately both risks of trafficking and special assistance needs.

**Area of origin:** Information is insufficient about this indicator to draw substantive conclusions. It is, however, valuable in terms of planning prevention programmes as well as mapping areas in source countries where reintegration assistance is needed. This information should be shared between sending and receiving countries to augment counter-trafficking efforts.

**Education:**<sup>239</sup> Most foreign victims had primary or middle school education. However, this changed somewhat in 2003 and 2004, when 40.7 per cent and 39.2 per cent of victims had attended high school, vocational school or university. Victims with higher levels of education came from Moldova, Romania and Ukraine<sup>240</sup>, signalling the limited economic opportunities for women with reasonable levels of education in these countries.

GRAPH 3  
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO, 2003 AND 2004



Of note were those victims with no education or less than primary level schooling, accounting for 11.9 per cent in 2003 and spiking to 35.8 per cent in 2004. For this

<sup>239</sup> In Kosovo, primary school refers to grades one through four, middle school to the completion of eight grades and high school refers to grades ten through 12.

<sup>240</sup> In Romania, Ukraine and Moldova, most women attend secondary school. The female net enrolment at secondary level is 81 per cent, 91 per cent and 70 per cent respectively (UNDP, 2004). Net enrolment is the number of students enrolled in a level of education who are of official school age for that level, as a percentage of the population of official school age for that level.

group, it is important to consider not only educational reinsertion programmes but also their specific educational and training needs when developing reintegration plans upon their return home. Simultaneously, economic support must be given to the family while the victim receives training and education.

To some degree, education levels of foreign victims were linked to the victim’s country of origin as well as age. Service providers reported that victims from Albania tended to have quite low education levels relative to their counterparts from Romania or Ukraine. Further, younger victims (about 25 per cent of victims in 2004 were minors) were less likely to have high education. To gauge the relevance of education for trafficking vulnerability, one must cross-reference it with these and other variables.

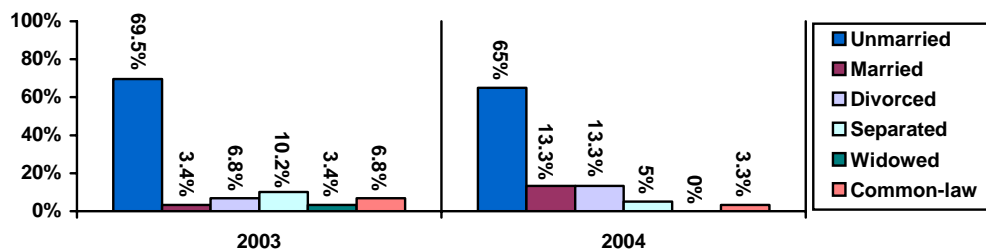
**Mental and physical disabilities:** In 2003, two victims (or 3.3 per cent) were mentally disabled while, in 2004, two victims (or 3.3 per cent) were disabled, one mentally and the other both physically and mentally. In most cases, physically disabled victims were trafficked for begging. Mentally disabled victims were trafficked into sexual exploitation.

The presence of mentally disabled victims requires the provision of specifically tailored assistance programmes. This has presented problems in some countries like Serbia where services for disabled persons are limited. If this trend develops, thought must also be given to prevention efforts that take into account specific capacities as well as the recruitment methods and manipulations used to lure this group into trafficking.

**Marital and family status:** Throughout the reporting period, the majority of victims were unmarried. This is generally consistent with the overall pattern in the region where young single women are targeted in recruitment. It is also consistent with the high number of minors assisted in both years.

Of note, 20.4 per cent of victims in 2003 and 18.3 per cent in 2004 were either divorced, separated or widowed. These groups may face social stigma or economic vulnerability in their home country, both of which can translate into a willingness to migrate and/or take risks in the migration process.

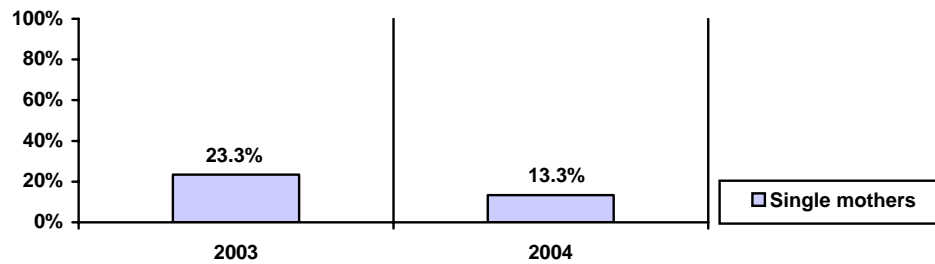
GRAPH 4  
MARITAL STATUS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO, 2003 AND 2004



It is also important to consider the number of victims with children, as many women opt to migrate in an effort to better support their families. Among foreign victims assisted in 2003 and 2004, 33.3 per cent and 31.7 per cent respectively were mothers when recruited. Of victims with children, 23.3 per cent in 2003 and 13.3 per cent in

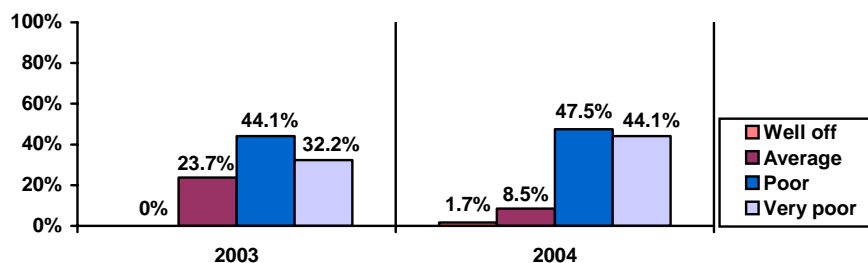
2004 were single mothers. These statistics signal the vulnerability of female-headed households in sending countries. As a corollary, consideration of victims with dependents other than children is valuable. As women are responsible for the care and support of parents, siblings and elderly relatives in many countries in the region; systematically documenting a victim's dependents, including but not limited to, dependent children, could serve as another, partial indicator of trafficking risk.

GRAPH 5  
NUMBER OF SINGLE MOTHERS AT RECRUITMENT AMONG FOREIGN VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004



**Economic status:**<sup>241</sup> In 2003 and 2004, the majority of victims were “poor” or “very poor”, supporting the general observation that poverty is an important contributor to trafficking in persons. However, given the overall poor economic conditions in many sending countries, poverty *per se* may not be a sufficiently distinguishing characteristic. Further, many “poor” families and individuals are not trafficked, also highlighting the insufficiency of poverty as an explanation. Rather than only considering the characteristics and behaviours of victims who are trafficked, it would be equally valuable to consider cases where persons (with the same economic, educational, social backgrounds) were not trafficked and identify strategies and behaviours they employ that guard against trafficking.

GRAPH 6  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO, 2003 AND 2004



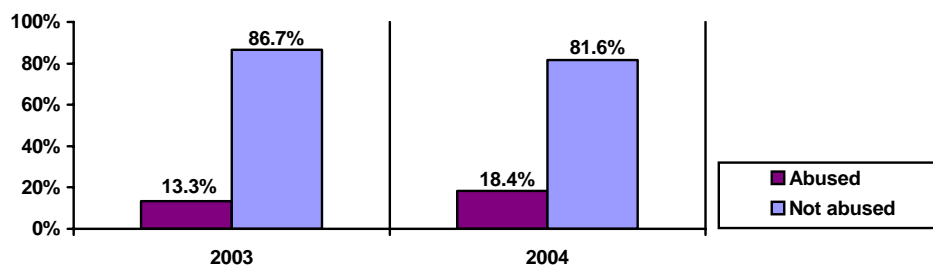
It is important to note that 23.7 per cent of victims in 2003 and 8.5 per cent in 2004 were from “average” economic backgrounds. A further 1.7 per cent of victims in 2004 were “well-off”. That victims came from from “average” and “well off” economic backgrounds undercuts the widely-held assumption that poverty is a precondition for trafficking. As such, while poverty is a causal contributor to trafficking, it cannot be

<sup>241</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim's self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

understood in isolation from the other socio-economic circumstances in a victim's life history, including family relations, employment history and personal ambition.

**Family and social relations:**<sup>242</sup> Another commonly presumed contributor to trafficking is poor family relations. Among foreign victims assisted in The Province of Kosovo, domestic violence was a problem faced by only some victims – 8.3 per cent in 2003 and 16.7 per cent in 2004. A further five per cent of victims in 2003 and 1.7 per cent in 2004 reported that alcoholism was a problem in their family environment. This suggests that violence sometimes serves as a contributor to a victim's willingness to migrate.

GRAPH 7  
VIOLENCE AND PROBLEMS IN THE HOME, FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO, 2003 AND 2004



However, these statistics must also be read in the reverse. A large number of victims originated from stable, normal family environments, 86.7 per cent in 2003 and 81.6 per cent in 2004. As such, it is essential to look beyond the issue of family strife or violence for explanations of trafficking vulnerability. Some thought must also be given to the specific vulnerability of victims from stable homes.

Another issue commonly cited as a potential contributor to trafficking is single-parent families. The degree to which this family structure is problematic or may result in a victim being trafficked is unclear. Some single-parent families are economically or emotionally vulnerable, while others are stable and economically secure environments. More analysis is needed to determine whether and how this is a site of vulnerability in the various counties of origin. In The Province of Kosovo, no foreign victims in either 2003 or 2004 were from a single-parent household.

More subtle family tensions – such as strained relations with other family members or being unable to communicate effectively – may also serve to increase a victim's vulnerability to trafficking.<sup>243</sup> Some foreign victims may face subtle pressure to work abroad to help the family realize material aspirations. Also salient are social relations

<sup>242</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims' self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim's individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim's relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

<sup>243</sup> In Romania, where a number of victims originated, one survey of risk factors noted that parents of vulnerable girls were less likely than parents of average girls to talk to their daughter about her problems or discuss sexual matters or intimate problems (Alexandru and Lazaroiu, 2003: 31).

more generally. Victims may be less socially integrated than their peers, lack a social safety net, have poorly developed social skills, *etc.* Therefore, to recognize vulnerability to trafficking, it is important to consider the interplay of variables in a victim's broader social terrain.

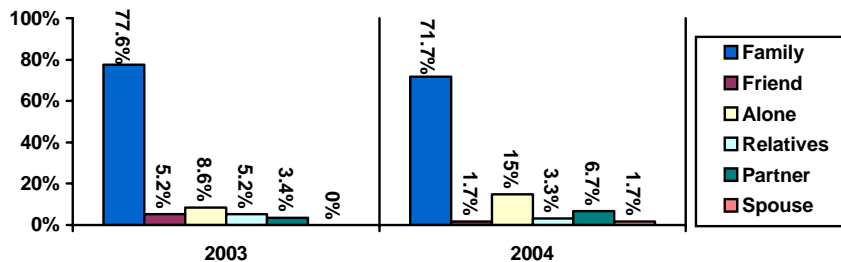
## Recruitment Experiences

**Living situation at recruitment:** The majority of assisted victims – trafficked for sexual exploitation, labour and begging – were living with family at recruitment. This has important implications for prevention – it identifies the family as a key target group and protection.

More precise information is required to assess the impact of victims' living situations at recruitment on trafficking vulnerability. There is a need to disentangle the effect of living in a nuclear family, an extended family environment or other household compositions on trafficking risk. Family environment is generally more complex than is evident at first glance.

No victims in either 2003 or 2004 were residing at an institution at recruitment. However, this does not mean that victims had never resided in institutions in the past.<sup>244</sup> More detail about living situations throughout a victim's life would be valuable in identifying both risk and resiliency factors.

GRAPH 8  
LIVING SITUATION AT RECRUITMENT OF FOREIGN  
VICTIMS ASSISTED IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO, 2003 AND 2004



Of note were the number of victims who lived alone at recruitment – 8.6 per cent in 2003 and 15 per cent in 2004. As most women in SEE live in family environments, this living arrangement may indicate a problematic family background or upbringing in an institution. Both situations appear to be conducive to trafficking vulnerability. On the other hand, living alone at recruitment can indicate an adventurous, independent thinking woman at odds with social convention and therefore open to the lure of migration and its attendant risk of trafficking. Living alone may also suggest a higher degree of economic vulnerability, given that women's unemployment in the region is high and this group may lack family resources on which to fall back.

<sup>244</sup> The data presented is reflective only of the victim's living situation at recruitment. However, in many circumstances the individual may have lived in another environment earlier in their life that may have contributed to their trafficking. Living in an institution informs development and negotiation skills in a way that may increase vulnerability. Similarly, having lived in a problematic family environment and then moved on may have contributed to trafficking risk. As such, more information is needed about past and present living arrangements to accurately pinpoint trafficking risk.

**Working situation at recruitment:** The majority of foreign victims trafficked to The Province of Kosovo were employed at recruitment, 81.4 per cent in 2003 and 80 per cent in 2004, contradicting the assumption that only the unemployed migrate. Employment alone does not appear to be a sufficient deterrent to migration, with many people in source countries reporting underemployment as well as unsatisfactory pay and working conditions. In the overall poor economies from which many assisted victims originated, the correlation between unemployment and trafficking may not be direct or inevitable.

Employed victims worked as waitresses, dancers, industrial workers and public or private employees. Some were also working in prostitution at recruitment and were recruited by their pimps.<sup>245</sup> Strikingly, none of the women working in prostitution at recruitment did so in their country of origin because they feared stigmatization.

**Recruiter:** Most assisted victims were recruited by men, accounting for 66.7 per cent of victims in 2003 and 67.8 per cent in 2004. This contrasts with other destination countries in the region in which many foreign victims were recruited by women. In part, this may be due to the increased number of victims originating from Albania, where most recruiters were men.

The victim's relationship to the recruiter varied slightly over time. In 2003, 50 per cent of victims were recruited by a stranger, a percentage that decreased to 33.3 per cent in 2004.<sup>246</sup> Recruitment practices that implicate persons intimately known to the victim are particularly difficult to combat. This finding may have implications for the development of prevention efforts, flagging as it does possibly new *modus operandi* in the recruitment process.

A handful of victims in both years were recruited by their pimps, signalling that recruitment for trafficking is taking place in the prostitution arena and that attention must be paid to the protection of this group, including targeted prevention programmes in key source countries.

Also of note is that no victims in 2004 were recruited by family, a decrease from 12.5 per cent in the previous year. Nevertheless, five per cent of victims in 2003 and 7.4 per cent in 2004 were recruited by a partner, raising the possibility that some men started relationships with women as part of the recruitment process, consistent with the "lover boy phenomenon".<sup>247</sup> If so, prevention efforts will have incorporate strategies to counteract this insidious recruitment method.

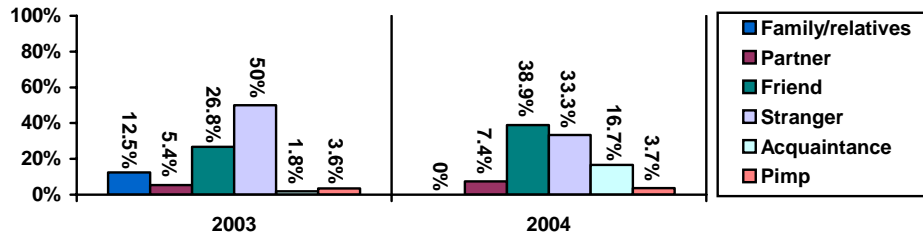
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<sup>245</sup> It is important to note that this finding has no relevance in terms of an individual's status and right to be treated as a victim of trafficking.

<sup>246</sup> Victims recruited by strangers can include recruitment through job agencies and newspaper advertisements. This suggests that this type of recruitment is declining for foreign victims sent to Kosovo, perhaps because of prevention efforts highlighting the risks of accepting work through job agencies and the control of these advertisements in some origin countries. It would be valuable to determine the number of victims recruited through an agency or advertisements and any changes over time.

<sup>247</sup> The "lover boy" phenomenon is a recruitment strategy noted in the Netherlands whereby the man initiates a relationship with the girl/woman with the intention of exploiting and trafficking her. For further explanation this specific recruitment technique, see Noten and van den Borne, 2004.

GRAPH 9  
RELATIONSHIP TO RECRUITER OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO,  
2003 AND 2004



Also salient in terms of recruitment was the recently noted trend of foreign women arriving in The Province of Kosovo with contracts signed by the employer and outlining the work conditions, salary and type of work, generally as a waitress. This tactic lends a façade of legality to the recruitment process and seems to be used especially when recruiting women from Ukraine, Moldova and Romania.<sup>248</sup>

**Reasons for leaving home country and type of work promised:** Most victims left their home countries to find employment abroad. This was true in 68.5 per cent of cases in 2003 and 61.1 per cent in 2004. Victims migrated abroad for work for different reasons. Some migrated to earn a better salary (or salary at all) and some because of limited options at home. Others accepted work because of a crisis in the family – an illness, an unexpected debt, a death in the family or another such emergency.

The type of work promised included waitress, babysitter/*au pair*, domestic work, dancer, begging, selling and prostitution. Strikingly, 5.4 per cent of victims in 2003 and 9.1 per cent in 2004 indicated that the work promised was in prostitution.<sup>249</sup> These victims had generally worked previously in prostitution, indicating the need for awareness-raising and prevention efforts in this arena.

While work was a central catalyst for migration, not all victims were poor (see *Economic status* above), which suggests other contributors. These might include one or a combination of the following: poor or unsupportive family relations, material aspirations beyond what is possible in the country of origin, a desire for adventure, the normative acceptability of migration as an economic strategy, *etc.*

While work remained the predominant rationale for migrating abroad, it was not the only one. In 2003, 5.6 per cent of victims and 7.4 per cent in 2004 were recruited with marriage promises. Their acceptance was tied to an ambition to set off on a new life. A more thorough understanding of the motivations and pressures leading a victim to accept a dubious marriage proposal is an important step in counteracting this recruitment practice.

In other cases, conditions at home contributed to trafficking. A number of victims reported domestic violence and family problems (see *Family and social relations*

<sup>248</sup> Cf. UNICEF 2004b: 28, Andreani and Raviv 2004 and Amnesty International, 2004.

<sup>249</sup> In some cases, this awareness seems to vary by country of origin. For example, 22 per cent of Moldovans interviewed by IOM reported that they were at least partially aware at recruitment that they might work in prostitution (Amnesty International, 2004: 11).



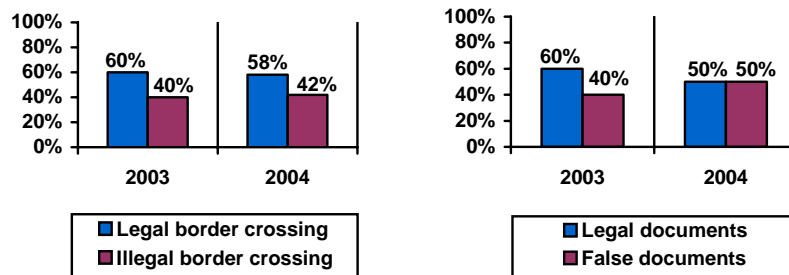
above) as a contributor to migration. At least one victim, in 2004, reported migrating exclusively because of problems at home.

A few victims were recruited with promises of tourism – 5.6 per cent in 2003 and 3.7 per cent in 2004. One victim, assisted in 2003, even reported accepting work as a way to have an adventure in life. A desire for adventure was expressed by a number of victims throughout the region. While it was not often the sole or even primary reason for leaving home, it was a partial contributor in many cases. Adventurous as opposed to naïve and deceived victims also require attention in terms of uncovering rationales for migration.

### Transportation and Movement

**Border crossings and documents:** There is limited information available about the use of legal border crossings and documents among foreign victims in The Province of Kosovo. Based on the limited information available (fewer than 50 per cent responded to this question), a slim majority of victims crossed at legal crossings and with legal documents.

GRAPH 10  
BORDER CROSSINGS AND DOCUMENTS – FOREIGN  
VICTIMS ASSISTED IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO, 2003 AND 2004



In the region, the use of legal documents in the transportation process is an emergent strategy of traffickers to subvert identification of victims by law enforcement and to camouflage the trafficking process. This strategy is effective not only with law enforcement but also with victims who, until their arrival at the destination, may not recognize that they are being trafficked. This makes it all the more remarkable that only a slim majority of victims trafficked to The Province of Kosovo were transported with this legal façade.

While many victims used legal documents in the transportation phase, most had their travel and identity documents confiscated by the traffickers during travel or upon arrival in The Province of Kosovo. The majority of victims in 2003 and 2004 required assistance in obtaining travel documents prior to return. Lack of access to their documents amplified victims’ vulnerability; even if they were able to escape, they were without the means to cross borders and return home. They may also hesitate to access assistance, feeling complicit in their own trafficking.

**Transportation routes:** Routes and means of transportation vary according to the victim’s country of origin. Victims reported the following general routes:

- *From Moldova and Romania:* Victims were usually transported in vehicles *via* Serbia. Some women and girls were first trafficked to Romania and Serbia before reaching The Province of Kosovo. In addition, Bulgaria was increasingly a transit country for foreign victims *en route* to The Province of Kosovo.
- *From the Ukraine:* Victims travelled overland *via* Hungary and Serbia, generally with legal documents and across legal borders. Some also travelled by plane to The Province of Kosovo.
- *From Albania:* Victims were either transported directly across the border into The Province of Kosovo or through Macedonia.
- *From other destination countries:* Victims from more distant destinations, such as Thailand, travelled directly to Pristina *via* the international airport.

**Intended destination country:** Most victims were promised work in destinations other than The Province of Kosovo, as outlined in the table below. In only nine cases in 2003 and 22 cases in 2004 were victims promised work in The Province of Kosovo, suggesting that The Province of Kosovo was not perceived as a desirable destination country for many victims. However, significantly more victims in 2004 were aware that The Province of Kosovo was their final destination.

TABLE 4  
INTENDED DESTINATION COUNTRIES OF FOREIGN  
VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO, 2003 AND 2004

Intended Destination Country	2003	2004
Bulgaria	1	0
Germany	1	0
Hungary	1	0
Israel	1	0
Italy	12	6
The Province of Kosovo	9	22
Macedonia	6	13
Romania	2	0
Russia	0	1
Serbia and Montenegro	6	3
Spain	2	0
Unspecified EU country	9	10
Unknown	10	5
Total	60	60

### Victims' Trafficking Experiences

**Forms of trafficking:** While foreign victims in The Province of Kosovo were primarily trafficked for sexual exploitation, this was by no means the only form of exploitation experienced. Indeed, in 2003 and 2004, increasingly disparate forms of trafficking were observed, signalling either a rise in different forms of trafficking or, more likely, increased recognition by counter-trafficking personnel of the multiplicity of forms trafficking can take.

TABLE 5  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG FOREIGN VICTIMS  
ASSISTED IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO, 2003 AND 2004

Form of Trafficking	2003	2004
Sexual exploitation	44	38
Labour exploitation	6	1
Sexual exploitation and labour	5	8
Labour and begging	4	8

Begging	0	0
Potential victims <sup>250</sup>	1	5
Total	60	60

Victims of sexual exploitation were primarily forced to work as prostitutes in bars and nightclubs. More recently, prostitution businesses were increasingly hidden, with victims kept in private apartments or houses. Other victims were transported to meet the client at motels, with arrangements made over the phone. In some cafés and bars, prospective clients received secret phone numbers through waiters and bar owners. This procedure added another layer of discretion, camouflaging the practice and protecting the trafficker. In addition, and as has been noted in countries such as Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, some victims were kept as the private property of their traffickers and required to service them sexually. In 2004, 12 assisted foreign victims suffered this form of exploitation.

Victims of labour exploitation were primarily trafficked for domestic work or waitressing. One woman, who was promised marriage in The Province of Kosovo, was instead locked into the house of her “prospective husband” and forced to undertake all labour tasks. Four other victims worked as waitresses but received no payment and were exposed to exploitative working and living conditions.

The increased presence of children begging on the streets in The Province of Kosovo has raised the concern that many of these minors are trafficked. Indeed, four minors in 2003 and eight in 2004 were identified begging and labouring on the streets. No victims were identified for whom begging was their only task.

Of particular note was the 15 per cent of victims in 2003 and 26.7 per cent in 2004 who suffered dual forms of exploitation. Most were exploited for sexual and labour purposes, which generally involved prostitution and waitressing or prostitution and cleaning. In some cases, this also included living with one man and providing him with both sexual and domestic services. The combination of labour and delinquency usually involved only minors begging in the streets as well as street selling or performing odd jobs.

Understanding victims’ experiences of exploitation, both singular and multiple, is valuable in pinpointing and meeting their specific assistance needs. Victims trafficked for labour but who have also been sexually exploited require many of the same forms of assistance as victims trafficked for prostitution. Victims exploited for criminal activities may require tailored legal assistance to avoid prosecution. Attention to the precise forms of exploitation is a valuable starting point in both the development and assessment of assistance frameworks.

In addition, a number of “potential victims” were identified. This refers to victims identified before exploitation but who manifest every indication of being in the trafficking process. The identification of potential victims signals increased skills in identification by law enforcement and outreach workers.

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<sup>250</sup> This designation is used when the individual was assisted for an insufficient time to clearly establish his/her trafficking experience or when the individual was identified and assisted before being exploited but showed strong signs of trafficking risk and vulnerability.

**Length of time trafficked:** In generally, the length of time trafficked varied from less than three months to two or three years. Data from IOM indicates that many of the foreign victims referred in 2003 and 2004 had been in The Province of Kosovo for two or more years. In other circumstances, former victims who had been held in The Province of Kosovo for several years had escaped their trafficking experience and found jobs to support themselves (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 61).

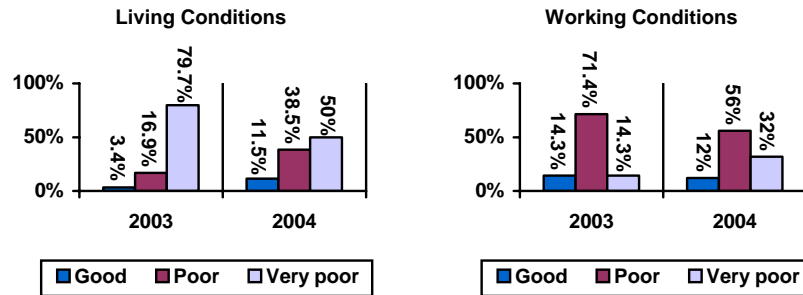
Correlations may be made between the length of time trafficked and the scope of traumatic impact. It is a reasonable surmise that the longer the time trafficked, the greater the trauma and dependency on the trafficker. It is not known whether victims are trafficked for longer or shorter periods now than in the past, or whether victims of different forms of trafficking tend to be trafficked for different lengths of time. Attention to how this relationship and dependency affects a victim's recovery is essential and must be built into any efforts to assist victims. Long periods spent trafficked may also affect victims in other ways. Separation from family and friends, living outside a family environment and being under extreme stress can impede recovery and reintegration and create problems in interpersonal relationships.

Time spent trafficked fluctuates according to a number of factors, including the level of repression endured by the victim, identification skills and priorities of law enforcement at the destination and the accessibility of services and assistance. Where victims are trafficked for shorter times, it may be due to amplified and improved identification efforts. Further analysis of this indicator, cross-correlated with details of the identification process, can potentially serve as a means to assess law enforcement's identification efforts as well as the efficacy of outreach measures by social services and civil society.

**Living and working conditions:** Although information about these indicators was incomplete, available information suggests that living conditions in 2004 were slightly improved over the previous year, with far fewer victims reporting "very poor" conditions and more reporting "good" conditions. This is consistent with information from THBS, which observed that foreign victims were generally no longer required to live in crowded rooms above the bars where they served clients. Many victims had their own accommodation, separated from their place of work (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 58).

By contrast, there seems to be no corollary improvement in victims' working conditions. Indeed in 2004, slightly fewer victims reported "good" working conditions than in 2003 and twice as many reported "very poor" conditions. This differs from anecdotal observations of service providers who asserted that both living and working conditions had improved.

GRAPH 11  
LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS WHILE TRAFFICKED AMONG  
FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO, 2003 AND 2004



As noted in RCP's first annual report, traffickers began to pay victims a salary to dissuade them from accepting or seeking assistance from authorities or service providers. Whereas in 2002 salaries were paid on *ad hoc* basis and in smaller sums, in 2003, victims reported receiving around EUR 200 or 300 per month, paid regularly.<sup>251</sup> Further, many victims were able to remit money home as well as return home with some savings. THBS reported that many victims held Western Union receipts for sums of money they had sent home to their families (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 57-58; cf. UNICEF, 2004b: 27). These improvements served as a disincentive for victims to escape trafficking. Instead, control was maintained by the use and threat of abuse. Further, by not seeking to escape, victims may have felt complicit with the trafficker, making them less likely to seek assistance at later stages.

Debt bondage was a common feature of trafficking to The Province of Kosovo. Victims were charged for their transportation (which is generally not explained at recruitment), as well as for food, medical care, accommodation and clothing. Employers also often created or augmented these debts, "fining" victims for various reasons, including refusing to have sex with a client who had taken drugs; getting drunk (although work involved drinking large quantities of alcohol) or arriving late to work (AI, 2004: 17).<sup>252</sup>

Of note, clients in The Province of Kosovo tended to be both local and foreign. While international clientele (peacekeepers, UN personnel, aid workers) comprised 80 per cent of consumers in the past, currently 80 per cent of those consuming services of trafficked women were thought to be local men (AI, 2004: 2). This reality highlights the need for raising awareness about trafficking among clients, including developing a zero-tolerance policy for use of trafficking victims within the community at large.

<sup>251</sup> As many victims received monthly salaries of less than US\$ 30.00 in their home countries, an amount possibly sufficiently to attract women as well as to dissuade a victim from leaving a trafficking situation.

<sup>252</sup> One victim explained, "I signed a contract for a monthly salary of EUR 100, because of the tax that would be taken out of my salary. However, I had a verbal agreement in my country to work for EUR 300 per month. The owner of the bar said, 'I bought you for EUR 200; you have to pay that back', and he told me that I had negative EUR 4. Then one day, he said, 'You owe me EUR 80' and I had to pay with my time. Every three or four days he would say to me, 'You are minus EUR 20' or whatever. For three months, I earned just EUR 300-350. but I should have had EUR 900. When I was in my country they said I would have food, cigarettes etc. There was nothing of that agreement. I paid for my uniform. I paid for medical checks. I paid for my contract. I paid for my trip, everything. I paid EUR 16 for my T-shirt. It had my name on the front and the company's name on the back." (AI, 2004: 17).

In 2003, 28 of the 44 victims (63.6 per cent) for whom there is information were denied all freedom of movement, 11 (25 per cent) were accompanied and five (11.4 per cent) suffered no restrictions on their freedom of movement. In 2004, foreign victims enjoyed greater freedom of movement while trafficked with only seven (or 20.6 per cent) of the 34 victims for whom there is information denied all freedom of movement. The remaining 17 (50 per cent) were accompanied and ten (29.4 per cent) suffered no restrictions on their freedom of movement. Possible explanations for the increased freedom of movement include: its use as a reward by traffickers to victims who are cooperative, that over time victims become more accustomed to trafficking and are less likely to seek escape and/or that victims can be detected relatively easily by the trafficker if they do escape due to networks and contacts.

**Abuse:** Information available is insufficient to draw substantive conclusions. However, in general, abuse continued to be used. IOM reported abuse and violence in 2002 and 2003, affecting 85.8 per cent and 87.3 per cent of victims respectively.<sup>253</sup> In 2004, 29 of 34 victims for whom there is data (85.3 per cent) were abused while trafficked. The rate may be higher still as some victims may deny being abused for fear of being deemed traitors by the trafficker or because they have developed a relationship and/or feelings for the trafficker. As well, some victims may not even be conscious of being abused, having suffered abuse in family environments and normalized abuse. Still others may deny having been abused as a defensive, coping mechanism.

The forms of abuse outlined above do not allow us to measure the severity of abuse, which may be the most important variable. Attention to this measurement is essential toward an appreciation of violence and abuse suffered by foreign victims in The Province of Kosovo and ensuring that medical and psychological services appropriately meet their needs.

Service providers assert that traffickers inflicted more subtle, sophisticated forms of abuse. Traffickers exerted psychological pressure, threatening to denounce victims to the police, to harm their families or to sell them to other traffickers. In this vein, a seemingly new tactic involved women traffickers/controllers, generally from the victim's country of origin and possibly also the victim's recruiter. The woman, who may have been a victim herself, explained the rules and punished those who did not obey. In addition to controlling the victims, she often also knew the victim's area of origin, including her family, which served as an extra means of control (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 58; UNICEF, 2004b: 27).<sup>254</sup>

**Mental and physical well-being:** Due to the conditions faced and lack of medical care, most victims were in poor physical and mental condition at identification, as detailed below.<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> These statistics apply to both foreign and national victims assisted by IOM.

<sup>254</sup> A similar tactic of "victim/controller" was noted among foreign victims in Montenegro. Not only did their presence serve as a means of control while victims were trafficked but also led them to decline assistance as the victim/controller was present when assistance was offered.

<sup>255</sup> In 2003, 48.3 per cent of foreign victims were denied all access to medical assistance while 15 per cent received medical assistance only in emergencies. Only 3.6 per cent of victims had regular access to medical care (Andreani and Raviv 2004: 59). In 2004, 14 of 34 assisted foreign victims (or 41.2 per cent) received medical care while trafficked, one regularly, four on occasion and nine on an emergency basis.

- *STIs*: Most foreign victims identified and assisted in The Province of Kosovo suffered from STIs. This is not surprising given that the majority of victims suffered some form of sexual exploitation, and that only approximately 30 per cent of victims reported that clients used condoms. This not only contributed to the poor sexual health of victims but may also have amplified feelings of violation.
- *Pregnancy*: In 2003, 1.7 per cent of foreign victims were pregnant at identification, a percentage that increased to 6.7 per cent in 2004. This signals the need for a broader menu of services and assistance for victims – both for those who chose to terminate the pregnancy as well as those who chose to keep and raise the child. Also critical is that such services are available in countries of origin upon reintegration.
- *Suicide*: While trafficked, approximately 12 to 15 per cent of foreign victims attempted suicide. These suicidal tendencies often continued even after the victim was assisted.
- *Psychiatric cases*: In 2003 and 2005, five foreign victims required and received substantive psychiatric treatment.
- *Drug/alcohol addiction*: Some foreign victims suffered drug and alcohol dependency at identification – one victim was addicted to drugs and a majority of victims abused alcohol and were forced to consume alcohol while trafficked, translating sometimes into a dependency. In 2005, one foreign victim was seriously addicted to both drugs and alcohol.
- *Physical injuries*: Some victims also endured serious physical injuries as a result of trafficking. One victim was beaten so severely by her trafficker that all of the bones in her hand were broken and she lost her eyesight.

In The Province of Kosovo, as in the rest of the region, there is a lack of information about the long-term health implications of trafficking. Also under-considered is the impact of trafficking on public health generally. There is a need for public health studies focusing on long-term health care needed by victims. However, care must be taken to not further stigmatize victims and to guard their privacy.

### **Post Trafficking Experience**

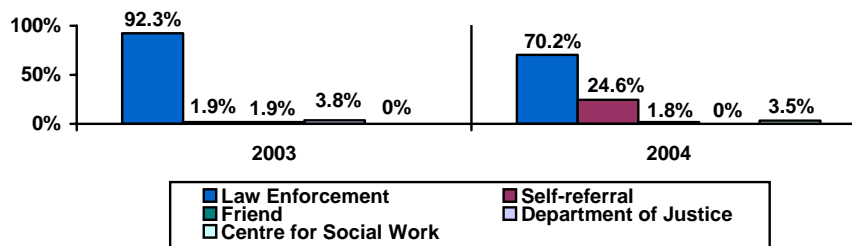
**Victim identification and referral:** In both years, the majority of victims were identified by law enforcement authorities, although numbers declined significantly in 2004. However, this does not always mean that law enforcement facilitated the victim's exiting trafficking situation. Rather, in many cases, victims contacted the police themselves and were subsequently referred.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>256</sup> In 2003, 46.7 per cent of the foreign and national victims assisted by IOM approached the police themselves and were then referred for assistance. Only 28.3 per cent were rescued as a result of police raids and/or other operations (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 55).

Simultaneously, 2004 saw a significant increase in the number of self-referrals. This is at least partly due to general awareness in the community of available services. Outreach by THBS also contributed to victims' knowledge of services and assistance available. While victims generally declined assistance offered during police operations, some did contact THBS at a later stage for assistance.

GRAPH 12  
IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO, 2003 AND 2004



Also of note is the number of victims identified by the Centres for Social Work. This was a new development and signals improvement in the work of these centres in assisting victims of trafficking.

**Re-trafficking:** A number of victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 had been trafficked previously, accounting for 21.7 per cent in 2003 and 11.7 per cent in 2004. Victims were primarily from Moldova and Ukraine. Often victims were trafficked to other countries initially and The Province of Kosovo was their destination when re-trafficked.

Re-trafficking often took place within six to 12 months of the victim's return to her home country. Generally, victims accepted work abroad again because of the limited options at home (for most, nothing substantive had changed from when they were first trafficked) and because of the feeling that they could effectively negotiate trafficking risks, having been exposed to the process in the past. Another contributor to re-trafficking may be the difficulties faced in the reintegration process, including stigma and shame associated with sexual exploitation. As well, if a victim has incurred debt from her trafficking experience, it may fuel her decision to migrate again.<sup>257</sup>

More generally, the issue of re-trafficking raises questions about the assistance needs of victims and the assistance framework itself. That is, in situations of return where very little has changed for these victims, the risk of re-trafficking is significant.

According to some service providers in the region, re-trafficking is more prevalent among victims of sexual exploitation. This is an issue that merits further study.

**Assistance declined:** There is insufficient information about this indicator to draw conclusions about all assisted foreign victims. However, some data from IOM is illuminating. In 2003, 15 victims screened by IOM were potential victims of trafficking

<sup>257</sup> Upon arrival in Kosovo, a woman's debt may be as high as EUR 3,500, having increased each time she was sold during the transportation phase. In addition, the debt increases as traffickers charge victims for medical treatment, accommodation, clothing, food, etc (Correspondence with Nicoleta Munteau, IOM Pristina, Kosovo, March 2005).



but declined assistance.<sup>258</sup> In 2004, six foreign victims of trafficking referred to IOM declined assistance, mainly because they did not wish to return home.<sup>259</sup> They preferred to stay and earn some money so that their families could be proud of them and see them as “successful”. Others declined fearing that representing themselves as trafficking victims would prevent them from returning to The Province of Kosovo for work in the future. Some also may not have seen themselves as victims, having been paid for their work, albeit often less than what was promised. Still other victims declined assistance because they did not feel that it was required. Having survived trafficking and escaped, they felt equipped to return home independently. Yet others were afraid to accept assistance because returning through an international organization was perceived as returning home with the police and as a betrayal of other girls who have not sought to escape and who fear being “rescued” because they are dependent upon the little money that they are able to earn and send home. Similarly, some fear that accepting assistance is seen as collaborating with the police and they fear the trafficker, who could further threaten them back home.

When foreign victims declined assistance in The Province of Kosovo, they often returned to their work situations since authorities in The Province of Kosovo lack the resources (detention centres, deportation mechanisms and financial means) to deport illegal migrants. As such, declining assistance in The Province of Kosovo often reflects a desire – a strategic economic choice – to return to work and earn money. This stands in contrast to most South-eastern European countries where victims who decline assistance are deported.

## 2.2 Kosovar Trafficking Victims

The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of assisted Kosovar victims of trafficking.

TABLE 6  
NUMBER OF ASSISTED KOSOVAR TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Kosovar trafficking victims	54	67	165	192	90	568

These figures comprise the number of Kosovar victims identified and subsequently receiving assistance in The Province of Kosovo. These figures also contain Kosovar victims trafficked to transit and destination countries and voluntarily returned through organized returns. Kosovar victims were both internally and internationally trafficked. Most victims were women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation, but a few male minors were also trafficked.

As the above table indicates, the number of Kosovar trafficking victims has increased since 2000. The Province of Kosovo is the only entity among the former Yugoslav countries to report such high numbers of internally trafficked cases.<sup>260</sup> This is

<sup>258</sup> More generally, between 2000 and 2003, IOM screened 671 victims and assisted 410. Of the 261 who were not assisted, some were not trafficking victims, while others declined the assistance offered, which is contingent upon return to their home country (UNICEF, 2004b: 48).

<sup>259</sup> Because there is legally no deportation mechanism from Kosovo, victims have the option to return to work if they decline the assistance offered. Assistance for foreign victims is contingent upon acceptance of returning home.

<sup>260</sup> It is debatable whether there is an increase in the rate of internal trafficking or an increase in identification of such cases.

attributable to The Province of Kosovo’s lingering post-conflict situation, rural poverty, the existing human trafficking networks and gender disparities in socio-economic opportunities. Counter-trafficking actors also postulate that this is a direct result of a surge in prostitution venues throughout the province, particularly on the outskirts of the cities, as well as in villages. While 2004 saw a drop in the number of identified and assisted Kosovar victims, many argue that there continue to be many Kosovar victims who go unidentified. Indeed, most Kosovar victims trafficked internally knew of many other Kosovar victims still in a trafficking situation.

The majority of Kosovar victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation. However, in a number of cases, victims were exploited for labour or begging as well as for a combination of labour, sexual exploitation and/or begging. This will be discussed in further detail, see *Forms of trafficking* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Kosovar Trafficking Victims*.

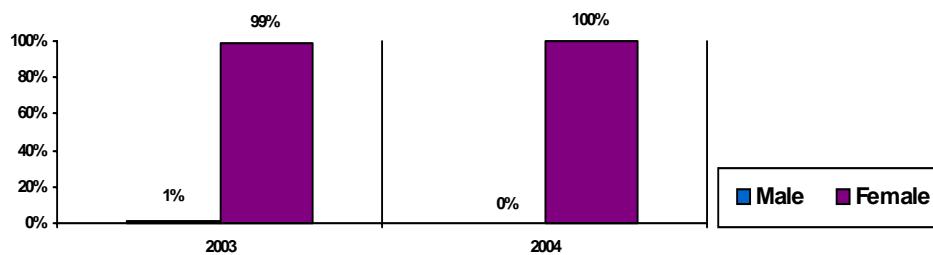
### 2.2.1 Profiles and Experiences of Kosovar Trafficking Victims

The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of Kosovar trafficking victims.

#### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics

**Sex:** The vast majority of Kosovar victims of trafficking were female. However, in 2003, two victims (one per cent) were minor male victims, trafficked for begging. As no males were identified and assisted in 2004, it is unclear if this was an emerging trend or an unusual circumstance. Certainly, males cannot be precluded from the risk of trafficking in The Province of Kosovo, particularly given the increased identification of male victims throughout the region and the high representation of male victims trafficked from Albania. The emergence of male victims will require identification mechanisms designed to ensure that all victims are accurately identified, regardless of their sex. In addition, assistance may need to be tailored to specific needs.

GRAPH 13



SEX OF KOSOVAR VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2003 AND 2004

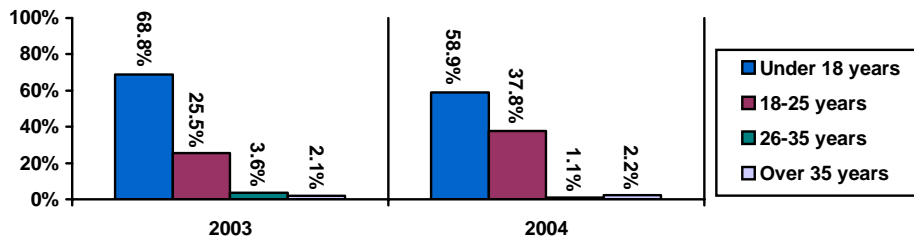
**Age:** In both 2003 and 2004, a dramatic number of victims were minors, accounting for the majority of victims in both years.<sup>261</sup> This high representation of minors among victims from the former Yugoslav countries in both 2003 and 2004 was consistent with findings from other Balkan countries, previously of destination and transit but

<sup>261</sup> This is generally consistent with previous years. CPWC reports that 81 per cent of victims assisted between 2000 and 2002 were minors.

increasingly countries of origin. This includes BiH, Croatia and Macedonia.<sup>262</sup> Similarly, this finding stands in contrast to the age of foreign victims assisted in The Province of Kosovo, most of whom were adults at identification.

These percentages are alarming and have significant implications for the type of assistance needed for re-integration. Moreover, these figures relate to victim's age at identification rather than at recruitment. It is likely that some victims identified as adults were, in fact, minors when recruited and since most service providers do not systematically record the victim's age at recruitment, it is difficult to calculate accurately the number of trafficked minors.

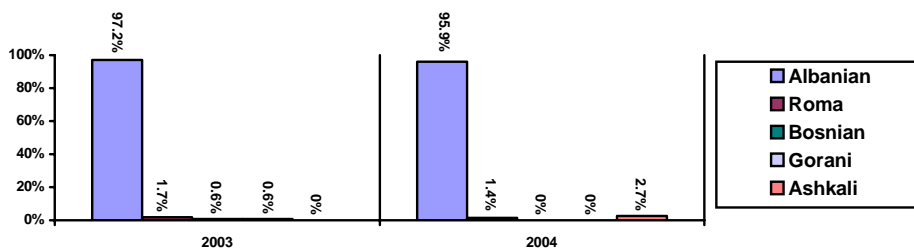
GRAPH 14  
AGE OF KOSOVAR VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2003 AND 2004



For reasons that are uncertain, only a minority of Kosovar victims were adults when trafficked –31.2 per cent in 2003 and 41.1 per cent in 2004.

**Ethnicity:** Almost all Kosovar victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 were ethnic Albanians. Only 2.3 per cent in 2003 and 4.1 per cent in 2004 were from ethnic minorities. This represents a slight increase from previous years in which CPWC documented three ethnic minorities among the 256 victims assisted between 2000 and 2002, or 1.2 per cent (CPWC, 2003: 37).<sup>263</sup>

GRAPH 15  
ETHNICITY OF KOSOVAR VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2003 AND 2004



Ethnic minorities may be particularly vulnerable to trafficking given their social and economic status as well as social disenfranchisement. In addition, among Roma there are cultural traditions, such as arranged marriage, that can facilitate trafficking. Given the representation of ethnic minorities among Kosovar victims, attention should be paid to this group in both prevention and protection efforts. This will entail more

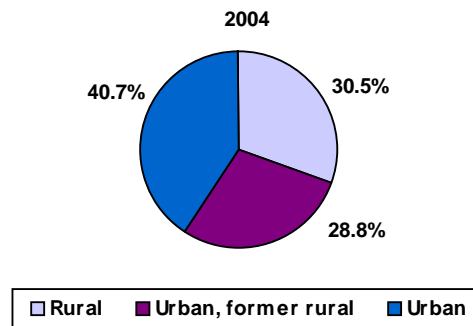
<sup>262</sup> See individual country reports for specific information about this finding.

<sup>263</sup> Similarly, six of the 469 victims of trafficking assisted by CPWC between 2000 and 2004 were ethnic minorities. They were Roma (2), Serbian (1), Ashkalie (2) and Bosnian (1) (UNICEF, 2004b: 36).

cooperation between ethnic minority communities and counter-trafficking actors. In addition, attention must be paid to differences among different ethnic minorities as well as the different subsections within ethnic populations.

**Area of origin:** There is insufficient information about this indicator for 2003 and 2004 to draw substantive conclusions. However, data from CPWC, which assisted a large number of Kosovar victims, suggests that most Kosovar victims were, at least originally, from rural areas. Many (28.8 per cent) were only recent urban dwellers, having moved to cities and towns since the Kosovo conflict. As such, in other respects their profiles may be more similar to rural dwellers.

GRAPH 16  
AREA OF ORIGIN OF KOSOVAR VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2004<sup>264</sup>



This finding is valuable in terms of identifying appropriate locations for prevention and reintegration efforts.<sup>265</sup> In addition, it highlights the importance of more precise information about the indicators we collect. Knowing that many victims were former rural dwellers who may live in impoverished conditions surrounding Pristina<sup>266</sup> can partly explain their vulnerability. As well, new urban dwellers may lack the social networks that serve as protection within well-established communities.

**Education:**<sup>267</sup> Between 50 to 60 per cent of Kosovar victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 had less than primary school education, including some with no education at all. In part, this reflects the youth of victims. As well, the political strife and subsequent war in the 1990s led many girls to withdraw from education, with the result that today many have very limited education.<sup>268</sup>

<sup>264</sup> These statistics refer to victims assisted by CPWC in 2004. It is, however, consistent with CPWC's earlier findings, in which 62 per cent of victims were rural dwellers and 38 per cent were urban dwellers, 18 per cent from capital cities and 20 per cent from towns (CPWC, 2003: 39).

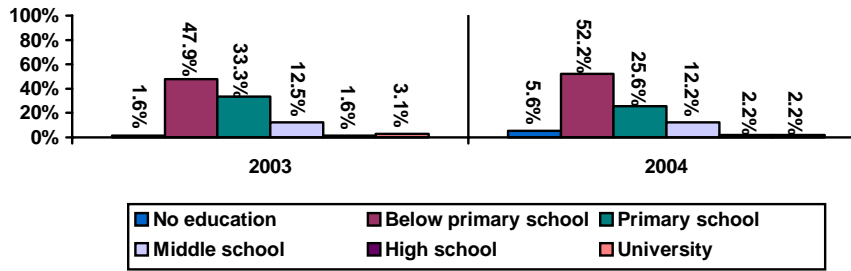
<sup>265</sup> For a discussion of the significance of this variable, please see: *Area of origin* in *Profiles and Experience of Foreign Victims Trafficked to Kosovo*.

<sup>266</sup> One study found that the conditions in peri-urban and suburban settings can be as impoverished as many rural settings. Further, as many new urban dwellers are, in fact, squatting, they may be socially and economically vulnerable (Surtees, 2000: 38).

<sup>267</sup> In Kosovo, primary school refers to the grades one through four, middle school to the completion of eight grades and high school refers to grades ten through 12.

<sup>268</sup> In 1989, with the suspension of autonomy in Kosovo, Albanian children were expelled or withdrew from the formal schooling system. While the Albanian community developed a "parallel" school system, school enrolment rates nevertheless decreased, especially among girls. Consequently, many young women, including teenage girls, now have very low education levels. Illiteracy rates of girls 16 to 19 are higher than among all other age groups.

GRAPH 17  
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF KOSOVAR VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2003 AND 2004

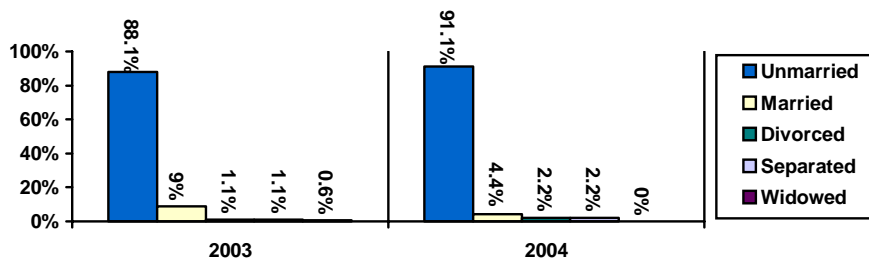


While few in number, it is also important to flag the handful of victims with high school and even university education in both years who contradict the idea that it is only the poorly educated who migrate. Limited economic options act as catalysts for trafficking/migration, sometimes even among the highly educated. In The Province of Kosovo, relatively high educational attainment does not necessarily translate into good economic and professional options, which is another aspect of trafficking vulnerability.

**Mental or physical disabilities:** A number of Kosovar trafficking victims in 2003 and 2004 had physical disabilities. This included 15 victims in 2003 (or 7.8 per cent) and five victims in 2004 (or 5.6 per cent). While many of these victims were trafficked for begging and labour, some, in both years, were also trafficked into sexual exploitation. There is a need to consider the specific assistance and reintegration needs of victims with physical disabilities, including medical assistance, vocational training, education programmes and job placement. Also salient is the need for targeted efforts to prevent the exploitation of person with disabilities.

**Marital and family status:** The vast majority of victims were unmarried at recruitment, partly due to the young age of most assisted victims, the majority of whom were minors at identification. Nevertheless, marital status is not a contributor that can be read in isolation, victims of different marital status were also vulnerable to trafficking.

GRAPH 18  
MARITAL STATUS OF KOSOVAR VICTIMS TRAFFICKED



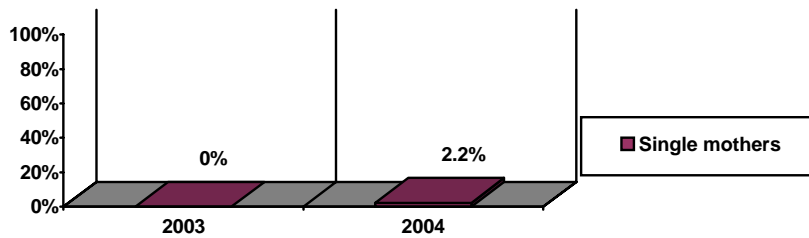
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004

It is also important to consider the number of victims with dependents as many women opt to migrate in an effort to better support their children. Only a fraction of assisted Kosovar victims in both 2003 and 2004 were mothers and even fewer were single mothers. Some victims, however, may have migrated because of the need to support

Further, there is a recent trend of Kosovar Albanian girls leaving the school system from the age of 11, which again means lower education levels of younger girls (UNICEF, 2004b: 10).

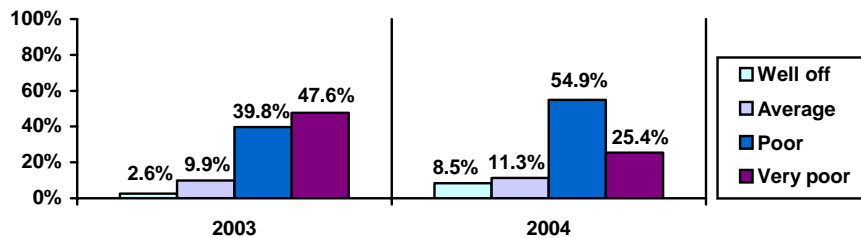
other dependents – siblings, parent or elderly relatives. This too can serve as a catalyst and, ideally, should be documented in case management.

GRAPH 19  
NUMBER OF SINGLE MOTHERS AMONG KOSOVAR VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2003 AND 2004



**Economic status:**<sup>269</sup> Kosovar victims of trafficking assisted in 2003 and 2004 were generally poor, signalling the importance of poverty as a contributor to trafficking. This is generally consistent with the overall economic circumstances in the province, with many families living in very poor conditions.

GRAPH 20  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF KOSOVAR VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2003 AND 2004



However, Kosovar victims' economic status improved somewhat over time. Whereas in 2003 "very poor" victims accounted for almost half of those assisted, this group declined to a quarter of assisted victims in 2004. In addition, while the majority of victims in 2004 were "poor", a noteworthy 20 per cent of victims were from either a "well-off" or "average" economic background. For further detail of the link between economics and trafficking, see *Foreign Victims of Trafficking Assisted in The Province of Kosovo*.

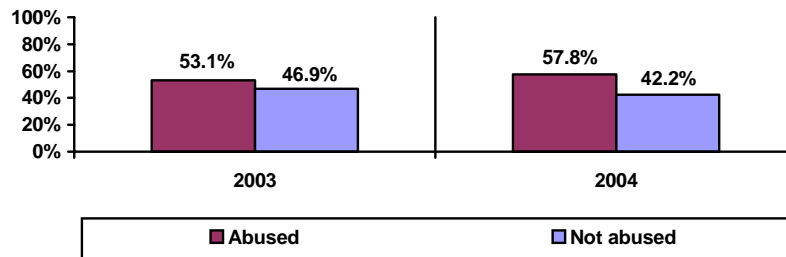
**Family and social relations:**<sup>270</sup> Poor family relations are often assumed to be a central contributor to trafficking. Among Kosovar victims, it appears that this was often a central catalyst. In an alarming number of cases, Kosovar victims originated from

<sup>269</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim's self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of "poor" or "average" vary accordingly.

<sup>270</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims' self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim's individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim's relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

violent homes. In some cases, this involved physical abuse, while other Kosovar victims were sexually abused within their family environment. In addition, a small percentage of victims in 2003 (0.5 per cent) came from homes in which alcohol dependency was a problem.

GRAPH 21  
VIOLENCE AND PROBLEMS IN THE HOME, KOSOVAR  
VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2003 AND 2004



A number of victims came from single-parent families (12.5 per cent in 2003 and 1.1 per cent in 2004) or had no parents at all (8.3 per cent in 2003 and none in 2004). While the link between single-parent families and trafficking is unclear, single-parent families tend to be more socially and economically vulnerable, which can increase trafficking risk.

Some victims came from very strict families, which can lead young girls to rebel. The Province of Kosovo is a conservative country and rebellion against tradition may make young girls open to work offers that camouflage trafficking recruitment.<sup>271</sup> Similarly, victims who have poor social relations with their peers or in the community may be more inclined to accept work abroad. Moreover, in light of the recent conflict in The Province of Kosovo, victims may have been exposed to past trauma. One victim assisted by CPWC in 2003 was not only a victim of trafficking but had also been raped during the war (CPWC, 2004: 6). In The Province of Kosovo context, it is worth considering whether and how conflict has heightened some victims' vulnerability to trafficking. Further, where victims have been exposed to myriad violations, their assistance and reintegration support must take this into account. Such victims are likely to require longer-term and perhaps different types of assistance.

Comprehensive information is needed about the family environment to develop reintegration plans. Where family conflict is chronic, the advisability of reintegration is open to question. Where the conditions that contributed to trafficking remain the same, reintegration is neither advisable nor a realistic solution. How family mediation and case monitoring can support reintegration into formerly problematic environments must be explored.

Even where family and social relations have been good in the past, the experience of trafficking can strain these relationships. Victims manifest their trauma in different ways and can be violent, anxious, depressed, etc., upon returning home. Tension can be particularly acute when the victim has been sexually exploited and experiences feelings

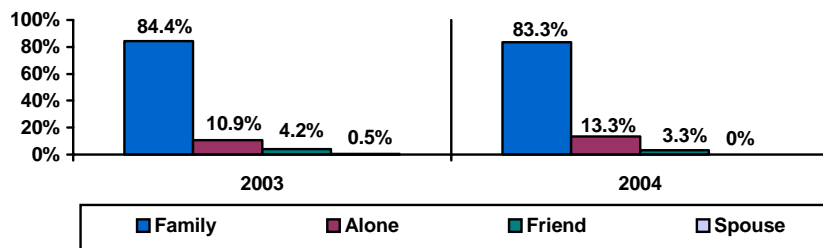
<sup>271</sup> This is not unique to Kosovo but has been observed in other areas. One Serbian victim trafficked abroad accepted work as a means to escape an arranged marriage her family was planning. See *Serbia Country Report*.

of guilt and shame. This issue has a particular resonance in The Province of Kosovo where ideals of female virginity and fidelity are pronounced and where families may blame the victim for their sexual exploitation. Thus, long-term family mediation and counselling are essential components of all reintegration programmes.<sup>272</sup>

## Recruitment Experiences

**Living situation at recruitment:** In the majority of cases, victims lived with family at recruitment. These findings are generally consistent with the young age of victims (the majority were minors and unmarried) as well as general residence patterns in The Province of Kosovo where most victims live with their families until marriage.<sup>273</sup> As well, most married women also live in an extended family environment.<sup>274</sup>

GRAPH 22  
LIVING SITUATION AT RECRUITMENT OF KOSOVAR VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2003 AND 2004



Residing with family does not appear to provide sufficient protection against trafficking. On the contrary, it is worth considering the degree to which this residence pattern may contribute to trafficking. Extended family living arrangements may be stressful or oppressive for women, particularly young women whose freedom is circumscribed. Similarly, divorced women may be socially stigmatized and unwelcome to return to their parent's homes. More attention to the precise dynamics of the victim's living arrangements at recruitment would serve as a starting point for both prevention and reintegration assistance.

In a number of cases, the victim lived alone at recruitment. As most women in The Province of Kosovo lived in family environments, this may indicate a problematic family background that they have sought to escape. Further, as women suffer higher rates of unemployment than their male counterparts in The Province of Kosovo,<sup>275</sup> women living alone are likely to be especially vulnerable economically, which may also create vulnerability to trafficking.

<sup>272</sup> For a more thorough discussion of this indicator, see *Family relations* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked to Kosovo*.

<sup>273</sup> Only 1.7 per cent of unmarried women in Kosovo in 2000 were not living with relatives. All others resided with their nuclear family (35.7 per cent) or in an extended family environment (62.6 per cent) (Surtees, 2000: 46).

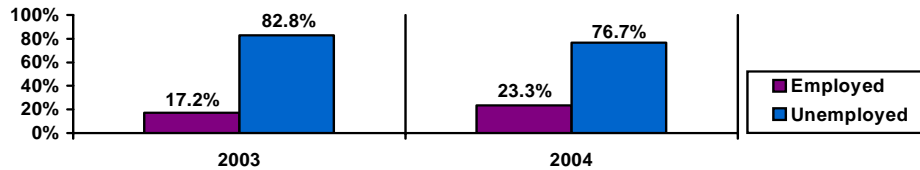
<sup>274</sup> In one survey, most married women in Kosovo (56.2 per cent) lived in an extended family environment, 49.1 per cent with the husband's family and 7.1 per cent with the wife's family (Surtees, 2000: 45).

<sup>275</sup> Female unemployment in Kosovo is 78.4 per cent as compared to 41.1 per cent for men. As the youth unemployment rate is 85 per cent, young women appear most likely to be unemployed and, thus, among the most economically vulnerable in Kosovo today (UNICEF, 2004b: 10-11).



**Working situation at recruitment:** Most victims were unemployed at recruitment. The high percentage of minor victims, many of whom should have been attending school at recruitment, partly explains this.

GRAPH 23  
EMPLOYMENT AT RECRUITMENT OF KOSOVAR VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2003 AND 2004



These findings are consistent with general employment patterns in the country, with an unemployment rate of 54.3 per cent and the youth unemployment rate at 85 per cent. Due to the poor economic circumstances in The Province of Kosovo, many young women work at the same time as, or instead of, attending school (UNICEF, 2004b: 10-11).

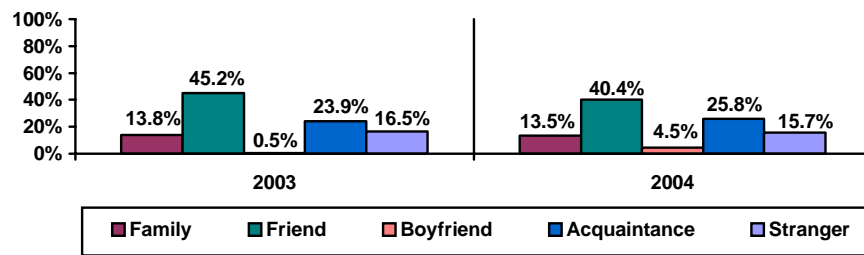
**Recruiter:** The majority of Kosovar victims were recruited by men, accounting for 85.3 per cent of assisted victims in 2003 and 86.5 per cent in 2004. In only one instance, in 2003, was a victim recruited by a couple. In contrast to some other countries in region, there has been no significant emergence of female recruiters. In the handful of cases of female recruiters, recruitment was done at schools through female friends or older students (CPWC, 2003: 41).

As critical to note was the victim’s relationship to her recruiter. In both years, most victims had an existing relationship with the recruiter – in 83.5 per cent of cases in 2003 and 84.3 per cent in 2004. Most Kosovar victims in both years were recruited by a friend. Similarly, a noteworthy minority of victims were recruited by family members. These findings indicate that prevention efforts must target the risk of recruitment within women’s immediate and intimate environment.

Also of note were the handful of victims recruited by a boyfriend – 0.5 per cent in 2003, increasing to 4.5 per cent in 2004. As CPWC explained, “He promises to love her. He promises her marriage. He promises her a job. He promises to take her out of The Province of Kosovo.” (AI 2004: 18) Some men may start relationships with women as part of the recruitment process, consistent with the “lover boy phenomenon”.<sup>276</sup> If so, prevention efforts will need to be alert to and counteract this insidious recruitment method.

<sup>276</sup> As outlined in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked to Kosovo*.

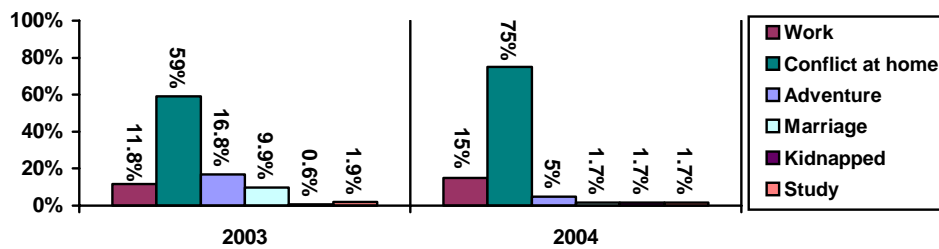
GRAPH 24  
RELATIONSHIP TO RECRUITER OF KOSOVAR VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2003 AND 2004



In both 2003 and 2004, most recruiters were Kosovar Albanians, consistent with the ethnicity and area of origin of victims.

**Reasons for leaving home country and type of work promised:** In sharp contrast to foreign victims, Kosovar victims generally left home because of problems in the family. This group accounted for the majority of victims in both years and an increased majority in 2004.

GRAPH 25  
REASONS FOR LEAVING HOME OF KOSOVAR VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2003 AND 2004<sup>277</sup>



In only a few cases were victims recruited with work offers. The type of work promised was generally waitressing, selling and begging. However, in a number of cases, victims were also told that they would work as a prostitute (four victims in 2003 and eight in 2004) and as a waitress/prostitute (five victims in 2003 and four in 2004). Other victims were offered work begging, accounting for ten victims in 2003 (cf. UNICEF, 2004b: 24).

A desire for adventure was the striking rationale given by a number of victims. Some girls rebelled against traditional women's roles and conservative family environments. In other cases, they were simply looking for a more exciting life away from home and even in a foreign country. For most, without the means to travel or study abroad, accepting work offers was the only means by which such adventures were possible. Kosovar victims were also recruited with other promises – marriage or study abroad.

<sup>277</sup> Data presented in the RCP's first annual report found similar results, with only 35 per cent of victims lured by false job promises. A number of victims (29 per cent) were trafficked by way of physical coercion, rape and blackmail. Another 18 per cent were lured by false marriage promises and 18 per cent were entrapped by false travel arrangements.

Further, and in contrast to the rest of the region, it cannot be ignored that some victims continue to be kidnapped.

### Transportation and Movement

**Destination country:** A striking number of Kosovar victims were trafficked within the province for sexual exploitation, perhaps the highest rate of “internal” trafficking within the region.

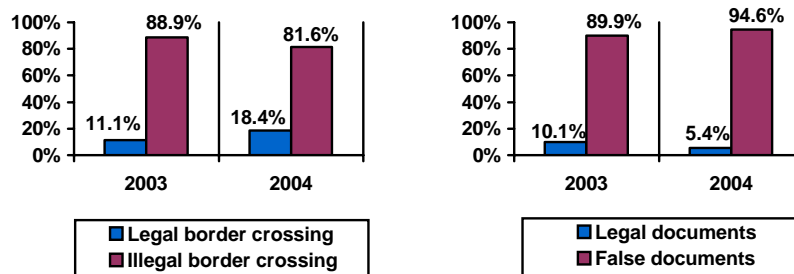
TABLE 7  
DESTINATION COUNTRIES FOR KOSOVAR TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004

Destination Countries	2003	2004
Albania	0	2
Germany	0	1
The Province of Kosovo <sup>278</sup>	159	57
Macedonia	9	12
Switzerland	2	1
Unknown	22	17
Total	192	90

In addition, a handful of victims were trafficked to EU countries – Germany and Switzerland or to neighbouring countries – Macedonia and Albania.

**Border crossings and documents:** Most Kosovar victims crossed borders illegally and with either false or no documents. This contrasts with a number of countries in the region where victims increasingly crossed at legal borders. Illegality of transportation (including the lack of legal documents) increases the possibilities of detection and also amplifies victim vulnerability as, even if they escape, they are without the means to cross borders and return home and it adds to a victim’s sense of complicity.

GRAPH 26  
BORDER CROSSINGS AND DOCUMENTS – KOSOVAR VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2003 AND 2004



In part, the illegality of transportation reflected the young age of victims (most in 2004 were minors) who were unable to cross borders without the consent of their parents. Where consent was granted, questions need to be asked about family complicity in trafficking and the type of reintegration support that is advisable.

**Transportation routes:** As most Kosovar victims were trafficked internally, routes *per se* were difficult to pinpoint. It is noteworthy, however, that one means of identification has been trafficking checkpoints.

<sup>278</sup> This designates cases of internal trafficking. In some cases, victims were trafficked only internally, while, in other instances, victims were trafficked internally as a first step to being trafficked internationally.

Routes for Kosovar victims trafficked abroad are very much dependent on the final intended destination. Victims *en route* to EU countries generally passed through the former Yugoslav republics and entered the EU in either Slovenia or Hungary. Other victims trafficked to Macedonia and Albania (as transit countries or final destinations) crossed illegally.

### Victims' Trafficking Experiences

**Forms of trafficking:** As was the case with foreign victims, most Kosovar victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation in The Province of Kosovo took place in variety of venues. In the past, victims were sexually exploited in bars and nightclubs where clients came to solicit sexual services. More recently, sexual services were also offered in more private locations in an effort to thwart law enforcement. Remarkably, different sources reported that Kosovar victims tended not to be exploited in the same locations as foreign victims.

In addition, service providers also reported a particular manifestation of sex trafficking in The Province of Kosovo in which the woman was abducted and subsequently subjected to repeated rape by a group of men or repeatedly abducted and forced to have sex with different men over a period of several months. After the initial ordeal, sometimes lasting for up to a month, the women were released, often dumped outside their homes or schools. The economic motive in this form of trafficking was unclear (Amnesty International, 2004: 19). It is also unclear how prevalent this trend was.

While sexual exploitation is the predominant form of trafficking, the majority of Kosovar victims were forced to simultaneously undertake labour tasks. Generally, this was a combination of prostitution and waitressing. However, in some cases, it involved cleaning or domestic work in addition to prostitution.

TABLE 8  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING OF KOSOVAR  
VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2003 AND 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Sexual exploitation	29	33
Labour	1	0
Sexual exploitation and labour	149	56
Begging	2	0
Labour and begging	9	0
Potential victims <sup>279</sup>	2	1
Total	192	90

Some victims in 2003 were also trafficked for labour and/or begging. Victims generally begged in the street as well as sold small items. Often labour and begging was undertaken simultaneously. This changed in 2004, with no victims exploited for these purposes in that year.

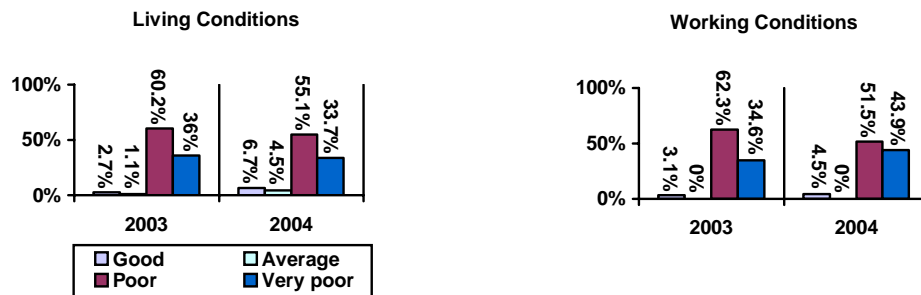
**Length of time trafficked:** Victims were trafficked for periods that ranged from a few days to several years. In 2003, 40 per cent of victims were trafficked for less than a year while 60 per cent were trafficked for more than a year, including some exploited for as many as five years. In 2004, the length of time trafficked decreased noticeably

<sup>279</sup> This designation is used when the individual was assisted for an insufficient time to clearly establish his/her trafficking experience or when the individual was identified and assisted before being exploited but after showing strong signs of being in the trafficking process.

with only 46 per cent of victims trafficked for more than one year. However, some victims were still trafficked for as many as four and five years. Given that all assisted victims were minors, many have spent a large part of their lives in a trafficking situation. The substantial time spent trafficked signals the difficulty faced by minors in exiting trafficking. The difficulties of minors whose developmental stages of life have been shaped by trafficking experiences are an additional challenge in recovery and reintegration assistance.

**Living and working conditions:** Apart from a handful of cases, victims lived in generally “poor” and even “very poor” conditions while trafficked. A few victims in 2003 reported “average” and even “good” conditions, with the percentage increasing further in 2004. While few in number, this does signal some improvement in living conditions for Kosovar victims. A small number of victims also reported “good” or “average” working conditions, although this finding must be read against a backdrop of overall “poor” and “very poor” working conditions.

GRAPH 27  
LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS WHILE TRAFFICKED OF  
KOSOVAR VICTIMS ASSISTED IN 2003 AND 2004



Kosovar victims, especially minors, seldom received any payment while trafficked. This differs substantially from foreign victims (UNICEF, 2004b: 25; cf. Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 64). As well, conditions for Kosovar victims were apparently worse than among their foreign counterparts, with victims sleeping only a few hours a night, forced to service ten to 15 clients a day and consuming high-energy drinks to stay awake (AI, 2004: 18).

**Abuse suffered:** While there is insufficient information about this indicator for 2004 to draw statistical conclusions, generally victims endured long working hours, poor nutrition, no financial remuneration, physical abuse by traffickers and employers, sexual violence and no or little freedom of movement.<sup>280</sup> One service provider estimated that 80 per cent of Kosovar victims were first sexually abused by the owner of the bar or café and then forced to sexually serve clients. Victims were also commonly abused when they failed to “obey” the owner of the bar/café or were seen as behaving badly. Given the high prevalence of minors in 2003 and 2004, the perpetration of abuse will necessarily have substantial physical and psychological effects on girls who are still in their developmental stage. However, the form of abuse does not denote its severity, which may be more crucial in terms of ensuring that medical and psychological services appropriately meet the needs of these victims.

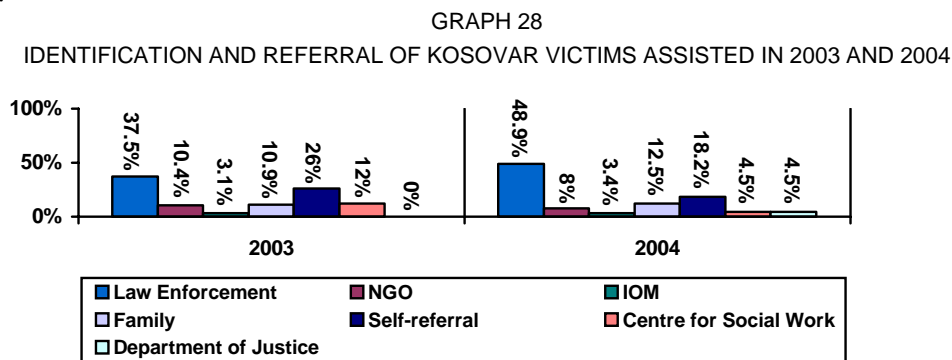
<sup>280</sup> In 2003, 77 per cent of Kosovar victims assisted by IOM suffered sexual abuse and 71 per cent per cent suffered physical abuse (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 64).

Further, data from IOM suggests a decreased use of abuse by traffickers. All of the Kosovar victims assisted by IOM in 2003 had suffered abuse, a number that declined to 50 per cent in 2004. This contrasts with the experiences of many foreign victims, the majority of whom suffered abuse while trafficked in 2003 and 2004.

**Mental and physical well-being:** Insufficient information was available to draw substantive conclusions. Overall, victims were in poor physical and mental condition at identification due to poor living conditions and lack of access to medical care. Most Kosovar victims suffered from STIs as well as infections and injuries to their reproductive organs. Some victims became pregnant as a direct result of their sexual exploitation. Many suffered violence and injury while trafficked, affecting their physical health. Some victims also developed a dependency on alcohol, cigarettes or narcotics while trafficked, which necessarily compromised their health. One Kosovar victim in 2005 was severely addicted to both drugs and alcohol, which placed serious obstacles in the way of assistance. Victims arrived at the shelter traumatized psychologically, manifesting a range of behavioural problems as well as depression, aggression, anxiety and stress. Some Kosovar victims suffered psychiatric problems as well, with at least one case of psychosis treated in 2004.

### Post Trafficking Experience

**Victim identification and referral:** In contrast to most countries in the region, Kosovar victims were identified by a range of organizations. While law enforcement was responsible for the largest number of identifications, it still amounted to only 37.5 per cent in 2003 and 48.9 per cent in 2004. Some victims spoke of police officers or social workers frequenting bars as clients, which decreased the likelihood that victims would trust these actors and identify themselves as victims.<sup>281</sup> Victims also reported not understanding the intention of police interviews, undercutting their willingness to access assistance and present themselves as trafficking victims (UNICEF, 2004b: 52-53).



A number of victims (and/or their families) directly sought the assistance of service providers, perhaps due to the outreach model of CPWC with its ten centres throughout the province as well as the long-standing work of various local NGOs.

Also of note was the 12 per cent of victims in 2003 and 4.5 per cent in 2004 who were identified by Centres for Social Work, bodies that were not involved previously in the

<sup>281</sup> Concern has been expressed that some minor victims of trafficking were left working in bars due to lack of evidence that prostitution was taking place on the premises or because they were not identified as minors (UNICEF, 2004b: 52).

identification of victims. This improvement may be the result partly of the training provided to social workers. Nevertheless, only a fraction of Kosovar victims were identified in this way and more efforts are needed.

**Re-trafficking:** A number of Kosovar victims had been trafficked previously – 21 in 2003 (10.9 per cent) and 14 in 2004 (15.6 per cent).

Service providers, such as IOM, reported paying special attention to monitoring Kosovar victims, but they were dependent on beneficiaries' willingness to be further contacted. Approximately half of the Kosovar victims assisted by IOM to date were still being monitored. Others declined further contact after a few months, while some refused all assistance. Kosovar trafficking victims may be less inclined to accept assistance because of the small size of the province and the likelihood that neighbours will find about their participation in this programme. Even where victims themselves do not fear stigmatization, their families may discourage their participation.

Case monitoring mechanisms and longer-term follow-up services, ideally, should be provided by organizations already working in communities but not associated with service provision to trafficked victims. Community or regionally-based service providers could more adequately assess the beneficiary's progress, while offering supportive services and specialized counselling and technical assistance, as needed. For further discussion, see *Re-trafficking in: Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked to The Province of Kosovo*.

**Assistance declined:** There is insufficient information about this indicator to draw conclusions.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO

In this section, we analyse the identification and referral mechanism in The Province of Kosovo (Section 3.1) as well as the assistance and protection available to foreign and national victims of trafficking (Section 3.2).

#### 3.1 Victim Identification and Referral in The Province of Kosovo

The official identification and referral of trafficking victims in The Province of Kosovo is similar for foreign and Kosovar victims. All victims are identified by law enforcement authorities and subsequently transferred to the ISF shelter, where they are screened and offered appropriate assistance. If the victim is foreign, s/he is interviewed by IOM and offered the IOM assistance package, which includes return to the home country. Those who accept this assistance are transferred to the PVPT shelter where they are accommodated and assisted prior to their return. Kosovar victims are referred to one of the shelters that accommodate Kosovar victims. If adults, Kosovar victims are accommodated at one of the local NGO shelters. As well, IOM provides support in the assistance to Kosovar victims. If the victim is a minor, s/he is offered assistance at one of the shelters operated by the international NGO Hope and Homes.

The referral process for foreign victims is clearly outlined in the recently developed *Standard Operating Procedures for Direct Assistance and Support to Foreign Trafficked Victims*. These procedures describe the responsibilities and services to be provided by each of the signatories and provide a good example of assistance cooperation in the region. Similar standard operating procedures are currently being mapped out to for the identification and assistance of Kosovar victims of trafficking.

While there is a clear line of referral, initial contact with the victim can occur through a range of actors, including law enforcement authorities, NGOs, self referral, IOM, the helpline and Centres for Social Work.

### **Law Enforcement**

Police identify the vast majority of foreign victims. Within the UNMIK Police, THBS is responsible for coordinating operational activities for discovering trafficking in human beings and collecting evidence to charge perpetrators. Increasingly, Kosovo Police Service (KPS) officers partner with THBS teams in this work. As a result of THBS investigations, numerous establishments have been identified throughout The Province of Kosovo as accommodating trafficked women and girls. These establishments are under scrutiny primarily because they employ foreign women. Nevertheless, in 2003, TPIU largely abandoned raids as a tactic and started to employ more investigative strategies. This proactive strategy involves intelligence gathering as well as a disruptive model according to which police mobilize all resources at their disposal – tax, customs and sanitary inspectors – to disrupt the business of the traffickers.<sup>282</sup>

Through law enforcement operations or routine identification checks, alleged victims are brought to the nearest police station for pre-screening interviews. TPIU officers conduct the interviews to collect evidence, determine trafficking status and assess victims' needs. Interviews are conducted following a standardized questionnaire. If officers determine that a victim is trafficked, s/he is transferred to the ISF shelter in Pristina, where assistance is offered according to the referral structure.

Foreign women who are not identified as trafficked victims can be charged with prostitution, illegal border crossing, illegal residency in The Province of Kosovo or false documentation and sentenced up to 20 days of detention. However, as there are no deportation mechanisms in place in The Province of Kosovo, women are thereafter free to leave and usually return to their work location.

Few referrals come through border officials. This is partly because most victims have not yet been exploited when entering The Province of Kosovo and, thus, cannot be identified. However, some measures can be taken. A recent UNICEF study documented the inadequacies of procedures used by immigration authorities at Pristina airport. Upon arrival, the women went through a brief interview without translation and were asked if they were working voluntarily. While their documents and personal information was copied, no other precautions were taken and they were provided with no information about the risks of working in The Province of Kosovo (UNICEF, 2004b: 43). Better identification procedures for all frontline officials are required.

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<sup>282</sup> Interview with Stefano Failla, THBS, Pristina, Kosovo, 16 February 2005.



### **Self-Referral**

Many Kosovar victims were identified through NGOs and women's organizations. Individual women or their families contact these established organizations to request assistance. These organizations play a significant role in efforts to combat trafficking in persons. Because of the lack of health structures, particularly in the rural areas, these organizations often offer mental health care and medical care as well as legal assistance and shelter, as needed. A large number of CPWC clients directly contacted one of the organization's centres seeking assistance.

The CPWC is composed of ten centres located throughout the country. However, due to lack of funding, a number of these centres will close in 2005. It remains to be seen if this will reduce referrals of Kosovar victims of trafficking, but the high number of referrals through centres suggests that it is a risk.

### **Centres for Social Work**

In each municipality, the Department of Social Welfare operates local Centres for Social Work (CSW) that are tasked with addressing the social needs of vulnerable population groups. Within the Direct Assistance and Shelter Coordination group, the CSWs are responsible for referring beneficiaries for psychological and psychiatric treatment or for medical diagnosis. Within the CSWs, 31 social workers were appointed as trafficking focal points and are available, in theory, on a 24-hour basis. Of note are the number of referrals of Kosovar victims by Centres for Social Work in 2003 and 2004, accounting for 12 per cent and 4.5 per cent respectively. This reflects positively on OSCE's efforts in further developing the capacity of this government institution. In recognition of the important role of these social actors in service provision, IOM plans to train the social workers on working with Kosovar victims and their families in the reintegration process.

### **Helplines**

In 2004, the Department of Justice established a helpline for victims of trafficking. To date, the helpline has received approximately 100 calls, 15 of which were related to trafficking. The remaining 85 calls constituted a misuse of the helpline, either prank calls or threats. Of the 15 trafficking-related calls, ten were directly from victims and five were from victims' families. These trafficking calls were all related to trafficking in women for sexual exploitation. It remains to be seen whether this helpline will lead to more trafficking victims being identified in The Province of Kosovo. In other countries in the region, most helplines serve more of an informational/preventative role; that a number of calls were received directly from victims is a positive sign. On the other hand, the helpline is operated by the Department of Justice and most callers are referred to law enforcement agencies or provided with legal advice and given little other assistance, counselling or referral. More attention must be paid to the effective counselling and referral process for victims accessing the helpline.

## **3.2 Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in The Province of Kosovo**

In the aftermath of the 1999 conflict, The Province of Kosovo lacked local governing structures. Therefore, the international community and civil society has carried out the bulk of the counter-trafficking assistance and protection services for victims. UNMIK conducts anti-trafficking efforts with the OSCE, the Provisional Institutions of Self-

Government (PISG), internal organizations and local and international NGOs. UNMIK Regulation 2001/4 on the *Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons in The Province of Kosovo* created a framework of assistance for trafficking victims incorporating temporary safe housing, psychosocial services, medical care, legal counselling and social welfare assistance. The assistance and services are outlined below.

As a general comment, a number of service providers noted the lack of specialized assistance to what might be termed “difficult cases”. Such cases often require assistance that falls outside of the normal assistance package and often service providers are without the skills and/or resources to adequately meet the needs of such victims. More attention is needed to helping such victims, including the development of interviewing skills, appropriate services and sensitized staff.

### **Shelter**

There are a number of different shelters located in the province supporting trafficking victims. Some are dedicated to trafficking victims (PVPT, ISF), while others assist victims of different forms of violence (ASB, Gjakova Women’s Safe, Women’s Wellness Centre, CPWC and Hope and Homes).

One shelter – Interim Secure Facility (ISF) – serves as a transit shelter for all identified victims prior to their referral to an appropriate shelter or assistance programme. It is intended as a place where victims can establish some sense of normalcy and reflect on their options prior to making any decisions about assistance. Victims receive all emergency assistance required as well as the option to participate in shelter activities. ISF also serves as a secure facility for high-risk cases and can be used for other categories of beneficiaries, such as witnesses in trafficking cases in need of protection.

One dedicated shelter exists for foreign victims of trafficking in The Province of Kosovo, located in Pristina. It is managed by the NGO PVPT and its beneficiaries are those who wish to be returned through IOM. The shelter accepts foreign victims of trafficking, both minors and adults. It is a restricted movement shelter, which means that beneficiaries may not enter or exit the shelter unaccompanied by shelter staff. The official capacity of the shelter is 15. The average length of stay depends primarily on the time required to secure identity and travel documents. Upon admission to the shelter, residents sign a contract in their native language regarding their voluntary admission to the shelter and acknowledgement of rules and regulations.

With the introduction of the three-month residency permit for foreign victims, service providers will need to reassess the lodging environment and services provided at the shelter. Moreover, service providers must develop alternatives to lodging beneficiaries within a closed, restricted movement shelter. Shelter and assistance services for foreign victims who do not wish to return home immediately are undeveloped, and it is unclear which organization(s) will provide such mid and long-term assistance for this category of foreign victims.

There are four shelters for trafficked Kosovar victims in The Province of Kosovo, located in Pristina, Peć/Peja, Prizren and Jakova/Djakovica. All of these shelters are managed by experienced local women NGOs that are primarily involved in combating violence against women. All of these shelters (ASB, Gjakove Women’s Safe, Women’s Wellness Centre) provide lodging for both Kosovar trafficking victims and domestic

violence cases. Three organizations provide short-term *ad hoc* lodging for Kosovar trafficked victims. The other organization (CPWC) has a more permanent structure for victims at greater risk of violence. Cases can be referred to the shelter on a 24-hour basis through one of the CPWC centres in the field.

None of the shelters has sufficient capacity or resources to offer long-term accommodation, constituting a gap in the assistance available to Kosovar victims. Further, one issue of concern flagged by the OSCE Department of Human Rights and Rule of Law is that shelters for domestic violence do not have the appropriate security measures for trafficking victims. As well, in some cases, domestic violence counsellors do not have the experience to provide appropriate support and services to trafficking victims (UNICEF, 2004b: 51).

Two shelters, operated by the international NGO Hope and Homes, are devoted to the assistance needs of minor victims, both foreign and Kosovar. These shelters are not dedicated to trafficking but rather accept minor victims of violence generally. However, a significant percentage of beneficiaries are victims of trafficking and staff have been trained in how to assist minor victims of trafficking as well as victims of other forms of violence. The two shelters are based in Pristina and Prizren. While both shelters are short to medium-term accommodation, in practice, the lack of longer-term options means that victims tend to stay there for long periods – up to two years. Significantly, the shelters are funded in part by the Government (the Department of Justice, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare), which bodes well for sustainability. In addition, the possibility of assisting minor trafficking victims within existing care facilities, including accommodation for children without parental care, victims of violence, *etc.* should be considered.

In 2005, a programme for semi-independent living for young adults was implemented and includes trafficking victims. This programme, aimed at long-term recovery and reintegration of victims is a first step in providing longer-term accommodation options for minors.

### **Medical Care**

General medical examinations are offered on a voluntary basis to both foreign and Kosovar victims of trafficking. Each of the shelters arranges for confidential and free-of-charge medical care within the organization's medical examination room or through a public health institution. Routine gynaecological examinations include tests for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Most beneficiaries present symptoms of STIs. Gynaecological examinations also include pregnancy tests and a number of victims (both foreign and Kosovar) have tested positive for pregnancy.

Due to the difficulty of ensuring secure, confidential and reliable HIV tests in The Province of Kosovo, shelter beneficiaries are not offered HIV tests. Therefore, no figures regarding HIV-positive beneficiaries are available. However, group counselling sessions and reproductive health booklets include information about HIV, and counsellors recommend that beneficiaries obtain HIV tests after they return to their home countries.

Shelter medical examinations also reveal that a significant minority of victims sustain physical injuries while trafficked. Victims suffer regular physical abuse, which can

result in serious physical injury. Service providers report that several beneficiaries developed a dependency upon alcohol use while trafficked. This has been a problem for both foreign and local victims. One local victim required psychological counselling to help her end her addiction.

One valuable medical initiative undertaken by UMCOR in The Province of Kosovo between July 2002 and August 2003 provided free-of-charge reproductive health service to trafficking victims and prostitutes. Ten gynaecological clinics throughout The Province of Kosovo were provided with the necessary equipment and training to offer services to trafficked women and prostitutes in a manner that takes into account their special needs in terms of services, confidentiality and safety. In all, 508 trafficking victims and prostitutes received medical assistance under this project. Unfortunately, the project was discontinued for lack of funds, but it stands as a good practice in terms of medical care for trafficking victims.

### **Psychological and Psychiatric Care**

Each of the shelters offers psychological support to beneficiaries. Psychological services vary from organization to organization but consist of both individual and group counselling sessions. Most shelter residents take part in the voluntary counselling sessions. These counselling sessions allow for assessment of the beneficiary's emotional status and facilitate the development of personality profiles and individual psychological reports. These reports are given to the organizations in the victim's country of origin prior to their return to enable more targeted reintegration assistance. The effectiveness of the counselling is difficult to assess given the short time most victims spend in the shelter. However, as many victims return to difficult family and social environments, they can benefit from the development of effective coping and decision-making skills, which are components of counselling.

Victims rarely receive follow-up counselling in their home communities, due both to the lack of services outside of Pristina and a reluctance to avail it for fear of stigmatization. IOM recently hired a psychologist who meets Kosovar victims in their hometowns, using the Centres for Mental Health as a meeting place, according to an agreement between the IOM and the Ministry of Health. A psychiatrist is also contracted to assist those Kosovar trafficking victims who are in need of psychiatric care and treatment. Longer-term counselling and psychosocial support services such as this should be developed in regions outside Pristina, in particular in communities of origin and at-risk communities. The professional capacity of NGOs in this area should be enhanced in order that victims can avail themselves of long-term supportive services with a reduced fear of stigmatization within their communities. As important, mental health care providers working for the government must be trained in counselling and supporting victims of trafficking. These services should be provided throughout the country.

If beneficiaries present mental and neurological symptoms, a private psychiatrist is contacted for treatment. To date, very few beneficiaries have needed psychiatric treatment and hospitalization. This is fortunate as psychiatric treatment facilities in The Province of Kosovo are limited and it is unclear what type of assistance would be available for victims requiring such services.

## Recreational Activities

Shelter beneficiaries take part in a range of activities, depending upon the shelter and the duration of their stay. Some activities are shorter term and geared to establishing a routine and some sense of normalcy for victims. They include cooking and housekeeping as well as recreational activities, such as arts, crafts, aerobics, knitting, English language and computer skills. Shelters for minors also include educational tutoring.

There is a need to develop strategies for longer-term educational and vocational assistance for victims who reside in shelters for longer periods. This might even involve individualized educational assistance in cooperation with NGOs that offer educational, social, and/or economic empowerment assistance to victims.

## Legal Assistance

UNMIK Regulation 2001/4 and the Yugoslav Criminal Procedure Code afford legal protection and assistance for trafficked victims. Victims are entitled to: safeguards against delayed return due to lengthy criminal investigations and trials,<sup>283</sup> free legal counselling,<sup>284</sup> interpretation during all legal proceedings,<sup>285</sup> alternatives to providing live testimony in court,<sup>286</sup> no cross-examination of a victim's personal history and character,<sup>287</sup> and the option of monetary compensation from traffickers.<sup>288</sup> These provisions present promising legal assistance mechanisms for victims inside and outside The Province of Kosovo. In practice, however, many of these protections are not implemented. Some judges have not followed the UNMIK regulation when sentencing, applying sentences lower than the minimum applicable sentence (UNICEF, 2004b: 71). Other actors have expressed concern about the lack of sensitivity to trafficking victims on the part of judges and prosecutors.

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<sup>283</sup> Victims provide a written statement during the investigative stage, rather than remaining in Kosovo to provide testimony in a trial. Overall, this regulation, which recognizes the primacy of the victim's rights and recovery, is applied in practice.

<sup>284</sup> In practice, access to legal counsel has been largely absent. Foreigners who entered the IOM assisted return programme did not generally meet with lawyers or discuss their cases with legal professionals. Even when victims provided written or live testimony in criminal cases, they did not receive individualized legal representation. However, they do have access to victims' advocates who provide support during legal proceedings. This is organized under the Victims Advocacy and Assistance Unit (VAAU).

<sup>285</sup> While service providers state that there are enough interpreters available, the presence of an interpreter needs to be better coordinated to ensure that victims routinely receive interpretation services during legal proceedings.

<sup>286</sup> To protect victims and avoid direct confrontation between the victim and the defendant, a court may permit victims and witnesses to present evidence *in camera* or by electronic means. These alternatives are rarely used in practice. Most courts in Kosovo lack the technical equipment (such as audio and video links) necessary for these alternative forms of testimony. Instead, victims should be allowed to provide written testimony rather than live or indirect testimony.

<sup>287</sup> Such a provision is valuable. Curtailing the introduction of personal information decreases the amount of secondary trauma experienced by victims during legal proceedings. Application of this evidentiary rule remains uneven. Ongoing sensitization and training of judges is needed as well as training for victims' lawyers in how to make proper objections to this kind of testimony.

<sup>288</sup> The Regulation calls for a reparation fund for victims, funded by property confiscated from traffickers. This fund has not yet been established, and mechanisms for legally confiscating traffickers' property must be finalized. While the Yugoslav Criminal Procedure Code allows for civil claims by victims of crime, there are no reports of such cases.

Overall, four types of legal assistance are available to victims of trafficking in persons:

1) *Documentation assistance necessary for their return*: IOM is primarily responsible for obtaining the identity and travel documents that foreign victims require to return to their home countries. IOM arranges for the issuance of these documents through the victim's embassy or consulate in The Province of Kosovo or in the nearest diplomatic office.

2) *Legal information regarding the victim's overall status as a victim of trafficking*: Most identified and assisted victims receive some form of legal information from NGOs or IOM regarding their overall status and rights as a victim of trafficking in The Province of Kosovo. In addition, victims received information about The Province of Kosovo penal system, including provisions about forced sexual relations, false testimony and false documents as well as the rights of the injured party, support available in the criminal justice process and problems that they could potentially face.

3) *Individualized legal advice and representation for those participating in legal proceedings against traffickers*: In terms of individualized, professional legal services, the majority of victims do not receive direct assistance from a lawyer and more attention to the provision of legal representation is needed. The Victim Advocacy and Assistance Unit (VAAU), under the Department of Justice, aims to address this gap by assisting trafficked victims (along with victims of other forms of violence). This includes providing advocacy and training to relevant actors and providing direct legal assistance and support services to victims.

4) *Legal assistance for Kosovar victims in procuring legal documents*: Kosovar victims without their identity papers require assistance in procuring these documents, which are essential to access medical and other social services. The government should facilitate and expedite this process in the case of trafficking victims, especially as it may affect access to medical care and other forms of social assistance.

### **Voluntary Return of Trafficked Victims**

At present, IOM is the organization responsible for the assistance package for foreign trafficked victims willing to return home. IOM secures identity papers, travel documents and an exit visa on the beneficiary's behalf and contacts other IOM missions or NGOs in the victim's country of origin to facilitate transit and reintegration possibilities. IOM personnel and NGO personnel meet all returning beneficiaries either at the airport or other points of arrival within the country of return and offer overnight accommodation and transportation to the beneficiary's desired destination. Upon return, most beneficiaries enrol in an assistance program, at least for a short period, which includes shelter, medical care, psychosocial assistance, a material assistance package and referrals for vocational and employment assistance. Detailed information about the range, scope and participation levels of reintegration programmes in countries of origin are outlined within specific countries reports.

At present, staff at the shelter do not communicate with the service providers in destination countries. Such communication would help to ensure continuity in the services provided and would allow service providers in the country of origin to access critical information. Direct information exchange and case planning should be encouraged.

**Witness Protection**

UNMIK Regulation No. 2001/20 established witness protection mechanisms for injured parties (victims) and witnesses in criminal procedures. However, in practice, these witness protection mechanisms are used only in high profile political cases. Witnesses and victims in trafficking cases are seldom, if ever, afforded this type of protection. Lack of victim and witness protection and exposure to intimidation can result in victims/witnesses retracting their testimony. To date, one victim has been assisted under the witness protection programme.

The ISF shelter, a high-security shelter, attempts to redress the lack of effective witness protection in The Province of Kosovo. High-risk victims can be accommodated for the duration of legal proceedings. However, this is merely a stopgap measure. For both foreign and Kosovar victims these risks are very real. One Albanian victim has been unable to return home because of her cooperation with law enforcement. In some circumstances, witnesses have even faced threats and intimidation while in the courtroom itself. While third country resettlement has been discussed in the case of some witnesses, there is a need for a more systematic and sustainable response.

**Temporary Residence Permit (TRP)**

UNMIK Regulation 2001/4 Section 4 stipulates that foreign victims and witnesses who provide information regarding a trafficking case may be granted temporary stay in The Province of Kosovo for as long as deemed necessary by authorities. While temporary stay is an important measure, it should not be contingent on cooperation with law enforcement authorities. Authorities and service providers must also further develop shelter and assistance possibilities for foreign victims who apply for temporary residence permits. At this time, there are no dedicated shelter or assistance programmes for these foreign victims.

**Reintegration Assistance**

Reintegration assistance possibilities for Kosovar victims of trafficking are limited at present and most service providers flag this as one of the more pressing gaps in the assistance framework. While all shelters attempt to offer some type of reintegration support, such programmes are underdeveloped. More resources are needed to support longer-term reintegration assistance schemes, including psychological counselling, family mediation, educational assistance, vocational training, job placement and income-generating projects. Family and security assessments are an essential part of the reintegration process.

Given the high rates of family violence noted among Kosovar trafficking victims, there is a clear need for family mediation and counselling services as part of reintegration. This is a critical aspect of any assistance for Kosovar victims, creating as it does the conditions for safe and sustainable return. Such efforts should be expanded to involve trained psychologists and social workers in areas of origin. Also, given the high percentage of minors among Kosovar victims, there is a strong need for this mediation. In addition, alternatives to long-term family reintegration should be considered, such as longer-term shelter options or subsidized housing. Currently in The Province of Kosovo, there are no such options, constituting a gap in the assistance framework.

One programme for minors, run by Hope and Homes, attempts to tackle the lack of reintegration support for minors, offering the option of semi-independent living for

young adults. The programme, only recently established, provides a range of services for victims, including medical care, psychological assistance, training, education and job placement. Interestingly, the staff have found local businesses very receptive to hiring and working with these young adults, which bodes well for a replication of such efforts elsewhere. The programme does not specifically target trafficking victims but they are among the potential beneficiaries. Housing and long-term accommodation options for adults are also needed. Similarly, in 2005, IOM elaborated its reintegration assistance for Kosovar victims of trafficking, focusing on counselling, family mediation, housing support, vocational training, job placement and income-generating activities for the victims and/or their families.

Finally, effective reintegration assistance requires consideration of the geographic distribution of services. There is at present little long-term support for victims who return to families outside of the capital. A need to develop and train a geographically disparate network of social assistance actors in The Province of Kosovo – government and NGO – to support the victim in the reintegration process.

#### **Case Monitoring/Case Follow up**

Comprehensive case monitoring and follow-up assistance constitutes a gap in services for trafficked victims in The Province of Kosovo, as well as the SEE region more generally. While organizations conduct case monitoring for a number of months following the beneficiary's departure, overall, follow-up is limited. This is due partly to limited resources and partly to the preference of many victims to remain anonymous on their return to their home communities.

Case monitoring mechanisms and longer-term follow-up services need to be further developed, with attention to both of these limitations. Ideally, follow-up services would be provided by organizations already working in communities and not associated with service provision to trafficked victims to reduce fear of stigmatization and increase victims' willingness to access them. Community or regionally-based service providers could more adequately assess a beneficiary's progress, while offering supportive services and specialized counselling and technical assistance, as needed. Service providers specialized in trafficking should be mobilized to train these organizations in areas of origin to ensure that these groups tailor their services to the needs of trafficking victims.

Case monitoring and follow-up is especially important for minors who are less able than adults to avoid risks and negotiate in negative family or community environments. Without case monitoring, it is impossible to gauge the minor's level of safety and the success of reintegration. Case monitoring and follow-up is essential in supporting the reintegration of victims as well as measure service providers' programmatic success.

#### **Vocational Training and Job Placement**

Increasingly, service providers are recognizing the importance of such initiatives in both prevention and protection. An employment and training assistant was recently hired by IOM to support employment placement, training and income-generation efforts for victims and their families. Recipients have, to date, received cattle and horticultural inputs for various income-generation schemes. As so many Kosovar victims were minors, such assistance would ideally be extended to victims' families to support the development of sustainable livelihoods. It is important that all vocational



training relate to the needs of the local employment market and organizations should ensure that graduates receive some formal certification to facilitate job placement. Assistance with job placement is also essential, including support in completing job applications and preparing for interviews.

### **Assistance for Minors**

Overall, specialized assistance to minor victims of trafficking is lacking. Perhaps most pressing is the lack of long-term alternatives for Kosovar minors who cannot be returned to their family environment. Given the high rate of violence in the homes of many victims, return to the family (at least in the short term) may not be in the best interest of the child. Consideration is needed of ways to tackle this lack of alternatives for minor victims. While foster care is being discussed for cases of domestic violence, it is not yet on the agenda for victims of trafficking. If it were to be considered, adequate training of foster families would be essential.<sup>289</sup>

Specialized treatment of minors is also lacking in the judicial system. Although the juvenile justice code (for juveniles in conflict with the law) outlines provisions for child victims and witnesses,<sup>290</sup> these are seldom implemented. While legal proceedings are difficult and stressful for all victims, they can be particularly traumatizing for minor victims. Centres for Social Work have an important role to play in ensuring that such legal protections are applied in practice and in serving as an advocate for minor victims.

On the other hand, there have been recent improvements in the provision of assistance to minor victims of trafficking. One positive development is the recent UNICEF handbook *Developing Effective Communication with Child Victims of Abuse and Human Trafficking*. This handbook is designed for use by social workers, police and other professionals within the UNMIK administration and clearly outlines how to interact sensitively with minor victims. In addition, according to the recently articulated *Standard Operating Procedures for the Direct Assistance and Support to Foreign Trafficked Victims*, it is requisite that all contact with minors occur only in the presence of a social worker appointed by the Centre for Social Work. Further, the CSW is responsible for the minor throughout the process and is responsible for identifying and implementing a durable solution in the best interest of the child. The soon to be articulated Standard Operating Procedures for Kosovar victims will similarly outline the roles and responsibilities of actors vis-à-vis minors.

The establishment of the Hope and Homes shelters in Pristina and Prizren catering to the specific needs of minors is another positive development. These shelters accommodate both foreign and Kosovar minors. In addition, this NGO will initiate a programme for independent living for young people in 2005 that provides alternatives to family reintegration when this option is not in the best interest of the child.

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<sup>289</sup> In the one instance in Kosovo of a trafficking victim being placed in a foster family, the tension within the family was significant and the foster family asked that the child be removed.

<sup>290</sup> These include removing public witnesses in the court, not being obliged to testify in the presence of the trafficker, being interviewed while accompanied by a psychologist, etc

# COUNTRY REPORT

## THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

This section analyzes the current situation of trafficking victims and victim assistance and protection in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The report is divided into three sections: 1) Number of Foreign and Macedonian Trafficking Victims Identified and Assisted, 2) Profiles of Trafficking Victims and 3) Overview of the Assistance Framework in FYR of Macedonia.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The total number of foreign victims identified and assisted in Macedonia between January 2000 and 31 December 2004 was 778.
- The total number of Macedonian victims identified and assisted between January 2000 and 31 December 2004 was 26.
- Macedonia is a country of destination in SEE. It is also a transit and temporary destination country. However, there are recent indications that Macedonia is also emerging as a country of origin for trafficking, with Macedonian victims trafficked both abroad and internally.
- Both foreign and national victims in Macedonia were primarily trafficked for sexual exploitation. Indeed, all Macedonian victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation. However, in a handful of cases, victims were also trafficked labour and begging/delinquency. In addition, some victims are exploited both for labour and sexual purposes.
- Foreign and national victims assisted in Macedonia were almost exclusively female. The only exception was a minor male, a “potential victim”, assisted in 2004, who was in transit to be trafficked for begging.
- Minor victims of trafficking were also assisted in 2003 and 2004. Minors were a particularly prominent percentage of national victims, accounting for 42.9 per cent of victims in 2003 and 23 per cent in 2004.
- A multiplicity of factors, including economic background, family relations, education and employment inform victims’ vulnerability to trafficking. In Macedonia, no single factor can explain trafficking in foreign and national victims, although the desire to work is prominent.
- The majority of foreign victims trafficked to Macedonia for sexual exploitation were from Ukraine, Romania and Moldova. Victims of labour exploitation primarily originated from Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria.
- A trend is emerging in Macedonia of foreign victims trafficked for sexual exploitation being held by individual men and required to provide both sexual and domestic labour.
- A number of foreign victims of sexual exploitation in 2004 were mentally disabled, an increase from 2003.
- A number of foreign victims of both labour and sexual exploitation came from “average” rather than “poor” economic backgrounds.
- Foreign victims were increasingly recruited by women, both for sexual and labour exploitation.

- Contrary to regional trends, foreign victims in Macedonia generally did not cross at legal border crossings. However, they did use legal documents in 2003 and 2004.
- There is inadequate information available about Macedonian trafficking victims. More information is needed to determine sites of vulnerability to trafficking in Macedonia for the purposes of effective prevention, identification and assistance.
- The majority of foreign victims were identified and referred for assistance by law enforcement authorities and a few by embassy staff. All national victims of trafficking were identified and referred for assistance through the national helpline.
- Most law enforcement authorities have been trained in identifying only victims of sex trafficking and lack training and skills in identification of trafficking for labour and begging/delinquency. There is a need to develop identification signposts for all forms of trafficking and profiles of victims.
- Macedonia does not have formal national referral system. Official identification and referral of victims in Macedonia currently operates according to an informal system, with all foreign victims referred to IOM and national victims primarily identified through Open Gate and referred for assistance within its network of partners. A consolidated national referral mechanism is needed for all victims of trafficking.
- Medical assistance is provided according to an agreement between Skopje General Hospital and IOM. The agreement stipulates that the hospital provide medical care according to the same fee scale used for local residents. This constitutes a good practice in the provision of medical assistance in the region.
- There is a lack of specialized assistance for minors in Macedonia, with few special procedures for under-age victims. Rather, adult services are adapted to minor victims. More specifically child-focused services are needed. One positive step in this regard is the set of *Standard Operating Procedures for the Assistance of Victims of Trafficking*, which include special procedures for the assistance of minors and mentally ill or disabled trafficking victims. In addition, psychological services in the shelter have been tailored to minors.
- The assistance framework available to trafficking victims in Macedonia has been geared primarily toward the return of foreign nationals. However, given the number of Macedonian victims identified, there is a need to develop programmes geared to national victims, including such reintegration components as vocational training, job placement, alternative housing options, family mediation/counselling and case follow-up and monitoring. Attention to the geographic distribution of these services is essential.

## 1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND MACEDONIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED

Macedonia is a country of destination in South-eastern Europe for trafficking in foreign women and girls for sexual exploitation and, in some cases, for labour exploitation. Some foreign victims were also trafficked both for sexual and labour purposes. Macedonia also serves as a transit country and a temporary destination for foreign victims. As such, most of the trafficked victims assisted since 2000 are foreigners. Nevertheless, Macedonian victims, trafficked both internally and abroad, have been identified in the past years.

Statistics and information about assisted trafficking victims in Macedonia was compiled according to primary data provided by the following organizations: For a Happy Childhood, Open Gate/La Strada Macedonia, Temis, Organization of Women of Skopje, Macedonian Bar Association, Transit Centre (Ministry of Interior), National Coordinator (Ministry of Interior), Department of Anti-Organized Crime (Ministry of Interior) and IOM Mission in Skopje.<sup>291</sup> These figures pertain primarily to foreign victims trafficked to Macedonia for sexual and labour exploitation. However, Macedonian victims have also been assisted. An examination of victim profiles will support more considered interventions and help to better address the needs of victims and redress their trafficking experiences.<sup>292</sup>

TABLE 1  
NUMBER OF VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO OR ORIGINATING FROM MACEDONIA, 2000 TO 2004<sup>293</sup>

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign trafficking victims	114	262	248	141	13	778
Macedonian trafficking victims	0	0	0	14	12	26

The figures presented in the table comprise the number of trafficked foreign victims identified within Macedonia and voluntarily returned to their countries of origin. Victims who were not properly screened or identified are not included in these figures. Victims who were identified as trafficked but refused return assistance were also not included. It is likely that they faced illegal migrant or other criminal charges and were deported. Unfortunately, without official statistics it is impossible to gauge how many foreign victims have been subjected to these extradition measures. In addition, the table includes the number of Macedonian victims identified abroad and returned to Macedonia as well as those victims identified within the country. To capture the full scope of trafficking in Macedonian nationals, there is a need to access information from destination countries outside of SEE.<sup>294</sup> While the RCP sought to collect victim data from a range of destination countries within the European Union, for the most part,

<sup>291</sup> Other organizations in Macedonia that participated in and provided information for the RCP research, include: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe – OSCE (Rule of Law and Police Development Unit), Sector for Minors and Delinquency (Ministry of Interior), Border Police Section for Illegal Migration (Ministry of Interior), Esma and Produzen Zivot.

<sup>292</sup> For a full discussion of how data was collected and the methodology used, please see: *Introduction*.

<sup>293</sup> The numbers presented in the chart above differ slightly from the data presented in the RCP first annual report. This is because service providers have since updated their databases with full case files of beneficiaries. We make this adjustment to reflect more accurately the trafficking situation in Macedonia.

<sup>294</sup> STV La Strada Netherlands reported one Macedonian victim assisted in 2004.

these efforts were met with reluctance or resistance due to limited resources, insufficient staff time or internal regulations about information sharing.

The number of identified and assisted victims varied significantly during the last four years. The number of victims increased by two and a half times between 2000 and 2001 but, in 2002, decreased by almost 20 per cent. Between 2002 and 2003, the number of assisted cases plummeted again from 248 to 141 foreign victims. More than 80 per cent of the victims referred to IOM in 2003 were referred during the first four months of the year. This reduction in assistance has continued through 2004 with only 13 victims identified and assisted in Macedonia in 2004.

Alongside the decreased identification and assistance of foreign victims was an increase in the number of identified and assisted national victims of trafficking, from no Macedonian victims assisted in 2002 to 14 assisted in 2003 and 12 in 2004. While the numbers were small, an almost equal number of national and foreign victims were identified and assisted in 2004.

Various explanations have been put forward by counter-trafficking actors for the decrease in the number of assisted foreign victims. One is that fewer bar raids were being conducted by police, leading to fewer identifications. Instead, police are relying more on investigation, which tends to be more time consuming and yield fewer victims, but in the longer term is more effective in apprehending and prosecuting perpetrators. Rather than targeting local and low-level pimps, this strategy targets and seeks to dismantle the network itself.<sup>295</sup> Also of importance is the more hidden nature of prostitution, with victims exploited in private homes and apartment, rather than bars and brothels. Yet, another explanation is what has been described as a burgeoning domestic sex market. The increase in Macedonian nationals trafficked within this domestic sex industry may have stemmed the demand for foreign nationals, many of whom were trafficking victims.<sup>296</sup>

The decreased number of assisted cases, it should be noted, cannot be attributed to victims declining assistance, a trend that has been observed in other countries in the region. The lack of alternatives available in the Macedonian assistance framework makes it unlikely that foreign victims will decline assistance. A foreign victim who declines IOM assistance is deported, although other alternative solutions for foreign victims, including temporary residence permits, are currently being explored.

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<sup>295</sup> In 2003, the Ministry of the Interior's anti-trafficking unit undertook 43 investigations, involving 73 perpetrators. Of these, 18 are finalized and before the court. Until September 2004, eleven investigations had been pursued, involving 33 perpetrators. One police expert stressed that the larger number of perpetrators relative to the number of investigations represents a better quality of investigation, which is the key to breaking up the networks (Interview, Ilco Gjorgievski Department of Anti-Organized Crime, Ministry of Interior, Macedonia, 15 December 2004; Interview, Hubert Staberhofer, OSCE Police Development Unit, Skopje, Macedonia, 14 December 2004). Among the investigations being pursued are those involving Macedonian victims. In 2004, the Anti-organized Crime Department registered one case of trafficking in which the victim was a Macedonian citizen who had been trafficked internally. In this case, one suspect has been charged with trafficking in human beings under the criminal code (Article 418a) and another three suspects with mediation into prostitution under the criminal code (Articles 191 and 192). Similarly, in 2003, there was investigation of trafficking in human beings involving a Macedonian victim (Interview, Ilco Gjorgievski Dept of Anti-Organized Crime, Ministry of Interior, Macedonia, 15 December 2004).

<sup>296</sup> Interview, Ivona Zakoska, IOM Skopje, Macedonia, 14 December 2004; cf. Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 72-73.

In addition, a recent IOM assessment documented a noteworthy number of foreign victims in the country based on police intelligence reports. According to testimony provided directly by one victim, over 150 Moldovan victims were forced to prostitute themselves in bars or nightclubs in the village of Velestra, near Struga. Further, in Tetovo there were reports of more than 30 sites in which women (both foreign and national) were held. As well, during the summer season in Lake Ohrid, many women are trafficked to work in massage centres, bars or nightclubs (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 83).

Finally, it is worthwhile to note the rate of illegal migration to and through the Republic of Macedonia. This can serve as a potential indirect indicator of trafficking, signalling its continuing importance as an issue. During 2003, 781 foreign nationals were registered as having illegally crossed the border, of whom 723 were deported. Legal measures were taken against 43 foreign persons for illegal crossing. The majority of illegal crossings (70.1 per cent) were by Albanian nationals, followed by Macedonians (11.3 per cent) and Serbian and Montenegrins (3.5 per cent). In 2004, the number of illegal crossings increased to 973, of whom 691 were deported. Legal measures were taken against 36 persons for illegal crossing. As in the previous year, the majority of illegal crossings (89.1 per cent) were by Albanian nationals, followed by Macedonians (4.7 per cent) and Serbian and Montenegrins (3.8 per cent). In both years, the gender and age of these foreign nationals was unavailable.<sup>297</sup>

## 2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

In this section, we analyze the profiles and experiences of both foreign trafficking victims (Section 2.1) and Macedonian trafficking victims (Section 2.2). Victims' needs are bound up with the specifics of their trafficking experiences. Understanding victims' backgrounds as well as the precise nature of recruitment, transportation and exploitation is an essential starting point in the development of appropriate assistance and services for victims.

### 2.1 Foreign Victims of Trafficking Assisted in Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

TABLE 2  
NUMBER OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN MACEDONIA, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign trafficking victims	114	262	248	141	13	778

As can be seen in the table above, 2003 saw a sharp decline in the number of foreign victims assisted in Macedonia – from 248 in 2002 to 141 in 2003. Even more striking is the decline in identified and assisted victims in 2004, with assisted cases plummeting to 13.

The majority of foreign victims trafficked to Macedonia were trafficked for sexual exploitation. Victims were exploited in bars and nightclubs where clients came to solicit sexual services. More recently, sexual services tended to be offered in more private locations in an effort to evade law enforcement. While sexual exploitation was

<sup>297</sup> Correspondence with Mr. Radivoja Jovanski, National Coordinator, Macedonia, 15 December 2004.

the primary reason for which victims were trafficked (accounting for 87.5 per cent of victims), victims were also commonly required to undertake other forms of labour. This included waitressing or cleaning at the bar where a victim sold sexual services or domestic services at the apartment where she worked.

TABLE 3  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN MACEDONIA, 2000 TO 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Sexual exploitation	107	224	228	115	7	681
Labour exploitation	0	18	18	24	2	62
Other forms	7	20	2	2	0	31
Potential victim <sup>298</sup>	0	0	0	0	4	4
Total	114	262	248	141	12	778

In addition to trafficking for sexual exploitation, there have also been cases of trafficking in women for labour exploitation, accounting for eight per cent of assisted victims. This included various types of labour, including domestic work, waitressing, construction and agriculture. The majority of victims trafficked for labour worked in the service sector – as waitresses, bartenders, dishwashers and cleaners. However, there was also one case in which the victim was exploited as a farm labourer.

In addition, there have been 31 documented cases of “other forms” of trafficking, accounting for four per cent of assisted victims since 2000 and capturing tasks such as begging. Further, in 2004, the four cases were, in fact, cases of minors (one boy and three girls) being trafficked to, or perhaps through, Macedonia for begging and delinquency. The profiles of these minor victims will not be presented and analyzed separately since they do not seem indicative of a separate trend. That is, three of the four victims were from the same family and allegedly trafficked by their mother. The other victim was also trafficked with family complicity. The significance of these cases at this time is that the identification of victims in the transportation phase (prior to exploitation) signals improvement in the identification skills of law enforcement authorities. That these potential victims did not conform to traditional profiles of victims (being minors and male) may also suggest increased awareness of other forms of trafficking and profiles of victims.

### **2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked for Sexual and Labour Exploitation<sup>299</sup>**

To follow is an analysis of the profiles and experiences of foreign victims trafficked to Macedonia for sexual and labour exploitation. In some circumstances, these victims were dually exploited, while, in others, they were exploited for one purpose or the other. Wherever possible, we try to distinguish between the profiles of victims trafficked for labour and sexual exploitation.

<sup>298</sup> This designation is used when the individual was assisted for an insufficient time to clearly establish his/her trafficking experience or when the victim was identified in transit and manifested every indication of being in the trafficking but was not yet exploited.

<sup>299</sup> While 115 victims of sexual exploitation were assisted in 2003, the victim profiles for sexual exploitation analyzed herein were based on data from 109 foreign victims for whom there was comprehensive information. The profiles in 2004 were based on 12 of the 13 victims for whom there was comprehensive information. The indicators for which there were comprehensive data in all cases are gender, age, forms of trafficking, and country of origin



TABLE 4  
FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL AND  
LABOUR EXPLOITATION, MACEDONIA, 2000 TO 2004<sup>300</sup>

Forms of Trafficking	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Sexual exploitation	107	224	228	115	7	681
Labour exploitation	0	18	18	24	2	62

Trafficking for labour exploitation in Macedonia was first noted in 2001 and since then has accounted for a small number of victims. It has been an under-considered form of trafficking in Macedonia and the information presented below is an effort to present both a general overview of this form of trafficking as well as some baseline information for future analysis and comparison.

### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics

**Sex:** All victims trafficked for sexual and/or labour exploitation assisted in Macedonia and presented in these profiles were female.

Nevertheless, there have been two cases of trafficking in men for sexual exploitation. They are not captured in the numbers or profiles presented herein as they were not assisted within the available framework in Macedonia.<sup>301</sup> However, given the uniqueness of the case, some details of these male victims of sexual exploitation are outlined below.

In August 2003, two Moldovan males – 48 and 23 years of age – were identified as victims of trafficking by the Moldovan Police after a period spent as illegal migrants in Macedonia. The two men were lured with promises of employment and, in May 2003, arrived in Skopje where they were sold by their “employers” to a woman who forced them to work as construction workers during the day and provide sexual services at night. If they refused they were beaten and denied food. In late August, they managed to contact relatives who sent money to buy their freedom. Upon their return to Moldova, they reported their case to the police. The two victims stated that their owner kept a consistent number of Moldovan passports, including passports of male individuals, signalling that this was not an isolated case (Handziska and Schinina, 2004: 3).<sup>302</sup>

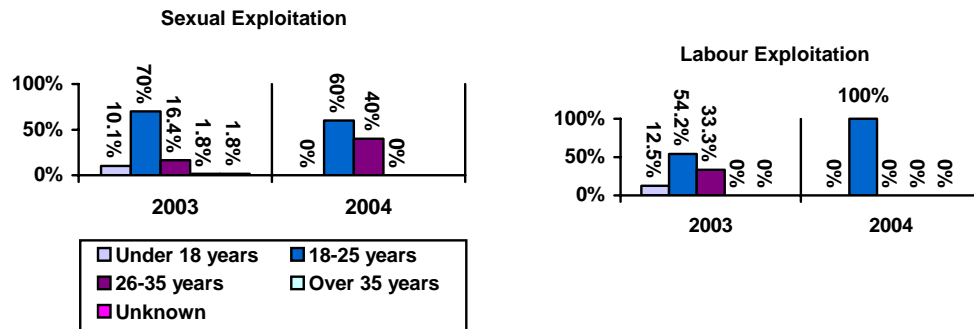
**Age:** The majority of victims trafficked for sexual and labour exploitation were between the ages of 18 and 25 years, although this fluctuated slightly both according to year and form of trafficking.

<sup>300</sup> Given the very few victims assisted in 2004, the statistics presented cannot be read as having quantitative significance.

<sup>301</sup> These cases were only identified when the victims returned to Moldova and sought assistance from law enforcement authorities there. Since they were not assisted by service providers in Moldova, neither are they captured in victim profiles in the *Moldova Country Report*.

<sup>302</sup> In response to this case, IOM Skopje conducted a survey among the homosexual community in Macedonia to assess the risk of trafficking of males for sexual exploitation. The study yielded some significant findings, with 59 per cent of surveyed homosexual males aware of male homosexual prostitution in Macedonia (Handziska and Schinina, 2004: 10). As important, six per cent of the male homosexuals surveyed had used the services of a male foreigner trafficked for sexual exploitation and 16 per cent had direct knowledge of someone from the homosexual community who had used the services of a foreign male victim trafficked for sexual exploitation (Handziska and Schinina, 2004: 13). A large percentage of respondents in the survey were targeted in “cruising areas”, where the population most susceptible to offers of commercial sex. As such, the information does not map the extent of the issue, but rather serves as evidence of its existence (Handziska and Schinina, 2004: 14).

GRAPH 1  
AGE OF FOREIGN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IN MACEDONIA, 2003 AND 2004<sup>303</sup>



Among foreign victims of sexual exploitation, minors accounted for 10.1 per cent of cases in 2003, which was relatively consistent with data from 2002 in which 12.8 per cent of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were minors at identification. This was also consistent with victims of labour exploitation who were minors, accounting for 11.3 per cent of cases between 2001 and 2004. Of note is that no minors trafficked either for sexual or labour exploitation were assisted in 2004.

Nevertheless, these ages refer to the victim's age at identification rather than at recruitment. This raises the likelihood that some victims identified and assisted as adults were, in fact, minors when trafficked. Unfortunately, most service providers in the region do not systematically record the victim's age at recruitment, making it difficult to calculate accurately the number of trafficked minors.

Of note is the relatively high number of victims in the 25 to 36 years age range among victims of both sexual and labour exploitation, signalling the vulnerability of both younger and older women. Further, no significant difference in the ages of victims for various forms of trafficking was observed.

**Country of origin:** The majority of foreign victims trafficked to Macedonia for sexual exploitation were from Moldova, Romania and Ukraine. Of the 680 assisted foreign victims of sexual exploitation between 2000 and 2004, 47.1 per cent came from Moldova, 31.2 per cent from Romania and 12.4 per cent from Ukraine.

While Moldovan citizens have been prominent among victims of sexual exploitation, the percentage has decreased since 2000 and, in 2003, for the first time, Moldova was not the most prominent country of origin. Rather, Romanians accounted for 42.6 per cent of assisted victims in 2003, as compared to 39.1 per cent of Moldovan victims.

In 2003, Bulgarians comprised 6.7 per cent of victims of sexual exploitation, 4.5 per cent in 2001 and 2.6 per cent in 2002, making them the third largest group of victims. However, this must be considered in the context of declining numbers more generally.

Very few citizens from Serbia, Montenegro and The Province of Kosovo were among assisted victims of sexual exploitation. This is striking given Macedonia's shared

<sup>303</sup> Victims of trafficking for labour exploitation in 2001 were primarily 18 to 25 years (61.1 per cent) with 11.1 per cent under 18 years and 27.8 per cent between 26 and 35 years. In 2002, 61.1 per cent were 18 to 25 years while 11.1 per cent were under 18 years, 11.1 per cent were between 26 and 25 and 16.7 per cent were unknown.

borders with these countries/entities and the emergence of The Province of Kosovo and, arguably, also Serbia as areas of origin.

TABLE 5  
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, VICTIMS OF SEXUAL AND LABOUR  
EXPLOITATION IN MACEDONIA, 2000 TO 2004

Country/entity of Origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Albania	0	0	0	0	1	1
Belarus	8	2	0	1	0	11
Bulgaria	0	10 (1)	6 (5)	8 (5)	2	26 (11)
Croatia	0	0	0 (1)	1	0	1 (1)
Czech	0	0	2	0	0	2
The Province of Kosovo <sup>304</sup>	0	0 (2)	1 (1)	0	0	1 (3)
Lithuania	0	0	1	0	0	1
Moldova	65	122 (12)	85 (6)	45 (9)	3	320 (27)
Romania	32	59 (2)	72 (5)	49 (9)	0 (1)	212 (17)
Russia	1	5 (1)	8	0	0	14 (1)
Serbia <sup>305</sup>	0	0	5	2	1	8
Ukraine	1	26	48	9 (1)	0 (1)	84 (2)
Total	107	224 (18)	228 (18)	115 (24)	7 (2)	681 (62)

\*The first numbers indicate victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation while the numbers in brackets and in blue are for trafficking for labour exploitation.

The bulk of victims trafficked for labour exploitation between 2000 and 2004 were from Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria, representing 43.6 per cent, 27.4 per cent and 17.7 per cent respectively of assisted foreign victims in Macedonia. While the number of Moldovan victims trafficked for labour exploitation remained relatively constant, the number of Bulgarian victims trafficked for this purpose increased from zero and subsequently one victim in 2000 and 2001 to five victims in both 2003 and 2004. Similarly, the number of Romanians has also increased incrementally over time – from zero in 2000 to two in 2001, five in 2002 and nine in 2003.

The dramatic decrease in the identification of foreign victims in 2004 makes it difficult to draw any conclusions or speak of trends.

**Ethnicity:** There was limited information available on this subject as most service providers do not record this information as part of case management. The NGO “For a Happy Childhood”, which provides services at the government-run shelter, reports that there were ethnic minorities within its caseload – for example, Roma from Bulgaria and Romanians and Russians from Moldova – but they had not systematically documented

<sup>304</sup> While Kosovo is a province within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, it is treated as a separate entity in this report in an effort to provide a more detailed picture of trafficking patterns, trends, and profiles within and between each country/entity of the region. This should not be read as a political statement on the part of the RCP.

<sup>305</sup> While the Republic of Serbia is a constituent state of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, it is analyzed here as a separate body in an effort to better understand the specifics of trafficking to, through, and from the Republic of Serbia as well as the Republic of Montenegro. Further, while citizens of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro constitute one nationality, this report distinguishes between victims resident in either Montenegro or Serbia. This should in no way be read as a political statement on the part of the RCP.

these, making it impossible to draw meaningful conclusions. In 2004, one of the seven foreign victims trafficked for sexual exploitation was Roma.<sup>306</sup>

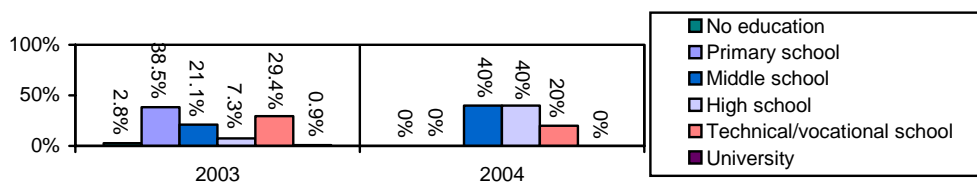
**Area of origin:** While victims trafficked for sexual exploitation came from both rural and urban areas, service providers noted an increase in the number of victims coming from urban environments. This trend began in 2003 and has been particularly apparent among victims from Moldova. As only 41.6 per cent of the Moldovan population lived in urban areas in 2000 (UNDP, 2002: 164), this increase reflects an increase in recruitment in urban environments.

There is insufficient information available to note areas of origin for foreign victims of trafficking for labour.

**Education:**<sup>307</sup> In 2003, the majority of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation – 38.5 per cent – had primary school education. Strikingly, an almost equal number of assisted victims – 29.4 per cent – had attended technical or vocational school and almost one per cent had attended university. Victims with higher levels of education came from Moldova, Romania and Ukraine, signalling the limited economic opportunities for women in these countries even for those with reasonable levels of education.

In 2004, educational levels were slightly higher, with more victims having attended middle school and high school than in the previous year. As high school education is the general educational attainment of women from countries of origin like Romania, Ukraine and Moldova,<sup>308</sup> most foreign victims had lower than average education.

GRAPH 2  
EDUCATIONAL LEVELS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION,  
2003 AND 2004<sup>309</sup>



<sup>306</sup> As well, the four foreign “potential victims” identified in 2004 were of Roma ethnicity, signalling that this is a realistic vulnerability factor in the Balkans.

<sup>307</sup> In Macedonia, primary school education refers to the first eight years of school, middle school is grades nine through 11 and high school refers to someone who has completed twelfth grade.

<sup>308</sup> In Romania, Ukraine and Moldova, most women attend secondary school. That is, the female net enrollment at secondary level in these countries is 81 per cent, 91 per cent, and 70 per cent respectively (UNDP, 2004). Female net enrolment is the number of students enrolled in a level of education who are of official school age for that level, as a percentage of the population of official school age for that level.

<sup>309</sup> Of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation assisted between 2001 and 2004, 1.3 per cent had received no education, 25.09 per cent had a primary school education, 21.3 per cent had middle school education, 27.1 per cent had high school education, 11.5 per cent had attended technical or vocational school, 4.2 per cent had attended college or university, 5.1 per cent reported having received “other” education and 4.4 per cent provided no response to this question.

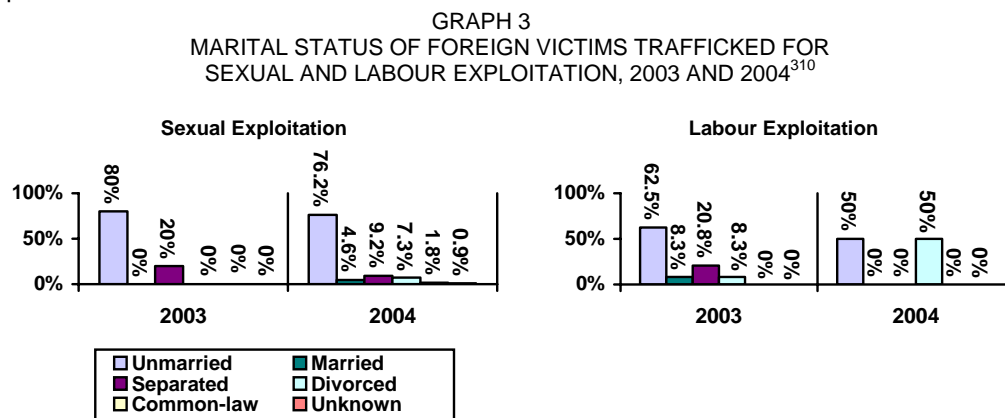
Overall, victims of trafficking for labour had slightly higher educational attainment than victims trafficked for sexual exploitation. From 2001 to 2004, most victims trafficked for labour had high school (32.3 per cent) or technical or vocational schooling (21 per cent), these two categories accounting for 53.2 per cent of victims. This educational attainment was consistent throughout the reporting period and even increased, with high school and technical/vocational training accounting for 33.3 per cent of victims in 2001, 61.1 per cent in 2002, 58.3 per cent in 2003 and 100 per cent in 2004. Also of note was that 6.5 per cent of victims in the reporting period had attended college or university.

Nevertheless, there were still a large number of victims trafficked for labour who had limited education. Of victims assisted between 2001 and 2004, 1.6 per cent had never attended school, 21 per cent had only primary school education and 14.5 per cent had a middle school education. While the percentage of victims with a primary school education fluctuated during the reporting period at 27.8 per cent in 2001, 11.1 per cent in 2002 and 25 per cent in 2003, it was always quite a moderate percentage of the assisted cases.

**Mental and physical disabilities:** Service providers report that, in 2004, two of the seven assisted cases of sexual exploitation involved a victim with borderline mental incapacity while, in 2003, one victim had an obvious mental disability. There is not information about this variable for victims of labour trafficking.

While few in number, this profile of victim signals both a potential site of vulnerability as well as the need for specifically tailored programmes to meet the protection and assistance needs of this target group. The recruitment of victims with disabilities has also been noted in other countries in the region and service providers in Serbia have been working to tailor service to mentally disabled victims. Service providers can benefit from each other’s experiences in seeking to assist these victims.

**Marital and family status:** In both 2003 and 2004, the majority of victims trafficked for both sexual exploitation and labour were unmarried at recruitment. However, more victims of labour exploitation were divorced, separated or married than victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.



<sup>310</sup> In 2001, 72.2 per cent were unmarried, 11.1 per cent married, 11.1 per cent divorced, and 5.6 per cent separated. In 2002, victims of labour exploitation were unmarried (61.1 per cent), separated (16.7 per cent), divorced (11.1 per cent), married (5.6 per cent) and widowed (5.6 per cent).

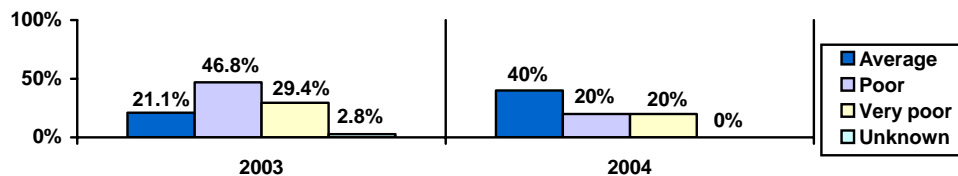
In 2004, among victims of sexual exploitation, 20 per cent were mothers, a dramatic decrease from 66.8 per cent in 2003. Of the victims with children, 23.9 per cent in 2003 and 20 per cent in 2004 were single mothers.

Victims of trafficking for labour exploitation included a number of mothers – 32.3 per cent. Of victims assisted between 2001 and 2004, 14 were single mothers, accounting for 22.6 per cent of assisted victims. The majority of mothers had only one child. However, in 2003, mothers reported having two, three and even four children.

These statistics signal potential reasons for the victim migration/trafficking – the need to support a family – as well as the vulnerability of female-headed households in sending countries. As a corollary, consideration of victims with dependents other than children is valuable. As women are responsible for the care and support of parents, siblings and elderly relatives in many countries in the region, systematically documenting victims’ dependents could provide a clearer picture of the causes of trafficking.

**Economic status:**<sup>311</sup> Victim’s economic status changed over time, with 2004 seeing a shift from “poor” to either “very poor” or “average” economic backgrounds.

GRAPH 4  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



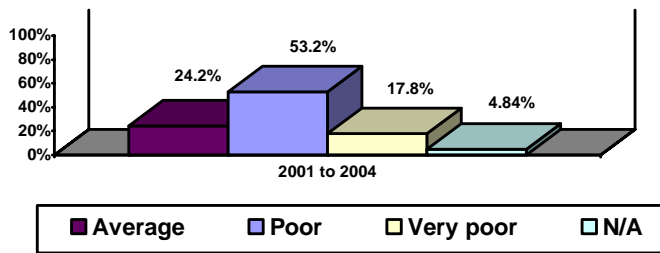
While poverty is often assumed to be a precondition for trafficking, the numbers of victims from “average” economic backgrounds belies this. While poverty is a causal contributor to trafficking, the figures suggest that it cannot be understood in isolation from the other socio-economic circumstances of a victim’s life. All countries from which victims originated were characterized by generally poor economic conditions. However, this change in economic status of victims shows that poverty is often not the only or even primary push factor.

Overall, the majority of victims trafficked for labour exploitation (53.23 per cent) reported coming from “poor” economic situations, 55.6 per cent in 2001, 50 per cent in 2002, 50 per cent in 2003 and 100 per cent in 2004. Furthermore, many victims of labour exploitation were reportedly “very poor”.

Still, as with victims of sexual exploitation, a number of victims were from an “average” economic situation, accounting for 16.67 per cent of victims in 2001, 27.8 per cent in 2002 and 29.2 per cent in 2003.

<sup>311</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim’s self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

GRAPH 5  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION, 2001 TO 2004



**Family and social relations:**<sup>312</sup> In 2003, 36.2 per cent reported “good” family relations and 31.9 per cent reported normal family relations. In only 19.9 per cent of cases were family relations reported to be “difficult” and in 5.7 per cent of cases as “bad”.<sup>313</sup> It is important to remember, however, that these are subjective assessments so that what is perceived to be “normal” family relations by one victim might be considered abusive by another.

In addition, abuse seems to have been a common experience for many victims, with 17.7 per cent of victims in 2003 reportedly suffering abuse prior to being trafficked. Of these, 44 per cent were abused by parents, 12 per cent by their husband, 12 per cent by a relative, 12 per cent by a stepparent, eight per cent by an acquaintance, four per cent by a boyfriend, four per cent by a sibling and four per cent by an unspecified individual. A further 10.6 per cent of victims reported suffering sexual abuse prior to being trafficked, the majority by members of their immediate families. There is insufficient data from 2004 to present on this subject.

As most victims assisted in Macedonia originated from traditional sending countries and usually had short stays at the shelter, it is possible that the findings understate abuse; victims are more able or willing to reveal negative experiences to a trusted counsellor or service provider, a relationship that takes time to establish.<sup>314</sup>

More subtle family tensions and behaviours may increase a victim’s vulnerability to trafficking. Family tension, teenage rebellion, poor communication and strict parenting can all contribute in degrees to trafficking risk. As well, some victims may have been pressured by family or spouses to migrate in an effort to earn money. This is particularly probable in countries where migration is a survival strategy. Similarly, explanations of vulnerability may be found in the victims’ more general social

<sup>312</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims’ self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim’s individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim’s relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

<sup>313</sup> These statistics refer to the full caseload of assisted foreign victims, including the 24 victims trafficked for labour exploitation.

<sup>314</sup> This underreporting becomes clear when we consider data from countries of origin, such as Moldova, Ukraine, and Romania, where assisted victims reported violence within the home. Further, domestic violence in these countries is a serious social problem. In Moldova, 22 per cent of women interviewed in a survey by the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention reported that they had been abused by a partner or former partner at sometime in their lives (Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, 2000a). Similarly, in one survey of 290 respondents in Romania, 72 (24.1 per cent) reported being hit by their husband or partner and 9.3 per cent reported their partner had stabbed or used a weapon against them (Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights 1995).

relations, with some victims weakly integrated in social circles and without a strong social network of support.

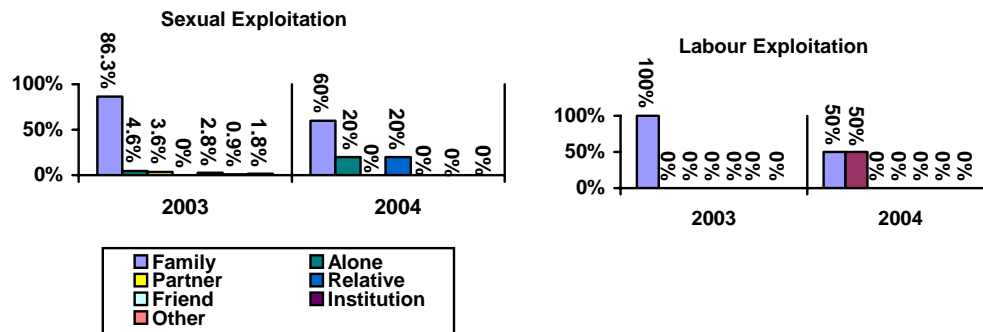
There is insufficient information about this indicator for victims of trafficking for labour. It would be interesting to note whether family relations contributed to trafficking for labour exploitation and how, if at all, this differs from other forms of trafficking.

## Recruitment Experiences

**Living situation at recruitment:** The majority of assisted victims – trafficked both for sexual exploitation and labour – were living with family at recruitment. This is important for prevention as it identifies a key target group and protection as it has implications for the advisability of reintegration with the family.

GRAPH 6

LIVING SITUATION AT RECRUITMENT OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN MACEDONIA, 2003 AND 2004



Further, while only 0.9 per cent of victims of sexual exploitation in 2003 were residing at an institution at recruitment, this number does not capture victims who may have resided in institutions in the past.<sup>315</sup> Nor does it mean that they did not come from problematic living environments.

As well, in 2003, all victims of trafficking for labour were residing with their families at recruitment. However, more detail reveals a far more complex family environment than is evident at first glance. One of the victims was living with her grandmother after having been orphaned as a child, suggesting a vulnerability that her current living situation camouflages.

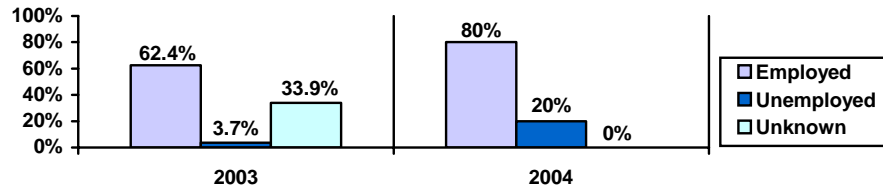
More precise information is required to assess the relationship between victims' living situations at recruitment and their vulnerability to trafficking. The difference between living in a nuclear and an extended family environment needs to be disentangled. Also salient is the composition of the household and relations among family members in identifying both risks and resiliency factors.

<sup>315</sup> The data presented is reflective only of the victim's living situation at recruitment. However, often victims may have lived in a problematic environment at some point in their lives, which contributed to their trafficking risk. For example, a victim may no longer be living in an institution but have done so at an earlier stage. Growing up such institutions informs development and negotiation skills and upon departure from these institutions, individuals may have no safety net or social support such as that provided by the family or extended family.



**Working situation at recruitment:** A significant number of victims in 2003 and 2004 were employed at recruitment, indicating that unemployment *per se* may not be a central push factor in trafficking of person. Issues of underemployment, low salaries and the general bad economic situation in the victim's country of origin may be of equal importance.

GRAPH 7  
EMPLOYMENT AMONG FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Of those employed at the time of their recruitment in 2003, 77.9 per cent were public or private employees, 10.3 per cent were self-employed, 7.4 per cent worked as domestic workers and 4.4 per cent worked as prostitutes. In 2004, all employed victims were public or private employees.

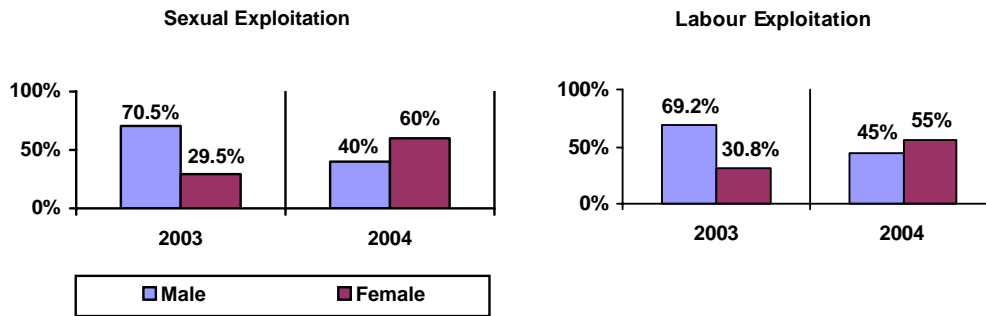
In 4.4 per cent of cases, the victim of trafficking for sexual exploitation was employed as a prostitute at recruitment. These victims were from Romania and Bulgaria. This is an apparently new phenomenon in 2003, with no assisted victim in Macedonia before this date having been recruited from within this occupation. This trend has important implications for efforts to target potential victims appropriately.<sup>316</sup>

For victims of trafficking for labour, between 2001 and 2004, 28.9 per cent were unemployed at recruitment. Whereas a number of victims in 2001 and 2002 were unemployed at recruitment, in 2003 all victims of labour trafficking were working when recruited. This was consistent with victims trafficked for sexual exploitation, of whom only 3.7 per cent were unemployed at recruitment.

**Recruiter:** In 2004, 60 per cent of victims of sexual exploitation were recruited by women. This represents a shift from 2003, when the majority of recruiters were male (70.5 per cent). Similarly, victims of trafficking for labour were increasingly recruited by women, from 30.8 per cent in 2002 to 55 per cent in 2003. There is insufficient data for 2004 to draw conclusions.

<sup>316</sup> It is important to note that this finding is of no relevance in terms of an individual's status and right to be treated as a victim of trafficking. It does, however, highlight the need for prevention efforts that take into account the potential vulnerability of this particular group.

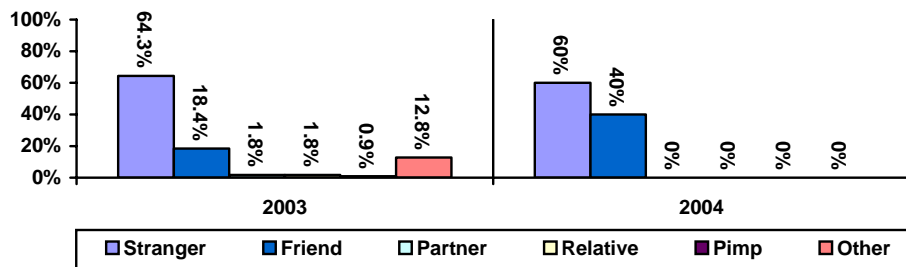
GRAPH 8  
SEX OF RECRUITER OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN MACEDONIA, 2003 AND 2004



Of note, Bulgarian victims of labour assisted in 2004 were recruited by women whereas only 33 per cent of Moldovan victims assisted in 2003 were recruited by women. Romanian victims were recruited in almost equal numbers by male and female recruiters. As such, the gender of the recruiter may be specific to the country where recruitment takes place and it may vary according to the destination of the victim.

In both 2003 and 2004, victims of sexual exploitation and labour were generally recruited by “strangers”. However, more information is needed about who falls into this category, as these may be employment agencies, which were often used in trafficking as well as migration. Advertisements promised work as dancers, hotel staff, waitresses, housekeepers, child-minders, and the victim was often required to reimburse expenses for travel.

GRAPH 9  
RELATIONSHIP TO RECRUITER OF FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004<sup>317</sup>



Recruitment was not undertaken only in the country of origin; in a number of cases, victims were recruited after arrival in Macedonia. Several Bulgarian victims travelled alone to FYROM by bus to work as waitresses but were then trafficked following their arrival (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 74). As such, migrant workers (both legal and illegal) are vulnerable to trafficking at various stages of migration. Safe migration messages must also capture this potential vulnerability.

<sup>317</sup> In 2001, victims of labour exploitation were recruited by friends (50 per cent) and strangers (50 per cent). Similarly in 2002, 66.7 per cent of victims were recruited by a stranger and 33.3 per cent by a friend. In 2003, 54.2 per cent of victims were recruited by a stranger, 29.2 per cent by a friend, 8.3 per cent by a relative and 8.3 per cent by “other”. There is insufficient information about this indicator for 2004.

**Reasons for leaving home country and type of work promised:**<sup>318</sup> According to service providers in 2002, 80 per cent of victims left their home countries to find employment abroad. In 2003, a significant number of victims (76.2 per cent) did not indicate the type of work promised to them at recruitment. Of the 23.8 per cent who provided a response, 30.8 per cent were promised work as dancer or entertainer, 26.9 per cent as *au pair*/babysitter, 15.4 per cent as a domestic worker, 15.4 per cent as prostitute, 7.7 per cent as other and 3.8 per cent as seller. This 15.4 per cent of victims who responded indicated that the work promised was in prostitution signals an awareness among some victims of the real type of work at destination. These victims, all of whom were from Moldova, were generally not those who had been working in this occupation previously. For 2004, there was no information about the type of work promised.

When victims migrated abroad for work, there were often other reasons underlying the need for work. One Bulgarian woman reported accepting work abroad because she needed money to care for her child. Similarly, a Romanian woman migrated abroad when her father fell ill and she needed money to support her family. Another woman, desperate to have a child and in an effort to save her marriage, accepted work abroad to cover the costs of fertility treatment. A crisis in the family can be a significant trigger to migration into which additional insight would be useful.

While work remained the predominant reason for migrating abroad in 2003 (66.7 per cent of victims), it was not the only reason. A striking 14.9 per cent of victims reported having been forced or coerced into migration. The undetected forcible trafficking of women across borders is especially worrying given the extensive training received by law enforcement throughout the region. Another 10.6 per cent of victims reported going abroad with the intention of visiting a friend or relative, while 1.4 per cent migrated to escape their family and 0.7 per cent were sent away by their family. The remaining victims gave no or an unspecified response to this question.

There is insufficient data on this subject for 2004.

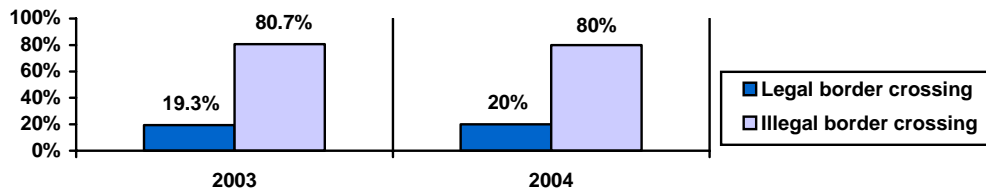
### **Transportation and Movement**

**Border crossings and documents:** In both 2003 and 2004, the majority of victims assisted in Macedonia did not cross at legal border crossings. One victim from Romania described entering Serbia illegally, then being transferred to The Province of Kosovo. After being exploited there for three months, she went to Macedonia, crossing the border illegally on foot, at night.

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<sup>318</sup> The statistics presented for this indicator are combined and refer to the full caseload of assisted foreign victims trafficked for sexual exploitation and labour.

GRAPH 10  
 BORDER CROSSINGS AND USE OF DOCUMENTS, FOREIGN VICTIMS  
 TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004<sup>319</sup>



In 2003, 27.5 per cent of victims of sexual exploitation travelled on legal documents, while the remaining 72.5 per cent of victims provided no response to this question. These findings were consistent with 2004 data in which all victims who provided a response to this question – only 40 per cent of the assisted cases – travelled on legal documents.

There is insufficient information about this indicator for victims of labour exploitation.

**Transportation routes:** As most of the victims for both forms of trafficking were Moldovan and Romanian, traffickers transported victims through Romania and Serbia (including The Province of Kosovo) on their way to Macedonia. Traffickers and/or middlemen usually transported the victims in automobiles, and middlemen transferred victims from one country to the other. Assistance providers report that women and girls were often trafficked between locations in Romania and Serbia before reaching Macedonia. Some victims are trafficked for weeks before ending up in Macedonia. A few victims were also transferred from The Province of Kosovo, where they were initially exploited. In total, 26 victims assisted in 2003 were exploited while in transit. The transportation and trafficking patterns within and surrounding Macedonia were trans-national and involved multiethnic networks that cooperate with each other.

**Intended Destination:**<sup>320</sup> In 2002, few victims knew that Macedonia was their country of destination, instead believing that they were *en route* to Greece or Italy.

In 2003, the majority of victims accepted to work in Italy (30.5 per cent). Other intended destinations included Macedonia (12.8 per cent), Serbia and Montenegro (8.5 per cent), Greece (7.8 per cent), BiH (2.8 per cent), Turkey (2.1 per cent), Spain (1.4 per cent) and a handful of other destinations. Another 27 per cent were unaware of their intended destinations.

In 2004, some victims were unaware of their intended destinations, some knew that they would go to Macedonia and some thought they were on their way to the EU. As Macedonia was also a transit country, it is possible that these victims were in fact *en*

<sup>319</sup> Throughout the reporting period, the majority of victims trafficked for labour exploitation (78.7 per cent) crossed at illegal border crossings. This finding was consistent throughout the reporting period with victims crossing illegally into Macedonia accounting for 100 per cent of victims in 2001, 73.9 per cent in 2002, 72.2 per cent in 2003 and 88.9 per cent in 2004.

<sup>320</sup> The statistics presented for this indicator refer to all assisted foreign victims, including those 24 victims trafficked for labour exploitation.

*route* to Italy and Greece and that they were interrupted in transit or exploited in Macedonia as a first step in their trafficking experience.

### **Victims' Trafficking Experiences**

**Forms of trafficking:** In Macedonia, sexual exploitation took place at a variety of venues. In the past, victims were sexually exploited in bars and nightclubs where clients came to solicit sexual services. More recently, sexual services tended to be offered in more private locations in an effort to evade law enforcement.

Moreover, while sexual exploitation is the primary reason for which these victims were trafficked, it was also common for a victim to be required to undertake other tasks, such as waitressing or cleaning at the bar where she sold sexual services or domestic service at the apartment where she worked. These cases are more accurately termed dual forms of exploitation. While service providers did not systematically record dual forms of exploitation, anecdotal accounts suggest that this was a common occurrence among foreign victims trafficked to Macedonia.

Another emerging trend involved victims being held by individual men who required them to provide both sexual and domestic labour.<sup>321</sup> Cases were reported in 2003 of victims of sexual exploitation being transferred to serve as personal servants in private homes. In 2003, eight such cases were assisted in Macedonia - three Bulgarian victims and five victims from Moldova. Sometimes this occurred when a bar owner formed a relationship with the victim, transferring her to his home. Other times, the victim was a "second wife", running the household. In both instances, a relationship was forged between exploiter and exploited that affected her perception of her situation (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 78).

This trend potentially complicates assistance provision. With the relationship based more on subtle manipulation than direct exploitation, the victim is more inclined to see herself as a wife or partner than as a victim of exploitation. Additionally, the hidden nature of this arrangement – within the domestic sphere – reduces the chances of identification and intervention. Moreover, since the victim can go a long time living with her exploiter, the "bond" between victim and exploiter is further galvanized. As well, when identified, there is the risk that such cases are misinterpreted as domestic violence rather than trafficking and referred to a very different and possibly inappropriate set of services and forms of protection.

Among victims trafficked for labour exploitation, the types of work undertaken included agriculture, waitressing, dishwashing and domestic work. The majority of cases of labour exploitation were for the service and domestic sectors, with only one of the 24 assisted cases in 2003 being for agriculture. As was the case for victims of sexual exploitation, victims of labour exploitation were also commonly exposed to dual forms of exploitation. Victims may be required to provide sexual services on an *ad hoc* basis to friends, relatives or colleagues of the trafficker. A victim may also be raped and abused by the trafficker himself. As victims of labour exploitation were also sexually exploited, this a fluid category with clear delineations between the experiences

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<sup>321</sup> This trend has also been noted in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

and abuse (and therefore needs) of victims of different forms of exploitation difficult to draw.

Victims trafficked for labour who have also been sexually exploited will require many of the same types of assistance as victims trafficked for prostitution. Victims exploited for criminal activities may require tailored legal assistance to avoid prosecution in some countries. Understanding victims' experiences of exploitation helps in pinpointing their specific needs and in the development and assessment of assistance frameworks.

**Length of time trafficked:** Service providers report that the length of time trafficked has in fact increased over time. In 2003 and 2004, more assisted victims reported staying in FYROM between two and three years, with some trafficked for as many as four and five years.

There is a correlation to be made between the length of time trafficked and the extent of the traumatic impact. The longer time spent trafficked, the greater the trauma and risk of dependency on the trafficker, conditioned of course by severity of abuse.<sup>322</sup> The length of time trafficked can also affect victims in other ways. Long periods spent away from family and friends under extreme stress can impede recovery and reintegration. Length of time trafficked accordingly must be considered in the development of assistance frameworks.

In addition, time spent trafficked may depend on a number of factors, including the level of repression endured by the victim, identification skills and priorities of law enforcement at the destination and the accessibility of services and assistance. Where victims are trafficked for shorter times, this may be due to amplified and improved identification efforts. Further analysis of this indicator, cross-correlated with details of the identification process, for example, whether the exploitation was carried out in the relatively open environments of bars and nightclubs or hidden in private apartments, would provide insight into the efficacy of law enforcement identification efforts as well as of outreach by social services and civil society.

**Living and working conditions:** Overall, living and working conditions for victims in Macedonia were poor. One victim, forced to work as a waitress and prostitute in a bar, was beaten whenever she refused to provide sexual services. She had no freedom of movement, received no payment for her work and was denied medical treatment.

In 2003, an increasing number of victims did not possess personal documents (i.e. passport or identity papers) – an increase of 27 per cent from the previous year (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 76). Many traffickers held victims' passports as a means of control.

Further, the majority of foreign victims in Macedonia had no freedom of movement. A five per cent increase in the number of victims who were denied any freedom of movement was observed in 2003, and the percentage of victims who were allowed to

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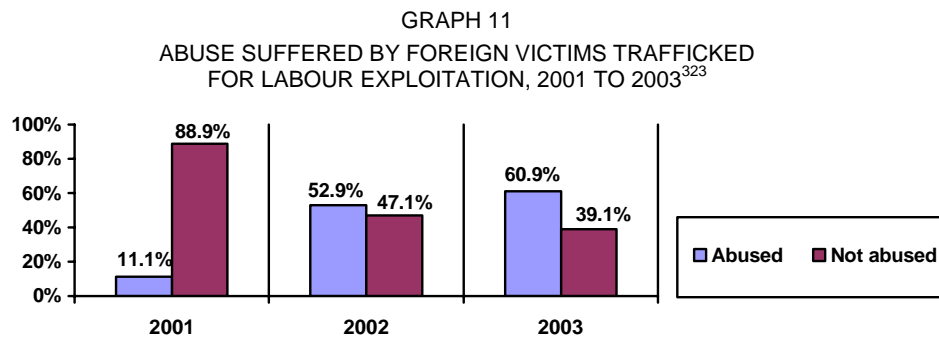
<sup>322</sup> In the context of field research throughout SEE, many psychologists referred to this phenomenon, a trend akin to "Stockholm Syndrome". Stockholm Syndrome describes the behaviour of kidnap victims who over time become sympathetic to their captors. The name derives from a 1973 hostage incident in Stockholm, Sweden at the end of which several kidnap victims resisted rescue attempts and refused to testify against their captors.

move unaccompanied also dropped sharply. This is especially disturbing as more women reported staying in Macedonia for longer periods of time – between one to four years (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 77).

Nevertheless, in 2003 and 2004, victims were paid small amounts of money, which proved sufficient in many cases to dissuade them from seeking assistance and escape. That is, 39 per cent of victims assisted in 2003 reported receiving some salary. One victim reported receiving US\$ 10.00 per night for her work as a waitress as well as her tips. These payments, while far from what was promised at recruitment, are important given that the majority of victims were trafficked as a result of the desire to work abroad and earn money. Where victims were able to earn some money, they were often less likely to seek to exit their trafficking experience. This strategy has been noted elsewhere in the region.

**Abuse:** In 2003, the majority of victims of sexual exploitation (72.5 per cent) suffered abuse while trafficked. In 2004, only 40 per cent of victims suffered abuse while trafficked. However, the very small sample size for 2004 makes it impossible to determine to what degree this might signal an actual change in the behaviour of traffickers. Still, this decrease in abuse is consistent with the behaviour of traffickers and employers in other countries, such as Serbia and BiH where foreign victims report better working and living conditions and less abuse. It is possible that trafficking is increasingly becoming a “business” with some profit sharing. When traffickers appear to have been able to operate with impunity, fearing neither authorities nor consequences, conditions were akin to slavery. More recently, in an effort to act more circumspectly in response to enhanced law enforcement and awareness of trafficking, traffickers use such tactics to provide a greater motivation for victims to remain in their “employment”.

Among victims of labour exploitation the experience of abuse fluctuated over time but generally increased, as outlined in the graph below



Intimidation continues to be used by traffickers to control victims, including those who were given limited permission to leave the locations where they lived and/or worked. Victims were told that everyone – from the cashier in the supermarket to the police – could be connected to the traffickers, and that they could depend on no one for help.

<sup>323</sup> In 2004, no victims trafficked for labour exploitation suffered abuse. However, as only two victims were identified and assisted, data is insufficient to draw conclusions.

Victims were also taught how to answer specific questions from the police to avoid being identified as victims of trafficking (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 77).

Again, the forms of abuse do not measure severity, which may be the most important variable in terms of ensuring that medical and psychological services appropriately meet the needs of victims.

**Mental and physical well-being:** Foreign victims of sexual exploitation exhibited a range of physical and psychological symptoms and problems when identified.

- *Sexual and reproductive health:* Most were diagnosed with and treated for STIs and, in many cases, suffered from physical exhaustion.
- *General health:* Serious injuries were also reported, with eight victims requiring hospitalization. These cases included four cases of victims with gunshot injuries, one case of lung tuberculosis, one case of gynaecological bleeding, one ectopic pregnancy and one fractured hip.<sup>324</sup>
- *Psychological well-being:* All victims have very high stress levels and many cannot cope without professional help. In Macedonia, they suffered from depression, anxiety and nightmares. Victims trafficked for more than a year presented particularly acute symptoms. In 2004, three victims suffered from neurosis, two from depression and two victims were in an anxious phobic state. In 2003, there were 11 neuro-psychiatric cases, with diagnoses including depression, neurosis and psychosis.
- *Pregnancy:* Some victims were pregnant at identification – five in 2003 and one in 2004 – raising the need for services specifically for pregnant women. This may include tailored medical assistance (i.e. pre and post-natal care), psychological counselling, longer-term shelter and housing options and family counselling. Access to abortion for trafficking victims is facilitated by only some service providers despite its being legal in Macedonia.

In terms of trafficking for labour, the mental and physical impact varies according to the type of labour. When a victim worked as a waitress or cleaner in a nightclub or bar where prostitution took place, she was often also sexually exploited (raped or abused by clients and employers), exposing her to the same abuses as victims trafficked for sexual exploitation. As such, these victims manifested many of the same physical and psychological symptoms. Victims of labour exploitation who were not also sexually exploited might be expected to suffer somewhat less trauma. For example, one Ukrainian woman trafficked for agricultural labour was less physically and mentally damaged than some victims of sexual exploitation. This might reflect her individual coping and negotiation skills as much as the specifics of her trafficking experience so that conclusions are difficult to draw.

Overall in the region, there is a lack of information about the long-term health implications of trafficking. Also under-considered is the impact of trafficking on public health generally. More attention should be paid to this issue by service providers. Also needed is long-term follow-up health care for victims with measures to prevent further stigmatization or violations of privacy.

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<sup>324</sup> Interview, Verica Stamenkova Trajkova, For a Happy Childhood, Macedonia, 14 December 2004, Interview, Dr. Drita Hadziabduli Palosi, IOM, Macedonia, December 2004.



## Post Trafficking Experience

**Victim identification and referral:** The majority of victims of sexual exploitation (84.4 per cent) in Macedonia in 2003 were identified by law enforcement either in the course of regular control activities in nightclubs, bars and private apartments or, to a lesser degree, at borders.<sup>325</sup> One victim went to the police after jumping from a window in the bar where she was kept and running barefoot through the forest to Tetovo. The remainder of victims were identified by different sources – 7.3 per cent by an embassy and 8.2 per cent by another, unspecified source. In 2004, all assisted victims were identified by law enforcement.

Victims trafficked for labour were also primarily identified by law enforcement authorities, accounting for 95.1 per cent of victims between 2001 and 2004. The remaining 3.3 per cent were identified by their embassy and 1.6 per cent by another, unspecified source.

Identification by embassy staff was a new development in 2003 and signals increased awareness and sensitivity on the part of embassy personnel. Embassy staff can be a valuable source of information about potential trafficking victims as well as an important source of referral.

**Re-trafficking:** Data collected from Macedonia indicates that re-trafficking is a significant issue for assisted victims. IOM reports that 19 victims in 2001 (7.3 per cent) had been trafficked in the past, 17 victims in 2002 (6.9 per cent), 14 victims in 2003 (ten per cent) and two victims in 2004 (15.4 per cent). In a few cases, victims from Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus and Romania were found to have been re-trafficked to Macedonia where they were again assisted by IOM Skopje.

In addition, deportation methods used by the Ministry of the Interior in Macedonia potentially contribute to the risk of re-trafficking and trafficking in deportees. According to IOM, because the Ministry of the Interior lacks resources to fund a victim's return home, the victim/deportee is often left at the Macedonian border without any resources, making the risk of re-trafficking high (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 80).

The high rates of re-trafficking flag the need for more targeted and effective prevention efforts, including (but not limited to) meaningful economic options. In addition, attention should be paid to the type of assistance received by victims in their country of origin. Where victims have received reintegration assistance in their home country, attention must be paid to how and why these victims were vulnerable to re-trafficking.

## 2.2 Macedonian Trafficking Victims

In what follows, we consider trafficking in Macedonian nationals. As can be seen in the table below, the number of assisted Macedonian trafficking victims was extremely low. Nevertheless, the last two years have seen the emergence of Macedonian victims, which requires urgent attention and consideration.

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<sup>325</sup> Correspondence with Mr. Radivoja Jovanski, National Coordinator, Macedonia, December 2004.

TABLE 6  
NUMBER OF ASSISTED MACEDONIA TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Trafficking victims	0	0	0	14	12	26

In addition to the numbers of identified and assisted victims compiled by service providers, there is also some secondary data about trafficked Macedonian nationals. For example, the 2002 report on Trafficking in Persons (TIP) reported four Macedonian minors trafficked to Belgium (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 81-2). In addition, one Macedonia victim was reportedly assisted by an NGO in Germany where she was identified. She has since been returned to Macedonia, although not assisted by any Macedonian organization.<sup>326</sup> More recent was the Bitola case in which two Macedonian minors – Roma girls – were trafficked internally for sexual exploitation. In addition, there were cases in the courts of internal trafficking, including, but not limited to, the Bitola case.

### 2.2.1 Profiles and Experiences of Macedonian Trafficking Victims

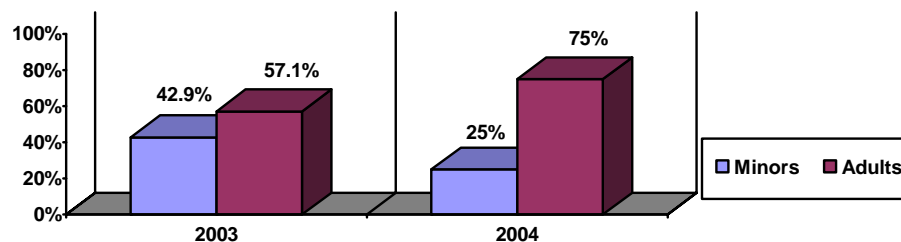
The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of assisted Macedonian trafficking victims. Extensive data on Macedonian victims is lacking as the organization working primarily with this target group did not provide detailed information about all RCP indicators. Instead, with the available information, we will draw a composite sketch of Macedonian trafficking victims in an effort to identify some of the sites of vulnerability of this profile of victim as well as their recruitment and trafficking experience.

#### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics

**Sex:** All Macedonia victims identified and assisted in 2003 and 2004 were women.

**Age:** While most of the victims assisted were adults when identified and assisted, a significant minority of victims in both 2003 and 2004 were minors at identification.

GRAPH 12  
AGE OF MACEDONIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS AT IDENTIFICATION, 2003 AND 2004



Social care actors stress the acute vulnerability of minors not only to being trafficked but also regarding the long-term impact of trafficking. Psychologists argue that such serious trauma in the formative stages of life informs the individual's perceptions in all areas of human relationships, with significant implications for victim recovery and reintegration.

<sup>326</sup> Interview Maja Varoslija and Marija Todorovska, Open Gate/La Strada, Skopje, Macedonia, 15 December 2004.

In addition, the age documented above refers to the victim's age at identification and assistance rather than at recruitment. Some victims who are identified and assisted when they were adults were probably, in fact, minors when trafficked. Unfortunately, most service providers in the region do not systematically record victim's age at recruitment, making it difficult to calculate accurately the number of trafficked minors.

**Ethnicity:** In 2003, three of the 14 assisted victims (or 21.4 per cent) were of Roma ethnicity. In addition, two girls victimized in the "Bitola case" were Roma. These findings flag the particular vulnerability of Roma (and other ethnic minorities) to trafficking in and from Macedonia. Given that approximately four per cent of the Macedonian population is of Roma ethnicity (World Bank, 2001), Roma victims are dramatically disproportionately represented in the national caseload.

Roma may be particularly vulnerable to trafficking due to their general social and economic vulnerability. Among Macedonian victims, this appears to be the case. Special attention to the specific vulnerability of Roma and ethnic minorities is needed both in terms of prevention efforts and protection and reintegration programmes. More cooperation is needed between counter-trafficking actors and organizations already working with ethnic minorities. Further, differences between and within ethnic minority groups must be taken into account to ensure that interventions are appropriate and effective.

**Education:**<sup>327</sup> The education levels of assisted national victims were quite low relative to the national average.<sup>328</sup> In 2003, at least one victim had only a primary school education. Most of the victims had primary school education and had started but not yet finished secondary school. In 2004, national victims had slightly higher education levels, with 61.5 per cent having completed secondary school.

**Mental and physical disabilities:** While the service provider was unable to provide information about this indicator for victims assisted in 2003 and 2004, there were signs that this is a potential site of vulnerability for Macedonia victims. According to one media account, in July 2003, a 16-year-old mentally retarded girl from Stip was kidnapped from her home and forced into prostitution in villages around Tetovo (Djordjevski, 2003).

**Marital and family status:** In both 2003 and 2004, the vast majority of victims were unmarried. Given the high percentage of minors in the caseload, this is not a surprising finding. Further, it is consistent with data about national victims trafficked for sexual exploitation from neighbouring countries, such as Serbia and BiH, in which national victims tended to be young, unmarried women.

**Economic status:** There is insufficient data on this topic from Open Gate to provide details of the economic status of assisted national victims. However, the one national

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<sup>327</sup> In Macedonia, primary school education refers to the first eight years of school, middle school is grades nine through 11, and high school refers to someone who has completed twelfth grade.

<sup>328</sup> In Macedonia, the female enrolment ratio at primary school is 93 per cent. While it decreased after primary school, it is still 81 per cent at secondary, dropping to 28 per cent at tertiary level (UNDP, 2004).

victim trafficked to Albania and assisted by IOM came from an average economic background. This is an area that merits further consideration. Where economics is identified as a primary contributor to trafficking, prevention efforts (employment placement, income generation and vocational training) should be pursued.

**Family and social relations:** While Open Gate was unable to provide detailed information about this indicator, this service provider indicated that many of the victims came from dysfunctional or single-headed families. Still, it is unclear whether women from dysfunctional families are particularly vulnerable to trafficking since various research reports show Macedonia to have a high rate of family violence and conflict generally. In a survey of university students, more than 31 per cent of female students reported being a victim of physical or psychological violence and 35 per cent reported witnessing acts of domestic violence (Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, 1998).

Further consideration of family and social relations as they affect a woman's vulnerability to trafficking as well as the feasibility and advisability of reintegration into dysfunctional families is merited. This is of particular concern given the high percentage of minors among assisted victims, making long-term reintegration options as well as alternatives to family reintegration pressing needs.<sup>329</sup>

### Recruitment Experiences

**Living and working situation at recruitment:** Most national victims were living with their families at recruitment. However, there is insufficient information about their employment at recruitment. It would be valuable to consider victim's (and their family's) employment at recruitment. Where unemployment, underemployment or insufficient salaries are noted, targeted prevention programmes (income generation, job placement) should be considered.

**Recruiter:** Recruiters were either friends or acquaintances in 2003 and 2004. The only exception was one victim trafficked to Albania who was recruited by a male friend.

**Reason for Leaving Home and Type of Work Promised:** The majority of national victims were recruited with promises of work as waitresses. They were subsequently forced into prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation.

### Transportation and Movement

**Destination:** The majority of Macedonian trafficking victims were trafficked internally to various locations around the country. In 2003, one victim was trafficked abroad, to Albania.

TABLE 7  
DESTINATION OF MACEDONIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2002 TO 2004

Destination	2002	2003	2004
Albania	0	1	0
Macedonia	0	13	12
Total	0	14	12

<sup>329</sup> For a more thorough discussion of this indicator, see *Family and social relations* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

## **Victim's Trafficking Experiences**

**Forms of trafficking:** Of the identified and assisted cases of trafficked Macedonians, all were trafficked for sexual exploitation.<sup>330</sup> However, there is insufficient primary data about how and where national victims were exploited.

According to one assessment, the trafficking and sexual exploitation of Macedonian victims is organized by criminal groups and centres around escort agencies. The client makes contact through the agency, which dispatches the woman along with an escort/minder to the client's address (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 83). In other cases, assisted foreign victims reported the presence of Macedonian nationals working in the same location as those to which they were trafficked – bars, nightclubs and brothels. While it is unclear whether these are forced or voluntary cases of prostitution, at the very least, where such locations employ minors, these were cases of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

**Living and working conditions:** According to Open Gate, victims were recruited through offers of work as a waitress in bars or cafes after which they were forced into prostitution. Victims were trafficked to Gostivar, Tetovo and Skopje as well as moved within Macedonia. While in some cases they enjoyed a degree of freedom of movement, they were also strictly controlled and manipulated (Andreani and Raviv, 2004).

**Mental and physical well-being:** According to Open Gate, all victims required medical assistance and often there was a need to procure medication for treatment. Among the ailments of assisted victims were sexually transmitted diseases. More information is needed about this indicator – psychological condition, reproductive health, alcohol, or drug dependency, pregnancy – in the development of appropriate services.

## **Post Trafficking Experience**

**Victim identification and referral:** The majority were identified and referred through the national helpline operated by Open Gate/La Strada. This stands in sharp contrast to other countries in the region where helplines were primarily accessed as a tool for information about migration and trafficking rather than to access services. One victim, assisted in 2003, was identified and referred through IOM missions.

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<sup>330</sup> While sexual exploitation was the only form of trafficking noted among Macedonian nationals, there were signs of other forms of trafficking. Criminal intelligence reports suggested the possibility of trafficking in Macedonian victims for begging and organ harvesting (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 83). In addition, according to a 2003 study on trafficking vulnerability of street children in Skopje, five per cent of the surveyed Albanian children in streets/street children had been offered a job abroad by unknown people. In addition, 25 per cent reported that their friends have worked abroad, predominantly in Germany, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, England and Turkey. Of the Roma street children, 23 per cent had been offered a job abroad, predominantly by relatives but also by friends and strangers. Of those surveyed, 26 per cent had friends working abroad, in Belgium, Germany and Italy (IOM, 2003a: 18-19).

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

In this section, we analyze the identification and referral mechanism in Macedonia (Section 3.1) as well as the assistance and protection available to foreign and national victims of trafficking (Section 3.2).

#### 3.1 Victim Identification and Referral in Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The official identification and referral of victims in Macedonia currently operates according to an informal national referral system. Initial contact with the victim occurs through various actors including police, NGOs, helplines and clients. All foreign victims are referred immediately to IOM where their identity is determined. National victims are primarily identified through Open Gate and referred for assistance within its network of partners. Details of this identification and referral process are outlined below.

##### Law Enforcement

Macedonian law enforcement<sup>331</sup> identify the vast majority of foreign victims of trafficking. Police identify these victims primarily through raids on suspect establishments, by routine administrative controls (i.e. inspecting working contracts of employees, checking residence permits of foreigners, etc.) and, increasingly, through investigations undertaken by the Anti-Organized Crime Department. In addition, border police have stepped up action on victim identification.

The normal procedure upon completion of a police operation is for representatives of the Anti-Organized Crime Department and/or the Department for Foreigners and Immigration Issues to transport victims to the nearest police station and conduct interviews. The dual purposes of these interviews are collection of criminal evidence and the determination of the victim's trafficking status. If potential victims, they are transported to the Transit Centre where an IOM representative screens each of them to determine whether they qualify as a victim according to the definition of the Palermo Protocol. If the representative determines that a person is a victim of trafficking, the representative explains IOM's assistance programme to them in a language they can understand and asks the victim if he or she voluntarily consents to enter the programme. The victim then signs a document in her own language consenting to return and the associated assistance.

##### Helplines

Another mechanism for the identification of trafficking victim was the telephone helpline, operated by the NGO Open Gate, which is a member of the La Strada network. The helpline, dedicated to trafficking in human beings, has proved particularly critical in identifying Macedonian victims of trafficking. It was established in October 2002 and aims to provide preventive information (information about employment agencies; working conditions abroad, etc.), as well as to inform callers

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<sup>331</sup> The two main law enforcement actors in this regard are the Anti-Organized Crime Department within the Ministry of the Interior, which is responsible for coordinating the operational activities for exposing trafficking in human beings and prosecuting perpetrators, and the Department for Foreigners and Immigration Issues, which is responsible for documenting victims' data as well as for providing temporary shelter prior to their return.

about assistance services and referral mechanisms. The helpline also collects information on missing women and girls and cooperates with the Anti-Organized Crime Department. The helpline is operated 12 hours a day, 8:00 am to 8:00 pm, with plans to increase the service to 24 hours a day. The number is toll free and is donated by Macedonian Telecom.

In 2003, the helpline received 231 calls, of which four were directly from victims still in trafficking and one was from a victim who had escaped. Three victims subsequently received assistance from Open Gate or were referred as needed. Of the remaining calls, 131 were informational or preventive, 46 related to missing persons and 52 were categorized as “other”, including threatening calls and calls related to domestic violence.

The profile of calls in 2004 was quite similar. Between 1 January and 31 December, the helpline received 294 calls, of which 13 were directly from victims still in their trafficking situation and nine calls were from victims who had escaped. Ten victims subsequently received assistance from Open Gate or were referred for assistance. Of the remaining calls, 142 were informational or preventive, four related to missing persons, 47 were calls requiring referral (i.e. domestic violence) and 19 were threatening calls.

In addition, there is another helpline for victims of violence, including trafficking, operated by the Organization of Women of Skopje. The helpline has been operating for 11 years and is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The helpline offers free advice as well as psychological counselling, legal advice and referrals for assistance. In addition, the helpline offers information about safe migration, including avoiding risks of trafficking. In 2004, the helpline received 934 calls (an increase from 793 in 2003) reporting various types of violence, including calls from victims and their families about trafficking. In 2004, calls included trafficking for sexual exploitation, labour and begging. Most victims accessing this helpline are Macedonian nationals.

### **Embassies**

A handful of foreign victims were identified by their respective embassies. In such cases, generally the victims approached the embassy for assistance – for travel documents, return assistance, etc. – thereby alerting embassy staff. This applies both to victims of labour exploitation and sexual exploitation. Between 2001 and 2004, 3.3 per cent of victims of labour exploitation were identified by their embassies. Similarly, 7.3 per cent of foreign victims of sexual exploitation in 2003 were identified by their embassies.

## **3.2 Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

The assistance and protection framework for trafficked victims in Macedonia has been geared mainly toward return assistance for foreign victims of sexual exploitation. The IOM has provided most of the return assistance to foreign victims in Macedonia over the last few years. Local NGOs are becoming more actively involved in counter-trafficking activities and services, and service providers have stepped up efforts to broaden the assistance framework to include foreigners who do not wish to repatriate immediately as well as Macedonian trafficking victims.

Victims assisted in Macedonia in 2003 and 2004 were provided with a range of services to meet their immediate and longer-term needs. Details of the various services are outlined below.

### **Shelter**

There is one dedicated shelter for trafficked victims in Macedonia, and this shelter provides services to foreign victims. The shelter, located in Skopje, is part of the *Transit Centre for Foreigners*, a secure, closed government facility. Movement of beneficiaries is restricted and they cannot enter or exit the building without official accompaniment. The shelter is jointly managed by the Ministry of Interior (Department for Foreigners and Immigration Issues), which maintains its own office and administrative personnel within the building. Daily activities and victim assistance are managed by the local NGO For a Happy Childhood in partnership with IOM.

The official capacity of the shelter is 20, although as many as 35 beneficiaries can potentially be accommodated there. It is staffed by three teams, each consisting of a social worker and psychologist. There is also a doctor, two nurses, an individual psychotherapist and a child psychologist who provide relevant services and assistance. The length of stay depends upon how long it takes for completion of administrative documents (i.e., identification and travel documents) as well as the length of legal proceedings involving the beneficiary. Victims testifying in court proceedings tend to remain for a longer period.

This transit shelter is the only government-run shelter in the region. The Ministry of Interior assumes financial responsibility for general maintenance, utility bills, providing meals and security. IOM provided most services for shelter beneficiaries until August 2002 when For a Happy Childhood assumed gradual responsibility for daily management and provision of direct psychosocial and recreational services.

In the best interest of the victims, the responsibility for facilities management of the transit shelter should be transferred from the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. This change in management should be possible under the National Action Plan as well as Article 53 on the *Law on Movement and Residence for Foreigners*. Until now, counter-trafficking activities of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs have been scarce, but their role should be increased according to guidelines designed to respect to human rights principles and the well-being of victims, and with proper cooperation and input from experienced service providers, international organizations and NGOs.

There is also a genuine need to develop housing and assistance capacities for foreign victims trafficked within Macedonia who do not want to return to their home countries or who do not qualify for the existing assistance return program. The number of foreigners who wish to remain in Macedonia for at least three months is likely to increase with the practical introduction of the three-month residency permit under the Tirana Commitment. Closed, restricted-movement shelters are inappropriate housing options for these women.

Another gap is the lack of accommodation options for national victims. Currently, there is no dedicated facility for identified Macedonian victims. Open Gate is currently working to establish a safe house for national and foreign victims, and has recently



secured funding for the project. In the meantime, this NGO has provided temporary *ad hoc* accommodation to both foreign and national trafficking victims.

### **Medical Assistance**

General medical examinations are mandatory for all beneficiaries entering the transit shelter. Examinations are conducted at the shelter. Gynaecological examinations (including STI and pregnancy tests) are conducted on a voluntary basis, but most beneficiaries request and receive them.

Some shelter beneficiaries required medical treatment and hospitalization for injuries such as gunshot wounds, broken limbs and broken ribs sustained during police operations and raids. Although police referred some of these injured victims directly to the hospital for treatment, others were referred to the shelter before receiving any medical attention for their injuries. It is imperative that police procedures include securing emergency medical care for injured victims prior to questioning victims or transferring them to police stations or the Transit Centre.

IOM reached an agreement with Skopje General Hospital regarding hospitalization and provision of emergency medical care to victims that stipulates that the hospital provides medical care according to the same fee scale used for local residents. This constitutes a good practice in the provision of medical services in the region.

### **Psychological Assistance**

A specialized mental health NGO provides psychosocial care to victims at the transit shelter. Psychological services include the daily presence of a team of social workers and a psychologist, individual counselling sessions and group counselling sessions. The psychologist conducts assessments of individual beneficiaries to create individual plans for their recovery.

Many victims reportedly suffer from acute stress including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), with those trafficked for more than a year presenting particularly acute symptoms. Service providers propose individual counselling sessions on a voluntary basis and almost all beneficiaries attend these sessions. Victims participate in individual sessions, depending on their needs, requests and length of stay at the shelter. A substantial number of the sessions are devoted to building self-esteem and establishing healthier living habits, especially habits relating to sleeping hours, nutrition and personal hygiene. Whenever needed, beneficiaries are referred for psychiatric treatment at a private clinic. In 2004, there were seven neuro-psychiatric cases and, in 2003, there were 11 such cases.

The shelter psychologist provides special counselling sessions, with particular attention to victims who plan to testify. The staff psychologist notes that these victims experience a significant amount of anxiety. In particular, victims grow especially anxious if legal proceedings are lengthy or of an uncertain duration, thereby prolonging their stay and delaying their return home. It is important to note that the staff psychologist makes an independent determination regarding whether the victim is competent, willing, and able to testify. Moreover, the psychologist provides an on-going assessment regarding the overall effect of the testimony upon the victim's well-being. Although the psychologist's opinion is not necessarily binding, it is nonetheless a good practice that a psychologist conducts and submits an assessment regarding the

victim's competence and willingness to testify, as well as monitoring the impact of the testimony upon the victim. This approach should ideally be introduced in other destination and origin countries.

In addition, the *Standard Operating Procedures for the Assistance of Victims of Trafficking for Macedonia* explicitly outline special procedures for mentally ill or disabled victims of trafficking, which include specialized medical services, specialized legal representation, the appointment of a legal guardian or representation and tailored return following an assessment of the conditions of return. These *Standard Operating Procedures* stand as a good practice for victim protection.

### **Educational and Recreational Activities**

The shelter offers a range of educational and recreational services for beneficiaries in spite of the difficulties posed by the relatively short stay of most victims. To enhance the recuperation process, build confidence levels and decrease stress, recreational offerings include yoga and other exercise classes, self-defence courses and art therapy. There is also a library with books in several languages.

Service providers do not provide longer-term vocational courses because they require more time than the three to four weeks that most beneficiaries spend at the shelter. However, brief courses are offered in hairdressing, cosmetology, English language, computer skills and sewing. Participation in all activities is voluntary, but almost all beneficiaries elect to participate in one or more of the recreational and educational activities.

### **Legal Assistance**

Four categories of legal assistance are provided to beneficiaries, as detailed below:

1) *Documentation assistance necessary for return home*: IOM is primarily responsible for obtaining the identity and travel documents that foreign victims need to return to their home country. The majority of foreign victims at the shelter do not possess proper identity documents and IOM makes arrangements with the victim's embassy or consulate in Macedonia for issuance of these documents. Victims from Romania, Ukraine and Bulgaria have an embassy in Skopje, but paperwork for Moldovan victims must be obtained via the Moldovan embassy in Sofia, Bulgaria.

2) *Legal information regarding the beneficiary's overall status as a victim of trafficking*: Regarding general legal information pertaining to issues of trafficking, migration and legal procedures, beneficiaries receive information at the shelter through written materials and information sessions conducted by Temis and the Macedonian Bar Association. On arrival at the shelter, beneficiaries receive general legal information about trafficking in leaflets printed in six languages.

3) *Individualized legal advice and representation for victims who participate in legal proceedings against traffickers*: In addition, pursuant to a contract with IOM, one lawyer from the legal NGO Temis and one lawyer from the Macedonian Bar Association provide individualized advice and representation to victims who participate in legal proceedings against their traffickers. Since September 2003, each lawyer has handled 20 cases (a total of 40 cases). As of December 2004, in the cases assisted by

these lawyers, there have been final verdicts in two cases with another six cases in the process of being heard.

In the Macedonian legal system, witnesses do not have the option to refuse to participate in legal proceedings. This makes legal representation especially critical. Lawyers for the victim/witness may attend the trial at the discretion of the presiding judge. In the past, judges were resistant to this practice but lawyers report an improvement in the past year. Similarly, lawyers report the improved conduct of judges, police and prosecutors in the handling of trafficking cases. This is due in part to efforts (seminars and workshops) by international organizations, in partnership with local legal associations, to increase the level of judicial awareness and respect for the rights of victims. One continuing problem faced in legal proceedings is that official legal interpreters for court are scarce, although legal representatives report improvement.

Under Macedonian legislation, it is possible for victims to attach civil damage claims to criminal cases against traffickers. Service providers report that 18 damage claims have been presented so far but none have been completed (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 79).

### **Witness Protection**

At present, Macedonia lacks a formal witness protection program for trafficked victims. Victims who testify are provided with protection on an *ad hoc* basis by police and international organizations. Due to the absence of a formal witness protection programme and occasional exposure of victims' details and cases within the media, most victims do not feel that they will receive adequate protection if they testify against traffickers. An amendment to the penal code on witness protection is currently under examination by the government. It includes the possibility to protect the identity of a witness, personal protection measures, resettlement and change of a victim's identity. According to these provisions, the public prosecutor in consultation with an investigative judge will decide upon adoption of specific protection measures on a case-by-case basis. It is anticipated that the witness protection law will be passed and implemented in January 2006.

To increase the fairness and reliability of court procedures and decisions, international organizations and local legal NGOs have initiated a series of training programmes for law enforcement and judicial personnel. These training programmes should be conducted on an ongoing basis. In response to the need for a comprehensive court monitoring system, the OSCE launched a pilot court monitoring program in cooperation with experienced, local legal NGOs.

### **Temporary Residence Permit (TRP)**

In December 2002, Macedonia signed the *Tirana Statement of Commitment* regarding the legalization of trafficked victims' status, including a pledge to issue temporary residence permits to victims of trafficking. Currently, Macedonia is in the process of making legislative amendments that would allow for this temporary residence permit for foreign victims of trafficking. The intention of the government is to include in the draft *Law on Foreigners* an article (Article 63) on temporary residence on humanitarian grounds. This entails a three-month non-conditional reflection period that can be extended to six or 12-month stay permits, conditioned upon cooperation with law enforcement. The law is expected to pass by mid-2005.

It is important that temporary residence permits not be conditioned upon a victim's willingness to participate in legal proceedings. In order for the temporary permit to serve its foremost purpose, as an instrument to facilitate a reflection and recovery period for the victim, the victim should be provided with an initial period of stay that affords enough time to achieve emotional and physical stability and an opportunity to make a fully informed decision about future options, including possible participation in legal proceedings. Accordingly, the government and service providers must develop an appropriate assistance framework, including medium-term shelters and corresponding rehabilitation assistance programmes, for foreign victims who reside in Macedonia under the temporary visa. There is also a need to ensure victims' freedom of movement.

### **Voluntary Return of Trafficked Victims**

IOM is the primary organization responsible for overseeing the assistance package for foreign trafficked victims willing to return to their home countries. IOM secures identity papers, travel documents and an exit visa on the beneficiary's behalf and contacts the IOM mission or partner NGO in the beneficiary's country of origin regarding the beneficiary's case file, transportation arrangements and reintegration possibilities. At present, NGOs working with beneficiaries in the transit shelter do not have direct contact with service providers in beneficiaries' home countries, although they have expressed a willingness to do this. This kind of direct information exchange and case planning should be encouraged.

Beneficiaries return by car or air and are met by IOM or NGO personnel who offer overnight accommodation and/or transportation to the beneficiary's desired destination. Most beneficiaries enrol, at least for a short period, in an assistance programme that includes shelter, medical care, psychosocial assistance, a material assistance package and referrals for vocational and employment assistance. Detailed information about reintegration programmes within specific countries of origin in South-eastern Europe are found in the individual country reports.

In some cases, NGOs such as Open Gate have also participated in the return and return of foreign victims whom they have assisted. These returns are organized through their network of partners including, but not limited to, the La Strada network.

### **Reintegration Assistance for Macedonian Victims**

At present, comprehensive assistance is not available for Macedonian victims of trafficking. This is due to the generally low number of identified and assisted national trafficking victims. What reintegration assistance is provided, is done on an *ad hoc* basis by NGOs like Open Gate who have been assisting national victims since their initial identification in 2003.

Plans are underway for the establishment of a shelter and assistance programme, including reintegration assistance, primarily for Macedonian victims. Funding has been secured and Open Gate is conducting study tours as a first step in the development of an appropriate assistance model. The project will be implemented in partnership with USAID, UNICEF and OSCE and is expected to begin in mid-2005.

The services envisaged will include basic needs (i.e. accommodation, food, clothing), legal assistance, medical assistance, psychological assistance, family assessment and

mediation and reintegration. The programme will depend upon the needs of the individual victims and may be implemented directly by Open Gate or through other organizations with the necessary expertise. Cooperation with the government agencies, including the Centres for Social Work, is also anticipated. It is essential to optimize the geographic distribution of services as well as to provide family mediation/counselling and case monitoring.

### **Assistance for Minors**

Service providers have recently made efforts to develop more specialized assistance and protection programmes for foreign trafficked minors, according to some of the principles outlined in UNICEF's *Recommendations for Special Measures to Protect Child Victims of Trafficking in South-eastern Europe*. Indeed the *Standard Operating Procedures for the Assistance of Victims of Trafficking for Macedonia* explicitly outline many of these provisions and with the underlying tenet of all action being taken in the "best interests of the child".

For a Happy Childhood, which is providing services at the Transit Centre, hired a psychologist to work exclusively with minors. Minors at the shelter receive individual counselling sessions, specialized educational and social activities, including group sessions addressing issues of particular concern to adolescents. Many of these minors come from dysfunctional, abusive family environments, so individual counselling sessions focus on developing positive relationships and building self-esteem. Minors who were sold by their families are some of the most difficult cases for service providers. These minors receive additional counselling and therapeutic services. Depending on their ages and levels of interest, the minors participate in educational and recreational activities along with adult shelter residents. The programme for minors includes workshops on building personal identity, dealing with stress, life skills and decision-making, dealing with conflict and aggression, professional development and communication skills.

Despite concrete efforts such as these to provide tailored assistance to minors, there remain some important gaps. For example, the UNICEF guidelines (and the *Macedonian Standard Operating Procedures*) call for separate accommodation for minors. However, minors are currently accommodated alongside adult victims. Similarly, under the UNICEF guidelines, all minor victims of trafficking should be appointed a legal guardian, a practice that has not been implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and/or the country's Centres for Social Work.

Solutions to these gaps are envisaged under the National Plan of Action recently drafted by the National Committee's Working Group on Children. The draft, finalized in December 2004 and under review by the National Committee, includes provisions for the establishment of separate accommodation for minors. As well, the NPA envisages tailored psychological and social assistance programmes for minors, the obligation to appoint a legal guardian for all minors, and legal reform – including an article on trafficking in minors and special provision under the witness protection law to process minors.

The working group has also been active in other ways to protect the rights of minors. In July 2004, the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia suggested changes to the *Law on Passports of the Citizens of the Republic of Macedonia*, which had included the

possibility for minors to travel abroad without the consent of their parents (see Articles 6,7, and 30). In recognition that this law violates Articles 35 and 36 of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC), the Working Group on Minors registered their concern and requested that the law be amended appropriately.

Temis provides individualized legal services to trafficked minors at the transit shelter. International organizations and local NGOs are exploring ways to make legal and court procedures involving minors conform to international standards for protection of minors. In this vein, Temis recently completed a legal assessment of the status of minors, disabled and mentally ill persons.

### **Protocols and Standard Operating Procedures**

In cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior and partner NGOs, the IOM mission in Skopje has developed and implemented standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the assistance of victims of trafficking in Macedonia. The SOPs present the basic principles and definition of assistance to victims of trafficking, describe the primary roles and responsibilities of the government and agencies involved in assistance, detail interagency coordination and outline the referral process. In addition, the SOPs outline special procedures for the assistance of two specific types of victims – minor victims and mentally ill or disabled victims of trafficking. The clear articulation of standards and protocols is an important component in victim protection and should be undertaken in all countries in South-eastern Europe.

# COUNTRY REPORT

## THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

This section analyzes the current situation of trafficking victims and victim assistance and protection in the Republic of Moldova. The report is divided into three sections: 1) Number of Foreign and Moldovan Trafficking Victims Identified and Assisted, 2) Profiles of Trafficking Victims and 3) Overview of the Assistance Framework in Moldova.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The total number of Moldovan nationals assisted as victims of trafficking between January 2000 and 31 December 2004 was 1633.
- The total number of foreign nationals assisted within Moldova in this same time period was three.
- Moldova is a country of origin for various forms of trafficking. In only a handful of instances have foreign victims been identified and assisted in Moldova.
- In 2003 and 2004, Moldovans were trafficked for sexual exploitation, labour, begging and delinquency. In addition, many victims were trafficked for multiple forms of exploitation, including combinations of sexual exploitation and labour, labour and begging and sexual exploitation and begging.
- While the majority of assisted Moldovan victims were female, a number of male victims of trafficking were also identified and assisted. Indeed, in 2004, 47.8 per cent of victims of labour trafficking were male, while 30.4 per cent of victims trafficked for begging and delinquency were male.
- Minors were also represented among assisted victims, accounting for ten to 15 per cent of victims of labour and sexual exploitation. Minors were particularly heavily represented among victims trafficked for begging and delinquency – accounting for 35.7 per cent in 2003 and 39.1 per cent in 2004.
- A multiplicity of factors, including economic background, family relations, education and employment, inform victims' vulnerability to trafficking. A number of national victims in Moldova report poverty, unemployment or underemployment, and lack of economic opportunities as central contributors to their migration. In addition, in many cases, family relations and marital and family status were push factors in a victim's willingness to migrate.
- In most cases, victims were trafficked alone. However, in a number of instances, entire families were trafficked as well as mothers trafficked with their children. These victims were trafficked for begging and delinquency.
- Some victims were recruited by women who were themselves victims or former victims of trafficking. Traffickers use this strategy of obliging victims to engage in recruitment to make victims criminally complicit in their own victimization and thereby discourage them from reporting to law enforcement authorities or escaping. This strategy has disturbing implications for victims who can and have been charged as recruiters/traffickers despite their victim status.
- Forms of recruitment include promises of work abroad, forcibly taking victims and victims being sold by family members.



- Moldovan victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were sent to as many as 32 different destination countries since 2000. More recently, destinations have further diversified with victims have been trafficked to new countries or identified there in greater numbers. In 2004, these destinations included Turkey (44.9 per cent), the Middle East (14.6 per cent), Russia (11 per cent) and European countries (8.3 per cent). Traditional destinations in SEE accounted for only 18.1 per cent of victims in 2004. In addition, some Moldovans were trafficked within the country.
- While poverty was prime contributor to trafficking, it was not an explanation in and of itself. In 2004, Moldovan victims of sexual trafficking originated not only from “poor” and “very poor” families, but also from “average” (29.5 per cent) and “well off” backgrounds (2.3 per cent).
- Many Moldovan victims had relatively high education levels, consistent with and even higher than the general population. This shows that both well and poorly educated people can fall victim to trafficking.
- Most victims were identified by law enforcement authorities. However, in 2004, identification by law enforcement declined substantially, to 36.4 per cent of victims of sex trafficking. Instead, more victims were identified by NGOs, international organizations and Moldovan embassies or were self-referred.
- Re-trafficking was a prominent issue in Moldova for all forms of trafficking. This highlights the need for ongoing evaluation of reintegration efforts as well as the creation of economic opportunities in source areas, both as a prevention and reintegration strategy.
- Most law enforcement authorities have been trained in identifying only victims of sex trafficking, which in practice often means that trafficking for labour and begging/delinquency are overlooked. There is a need to develop identification signposts for all forms of trafficking and profiles of victims.
- While calls from victims were a small percentage of the total calls received by the La Strada helpline, a significant number of calls translated into referrals. This differs from many of the helplines in the region where few victims access these lines. It is worth exploring how La Strada’s experience of victim identification through the helpline might be replicated in other countries.
- There is a clear need for improved (secure) information sharing and referral procedures between service providers in destination and transit countries. NGO networks should be expanded and, more generally, formal links and referral agreements should be made between organizations in source and destination countries. Ideally, victims should not be limited in the choice of assistance to only cooperating NGOs but rather should be informed about the full range of assistance and reintegration possibilities in Moldova.
- There are positive developments in NGO cooperation in source, destination and transit countries. Such cooperative efforts should be expanded. To mitigate the risk of victims being re-trafficked, it is essential that all such programmes

include transportation (and have the necessary associated funding) to ensure that identified victims reach their homes (or shelter) in Moldova safely.

- Specialized assistance to minors is comparatively well developed in Moldova, standing as a good model for other countries. These include the “Minors and Child-Friendly” Wing in the IOM rehabilitation centre, Salvatii Copii’s good parenting classes offered upon reintegration and coordination with the government on the appointment of legal guardians in the case of minors. However, there is also a need to consider the longer-term reintegration needs of minors.
- Overall, service providers report an increased demand for various forms of legal assistance and counselling. With increasing number of trafficking cases being pursued in Moldova, this would be a valuable service for victims
- Little emphasis is placed on educational assistance for trafficked victims, despite the generally low educational attainment of most assisted victims. Educational reinsertion programmes are uncommon and formal educational reinsertion agreements have not been developed with the government. Typically, victims are more interested in attending vocational training that could lead to immediate earnings. While these vocational programmes are important, specialized educational reinsertion and alternative education programmes should be developed, especially for minors. A potentially amenable approach for all would be that education programmes include a vocational component, a life-skills orientation and a practical focus on income-generation possibilities within respective communities.
- Because most trafficking victims leave Moldova in search of a liveable wage, service providers focus on vocational, employment and business development programmes. In some cases, these programmes have also been expanded to include women and girls considered to be at risk of trafficking and have been undertaken by not only NGOs and international organizations but, significantly, also the Moldovan government. Such prevention efforts should be used more widely.
- Deportation of trafficking victims to Moldova continues, contravening international standards. Destination countries are obliged to identify and assist trafficking victims and these obligations should be adhered to.
- The geographic distribution of services must be considered. While organizations partnering with local NGOs and community groups serves this purpose to some extent, more specific professional services, e.g. medical and psychological, are needed in outlying areas.
- Lack of data from destination countries can camouflage the extent of trafficking in Moldovan nationals. There is a need to access information from both origin and destination countries to measure the scope of trafficking.

## 1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND MOLDOVAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED

Moldova is a primary country of origin for trafficking in women and girls, mainly for sexual exploitation. Moldovan victims are trafficked to destinations throughout South-eastern Europe as well as the European Union. In addition, Moldovans are trafficked abroad for labour exploitation, begging and delinquency. According to some sources, Moldova is also a transit country for traffickers from Ukraine and other countries of the former Soviet Union. As well, a handful of foreign victims have been assisted in Moldova

Statistics and information about Moldovan trafficking victims were compiled according to primary data provided by the following organizations: Salvati Copii, La Strada Moldova, Interaction, Gencliar Birlilii, IOM Rehabilitation Centre, Italian Consortium of Solidarity (ICS), Centre for the Prevention of Trafficking in Women (CPTW), IOM Mission in Chisinau, Young Generation (Romania), Koofra (Germany) and the Poppy Project (UK).<sup>332</sup> The data relates to experiences of victims trafficked for a range of purposes – sexual exploitation, labour exploitation and begging/delinquency.

In what follows, we present our findings of profiles and experiences of victims from and within Moldova. These findings will be helpful in considering interventions that can better address victim's needs and redress their trafficking experiences.<sup>333</sup>

TABLE 1  
NUMBER OF VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO OR ORIGINATING FROM MOLDOVA, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Moldovan trafficking victims	319	382	329	313	300	1643
Foreign trafficking victims	0	0	0	1	2	3

These figures comprise the number of trafficked Moldovan women and girls identified and voluntarily as well as forcibly returned to Moldova between 1 January 2000 and 31 December 2004. The vast majority of victims returned to Moldova through voluntary return programmes, although, in some cases, victims were forcibly returned by third countries and assisted upon or after arrival in Moldova. Victims who were voluntarily returned to Moldova under formal assistance programmes but declined further assistance in Moldova are included within the assistance figures because they were formally identified and received a basic assistance package.

Suspected victims who were not properly or formally identified and assisted are not included in the numbers presented above. For example, a Ukrainian NGO that interviews Moldovan women deported from Turkey to Odessa harbour suspects that approximately 20 per cent of women were trafficked victims. While the NGO provides suspected victims with information about assistance programmes in Moldova, many do not contact assistance providers. As such, they are not captured within identification and assistance figures.

<sup>332</sup> Other organizations in Moldova that participated in the RCP research and provided information for the RCP research, include: CARITAS, Border Police and UNICEF.

<sup>333</sup> For a discussion of how data was collected and the methodology used, please see: *Introduction*.

With the exception of information provided by the NGOs Poppy Project (UK) and Koofra (Germany), the above figures do not include Moldovan victims identified and assisted by NGOs or organizations in third countries who are not subsequently returned or assisted in Moldova. This is because, apart from these two NGOs, no organizations in destination or transit countries provided RCP with individual victim profiles about Moldovan victims they assisted. If we were able to include victim data from destination countries, it is reasonable to conclude that these numbers would be far higher. Between June 1996 and June 2001, 144 Moldovan trafficking victims were enrolled in Italy's (Article 18) social assistance schemes for trafficked victims (Transcrime, 2004). Further, STV La Strada in the Netherlands assisted an additional seven Moldovan victims in 2003 and 2004.<sup>334</sup>

Data from these sources is necessary to highlight: a) the extent to which victims were trafficked to various destinations, b) various forms of trafficking and c) the specific profiles of a wider range of victims to ensure effective prevention and protection efforts. RCP efforts to collect information from service providers in destination countries were largely unsuccessful as many organizations lacked time and resources to assist in the research or were prevented from doing so by institutional regulations on information sharing. With more victims staying in destination countries due to residency options, the lack of data from destination countries can result in repressed numbers and a misperception that trafficking has decreased.

While the number of identified and assisted victims provides some insight into the number of trafficking victims, service providers and counter-trafficking actors assert that these numbers are only a fraction of the Moldovans who face being trafficked each year. As an alternative indicator of the scope of trafficking from Moldova, consider that the La Strada helpline in Chisinau received 12,274 calls between 1 September 2001 and 1 December 2004 related to migration as well as trafficking assistance. From 1 January to 1 December 2004, the helpline received 4,301 calls, an increase from 3,731 calls over the previous year. Similarly, the helpline operated by the Centre for the Prevention of Trafficking in Women has received over 2,500 calls related to trafficking to date. In addition, information from communities in Moldova flag high rates of outmigration, much of which may be trafficking. One young woman trafficked to Turkey by her neighbour travelled with two other women and knew of at least 50 others trafficked by the same woman in the last six months. So far, she is the only one who has returned.

## 2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

Below is an exploration of victim profiles for the various forms of trafficking documented in, to and through Moldova. In this section, we analyze the profiles and experiences of Moldovan victims trafficked for sexual exploitation (Section 2.1.1) and for labour, begging and delinquency (Section 2.1.2). We also consider foreign victims trafficked to Moldova (Section 2.2). Since victims' needs are shaped by their particular trafficking experiences, an understanding their backgrounds as well as the precise nature of recruitment, transportation and exploitation is an essential starting point in the development of appropriate assistance and services.

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<sup>334</sup> Correspondence with Suzanne Hoff, La Strada, Netherlands, 26 April 2005.

## 2.1 Moldovan Victims of Trafficking

In what follows, we examine the trafficking in Moldovan nationals.

TABLE 2  
NUMBER OF MOLDOVAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND/OR ASSISTED, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Moldovan trafficking victims	319	382	329	313	300	1643

This section considers the profiles of Moldovan victims trafficked for sexual exploitation, labour exploitation, delinquency and begging<sup>335</sup>, including situations where victims were exposed to two or more forms of exploitation. The table below details the number of Moldovan victims exploited in various form of trafficking.

TABLE 3  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG ASSISTED MOLDOVAN VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004<sup>336</sup>

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Sexual exploitation	162	230
Labour exploitation	61	22
Sexual and labour exploitation	68	17
Begging/delinquency	14	23
Sexual exploitation and begging/ delinquency	2	7
Labour, begging/delinquency	1	1
Sexual exploitation, labour and begging/ delinquency	1	0
Other	4	0
Total	313	300

Of note is the number of victims who were trafficked for labour, including domestic work, bartending, agriculture, industry, waitressing, caregiving and selling. In 2003, this includes 61 victims (or 20.1 per cent), although 2004 saw a significant decline to 22 victims (or 7.3 per cent). Delinquency was also noted in both years – 14 cases in 2003 (4.3 per cent) and 23 cases (7.7 per cent) in 2004. This includes begging and petty crime as well as facilitating the prostitution of other victims of trafficking.

As is the case in a number of countries throughout the region, a noteworthy number of victims were also trafficked for multiple purposes, including sexual exploitation, labour, begging and delinquency. In some cases, victims were exploited for two purposes simultaneously – as when women were required to work both as prostitute and waitress in a bar. In other cases, the victim was first exploited for one purpose – perhaps forced to beg or undertake labour – and subsequently required to provide sexual services. Indeed, as can be seen from the table above, 21.8 per cent of victims assisted in 2003 suffered dual forms of exploitation, although this decreased to 8.3 per cent in 2004.

The most common form of dual exploitation was sexual and labour exploitation, accounting for a striking 68 victims in 2003 (21.7 per cent of victims) and decreasing to

<sup>335</sup> While there is speculation about incidents of trafficking for adoption and human organs, such cases were insufficiently documented and no assisted Moldovan victim has been exploited for this purpose. There have been similar reports and allegations from “source countries” such as Albania and Romania. Moreover, in a recent IOM criminal assessment there were indications of trafficking of illegal adoption from BiH (see Andreani and Raviv, 2004). To date the only concrete cases of trafficking for adoption were documented in Bulgaria in 2004. For details, see *Bulgaria Country Report*.

<sup>336</sup> While there were various forms of trafficking prior to 2003, service providers do not systematically document this data. As such, it is not possible to present a reliable breakdown of the various forms of trafficking prior to 2003.

17 victims in 2004 (or 5.7 per cent). Some victims exploited sexually in bars and restaurants were also required to serve as a waitress, dancer, cook, or cleaner. In other cases, victims were prostitutes but required to undertake domestic service for the bar owner or his family. In still other circumstances, the victim was employed as a domestic worker and also sexually exploited by her employer and/or his friends and clients. Other victims worked as sellers, in the textile industry, or as a caregiver for the elderly as well as being sexually exploited. One exceptional example of dual forms of trafficking involved two Moldovan men trafficked in 2003 to Macedonia for labour but forced to provide sexual services as well.<sup>337</sup>

In addition, some victims were trafficked for delinquency along with other forms of exploitation. In 2004, seven victims were sexually exploited as well as involved in delinquency (selling drugs, theft, pimping and criminal activity). Similarly, victims were exploited for labour and begging/delinquency, accounting for one case in 2003 and one case in 2004. In one case in 2003, a Moldovan victim was even trafficked for sexual and labour exploitation as well as begging.

There has been speculation about incidents of trafficking for adoption and human organs. One source from the Department for Youth Affairs of Balti City in Moldova recounted a case of a mother selling her newborn baby to traffickers who took the baby abroad to foreign parents for adoption (IPP, 2004: 7). Similarly, more than 300 Moldovans have sold a kidney abroad since 1998 with a range of coercion methods used, making some of these trafficking cases (Pearson, 2004: 24). In addition, in 2002, two arrests were made on charges of trafficking in organs, charges brought after the victim contacted the police (Vermot-Mangold, 2003: 9-10). However, these cases were insufficiently documented and no Moldovan victim exploited for this purpose has, as yet, been assisted.<sup>338</sup>

Victims' experiences of exploitation colour their needs. Victims trafficked for labour but who have also been sexually exploited require many of the same types of assistance as victims trafficked for prostitution. Victims exploited for criminal activities may require tailored legal assistance to avoid prosecution. Precise forms of exploitation must therefore be a starting point in both the development and assessment of assistance frameworks.

### **2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Moldovan Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation**

The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of Moldovan victims trafficked for sexual exploitation. In both 2003 and 2004, most Moldovan victims were trafficked solely for sexual purposes but a significant number suffered dual forms of exploitation, as detailed in the table below.

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<sup>337</sup> These two victims were not included in the assisted caseload in 2003 as they did not request assistance from any service providers in Moldova or Macedonia. For more detail about this case, please see *Sex* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Moldovan Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

<sup>338</sup> There have been similar reports and allegations from "source countries" such as Albania and Romania. Moreover, in a recent IOM criminal assessment there were indications of trafficking of illegal adoption from BiH (see Andreani and Raviv, 2004). To date the only concrete cases of trafficking for adoption were documented in Bulgaria in 2004. For details, see *Bulgaria Country Report*.

TABLE 4  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG ASSISTED MOLDOVANS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004<sup>339</sup>

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Sexual exploitation	162	230
Sexual and labour exploitation	68	17
Sexual exploitation, begging/delinquency	2	7
Sexual exploitation, labour and begging/delinquency	1	0
Total	233	254

### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics<sup>340</sup>

**Sex:** To date, all identified and assisted Moldovan victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation were women.

However, in one unique case – documented in 2003 – two Moldovan men were trafficked to Macedonia for sexual and labour exploitation. As these men were not assisted by any of RCP’s partner organizations, there is limited information about their experience and they do not appear in these statistics.<sup>341</sup> Nevertheless, the exploitation of men for sexual exploitation is a form of trafficking that has been documented elsewhere, albeit in very limited profile.

**Age:** Moldovan victims of sexual exploitation were generally between 18 and 25 years, a finding that has been relatively consistent since 2000. In 2004, 73.9 per cent of victims were in this age range, with only 15.8 per cent over 25. As such, there is no evidence to suggest that the age of Moldovan victims trafficked for sexual exploitation has changed substantially in the past five years

The only exception was among victims identified and assisted in 2003, when comparatively fewer victims of sexual exploitation were between 18 and 25 (65 per cent) and more over 25 (26.9 per cent). This included 23.3 per cent between the ages of 26 and 35 years and 3.6 per cent over the age of 35. This finding is noteworthy as it is often assumed that “older women” are not as vulnerable to trafficking for sexual exploitation.<sup>342</sup> Nevertheless, this increase in older victims may be due, in part, to victims being trafficked for longer periods than in the past.

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<sup>340</sup> Profiles of Moldovan victims of sexual exploitation presented herein were drawn from victims for whom there was comprehensive data. In a number of cases – generally those where victims stayed a short time at the shelter or declined further assistance – it was not possible to collect comprehensive data about the victim and their trafficking experience. In 2003, comprehensive data was available for 223 victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation and, in 2004, comprehensive data was available for 166 victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. Indicators where there was comprehensive data about all victims were: gender, form(s) of trafficking, area of origin, and country of destination.

<sup>341</sup> In August 2003 two Moldovan males – 48 and 23 years of age – were identified as victims of trafficking by the Moldovan Police. The two men were lured with promises of employment and in 2003 were trafficked to Macedonia where they were sold by their “employers” to a woman who forced them to work as construction workers during the day and provide sexual services at night. If they refused, they were beaten and denied food. Relatives sent money to buy their freedom. On return to Moldova, they reported their case to the police. The two victims stated that their owner kept a consistent number of Moldovan passports, including passports of male individuals, signalling that this may not have been an isolated case (Handziska and Schinina, 2004: 3).

<sup>342</sup> More victims of trafficking for labour exploitation were older than victims of sexual exploitation. Victims of labour exploitation over 26 years accounted for 35 per cent of victims in 2004, 44.7 per cent in 2003, and 27.3 per cent in 2002 and 2001.

GRAPH 1  
AGE OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004<sup>343</sup>



Among Moldovan victims trafficked for sexual exploitation, the percentage of minors remained relatively constant at approximately ten per cent. This was also consistent with data about victims of trafficking for labour. However, age presented herein is the age of the victim at identification rather than at recruitment. This raises the likelihood that some victims identified as adults were, in fact, minors when trafficked. As the majority of service providers do not systematically record victim's age at recruitment, it is impossible to document the exact number of minors trafficked.

**Ethnicity:** Data on this subject is limited as most service providers do not systematically record this information as part of case management. It would be valuable to consider whether and how some ethnic minorities might be at risk of trafficking.<sup>344</sup>

**Area of origin:** In 2002, only 36.9 per cent of victims assisted by IOM were from the rural parts of Moldova. In 2003, roughly equal numbers of victims of sexual exploitation were from rural and urban areas, 46.9 per cent and 53.1 per cent respectively. A slightly higher percentage of assisted victims of sexual exploitation in 2004 originated from urban settings, accounting for 57.6 per cent. This finding contrasts with the general demographics of the Moldovan population, 58.4 per cent of whom live in rural areas (UNDP, 2002: 164) and suggests that urban dwellers were slightly more vulnerable to this form of trafficking than rural dwellers.

In terms of specific regions, available statistics for 2000/01 found that over 26 per cent of victims originate from Chisinau district and municipality, 18 per cent from Cahul district in south of the country, nine per cent from Balti the north, seven per cent in Unghen district at the Romanian border and six per cent from Transnistria and others from locations scattered throughout the country. The only notable increase was the higher number victims originating from Transnistria.

Victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 originated from a wide array of areas, as detailed in the table below.

<sup>343</sup> In 2000, 9.84 per cent of victims were under 18 years, 73.3 per cent were between 18 and 25 years, 15.6 per cent were between 26 and 35 years, and 1.3 per cent were over 35 years of age. In 2002, 8.5 per cent were under 18 years, 72.3 per cent were between 18 and 25 years, 18.9 per cent were between 26 and 35 years, and 0.3 per cent were over 35 years of age.

<sup>344</sup> The ethnic composition of the Moldovan population is as follows: Romanian/Moldovan – 64 per cent, Ukrainian – 14 per cent, Russian – 13 per cent, Jewish – 2 per cent, Bulgarian – 2 per cent, and Gaguaz and other – 5 per cent (Vincent, 2004: 7).



TABLE 5  
AREA OF ORIGIN OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004

Region/Area of Origin	2003	2004
Chisinau	42	41
Balti	1	11
Ceadir Lunga	20	14
Anendi Noi	7	9
Orhei	4	10
Calaras	8	10
Straseni	3	9
Criuleni	2	6
Hincesti	12	7
Stefan Voda	6	7
Cahul	5	6
Edinet	4	5
Ungheni	5	5
Bender	7	4
Cantemir	3	4
Cimislia	3	4
Floresti	2	4
Leova	2	5
Rezina	0	4
Telnești	4	4
Slobodozia	2	4
Briceni	0	3
Causeni	2	3
Dubasari	0	3
Ialoveni	3	4
Riscani	0	3
Soldanesti	0	3
Taraclia	7	4
Tiraspol	6	4
Comrat	5	3
Singerei	0	2
Grigoriopol	0	2
Basarabasca	1	1
Falesti	1	1
Soroca	2	1
Vulcanesti	1	1
Ribnita	3	1
Donduseni	1	0
Camenca	1	0
Nisporeni	1	0
Unknown	57	20
Total	233	254

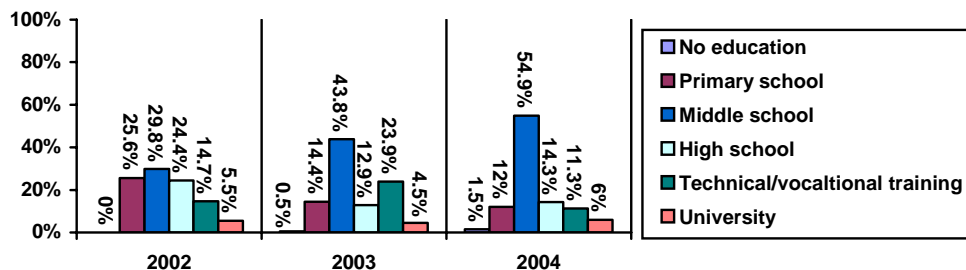
Such information is valuable not only for targeted prevention efforts, but also for mapping the areas where additional services are needed to support reintegration. Attention to the mapping of services relative to source areas would be a valuable exercise in designing prevention programmes and identifying gaps in reintegration and other assistance. As source areas may fluctuate over time, this exercise should ideally be ongoing.

**Education:**<sup>345</sup> The educational attainment of Moldovan victims trafficked for sexual exploitation was quite diverse, but decreasing over time.<sup>346</sup> By 2004, more victims held a middle school education (from 18.1 per cent of victims in 2000 to 54.9 per cent in

<sup>345</sup> In Moldova, primary school refers to grades one through four, middle/secondary school to grades five through nine, and high school to grades nine through 12.

2004), while fewer victims had attended high school (from 32.9 per cent in 2000 to 11.3 per cent in 2004). In addition, the percentage of high school graduates was substantially below the female net enrolment for high school in Moldova,<sup>347</sup> which, in 2000/01, was 70 per cent.

GRAPH 2  
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2000 TO 2004<sup>348</sup>



Nevertheless, victims with more than a basic school education (primary and middle school) accounted for a noteworthy number of cases. In 2003, victims with secondary and tertiary level education accounted for 41.3 per cent of victims, with 4.5 per cent having attended university, 23.9 per cent with technical or vocational training and 12.9 per cent with a high school education. In 2004, the number of victims with secondary or tertiary level of education (high school, vocation training and/or university) decreased to only 31.6 per cent of assisted victims.

Of note is that throughout the reporting period a relatively constant percentage of victims – approximately five to six per cent – had attended university. Victims with high levels of education seem as vulnerable to trafficking as their less educated counterparts in some cases, perhaps linked to an inability to find work and earn a salary commensurate with their education.

Victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation were drawn from a wide range of educational levels demonstrating that lack of education alone was not a direct cause of trafficking. These statistics reinforce the need for continued and expanded prevention activities targeting youth from primary through high school level, as well as expanded prevention activities in informal venues for school leavers. More rigorous follow-up analysis to assess and enhance the impact of these awareness and prevention programmes is also needed as part of this effort.

**Mental and physical disabilities:** While there is no data about the rate of disabilities

<sup>346</sup> Almost all victims received some formal schooling; only a handful had none – accounting for 0.8 per cent of victims of sexual exploitation in 2000, 1.1 per cent in 2001, 0 per cent in 2002, 0.5 per cent in 2003 and 1.5 per cent in 2004.

<sup>347</sup> Female net enrolment is the number of students enrolled in a level of education who are of official school age for that level as a percentage of the population of official school age for that level. In Moldova, in 2000/01 female net enrolment was 78 per cent at primary, 70 per cent at secondary and 33 per cent at tertiary (UNDP, 2004).

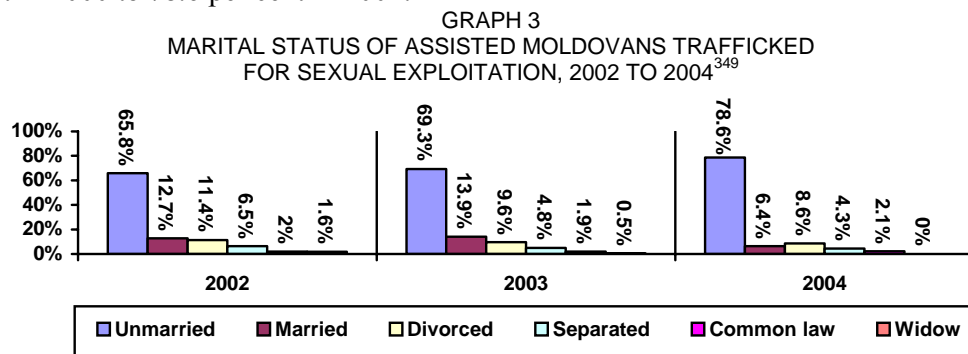
<sup>348</sup> Educational attainment of victims for sexual exploitation in 2000 was as follows: no education (0.8 per cent), primary school (19.3 per cent), middle school (18.1 per cent), high school (33 per cent), technical/vocational training (22.6 per cent), and university (6.2 per cent). In 2001, 1.1 per cent of victims had no education, 21.1 per cent had primary school, 31.6 per cent had middle school, 26.9 per cent had high school, 13.5 per cent had technical/vocational training and 5.8 per cent had attended university.

specific to victims trafficked for sexual exploitation, in general, service providers reported cases of assisted victims with disabilities. Mentally disabled victims were recruited primarily for sexual exploitation and physically disabled victims were generally trafficked for begging or other forms of delinquency.

The specific rate of disabilities relative to the form of trafficking was unknown. However, it is worth noting that among 672 victims assisted by IOM Chisinau between 2001 and 2004, 15 per cent had a mental disability at recruitment, accounting for 9.9 per cent of assisted victims in 2001, 9.3 per cent in 2002, 14.5 per cent in 2003 and 6.3 per cent in 2004. Similarly, a number of victims assisted in 2003 were physically disabled.

Mentally disabled victims can fall prey to traffickers because of their limited capacity to negotiate the recruitment process and gauge risk. One mentally disabled girl assisted by the NGO Interaction in Transnistria was seduced into trafficking by a neighbour who had returned from Turkey with nice clothes and promises of good work. Not only was she easily manipulated because of her disability, she had also been abandoned by her mother as a child and so had no one with whom to discuss the risks of trafficking or more generally protect her. Where a link between trafficking and disability is established, prevention and protection efforts must seek to accommodate this profile of victim.

**Marital and family status:** Throughout the reporting period, unmarried women accounted for the majority of assisted Moldovan victims trafficked for sexual exploitation as well as an increasing percentage of victims over time – from 59.1 per cent in 2000 to 78.6 per cent in 2004.



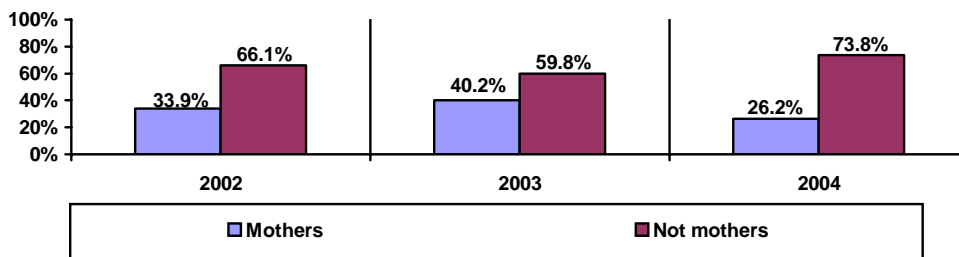
While the overall composition of victims' marital status remained relatively constant, there were some minor fluctuations. The steady increase in unmarried victims was accompanied by a slow decline in married victims (from 14.3 per cent in 2000 to 6.4 per cent in 2004). Similarly, separated victims, who accounted for 11.7 per cent of victims in 2001, accounted for only 4.3 per cent of assisted victims in 2004; divorced victims, who were 16.7 per cent of victims in 2000, were half that in 2004, only 8.6 per cent. The significance of these changes is unclear beyond that unmarried women were acutely vulnerable to trafficking and programmes that address the socio-economic

<sup>349</sup> In 2000, 59.1 per cent of victims were unmarried, 14.3 per cent were married, 16.7 per cent were divorced, 8.3 per cent were separated, 0.8 per cent were in common-law relationships and 0.8 per cent were widows. In 2001, 59.7 per cent were unmarried, 10 per cent were married, 15.8 per cent were divorced, 11.7 per cent were separated, 1.4 per cent were in common-law relationships and 1.4 per cent were widows.

vulnerability of this group are important.

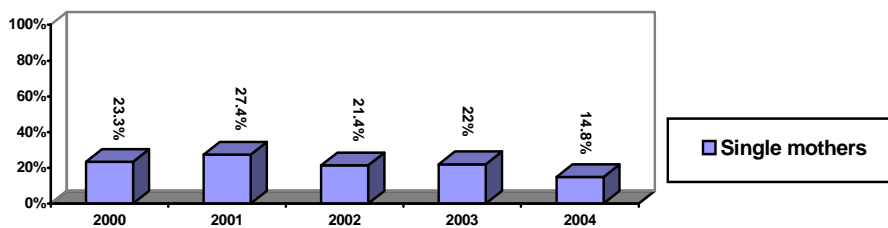
Although the majority of victims were unmarried at recruitment, a large number were mothers. In many cases, the need to support a family seems to have been a trigger in the victim’s migration/trafficking and reflects the economic vulnerability of women. However, many victims reported coming from a reasonably comfortable economic background (see section: *Economic status*, below). As such, in some cases, the decision to migrate may reflect a desire to provide children with economic possibilities unavailable in the Moldovan economy. As mothers make up such a substantial portion of trafficked victims in Moldova, more prevention programmes, such as targeted employment schemes for mothers, could be developed. Furthermore, mothers have some specific assistance needs, including the option of accommodation with their children, training in good parenting skills, family counselling to reconcile families separated by trafficking/migration, *etc.* These aspects of assistance have been considered in Moldova and constitute good practices that should be replicated in other countries.

GRAPH 4  
MOTHERS AT RECRUITMENT, ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004<sup>350</sup>



Given the large numbers of single victims and victims who were mothers, it is not surprising to find that many victims were single mothers. Service providers report that many single mothers were the sole income earners for their families, with most receiving no financial support from the child’s father. Single mothers were consistently represented among Moldovan victims trafficked for sexual exploitation throughout the reporting period. Thus, single motherhood can be read as a strong indicator of trafficking in Moldovan context. However, a decline was observed in this category in 2004 – to 14.8 per cent.

GRAPH 5  
SINGLE MOTHERS, ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2000 TO 2004



<sup>350</sup> In 2000, 39.8 per cent of victims were mothers, while, in 2001, 41.4 per cent were mothers.

It is critical to consider what happens to the child when a single mother migrates abroad. Many mothers left their children in the care of family members, while others were left in state childcare institutions. Many service providers argue that children raised in state institutions are particularly vulnerable to trafficking as they lack family support and life skills needed when they leave the institution and start their own lives. In addition, where parents are absent and caregivers (grandparents, relatives, neighbours) are less than diligent in their care responsibilities, minors may not attend school or may not develop some of the basic life skills needed as adults.<sup>351</sup> Indeed, the concern has been raised that this group of children could constitute a second generation of trafficking victims as their unsupported developmental years may render them vulnerable to trafficking and also because migration is seen as a viable and acceptable economic strategy (cf. Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 9).<sup>352</sup> The right to guardianship may also prove an issue for returning mothers who have relinquished guardianship rights. Legal assistance as well as parent-child mediation may be required to address this specific area of need.

In addition to dependent children, many victims were also responsible for the care of other family members at recruitment (parents, siblings and elderly relatives). This, too, can serve as a push factor for trafficking. Systematically documenting a victim's dependents would aid analysis of this indicator, which may provide another, at least partial, explanation of trafficking. This information can be mobilized in prevention efforts – including providing economic support and opportunities. Such efforts should ideally target not only vulnerable individuals but also families as a whole. This is particularly important for preventing trafficking in minors.

**Economic status:**<sup>353</sup> The economic composition of Moldovan victims of sexual exploitation changed in recent years, with more victims describing themselves as coming from either “very poor” or “average” economic backgrounds. This differs from the past when the majority of victims – 61.7 per cent in 2002 – were from “poor” backgrounds. In 2003, 40.9 per cent of victims were “poor”, a category that decreased further in 2004 to 35.7 per cent.

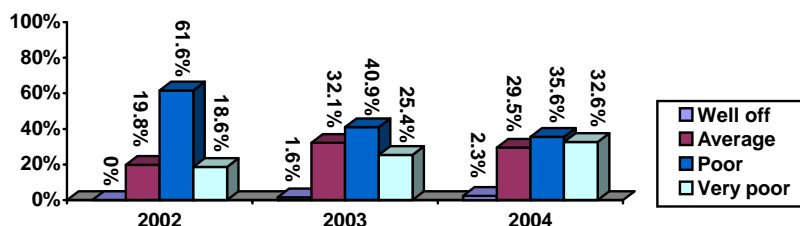
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<sup>351</sup> According to one study, more than 3,000 children have both parents abroad and are being supervised by their grandparents, relatives or neighbours. Similarly, an estimated 1,000 children of migratory parents do not attend school (Catana *et al.*, 2003: 8).

<sup>352</sup> Nevertheless, the exact relationship between these indicators requires further exploration, as it may equally be the case that children whose parents remit money – whether migrant or trafficking victims – are less vulnerable to trafficking as they are afforded economic security. While it is often assumed that trafficking victims earn no money, many victims were increasingly remitting some money (albeit not all that was promised); in many cases, these remittances amount to more than can be earned in Moldova.

<sup>353</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim's self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

GRAPH 6  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004



Of interest, roughly equal numbers of victims were from “average” and “very poor” backgrounds. This finding both corroborates and contradicts the argument that poverty is the central contributor to trafficking. Another striking finding in 2003 and 2004 was that some Moldovan victims of sex trafficking were from affluent economic backgrounds. This economic category was represented for the first time in 2003, when 1.6 per cent of victims described themselves this way and almost doubled to 2.6 per cent in 2004. Further investigation into the profile and recruitment of this category of victim<sup>354</sup> is essential in pinpointing alternative contributors to trafficking for sexual exploitation.

It would also be valuable to consider the socio-cultural context of poverty in Moldova – according to UNDP, 80 per cent of the Moldovan population lives in poverty (Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, 2000a)<sup>355</sup> – and identify what, if any, strategies are used by the very poor to guard against trafficking. In some cases, poverty may not be the single most critical push factor for trafficking. Rather, in societies where the overall economic situation is bad and opportunities generally lacking, a desire to realize personal and/or professional aspirations may be equally or more important.

**Family and social relations:**<sup>356</sup> Data about family relations and violence within the home is incomplete, making it difficult to draw strong conclusions. However, anecdotal information from service providers flagged the prevalence of domestic violence within many victims’ homes as well as other problems, such as alcoholism.<sup>357</sup> Violence serves as an important catalyst for some migration/trafficking.

<sup>354</sup> These economic variables must be contextualized in the Moldovan backdrop where the overall economic situation is poor. What is “poor” or “average” in Moldova is likely to be far below what is deemed an acceptable economic circumstance in EU countries.

<sup>355</sup> Similarly, according to the 2003 Annual Social Report, very few women have a satisfactory economic situation: 0.7 per cent were rich, 10.7 per cent were well-off, 54.6 per cent have a modest income, 25.6 per cent were on the verge of poverty and 8.4 per cent were very poor (Ministry of Labour and Social Protection 2003).

<sup>356</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims’ self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim’s individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim’s relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

<sup>357</sup> Such findings are consistent with general social trends where violence is rife. For example, 22 per cent of Moldovan women interviewed in a survey by the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention reported that they had been abused by a partner or former partner at some time in their lives (Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, 2000a). Similarly, UNDP reports an increase in alcohol abuse, domestic violence and other kinds of violent deviant behaviour (Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, 2000a).

The NGO Italian Consortium of Solidarity (ICS), which runs an income-generation programme for victims of trafficking, reported that seven of its 21 (33.3 per cent) beneficiaries came from a home where there was domestic violence. Similarly, the NGO Interaction in Transnistria reported that approximately 80 per cent of the 50 victims it assisted in 2004 experienced domestic violence. In addition, of 28 victims assisted by Salvati Copii (Save the Children) in 2003, ten (35.7 per cent) came from a problematic family background, including five (17.9 per cent) where there was alcohol abuse, two (7.1 per cent) where there was conflict, two (7.1 per cent) where the victims were neglected and one (3.6 per cent) who suffered domestic violence.

However, an almost equal number of victims 11 (39.3 per cent) reported no conflict at home. Moreover, while much attention is focused on poor family relations, many victims came from good families, as indicated by the 66.7 per cent of ICS's clients who did not suffer violence in the home. This is not to undermine the significance of violence as a contributor to trafficking but rather to stress that it is only one of a number of possible explanations.

An additional seven victims (25 per cent) came from single-parent families, although single-parenthood is not necessarily a problem given that only some single-parent families are economically vulnerable and/or involve conflict while others are stable, healthy environments.

Violence and conflict in the home places significant obstacles in the way of long-term reintegration of victims. Where few alternative housing options are available, the return to this abusive family environment is unavoidable, taking a toll on the victim as well as entailing broader social costs.<sup>358</sup> While service providers seek to avoid placing minors in state institutions, in some circumstances it is necessary and in the best interests of the child, albeit the best of poor options.

It is also necessary to stress that a variety of family relations, in addition to abusive parents or spouses, can be push factors in trafficking. For example, considerable tension can be involved when a woman divorces her husband and returns to live in her parent's home, leading to psychological abuse and fuelling a desire to migrate. Poor communication skills and distant relationships within family environment<sup>359</sup> combined with the acceptance of migration in Moldovan society may lead families to pressure their daughters/wives to migrate to find work, making them vulnerable to trafficking. The acceptance of migration as a strategy for improving earnings and opportunities is especially worrying in the context of minors whose inexperience, negotiation skills, education level, etc. make them especially vulnerable to the enticements of traffickers. In addition, women or girls who are rebellious, adventurous or independent minded may be particularly at risk, given their willingness to break with social convention.

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<sup>358</sup> Domestic violence affects not only the individual being abused but also the family as a whole. Further, from an economic perspective the cost of this violence – manifested in low economic productivity of abused women and medical costs – should not be underestimated.

<sup>359</sup> One survey of risk factors to trafficking in Romania noted that parents of girls vulnerable to trafficking were more likely than parents of average girls to not talk to their daughter about her problems or discuss sexual matters or intimate problems (Alexandru and Lazaroiu, 2003: 31).

Even where family relations have been good in the past, the experience of trafficking can strain them. Victims manifest trauma in different ways and upon returning home and families may find it difficult to deal with a violent, anxious, depressed, etc. victim. Tension can be particularly acute when the victim has been sexually exploited and experiences feelings of guilt and shame. Where the family and/or husband blame the victim for their sexual exploitation (and it is not uncommon), the victim's trauma can be particularly acute. Thus, family mediation and counselling need to be firmly incorporated in all reintegration programmes.

Further, social relations need to be considered more generally, as issues of social integration, peer relations and exclusion affect vulnerability in different ways.

### **Recruitment Experiences**

**Living situation at recruitment:** In both 2003 and 2004, the vast majority of victims resided with their families at recruitment, 80.5 per cent in 2003 and 75.5 per cent in 2004. This is not surprising, given that so many victims were unmarried at recruitment and most unmarried women in Moldova live with their families until marriage. As well, economic dependence plays a role in this living configuration with the cost of independent living for unmarried women prohibitive.

Not only does living with one's family seemingly not protect many victims, various family configurations and dynamics may in fact impel women to migrate and face the risk of being trafficked. Living in an extended family can be stressful for women, particularly young women, when/if it circumscribes their freedom. Similarly, divorced women may be exposed to pressure from their families for failing in their marriages. More attention to the precise dynamics of the victims' living situations at recruitment would serve as a starting point for both prevention efforts and assistance programmes upon return.<sup>360</sup>

It would be valuable to consider the correlation between residing with family and vulnerability to trafficking. Many in Moldova point out that a significant number of families are disrupted by out-migration from Moldova, including married couples who are forced to live apart and minors who are left without supervision because of their parents' emigration.<sup>361</sup> Does this disrupted family environment contribute to trafficking? Conversely, do remittances from the migrant family member serve protect the remaining family from the pressure to migrate and hence the risk of being trafficked? Given the high rate of emigration from Moldova (as well as other sending countries in the region, such as Romania, Albania and Bulgaria) the relation between these phenomena merits exploration.

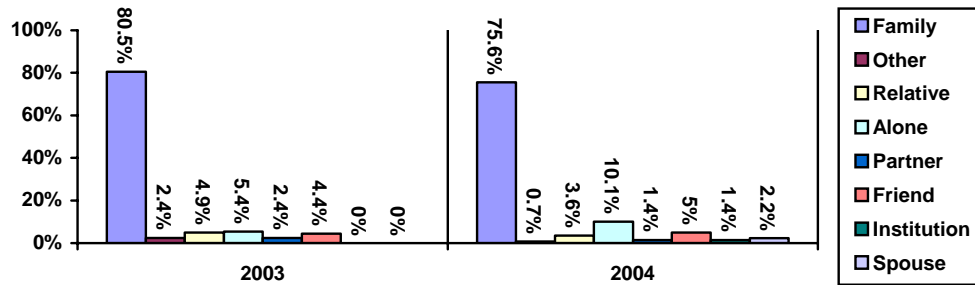
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<sup>360</sup> In a qualitative study on trafficking, 48 children were not stopped by any of the members of their families from going abroad. Of this 48, 27 of the children reported that their families knew that they were to go abroad to work and attitudes of relatives (father, mother, other members of the family) was positive or indifferent. In only ten cases did family members oppose their decision to migrate for work (IPP, 2004: 24).

<sup>361</sup> According to a recent study by the local public authorities and the Office of the General Prosecutor, there are over 20,000 children left without supervision in the country, because their parents are working abroad (Catana *et al.*, 2003: 8).



GRAPH 7  
LIVING SITUATION AT RECRUITMENT OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Victims living in institutions were also represented in 2004. Many service providers flag the prevalence of victims from state institutions. Some estimated that as many as 30 per cent of assisted trafficking victims lived at some point in their lives in a state institution, although a more common estimate was approximately ten per cent. However, neither assertion is borne out in the statistics above. In 2003, no assisted victims of sexual exploitation were living in an institution at recruitment, a percentage share that increased only to 1.4 per cent in 2004. To some degree, this gap can be attributed to the manner in which data is collected from victims. Most service providers document the location of the victim when s/he was recruited. However, in many circumstances the individual may no longer be living in an institution at recruitment. Indeed, many of the victims living alone at recruitment had lived in an institution at some point. A childhood spent in institutions informs social and personal development and negotiation skills with obvious implications for trafficking vulnerability. Further, on departure from these institutions, individuals lack a safety net or social support, otherwise usually provided by the family or extended family.

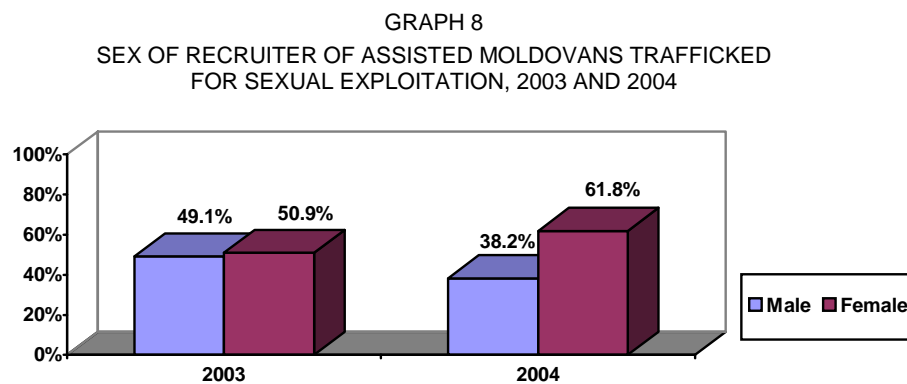
A number of victims also lived alone at recruitment, almost doubling from 5.4 per cent in 2003 to 10.1 per cent in 2004. This is an unusual living arrangement for unmarried women in Moldova. Some may have left institutions while others may have fled a difficult home. Still others may be adventurous and independent minded, preferring to live alone. More information about this profile of victim would be valuable in terms of determining risk factors. Also valuable to note are the various living arrangements of victims not only at recruitment but also at different stages of life.

**Working situation at recruitment:** Of the 134 victims who responded to this question, only 20 (14.9 per cent) were unemployed at recruitment. The other 114 respondents were employed in various jobs, although most were private/public employees. In 2004, the majority of victims (61 per cent) were private/public employees. In both years, other employment included family business, domestic work, bartender, waitress, typist, agricultural worker and salesperson. In only 0.8 per cent of cases in 2003 and 1.7 per cent in 2004 was the victim employed in prostitution at recruitment.<sup>362</sup>

<sup>362</sup> It is important to note that this finding is of no relevance in terms of an individual's status and right to be treated as a victim of trafficking. It does, however, highlight the need for prevention efforts that take into account the potential vulnerability of this particular group.

Unfortunately, because of limited information about this indicator, it is difficult to note the exact rate of employment among victims of sex trafficking. However, it is worth noting that in Moldova, unemployment rates are generally higher for women than for men, which increases their economic dependence on husbands and family (Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, 2000a; cf. Ministry of Labour and Social Protection 2003). Nevertheless, it is quite possible for women to be employed and still unable support themselves or their families with their earnings. Being underpaid may be as salient a risk factor as being unemployed in Moldova. Further, even where pay is adequate, employment opportunities in Moldova may not be sufficient for professional fulfilment and stoke the desire to work abroad.

**Recruiter:** In 2003, roughly equal numbers of victims were recruited by women (49.1 per cent) and men (50.9 per cent). This changed in 2004 when more Moldovan victims of sexual exploitation were recruited by women, accounting for 61.8 per cent.



In many circumstances, female recruiters were former or current victims of trafficking who were obliged by their traffickers to recruit other women. As one service provider reported, women were often promised that they would be freed if they could find someone (or a few people) to replace them. In some cases, they were released after recruiting new victims, while in others they were not. This strategy of former victim as recruiter is strategic and effective as traffickers use victims' complicity in the recruitment process as a mechanism of control. This strategy not only discourages escape, but also subjects victims to guilt for having helped to exploit and abuse another person. In practice, this strategy is being played out in disturbing ways in the criminal process. According to CPTW in Moldova, many of the traffickers charged and convicted (arguably 50 per cent) were themselves victims of trafficking. In one case, a woman was sentenced for ten years as a trafficker but had herself been trafficked for three years.<sup>363</sup>

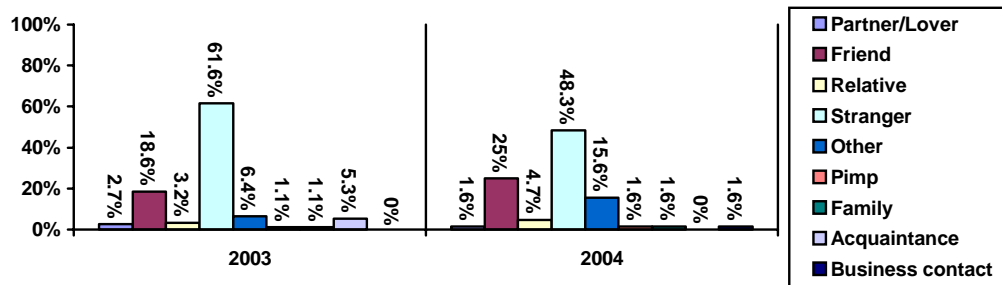
The victim's relationship to recruiters varied between 2003 and 2004. While most were recruited by strangers in both years, more victims were recruited by strangers in 2003 (61.7 per cent) than in 2004 (48.4 per cent). More information is needed about who is categorized as "strangers", as these may refer to employment agencies, which were often used in migration/trafficking recruitment. Advertisements promised work as dancers, hotel staff, waitresses, housekeepers or child-minders and the victim was

<sup>363</sup> Interview with Ion Vizdoga, Center for the Prevention of Trafficking in Women (CPTW), Moldova, 9 December 2005.

often required to reimburse expenses for travel. One woman was trafficked seeking work through a labour firm that promised her a legal contract abroad as a waitress with promises of a salary so large that she could pay off her debt in one month.

In 2004, more victims were recruited by friends (from 18.6 per cent in 2003 to 25 per cent in 2004). The decreased recruitment by strangers may signal a decreased use of employment agencies and job advertisements due, in part, to targeted prevention efforts. Other categories of recruiters – relative, partner, family – have been relatively constant over time.

GRAPH 9  
RECRUITER'S RELATIONSHIP TO ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



In a small number of cases – 2.7 per cent in 2003 and 1.6 per cent in 2004 – victims were recruited by their partner/lover. This pattern was noted in other countries of the region – namely Serbia, Albania and Romania – and may parallel the “lover boy” phenomenon occurring in the Netherlands whereby the man initiates a relationship with the girl/woman with the intention of trafficking her.<sup>364</sup> This form of recruitment is strategic, creating a sense of affection and dependency that serves to prevent victims from perceiving and exiting trafficking. It is worth investigating the extent of this recruitment tactic in Moldova.

Most recruiters in 2003 and 2004 were Moldovan, although there were also instances of other nationalities recruiting in Moldova.

**Reasons for leaving home country and type of work promised:** The primary reasons given by victims for leaving home were low salaries and limited employment options. Others accepted work to pay off debts or to earn money to deal with a family crisis, such as an illness. One woman accepted work abroad because of pressure within her family to contribute to the family economy. She wanted to study at the university but her parents categorically refused, insisting that she find work. When she was offered a monthly salary of between US\$ 700 and 1,000, her mother agreed and signed her consent to work abroad. Many Moldovans hear success stories from family and friends who migrated abroad, and it was not uncommon for returned victims to tell service providers that they would consider trying to work abroad again.

It is important to note that in recent years more victims were aware of the risk of going abroad (due largely to the awareness raising efforts of counter-trafficking organizations) but chose to take the risk anyway because of the lack of options at home.

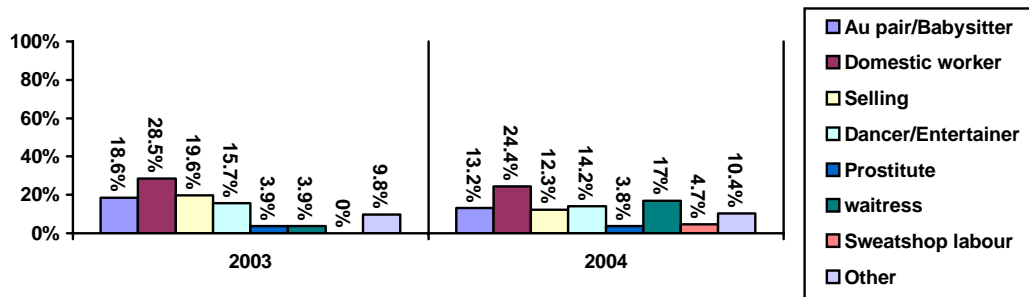
<sup>364</sup> For an explanation of the “lover boy” phenomenon and this specific recruitment technique, see Noten and van den Borne, 2004.

Given this context, without access to sustainable, income-generating opportunities in Moldova (or outside of Moldova as legal migrant workers), women will continue to migrate abroad with all of the attendant risks and implications.

At recruitment, victims were promised different types of work, all of which were in the service sector. Without exception, the type of work offered was traditionally “female work” such as domestic work (28.5 per cent in 2003 and 24.4 per cent in 2004), selling (19.6 per cent in 2003 and 12.3 per cent in 2004) and *au pair*/babysitting (18.6 per cent in 2003 and 13.2 per cent in 2004). Work as a dancer/entertainer was another type of employment offered consistently in both years – 15.7 per cent in 2003 and 14.2 per cent in 2004. In 2004, more victims were promised work as a waitress (17 per cent) than in the previous year (3.9 per cent in 2003), perhaps indicating a new recruitment strategy. Also consistent was the number of women who were offered (and accepted) work in prostitution – 3.9 per cent in 2003 and 3.8 per cent in 2004.

While most victims were unaware of the possibility of sex-related activities prior to departure, more victims had a partial idea that sex-related activities might be involved. In 2003 and 2004, one per cent of victims assisted by IOM acknowledged that they knew about the possibility of sex-related activities when recruited. In addition, based on work with the victims, the IOM estimates that three per cent of victims were partially aware of the possibility of sex-related activities.

GRAPH 10  
TYPE OF WORK PROMISED TO ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Nevertheless, a disturbing new trend was noted in 2003 – that of victims being forcibly recruited. In 2003, 4.5 per cent of victims assisted by IOM were forcibly taken from Moldova, while, in 2004, four victims (1.6 per cent) were forcibly transported from Moldova. Further, in 2003 and 2004, one victim in each year was sold to traffickers by a family member.<sup>365</sup> In such circumstances, prevention strategies based on analysis of victim vulnerabilities and presuming some degree of choice or decision-making by victims will be ineffective.

There was also a handful of victims who accepted work abroad out of a desire for adventure, a motivation shared with many female migrants around the world. The degree to which this was the victim’s primary motivation is unclear, but it is likely that in many cases it was a supplementary motivation.

<sup>365</sup> Further, in the first three months of 2005, IOM Turkey reported 12 cases in which Moldovan victims were kidnapped and trafficked to Turkey (IOM, 2005). This contrasts with 2002 when there were no such cases reported.

Where work was not a motivation, family environment often was. As noted above (see section: *Family and social relations*), many victims trafficked for sexual exploitation came from violent homes and problematic family environments. Even when violence or problems in the home may not have been the precise catalyst for migration, it may have contributed by providing no incentive for the victim to stay home.

## Transportation and Movement

**Destination country:** Destination countries for Moldovan victims were myriad and, to some degree, have changed over time. Moldovan victims of sexual exploitation were trafficked to as many as 32 different destination countries since 2000. More recently, victims were trafficked to new countries, signalling a diversification of destinations. In 2004, these destinations included Turkey (44.9 per cent), the Middle East (14.6 per cent), Russia (11 per cent) and EU countries (8.3 per cent). Strikingly, countries in SEE, which have been traditional destinations for Moldovan victims, accounted for only 18.1 per cent of victims assisted in 2004.

TABLE 6  
DESTINATIONS OF MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2000 TO 2004<sup>366</sup>

Countries/Entities of Origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Albania	68	27	9	1	1	106
Bosnia-Herzegovina	92	71	76	10	10	259
Bulgaria	0	4	0	0	2	6
Croatia	0	0	2	0	2	4
Cyprus	0	0	0	2	5	7
Czech Republic	0	0	0	2	0	2
Germany	0	0	0	0	2	2
Great Britain	0	1	0	3	1	5
Greece	1	0	3	1	3	8
Israel	0	3	5	5	11	24
Italy	12	15	12	10	3	52
The Province of Kosovo	76	87	32	9	9	213
Lebanon	0	0	1	0	0	1
Macedonia	67	150	82	46	12	357
Moldova <sup>367</sup>	0	0	0	6	6	12
Netherlands	0	0	0	0	1	1
Pakistan	0	0	2	0	0	2
Poland	0	0	3	2	3	8
Portugal	0	0	0	0	2	2
Romania	0	1	10	6	4	21
Russia	0	0	30	25	28	82
Saudi Arabia	0	0	0	1	0	1
Serbia and Montenegro	0	17	33	15	0	65
Spain	0	1	0	0	1	2
Sweden	0	0	0	1	0	1
Switzerland	0	0	1	1	0	2
Syria	0	0	0	0	1	1

<sup>366</sup> The table includes destination countries for sexual exploitation as well as for dual forms – either trafficking for labour and sexual exploitation or trafficking for sexual exploitation and delinquency. It is perhaps illuminating to highlight countries where victims were exposed to dual forms of exploitation. In 2003, victims of sexual and labour exploitation were primarily trafficked to Turkey (19) and Macedonia (26), UAE (2), BiH (4), Cyprus (1), Czech Republic (1), Kosovo (4), Moldova (2), Romania (1), Russia (4), Uzbekistan (1) and Serbia and Montenegro (2). In 2004, they were trafficked to Cyprus (1), Greece (1), Italy (1), Israel (1), Kosovo (2) and Moldova (2). Victims exposed to sexual exploitation and delinquency in 2003 were trafficked to Ukraine (1) and Russia (1), whereas, in 2004, they were trafficked to Bosnia (1), Israel (2), Poland (1), Russia (1) and Turkey (2).

<sup>367</sup> This designates cases of internal trafficking. In some cases, victims were trafficked only internally, while, in other instances, victims were trafficked internally as a first step in international trafficking.

Turkey	0	1	6	66	114	178
United Arab Emirates (UAE)	0	0	1	12	26	39
Ukraine	0	0	0	3	0	3
Uzbekistan	0	0	0	1	1	2
Unknown	0	0	0	5	6	11
Total	316	378	308	233	254	1479

There are various explanations for the shift in destination countries. Since the removal of *Schengen* visas for Romanians, traffickers have provided Moldovan victims with stolen Romanian passports, which enable them to enter EU countries. As well, augmented counter-trafficking measures in the Balkans – a traditional destination – may serve to impede the flow of victims. Further, the increased number of women going to the Middle East may be because traffickers prefer to traffic women to destination countries with less concerted law enforcement efforts and more civil society restrictions.

Perhaps the most notable development is the emergence of Turkey as a destination for victims of sexual exploitation. This trend began in 2003, when 57 victims were trafficked to Turkey, accounting for 25.6 per cent of victims that year. This stands in contrast to previous years in which only a handful of victims who were trafficked to Turkey – six in 2002 (two per cent), and one in 2001 (0.3 per cent). In 2004, this trend continued with 114 assisted victims trafficked to Turkey, a striking 44.9 per cent. In many cases, victims in Turkey were dually exploited. Of the 57 victims trafficked to Turkey in 2003, 14 (24.6 per cent) were exploited for both labour and sexual purposes. While the Turkish government has begun to recognize trafficking to the country, mechanisms need to be created to reach victims trafficked to that destination. Victims generally were treated as illegal migrants and many spent time in detention in Turkey, which served to further traumatize and victimize them. Most victims were identified and assisted only after their return from Turkey (either independently or through deportation). A number were identified *via* the La Strada helpline while others were identified by organizations like the NGO Contact, which assist victims in the community (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 89).

The number of victims trafficked to Russia for sexual exploitation has remained relatively constant since 2002 and accounted for 11 per cent of victims in 2004. Noteworthy about this destination was the number of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation who were minors. Of the 21 victims assisted by IOM in 2003 who were trafficked to Russia, nine (42.9 per cent) were minors. Further, many minors returning from Russia reported that they had met or were held together with large numbers of other minor victims in Russia (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 91).

Trafficking to the Middle East accounted for 14.6 per cent of victims of sexual exploitation. Destinations included Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Israel. While assisted victims trafficked to Israel were few in number, information from NGOs in Israel, such as Kav La'Oved and Hotline for Migrant Workers, stress that this has been a relatively common destination country over the past few years.<sup>368</sup>

<sup>368</sup> One study interviewed 106 trafficking victims in Israel, 48 per cent of whom were Moldovan. Similarly, between 2000 and 2002, 1004 victims of trafficking were deported from Israel, the majority of whom were either Moldovan, Ukrainian or Russian (Dahan and Levenkron, 2003: 6; cf. Kav La'Oved 2003).

By contrast, countries such as UAE were newly emerging destinations. However, the very limited scope of NGO, IO and women's assistance and support activity in general makes it difficult to determine for how long and in what numbers Moldovan women have been trafficked there for sexual exploitation. This lack of a supportive social infrastructure (as well as government action) also presents very serious limitations in terms of victim assistance protection.<sup>369</sup> While two organizations in Moldova – CPTW and La Strada – report that they have developed contacts with UAE police officers, such contacts were not widespread. Further, organizations from other countries whose citizens were trafficked to the Middle East reported very serious obstacles in accessing and assisting victims.

Also important to note was internal trafficking of Moldovan victims for sexual exploitation. While currently few in number – six victims in 2003 and six in 2004 – the apparent increase in local prostitution, a portion of which involved trafficking, is a trend to be watched.<sup>370</sup> In some cases, victims trafficked abroad may first be trafficked internally within Moldova. It is unclear whether the limited numbers of internally trafficked victims is tied to the limited scope of this phenomenon or to limited awareness of this phenomenon among service providers and law enforcement.

Finally, given the increased number of victims trafficked to EU countries, data from destination countries is needed. If Moldovan victims remain in destination countries (a real possibility given residency permits in a number of countries), this lack of data inhibits an understanding of the scope of trafficking. The decreased number of victims returning to Moldova can camouflage the extent of trafficking from the country and inhibit our ability to act and react accordingly.

**Border crossings and documents:** Most Moldovan victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation used legal documents while trafficked, accounting for 100 per cent of victims in 2002, 87 per cent in 2003 and 92.2 per cent in 2004. In only a few cases – 13 per cent in 2003 and 7.8 per cent in 2004 – were false documents used.

An important development in Moldova with regard to travel documents was the Parliamentary Bill, passed in September 2004, which requires all minors to carry travel documents. Prior to this, minors travelling east (to Russia and Ukraine) required only identity papers, not passports.<sup>371</sup> This measure is envisaged as mechanism for protection of minors.

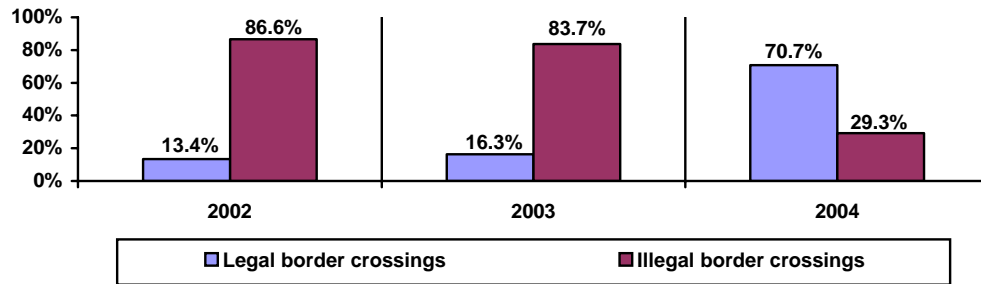
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<sup>369</sup> For example, illegal migrants or those who have overstayed their visa are required to pay a fine – US\$ 16 per day for each day they stay beyond the expiration of their visa. Alternatively, victims are required to provide testimony, although there is apparently limited support for the victim in this process and no mechanisms to ensure her safety. In addition, one assisted Moldovan victim who was deported from UAE reported that when she was arrested and placed in detention in UAE, her six-month old baby was taken from her and she has not seen him again. She has been unable to access any avenues of assistance in locating her child and returning him to Moldova (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 93-4).

<sup>370</sup> There are currently a large number of brothels in Chisinau – arguably as many as 300 most of which are disguised as saunas and bathhouses. In addition, prostitution takes place at hotels and in the areas near train and bus stations. Most of these women came to Chisinau from rural areas seeking employment or training. They were generally controlled by a pimp who also abused them and withheld their earnings. In many cases, they found themselves in the situation of being internally trafficked. There is also information about child prostitution and weekend prostitution of students (Catana *et al.*, 2003: 18).

<sup>371</sup> Interview with Mariana Ianachevici, Salvati Copii, Chisinau, Moldova, 10 December 2004.

GRAPH 11  
 BORDER CROSSINGS OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED  
 FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004



While the use of legal documents was consistent throughout the reporting period, the use of legal borders has changed somewhat since 2002. In 2002 and 2003, 86.6 per cent and 83.7 per cent of victims respectively crossed at illegal border crossings. By 2004, however, this changed, with the majority of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation (70.7 per cent) crossing at legal border crossings. This meshes with the overall trend noted in the region whereby traffickers mobilize more legal means of transportation and more subtle means of exploitation. This veneer of legality serves to camouflage trafficking and avoid detection.

**Transportation routes:** At present, state institutions do not have the capacity to record movements of their citizens across borders. However, some general routes and means of transportation can be drawn from the experiences of victims assisted in 2003 and 2004.

- *To the Balkans:* Victims trafficked to the Balkans most commonly passed through southern Moldova (Cahul and Vulcanesti) and from there, to the region of Vrsac in Romania and into Serbia. This involved overland travel – car, bus, train or on foot – depending upon the traffickers involved.
- *To EU countries:* Victims en route to the EU generally passed through Romania, Serbia, and Croatia en route to Italy (by sea) or Slovenia or Hungary (overland).
- *To Ukraine and Russia:* Victims travelled overland, by car or train.
- *To Turkey:* Ukraine is a transit country for victims travelling to Turkey. Victims travel overland from Moldova to Odessa harbour and from there by boat to Turkey. In addition, some victims were transported to Turkey by air.
- *To UAE:* Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation to UAE travelled by air with legal documents and entered legally into the country through the international airport.

### Victims' Trafficking Experiences

**Forms of trafficking:** Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were exploited in a variety of locations. The precise configuration of the victim's form of trafficking was very much tied to their destination country. Many trafficking victims sexually exploited in Italy worked in street prostitution. By contrast, women sexually exploited in UAE were kept in far more hidden locations, such as private apartments where they were under guard. They were often sexually exploited in these houses or apartments as well



as in bars and discotheques. Victims trafficked to Russia were either kept in private apartments where they were sexually exploited or used in street prostitution but strictly monitored. Women trafficked to the Balkans were exploited in bars and nightclubs as well as kept in private apartments and transported to the clients. Some Moldovan victims trafficked to the Balkans were also kept privately by a single man and required to provide sexual services for him. One Moldovan woman trafficked to Serbia was recruited with the promise of marriage and kept as a man's "girlfriend" until he tired of her and sent her to Italy to work in street prostitution. In Turkey, women were generally kept in private apartments with one or two other victims. Victims were required to provide sexual services in apartments, cafes, bars and brothels.

Sexual exploitation also took place within Moldova and, in one exceptional case in 2004, a police investigation uncovered Moldovan women sexually exploited over the Internet in private apartments in Chisinau,<sup>372</sup> although the victims were not assisted by service providers and, thus, are not captured in these victim profiles.

TABLE 7  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Sexual exploitation	162	230
Sexual and labour exploitation	68	17
Sexual exploitation, begging/delinquency	2	7
Sexual exploitation, labour and begging/delinquency	1	0
Total	233	254

In addition, a number of victims endured multiple forms of exploitation. In 2004, 17 victims (6.7 per cent) were exploited for both sexual and labour purposes, a decrease from 68 victims (21.7 per cent) in 2003. Victims trafficked for labour and sexual exploitation worked as prostitutes in bars where they were also required to work as waitresses or cleaners. As well, victims undertook labour tasks, such as domestic work, waitressing or market seller, but were also sexually exploited. In some cases, the victim was sexually exploited by her employer, while in others she was sold for sexual services to other men. One victim trafficked to Turkey as a domestic worker was required to provide sexual services to her employer on a regular basis. She escaped when she learned that her employer intended to host a party for his friends at which she would be required to provide sexual services. In addition, some victims were first trafficked for one purpose – i.e. forced to work in prostitution in one location – and then resold and trafficked for another purpose – i.e. forced to work as a waitress. Destination countries for dual forms of exploitation varied in 2003 and 2004 but included various European countries (Czech Republic, Italy, Greece, Cyprus) as well as destinations in the Middle East (UAE and Israel), South-eastern Europe (The Province of Kosovo, BiH, Moldova, Romania, Macedonia) and Turkey.

Similarly, seven victims in 2004 (2.8 per cent) were exploited for sexual purposes as well as begging and delinquency. Victims trafficked in 2004 were obliged to undertake begging, selling drugs, facilitating the prostitution of others and theft as well as being sexually exploited – either by their boss or by others to whom they were required to sell sexual services. Some victims started out begging but later, as they grew older or proved inadequate at the task, were transferred to prostitution. Other victims were

<sup>372</sup> Interview, Mariana Ianachevici, Director, Salvati Copii, Moldova, December 2004.

required to undertake both tasks simultaneously. Victims trafficked for these forms of exploitation were trafficked to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Israel, Poland, Russia, Ukraine and Turkey.

In one case in 2003, the victim – an adult woman – was trafficked to Romania where she was obliged to work as a domestic worker, provide sexual services and also beg.

**Length of time trafficked:** There is incomplete data about this indicator. However, analysis of data provided about 25 victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation assisted in 2003 found time trafficked ranged from less than a month to two years, with most trafficked for less than six months.<sup>373</sup> This suggests that lengths of time trafficked decreased in 2003 and 2004.

Nevertheless, the average length of time trafficked for victims of sexual exploitation varied according to destination as well as over time. In the past, victims trafficked to the Balkans were exploited for as many as five years. However, currently they spend nine to 12 months there.<sup>374</sup> By contrast, victims trafficked to UAE tended to be trafficked for longer periods – years rather than months. Victims exploited in Turkey were generally trafficked for shorter times – between three and six months.

Time spent trafficked fluctuates according to a number of factors, including the level of repression endured by the victim, identification skills and priorities of law enforcement at the destination and the accessibility of services and assistance. Where victims are trafficked for shorter periods, this may be attributable to amplified and improved identification efforts. Cross-correlating time trafficked with details of the identification process would be useful in assessing law enforcement's identification efforts as well as the efficacy of outreach measures by social services and civil society.

Long periods spent trafficked can create pronounced trauma as well as, in some cases, dependency on and affection for the trafficker, complicating and lengthening the recovery process.<sup>375</sup> Long separation from family and friends, being forced to live outside of a family environment and being under extreme stress, can all affect recovery and reintegration. Attention to these aspects of a victim's experience is essential for programmes geared to victim recovery.

**Living and working conditions:** While there is incomplete data about this indicator, available data (a sample of 23 cases in 2003) signals that victims of sex trafficking experience a range of conditions. Overall, in 2003, victims experienced “poor” (60.9 per cent) or “very poor” (13 per cent) living conditions. However, 26.1 per cent

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<sup>373</sup> In this sample, victims were trafficked for less than a month (1), one to three months (10), four to six months (3), seven to 12 months (7), 13 to 18 months (2) and 18 to 24 months (2). Destinations ranged from countries in SEE (Serbia and Montenegro – 3, Macedonia – 4, Romania – 2), to the EU (Italy – 8, Greece – 1, UK – 1, Poland – 1) as well as to other destination countries (Russia – 3, Ukraine – 2, Turkey – 6, Israel – 2, UAE – 6, Cyprus – 1).

<sup>374</sup> When victims were trafficked within the Balkans for longer than this time, it was often as the private “girlfriend”/“property” of one man rather than as a prostitute servicing multiple men. As well, longer trafficking experiences occurred when victims were trafficked from country to country in the Balkans.

<sup>375</sup> In the context of field research throughout SEE, many psychologists referred to this phenomenon, a trend akin to “Stockholm Syndrome”. Stockholm Syndrome describes the behavior of kidnap victims who, over time, become sympathetic to their captors. The name derives from a 1973 hostage incident in Stockholm, Sweden at the end of which several kidnap victims resisted rescue attempts and refused to testify against their captors.

reported “good” living conditions, double those reporting “very poor” living conditions. Also significant is that while the majority of victims reported “poor” (50 per cent) or “very poor” (4.2 per cent) working conditions in 2003, almost as many reported “good” working conditions (45.8 per cent). Moreover, far more reported “good” than “very poor” working conditions. This is consistent with data from other countries in the SEE region indicating that conditions of work improved, as a strategy of traffickers to dampen victims’ desires to escape.<sup>376</sup>

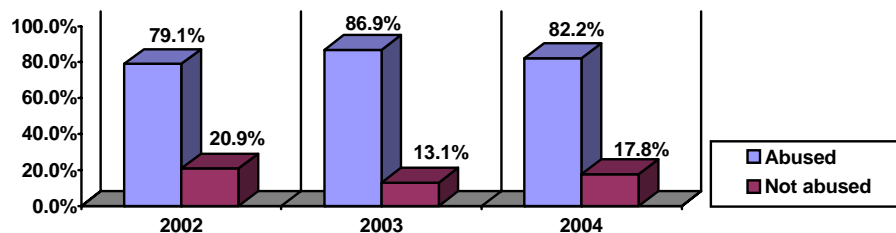
One woman assisted in 2004, who worked as a waitress and prostitute in a bar in Turkey, reported that she and her friend (with whom she was trafficked) were treated well by the owner – fed well and she even returned home with some money.

Nevertheless, some destination countries exposed women to poorer working and living conditions. Victims trafficked to UAE were held in closed, private apartments and closely monitored by the traffickers. In addition, their freedom of movement was severely curtailed and they were not permitted contact with outsiders. They also suffered high levels of violence and what a service provider described as cruel punishments. Similarly, victims trafficked to Turkey were also badly beaten and exposed to very difficult working and living conditions, including unprotected sexual intercourse with clients. Victims trafficked to Turkey were also more likely to return home with injuries. One young woman returned home with a broken spine.

A common feature of trafficking is debt bondage. The extent of debt bondage as a mechanism in trafficking in persons from, through or within SEE has been little considered to date and merits further attention. Debt not only serves a means of control while in the destination country, but also as an obstacle to reintegration when the debt – to family, a local moneylender, the trafficker, etc. – prohibits victims from returning to their home communities.

**Abuse:** The majority of victims were exposed to some form of abuse – from 79.1 per cent in 2002, to 86.9 per cent in 2003 and 82.2 per cent in 2004. The specific forms of abuse varied, with some victims exposed to multiple forms (sexual, physical and psychological abuse), while others suffered one type of abuse.

GRAPH 12  
ABUSE AND VIOLENCE WHILE TRAFFICKED – ASSISTED MOLDOVANS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



According to an analysis of victims assisted in 2003, exposure to abuse was not specific to a destination country, but rather varied according to the specific trafficking context and relationship. Of the eight victims identified in BiH, one (12.5 per cent) suffered no

<sup>376</sup> Statistical data about these indicators for 2004 is insufficient to present even basic findings.

abuse. Similarly, of 38 victims trafficked to Macedonia, eight (21.1 per cent) suffered no abuse. Of note, victims trafficked to Serbia were less likely in 2003 to suffer abuse, with six of 13 victims (46.2 per cent) reporting no abuse while trafficked. In previous years, victims trafficked to Serbia reported a greater frequency of abuse – 78.3 per cent were abused in 2002 and 89.5 per cent in 2001.

In addition, victims returning from abroad (from Turkey through the Odessa harbour or from Russia) and crossing the Ukrainian-Moldovan border suffered verbal, physical and sexual abuse, including rape by border police on both sides of the border. Victims reported that when they lacked the correct documents or money, they were required to pay with sexual services. Some victims reported paying for their train tickets home by offering sexual services to train workers because they did not have any money to buy a ticket (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 93).

**Mental and physical well-being:** A victim's mental and physical well-being is significantly affected by their trafficking experience, although their specific health problems are strongly correlated with their unique case histories.

- *STIs:* Overall, IOM shelter medical staff report that victims of sex trafficking had gynaecological infections and most tested positive for some form of STI. Of 672 victims assisted between 2001 and 2004, only 11.7 per cent had no STIs.<sup>377</sup> Contraction of STIs was greater in some destination countries, such as UAE, Turkey and Cyprus, where victims reported that clients were less likely to use condoms. However, this may also be due partly to fewer medical services available than in the Balkans where many victims received STI treatment prior to return. It is worrying that as many as 88.3 per cent of victims returned with STIs, as most came through voluntary return programmes and should have received medical treatment in the destination country.
- *Sexual and reproductive health:* Victims' overall sexual and reproductive health was negatively affected by trafficking. One victim trafficked to Cyprus was a virgin at the time of her trafficking. To facilitate sexual intercourse with men, her traffickers cut her vagina, a wound that became infected and re-infected and went untreated during her trafficking exploitation.
- *HIV:* IOM Moldova has since 2000 assisted nine victims who tested positive for HIV. All victims became infected as a result of trafficking. Medical assistance has been provided since 2003 by UNAIDS.
- *Drug and alcohol dependency:* In addition, 14 per cent of the 672 victims assisted between 2001 and 2004 had a substance abuse problem. In 2003 alone, five victims assisted were addicted to drugs and 15 victims were dependent on alcohol (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 96). In addition, 14 victims in 2003 were forced to consume alcohol while trafficked and, in 2004, IOM assisted six victims who were dependent on alcohol and nine who were addicted to drugs.

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<sup>377</sup> The remaining 88.3 per cent had one STI (13.5 per cent), two STIs (50.1 per cent), three STIs (21.2 per cent) and four STIs (3.6 per cent).

- *Pregnancy*: One service provider estimated that 15 to 25 per cent of victims were pregnant as a result of their trafficking experience. Some kept the child and some had abortions. In 2003, 21 victims were returned to Moldova in their late months of pregnancy or with a baby that was born while they were trafficked. In 2004, 25 victims were returned to Moldova in their late months of pregnancy or with a baby that was born while they were trafficked.<sup>378</sup> This profile of victim – young mothers who in many cases have been severely traumatized – requires tailored and longer-term assistance not only for recovery but also to learn good parenting skills. In addition, some consideration should be given to how the victim may feel about the child over the long term, given the violent circumstances in which the child was conceived. While abortion is legal in Moldova, it is not provided under most assistance programmes. However, in at least ten cases in 2003 and 21 cases in 2004, victims opted for an abortion.<sup>379</sup> In some cases, the victim's pregnancy was too far advanced for the pregnancy to be terminated upon her return. One victim who had been trafficked to Turkey and returned five months pregnant was severely depressed because she was unable to terminate this pregnancy. This victim – already the unmarried mother of one son from a poor family – was unable to imagine how she would be able to support this second child.
- *Psychological well-being*: Of victims assisted between 2001 and 2004, 84 per cent had neurotic disorders, which included depression, anxiety, aggression, insomnia, PTSD, etc. Indeed some service providers asserted that most victims returned with severe mental disorders and post-trauma, stress-related symptoms. More generally, victims expressed acute feelings of guilt and shame, either due to the type of work undertaken or their failure to earn money. Feelings of shame and guilt can manifest themselves in different ways, including depression or violence and aggression that may be targeted toward the victim's own family or children. In some cases, the victim also self-mutilated, not in an attempt to kill herself but rather as an expression of stress. These feelings and behaviours pose obstacles in the reintegration process. The lack of psychological support and assistance in rural areas where the majority of victims originated further exacerbated these problems.

In Moldova and overall in the region, there is a lack of information about the long-term health implications of trafficking. Also under-considered was the impact of trafficking on public health generally. More attention should be paid to the health of victims and public health studies undertaken on this subject. Such measures must be conducted in ways that do not stigmatize or violate the privacy of trafficking victims.

Where victims have been trafficked as a family, the mental and physical well-being of all members will have been compromised and their stress levels will be acute. This is likely to create tension and even violence in the family environment, with members not always able to process feelings of anger, guilt, shame, etc. In such circumstances, family counselling and similar support is vital. In addition, the health and assistance

<sup>378</sup> These numbers refer to all victims assisted in the 2003 and 2004 caseload and are not specific to victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

<sup>379</sup> These numbers refer to all victims assisted in the 2003 caseload and are not specific to victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

needs of these (multiple) victims can place an additional burden on the family economy which service providers must consider in the development of reintegration plans.

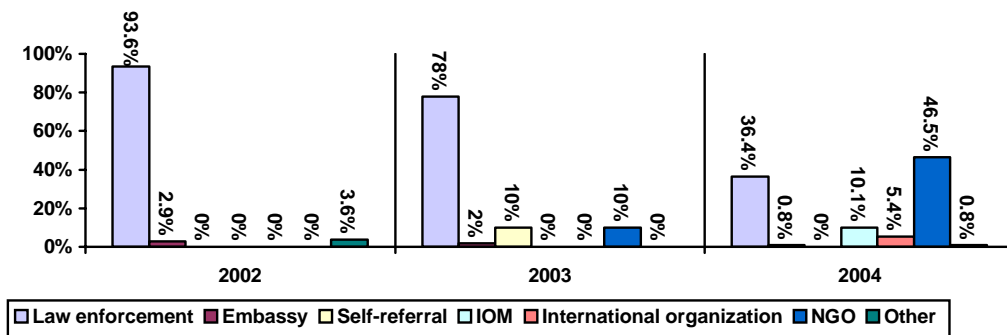
### Post Trafficking Experience

**Victim identification and referral:** The majority of victims of sexual exploitation assisted in 2002 and 2003 were identified by law enforcement authorities, 93.6 per cent and 78 per cent respectively. In 2002, only a few victims were identified by other actors – 2.9 per cent by embassies and 3.6 per cent by other sources. No victims were self-referred, nor did any NGOs or IOM identify victims in 2002.

In 2003, there was a reduction in the number of victims identified by law enforcement (78 per cent) and an increase in the number of victims who were self-referred (ten per cent) and referred by NGOs (ten per cent). Approximately the same number of victims – two per cent – were identified by the embassy.

2004 saw a further reduction in the number of victims identified by law enforcement – from 78 per cent in 2003 to 36.4 per cent in 2004 – and a dramatic increase in the number of victims identified by NGOs – from ten per cent in 2003 to 46.5 per cent in 2004. The identification by NGOs is probably due to the increased visibility of services in destination countries and Moldova including outreach initiatives such as the La Strada helpline and the work of community-based NGOs. IOM identified 10.1 per cent of victims and 5.4 per cent were identified by another international organization. Fewer victims – 0.8 per cent – were identified by the embassy.

GRAPH 13  
IDENTIFICATION OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004



**Re-trafficking:** Approximately 12 per cent of the women assisted and returned to Moldova between 2001 and 2003 reported prior trafficking experiences. In 2003, 15 of 198 victims assisted by IOM (or 7.6 per cent) had been trafficked previously. In 2004, ten victims (4.3 per cent) were trafficked more than once, some as many as three times.<sup>380</sup>

Still, it is difficult to know the exact rate of re-trafficking. Case monitoring by service providers lasts at most 12 months and, in general, is not comprehensive. Further, data regarding re-trafficking rates are solely based on statements made by trafficked victims,

<sup>380</sup> These numbers refer to the full 2003 and 2004 caseload and are not specific to victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

who may choose not to reveal that they had been trafficked before if they feel it might diminish the possibility of assistance. More reliable re-trafficking rates will be obtained when assistance providers increase the length and scope of the monitoring component within reintegration programmes.

Overall, it is reasonable to assert that re-trafficking is a common phenomenon in a source country like Moldova. Many victims report attempting to migrate again shortly after return because of the need to earn money, lack of opportunity or problems in the home. Another contributor to re-trafficking may also be the difficulties faced in reintegration, including stigma and shame associated with sexual exploitation as well as dissatisfaction with the material conditions at home, which are often poorer than those faced while trafficked. Debt is another factor that may contribute to re-trafficking. Debt can be owed directly to the trafficker, to a family member who funded the migration or a community moneylender. One woman was indebted for her trip expenses and travel documents to the employment firm that arranged her work abroad. Where victims incur debt, the need to recoup this money can fuel the decision to migrate again. Victims may also face difficulties in reintegration. In some cases, marriages have broken apart and a number of migrants reported fractured social relations.

**Assistance declined:** There is insufficient information available about this indicator to draw substantive conclusions.

### **2.1.2 Profiles and Experiences of Moldovan Victims Trafficked for Labour, Begging and Delinquency**

The information presented in this section details the profiles and experiences of Moldovan victims trafficked for labour, begging and/or delinquency. In some circumstances, victims suffered one form of exploitation, while, in others, victims were exposed to multiple forms of trafficking.

TABLE 8  
VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING FOR LABOUR, BEGGING  
AND DELINQUENCY IN MOLDOVA, 2003 AND 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2003	2004
Labour exploitation	61	22
Begging/delinquency	14	23
Sexual exploitation and labour	62	17
Sexual exploitation and begging/delinquency	2	7
Labour, begging/delinquency	1	1
Sexual exploitation, labour and begging/delinquency	1	0
Total	141	70

There were far fewer victims of trafficking for labour than for sexual exploitation. In part, however, this was probably as much an artefact of methods of identification and victim self-representation as a reflection of actual rates of trafficking. Throughout the region and indeed in Europe generally trafficking for other forms of exploitation has received little attention. Most law enforcement authorities have been trained in identifying only sex trafficking, leading them to overlook trafficking for labour and begging/delinquency. The way in which victims themselves interpret their experience distorts the picture. In cases where they have been trafficked for labour, most migrants considered themselves unlucky in migration rather than victims of trafficking. As such,

they seldom access assistance and when they do, it tends to be in very extreme cases of labour exploitation where abuse was severe.<sup>381</sup>

In 2003 and 2004, 165 Moldovan victims – both men and women – were trafficked for some form of labour. Given the high rates in the Moldovan context of both migration and trafficking and of the risk factors commonly understood to contribute to trafficking, it is not surprising to find these forms of trafficking. What is striking is the dramatic decrease in the number of victims identified and assisted in 2004 from 2003. As Salvati Copii in Moldova assisted the majority of this profile of victim in 2003, this decrease may be explained partly by the closing of some of its sheltering services. Based on other information from organizations working in the field, there is no reason to believe that fewer victims are being trafficked for labour.

Indeed, anecdotal information indicates higher rates of labour exploitation than are captured in the number of assisted victims. The NGO Gencliar Birlui in Gagauzia reported large numbers of men trafficked for labour who came to the organization to request assistance. At the time of field research in December 2004, the NGO received ten cases of trafficking in men for labour in 30 days and in one village alone they had documented 60 such cases. Further, when asked to estimate the prevalence of trafficking for labour, the organization explained that in one village of 9,000 people, 3,500 women and men were working outside of Moldova. Approximately 55 per cent of these migrants were men, of whom the organization estimated seven to eight per cent were, in fact, trafficking victims.<sup>382</sup> Similarly, a recent report on trafficking in minors reported a Russian entrepreneur recruiting unskilled workers, including minors, from Balti to work in a factory. In only one day, fifteen male minors accepted this work, although they later returned home with no income and having been physically maltreated (Catana *et al.*, 2003: 11). In addition, the La Strada helpline in Moldova has also received calls about trafficking for labour exploitation. These calls were from families of men who were trafficked for work in construction – generally in Russia.<sup>383</sup>

Trafficking for begging and delinquency has also emerged as a prominent form of exploitation among assisted victims in 2003 and 2004. Indeed, in 2004, as many Moldovans were trafficked for begging or delinquency as for labour. Further, data from destination countries like Russia suggest that the prevalence of this form of trafficking was far higher than is reflected in the table above.

To follow are profiles and trafficking experiences for Moldovans trafficked for labour and begging/delinquency. While perhaps not a complete picture of these forms of trafficking, it is a valuable starting point for understanding the phenomenon of trafficking for labour exploitation from Moldova as well as a first step toward identifying sites of vulnerability. This section provides some insight into the background and experiences of these victims as well as establishes some baseline information from which to chart changes and developments. Wherever possible and

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<sup>381</sup> It is difficult to know how representative assisted victims of trafficking are relative to the number of trafficking victims generally. It seems plausible that assisted victims tend to be those who are the more abused and exploited thus in need of assistance. However, this is just an informed assumption.

<sup>382</sup> Interview with Saveli Tucan, NGO Gencliar Birlui, 9 December 2004, Moldova.

<sup>383</sup> Email correspondence with Alina Budeci, La Strada Moldova, December 2004.



appropriate, distinctions are made between different forms of trafficking.

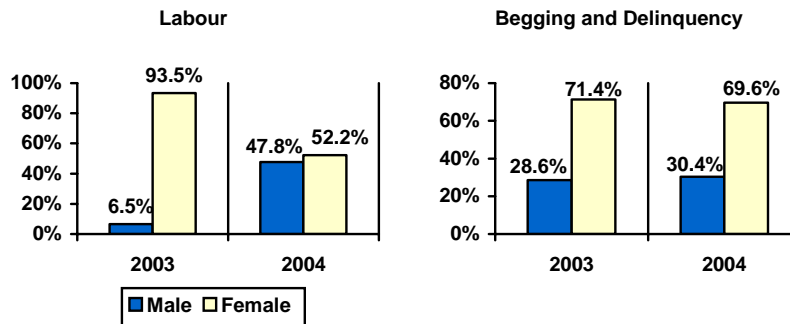
Profiles detail the experiences of victims trafficked solely for of labour exploitation (22 instances in 2004 and 61 instances in 2003) as well as victims of trafficking for labour exploitation and delinquency (one instance in 2004 and one instance in 2003). Profiles of victims trafficked for begging or delinquency refer to victims for whom this was their sole form of exploitation (14 in 2003 and 23 in 2004). Profiles of victims of sexual and labour exploitation and victims of sexual exploitation and delinquency are considered in the section on sexual exploitation, as in most of these cases the sexual exploitation was the “primary” form of exploitation. The one case of trafficking for sexual exploitation, labour and begging/delinquency is also considered in the section on trafficking for sexual exploitation.

### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics<sup>384</sup>

**Sex:** Prior to 2002, all assisted Moldovan victims of labour exploitation were female. This changed in 2002 when La Strada assisted one male victim of trafficking, accounting for 8.3 per cent of victims assisted that year. Similarly, in 2003, four male victims of trafficking for labour were assisted by Salvatii Copii, accounting for 6.5 per cent of victims of labour trafficking.

An additional 11 Moldovan male victims of trafficking for labour were also identified and assisted in 2004 by Young Generation in Romania and referred to Salvatii Copii in Moldova upon return. As such, in 2004, of Moldovan victims of trafficking for labour, a striking 47.8 per cent were male.<sup>385</sup>

GRAPH 14  
SEX OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



<sup>384</sup> Profiles of Moldovan victims of labour exploitation, begging and delinquency presented herein were drawn from the cases for which there was comprehensive data. It was not possible to collect comprehensive data when victims stayed a short time at the shelter or declined further assistance. Comprehensive data was available about labour exploitation in 11 instances in 2002, 62 instances in 2003, and 20 instances in 2004. Indicators where there was full data about all victims were: gender, form of trafficking, age, and country of destination. Among Moldovan victims of begging and delinquency, comprehensive data was available in six instances in 2002, 14 instances in 2003, and 11 instances in 2004. Indicators about which there was full data about all victims were: gender, age, nationality, and country of destination

<sup>385</sup> This is consistent with information from the La Strada helpline in Moldova, which reported that two per cent of missing persons calls in 2003 and three per cent of missing persons calls in 2004 were related to men. Further, La Strada staff working in the drop in centre assisted male victims of labour exploitation, albeit in small numbers (Email correspondence with Alina Budeci, La Strada, Moldova, 9 December 2004).

Moldovan victims of trafficking for begging and delinquency were exclusively female until 2003. However, in 2003 the gender profile of victims changed with the identification and assistance of four male victims of trafficking for begging and delinquency. As such, male victims accounted for 28.6 per cent of victims in 2003, having been trafficked in some cases on their own as well as in other cases with their mothers.

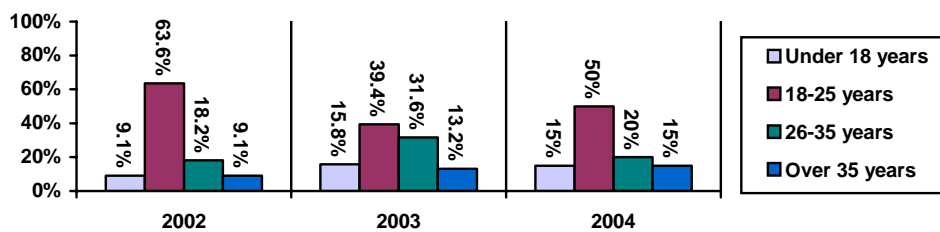
Males were even more significantly represented in 2004 with the assistance of seven male victims, accounting for a notable 30.4 per cent. In all cases, these male victims were trafficked with their family. In one case, the adult male was trafficked with his wife and two sons and the whole family was engaged in begging. In the other cases, male minors were trafficked with their mothers for the purpose of begging.

In part, the low representation of trafficked men can be attributed to the tailoring of most services to female victims. As well, men may be less inclined to access assistance, believing it not to conform to norms of self-reliance and other concepts of manhood. Regardless, it is important to note that men are trafficked for labour and must be considered as a target groups for prevention and assistance.<sup>386</sup>

**Age:** Similar to victims of sex trafficking, most victims of labour trafficking were between 18 and 25 years, accounting for 85.7 per cent of victims for 2000, 68.2 per cent in 2001 and 63.6 per cent in 2002. However, the proportion in this age category has declined over time, accounting for 50 per cent in 2004.

Victims between 26 and 35 years were a consistent percentage of victims between 2000 and 2004, fluctuating but always constituting the second largest category of victims.

GRAPH 15  
AGE OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR, 2002 TO 2004<sup>387</sup>



What was new in 2003 and 2004 was the steady increase in victims who were both older (more than 35 years) and younger (under 18 years). Since 2002, victims over 35 years increased – rising from 9.1 per cent in 2002 to 13.2 per cent in 2003 and 15 per cent in 2004. This signals that in Moldova all age groups are potentially vulnerable to trafficking and prevention efforts must take such findings into consideration.

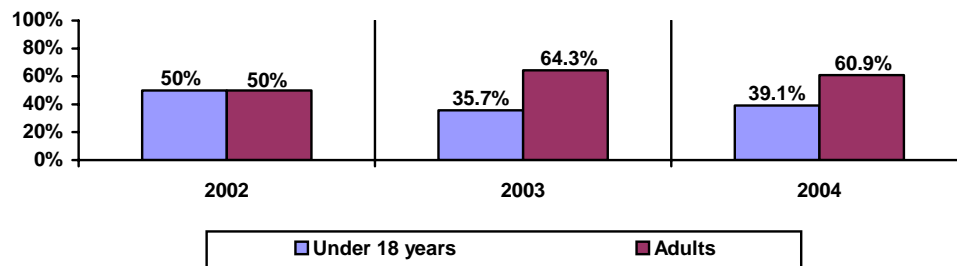
<sup>386</sup> Indeed, one NGO in Gagauzia explained that they have had requests from many men whose migration experiences had been trafficking. That assistance was tailored for female victims constituted a gap in services of trafficking victims as a whole (Saveli Tucan, NGO, Gencliar Birlilii, Moldova, 9 December 2005).

<sup>387</sup> Victims of labour exploitation assisted in 2000 were under 18 years (0 per cent), 18-25 years (85.7 per cent), and 26-35 years (14.3 per cent). In 2001, victims were under 18 years (4.6 per cent), 18-25 years (68.2 per cent) and 26-35 years (27.3 per cent)

Similarly, the number of minors increased from none in 2000 to 15.8 per cent in 2003 and 15 per cent in 2004. Of interest, a number of these cases in 2002 and 2003 were internally trafficked. In addition, we might reasonably expect that some victims between 18 and 25 years were minors at recruitment, as the age documented was that at identification. This indicates that Moldovan minors were an increasingly vulnerable target group not only for sexual exploitation, but also for labour.

By contrast, since 2002, minors have been a decreasing percentage of victims trafficked for begging and delinquency. Nevertheless, minors were a significant minority of victims. It is important to highlight that in 2004 minors were, for the most part, trafficked with their parents rather than alone. This phenomenon of “family trafficking” may protect minors to some degree, but how much is unclear.

GRAPH 16  
AGE OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS OF TRAFFICKED FOR BEGGING/DELINQUENCY, 2002 TO 2004



**Ethnicity:** There is limited information available on this subject, as most service providers do not systematically record this information as part of case management. As many countries in the region see a high rate of trafficking among ethnic minorities, it is an important indicator to document toward identifying sites of vulnerability.

**Area of origin:** Victims trafficked for labour exploitation and begging were more likely than victims of sexual exploitation to be from rural environments.

TABLE 9  
RURAL/URBAN ORIGIN, MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR,  
BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004

Moldovan Victims	2003		2004	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Labour exploitation	9	47 (1)*	2	6
Begging/delinquency	2	12	2	19
Total	11	60	4	25
Unknown	5		17	

\*This designates the area of origin for victims trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency.

Specific areas of origin are also important to consider both for service provision for reintegration as well as implementing prevention programmes (i.e. income and employment generation activities, etc.). Victims of labour, begging and delinquency originated from a wide array of areas throughout Moldova, as outlined in the table below.

TABLE 10  
AREAS OF ORIGIN OF MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR,  
BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004<sup>388</sup>

Area of Origin	2003		2004	
	Labour	Begging and Delinquency	Labour	Begging and Delinquency
Chisinau	0	1	0	1
Anenii Noi	1	0	0	0
Edinet	1	0	0	0
Ceadir Lunga	0	0	3	
Cimislis	0	0	2	
Cantemir	1	0	0	0
Hincesti	0	0	0	4
Comrat	1	0	0	0
Soroca	1	0	0	0
Orhei	1	0	0	3
Floresti	1	0	0	0
Basarabasca	0	0	1	
Causeni	0	0	0	2
Vulcenesti	0	0	1	
Dubasari	0	0	0	2
Balti	1	1	1	0
Singerei	0	0	0	1
Leova	0	0	0	1
Criuleni	0	0	0 (1)*	0
Nisporeni	0	1	0	1
Laloveni	2 (1)*	4	0	1
Straseni	1	4	0	4
Total	11 (1)	11	8 (1)*	20

\*This designates the area of origin for victims trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency.

**Education:**<sup>389</sup> Education levels of victims trafficked for labour were generally quite low, with most victims holding primary or middle school education. However, more victims of labour exploitation held middle school education than victims of sexual exploitation, accounting for 31.8 per cent in 2001, 27.3 per cent in 2002, 54.8 per cent in 2003 and 68.4 per cent in 2004.

The percentage of victims who had attended high school in 2003 (6.9 per cent) and 2004 (0 per cent) decreased substantially from the previous years (31.8 per cent in 2001 and 27.3 per cent in 2002). Further, the percentage of high school graduates was substantially below the female net enrolment for Moldova.<sup>390</sup>

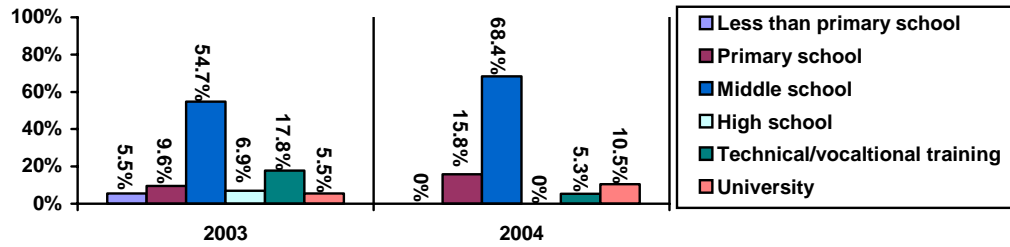
Of note, a number of victims had attended university, indicating that victims with high levels of education may be as vulnerable to trafficking as their less educated counterparts, perhaps due to their inability to find work and earn a salary commensurate with their education.

<sup>388</sup> This table reflects only the areas of origin for victims assisted by IOM.

<sup>389</sup> In Moldova, primary school refers to grades one through four, middle/secondary school to grades five through nine, and high school to grades nine through 12.

<sup>390</sup> Female net enrolment is the number of students enrolled in a level of education who are of official school age for that level as a percentage of the population of official school age for that level. In Moldova, in 2000/01, female net enrolment was 78 per cent at primary, 70 per cent at secondary, and 33 per cent at tertiary. The overall net secondary enrolment rate refers to the number of students enrolled in a level of education who are of official school age for that level as a percentage of the population of official school age for that level. In 2000/01, the overall net secondary enrolment rate for both men and women was 68 per cent (UNDP, 2004).

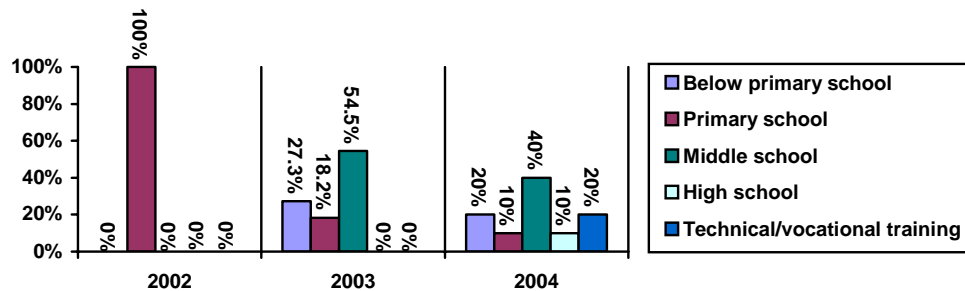
GRAPH 17  
 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED  
 FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION, 2003 TO 2004<sup>391</sup>



The overall educational attainment of victims of begging and delinquency was quite low, partly because of the young age of many assisted victims. However, victims' education levels increased over time, with more victims attending middle school (54.6 per cent of victims in 2003 and 40 per cent in 2004) as well as high school (ten per cent in 2004) and technical/vocational training (20 per cent).

Nevertheless, it should not go unnoticed that 27.3 per cent of victims in 2003 and 20 per cent in 2004 had less than primary school education. These victims require special attention upon reintegration, as basic literacy must be achieved before other programmes, such as vocational training, can be offered.

GRAPH 18  
 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED  
 FOR BEGGING OR DELINQUENCY, 2002 TO 2004



As can be seen from the above data, victims of trafficking for labour, begging and delinquency came from a wide range of educational levels and a lack of education is not in itself a sufficient explanation of trafficking vulnerability. These statistics reinforce the need for continued and expanded prevention activities targeting girl and boys from primary school to high school level as well as for expanded prevention activities in informal venues for school leavers. This prevention work also demands rigorous follow-up analysis to assess the efficacy of prevention programmes and find ways to improve them.

<sup>391</sup> Educational attainment of victims of labour exploitation in 2001 was as follows: primary school (18.2 per cent), middle school (31.8 per cent), high school (31.8 per cent), technical/vocational training (4.6 per cent), university (9.1 per cent) and other (4.6 per cent). In 2002, victims had primary school (18.2 per cent), middle school (27.3 per cent), high school (27.3 per cent) and university (27.3 per cent).

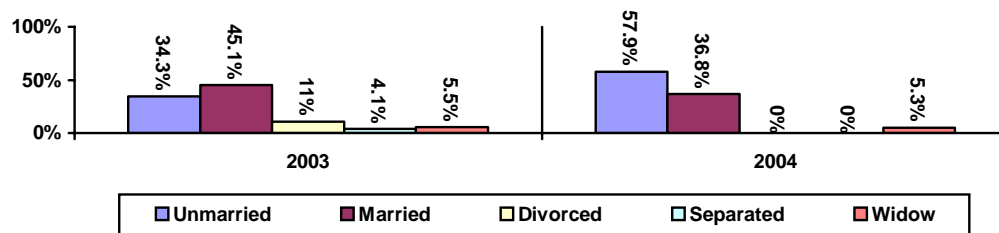
**Mental and physical disabilities:** Unfortunately, there is incomplete data about the existence of disabilities among victims trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency, as it is not an indicator recorded by all service providers.

However, in 2003, Salvati Copii reported three instances of mentally disabled victims (6.7 per cent) and one instance of a physically disabled victim (2.2 per cent) among the 45 victims trafficked for labour assisted that year. As such, 8.9 per cent of victims of labour trafficking were either physically or mentally disabled.

Among victims trafficked for delinquency and begging in 2003, Salvati Copii reported one instance of a physically disabled victim (33.3 per cent) among the three assisted victims trafficked for this purpose. More generally, it has been observed that physically handicapped persons, particularly minors, are attractive for trafficking for begging and are generally trafficked within the country (generally to Chisinau, Balti and Orhei) or sent to Russia and Ukraine (IPP, 2004: 10). This is corroborated to some degree by accounts of assisted victims who were required to simulate a handicap while begging or who were inflicted with an injury by their trafficker to earn more money. In one instance, a female minor was trafficked to Russia for begging where she was forced to sit in a wheelchair and simulate a physical disability. To make her foot numb, her traffickers injected her leg with a numbing substance (IPP, 2004: 40).

**Marital and family status:** Most victims were unmarried at recruitment, accounting for 63.6 per cent of victims in 2002, 54.6 per cent in 2003, and 57.9 per cent in 2004. The exception was among victims assisted in 2003 where more victims were married (45.2 per cent) than unmarried (34.3 per cent). In 2004, assisted victims were divorced or separated. This differs from previous years in which a minority of victims fell within these two categories.

GRAPH 19  
MARITAL STATUS OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION, 2003 TO 2004<sup>392</sup>



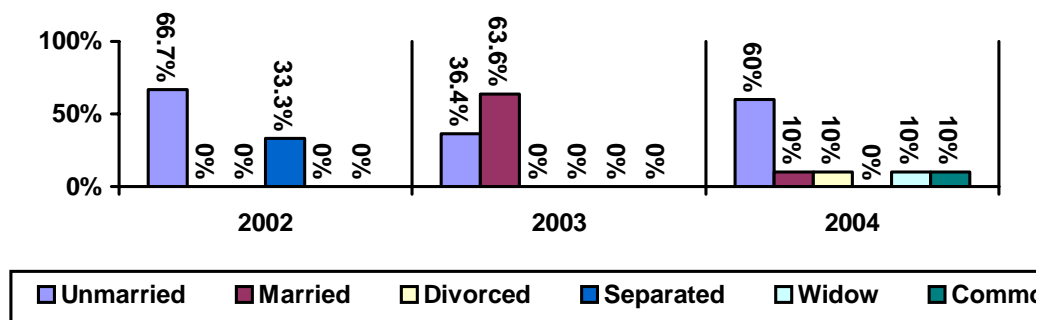
Despite the prevalence of unmarried victims among those trafficked for labour, a number were mothers/fathers at recruitment. In 2002, the majority (63.6 per cent) were mothers or fathers, as was the case in 2003 (61.9 per cent). This changed, however, in 2004, when only 26.3 per cent of victims trafficked for labour were parents at recruitment. Also relevant is the number of victims who were single parents. While there is incomplete data about this indicator, available data found varying rates of single parenthood – a remarkable 45.5 per cent in 2002, 10.7 per cent in 2003 and none

<sup>392</sup> In 2001, most victims were unmarried (63.6 per cent), while the remaining were married (9.1 per cent), divorced (22.7 per cent), and separated (4.6 per cent). In 2002, most were married, although the percentage decreased to 54.6 per cent, while other victims were unmarried (18.2 per cent), separated (18.2 per cent) and widowed (9.1 per cent).

in 2004. These findings stand in contrast to victims trafficked for sexual exploitation, a large percentage of whom were single mothers.

The marital status of victims of begging and delinquency fluctuated over time, although unmarried was generally the norm, accounting for 66.7 per cent of victims in 2002, 63.6 per cent in 2003 and 60 per cent in 2004. The high rate of unmarried victims was to be expected given the young age of victims, many of whom were minors at identification and many of whom were trafficked with their parents. Data on the marital status of these parents would be more relevant as their divorced, separated or widowed status may have contributed to their vulnerability to trafficking given the more general socio-economic vulnerability of these groups.

GRAPH 20  
MARITAL STATUS OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2002 TO 2004



Many victims trafficked for begging and delinquency were mothers at recruitment – 50 per cent in 2002, 87.5 per cent in 2003 and 66.7 per cent in 2004 and, in many cases, mothers were trafficked with their children. A number of victims were single mothers: 50 per cent in 2002, none in 2003 and 30 per cent in 2004. Economic opportunities in Moldova are generally quite limited and single-parent families tend to be particularly economically vulnerable so that a relation between single-parent families and trafficking would appear to have a degree of salience. Of note, in 2003 none of the mothers (87.5 per cent of the caseload) were single parents.

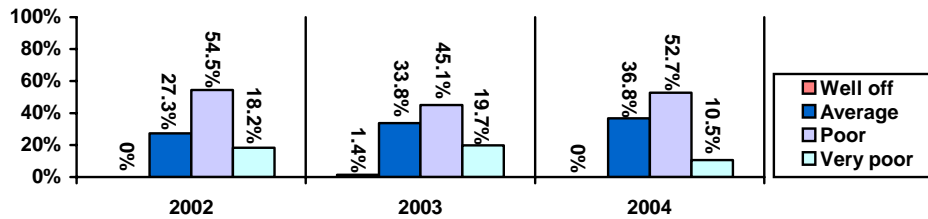
Also salient is whether victims had dependents other than their children, such as parents, siblings and elderly relatives. Systematically documenting a victim’s dependents would also be valuable as this indicator may be another push factor in trafficking.

**Economic status:**<sup>393</sup> While the poor were the majority of victims from 2002 to 2004, more victims were from “average” economic backgrounds than from “very poor” economic backgrounds. This differs from victims of sexual exploitation who, in 2003 and 2004, were recruited in roughly equal numbers from “very poor” and “average” economies. This finding contradicts the common assertion that poverty and economics is the central contributor to trafficking and points to a need to further investigate the

<sup>393</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim’s self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

profiles and recruitment of victims from “average” economic backgrounds for a better understanding of other contributors to trafficking for labour.

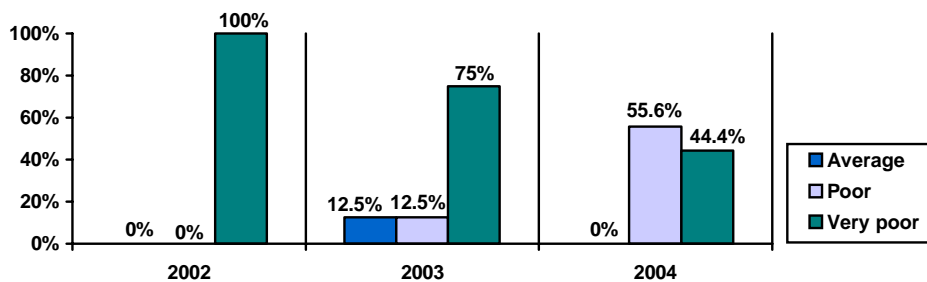
GRAPH 21  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004



Another striking finding in 2003, was that 1.4 per cent of victims described themselves as coming from “well off” or affluent backgrounds, consistent with victims trafficked for sexual exploitation. The first and only year in which this economic category was represented was 2003 and, as such, cannot be said to denote a trend.

Overall, victims trafficked for begging and delinquency were quite poor. Whereas victims of labour and sexual exploitation were sometimes from “average” or even “well off” economic backgrounds, only one victim of begging/delinquency (assisted in 2003) was from an “average” economic background. Rather, the majority of victims were either “poor” or “very poor”. The strong correlation between economic background and trafficking vulnerability for this category of victim is perhaps not surprising, however, given that a poor appearance is directly germane to the enterprise at least of begging.

GRAPH 22  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED FOR BEGGING/DELINQUENCY, 2002 TO 2004



**Family and social relations:**<sup>394</sup> Data is not available on this subject from all service providers. However, a consideration of 45 victims of labour trafficking assisted by Salvati Copii in 2003<sup>395</sup> found that a slight majority of assisted victims (51.1 per cent) faced problems in their families, including alcohol abuse (20 per cent), domestic violence (11.1 per cent), conflict (8.9 per cent), neglect (8.9 per cent) and dysfunction (2.2 per cent). These findings, while qualitative and specific to one organization, were

<sup>394</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims’ self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim’s individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim’s relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

<sup>395</sup> There is insufficient data on this indicator for 2004 to draw any substantive conclusions.



consistent with the overall assumption that problems within the home can serve as a catalyst to migration and trafficking or at least remove the incentive to stay home.

However, it is also important to note the 48.9 per cent of victims suffered no violence or conflict in their families. As such, victims of so-called “normal” or “functional” families were also vulnerable to trafficking and attention to their specific vulnerabilities merits consideration. In one study, trafficked minors from sound family relationships were motivated by other reasons, including one member of the family being handicapped or ill or the family being large and in need of economic support (IPP, 2004: 23).

In addition, 24.4 per cent of victims came from a single-parent family, although it is unclear if these families were dysfunctional or socially vulnerable as a result of this composition or if this family composition can be linked to trafficking risk at all.

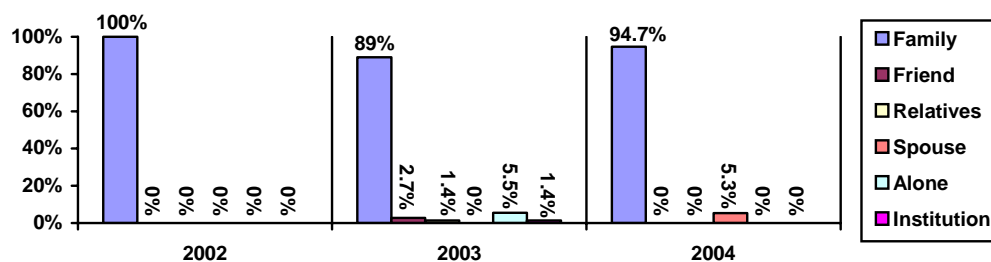
More information would be required to draw a link between family relations and trafficking for begging and delinquency. In many cases, victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 were in fact trafficked with family. In one case the whole family – mother, father, and two sons – were trafficked to Poland where they were forced to beg. In other circumstances, victims were trafficked with one parent, generally their mother, and forced to beg. It would be valuable to consider if there is a correlation between mothers and children being trafficked and an effort to escape an abusive husband/father. This was a contributor in the case of one victim who was badly abused by her husband. In an effort to escape, she accepted a work offer that led her (and her two children) to being trafficked for begging. It would also be worth considering what factors lead to a mother being trafficked with her child rather than leaving her child at home.

### Recruitment Experiences

**Living situation at recruitment:** The majority of victims from 2002 to 2004 were residing with their families at recruitment. This finding is consistent with a qualitative study in which only ten of 48 families of migrating children opposed their decision to migrate for work (IPP, 2004: 24). This lack of intervention or further investigation of the migration options by families is remarkable.

While victims resided with their families, the exact composition of these families – whether nuclear or extended, one or three generation, *etc.* – is unclear. Attention to these variables may identify relevant sites of vulnerability.

GRAPH 23  
LIVING SITUATION AT RECRUITMENT OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS  
TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR, 2002 TO 2004



Although victims living in institutions are generally seen to be particularly vulnerable to trafficking, this group was only minimally represented among victims of trafficking for labour exploitation, with none in 2002, 1.4 per cent in 2003 and none again in 2004. However, as discussed earlier, this may be largely a function of how data is collected. More detailed information about victims' living environment throughout their life is needed. For further discussion, see *Living situation at recruitment* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Moldovan Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

Most victims trafficked for begging and delinquency were living with their families at recruitment, accounting for 100 per cent of victims in 2002, 82.8 per cent in 2003 and 80 per cent in 2004. As so many of the victims were, in fact, trafficked as a family, this finding is not surprising. In a few cases victims lived with friends (9.1 per cent in 2003), alone (9.1 per cent in 2003), with a relative (10 per cent in 2004) and in other living arrangements (ten per cent).

**Working situation at recruitment:** In 2002, six (54.6 per cent) of 11 victims trafficked for labour exploitation were working as public/private employees at recruitment, while five victims (45.5 per cent) were unemployed. In 2003 and 2004, the findings were similar. Equal numbers of victims were employed at recruitment as unemployed. Employed victims worked in different sectors including domestic work, in private/public employment, family business, post office, factory and as a secretary. Many of those who were technically unemployed worked occasionally and thus were underemployed.

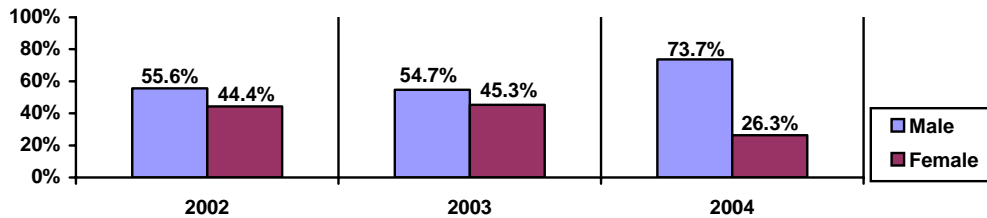
There is insufficient data about the employment of victims of begging/delinquency at recruitment to draw substantive conclusions. Some victims were employed at recruitment – in family business, agriculture, industry – although this indicator does not capture salary or rates of underemployment. In other cases, victims were under or unemployed at recruitment. To better understand the way in which victim's employment intersects with recruitment, more attention needs to be paid to levels of underemployment as well as unemployment and to the availability of employment in a sector that yields a living wage.

Overall, it must be stressed that Moldovan men and women suffer high rates of unemployment (Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, 2003), which coupled with inadequate/low earnings fuels migration for work.

**Recruiter:** Victims of trafficking for labour were recruited by both women and men. However, unlike victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, victims of labour exploitation were increasingly recruited by men. Of the victims assisted in 2004, 73.7 per cent were recruited by men.

Most recruiters for labour in 2003 and 2004 were Moldovan, although there were instances of recruiters of other nationalities recruiting victims in Moldova.

GRAPH 24  
SEX OF RECRUITERS OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004

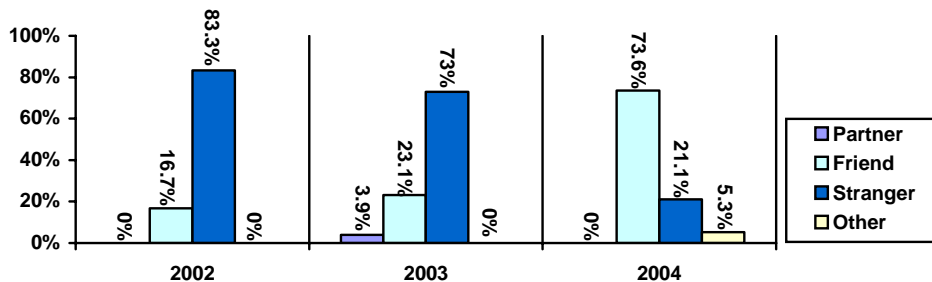


To date, there has been no mention of victims recruited by former or current victims of trafficking, a trend noted among victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

In both 2002 and 2003, the vast majority of victims were recruited by strangers – 83.3 per cent and 73.1 per cent respectively. More information is needed about whether these “strangers” may be employment agencies, which were often used in the migration/trafficking process. Advertisements promise work as dancers, hotel staff, waitresses, housekeepers or child-minders and the victim is often required to reimburse expenses for travel.

In 2004, the number of victims recruited by a stranger dropped dramatically to 21.1 per cent. Instead the majority of victims – 73.6 per cent – were recruited by friends, a process that entails its own set of problems, based as it is on manipulating relationships of trust.

GRAPH 25  
RECRUITER'S RELATIONSHIP TO ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004



Victims recruited for begging and delinquency were recruited by both women and men. In 2002, 100 per cent were recruited by men while, in 2003, 75 per cent of victims were recruited by women, and 25 per cent by men. In 2004, 62.5 per cent of victims were recruited by women and 37.5 per cent by men. Recruitment for this form of trafficking does not appear – from the data that is available – to have a gender complexion.

Most victims of trafficking for begging and delinquency were recruited by strangers, 100 per cent in 2003 and 70 per cent in 2004. Interestingly, of the remaining 30 per cent, none were recruited by a person close to them – ten per cent by an acquaintance and 20 per cent by “other”. This stands in contrast to victims recruited for labour exploitation who were, for the most part, in 2002 and 2003, recruited by persons known and trusted by them, such friends and family.

**Reason for leaving home country and type of work promised:** The majority of victims left home for work to earn money. In 2003, equal numbers of victims were promised work as domestic workers and sellers, while other victims were promised work as *au pair*/babysitter and waitress. In 2004, victims were promised work primarily as labourers (in agriculture and construction) and, in a handful of cases, as waitresses, domestic workers and sellers.

### **Transportation and Movement**

**Border crossings and documents:** Victims trafficked for labour generally crossed at illegal border crossings – 81.8 per cent in 2002, 50.8 per cent in 2003 and 79 per cent in 2004. Interestingly, most victims of trafficking for labour travelled with legal documents, accounting for 75 per cent in 2002 and 100 per cent in both 2003 and 2004.

Whereas in 2002 all victims of begging crossed at illegal border crossings, by 2003 and 2004 more victims crossed at legal borders. By 2003, 63.6 per cent of victims crossed at legal border crossings, a number that increased in 2004 to 70 per cent. The majority of victims travelled with legal documents. While many of the victims were minors when trafficked, that they were travelling with their parent mitigated the risk of detection.

**Transportation routes:** Victims of labour, begging and delinquency were generally *en route* to Russia and Ukraine or to the EU, often via the Balkans. Routes do not differ substantially from those of victims for sexual exploitation, See *Transportation routes*, section: *Profiles and Experiences of Moldovan Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

**Destination country:** Victims of trafficking for labour exploitation were sent to 23 different countries/entities between 2002 and 2004. In 2004, Italy was the primary destination for trafficking for labour, accounting for 68.2 per cent of assisted victims, a shift from the previous year in which Russia factored highly among destinations, accounting for 24.2 per cent. In 2004, no victim was trafficked to Russia for labour exploitation.

In 2004, the second most common destination for labour exploitation was Turkey, accounting for 13.4 per cent, a percentage that increased to 27.5 per cent when including trafficking for multiple forms of exploitation. In the remaining cases, it was difficult to detect any trend or pattern as the cases were few and the destinations disparate.

Overall, service providers reported that victims were increasingly aware of their final destination at recruitment. Whereas in the past victims were deceived as to where they would work, this was less common in the present.

TABLE 11  
DESTINATIONS OF MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR,  
BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004

Country/Entity of Destination	2003			2004		
	Labour	Begging and Delinquency	Dual Exploitation (Labour or Begging/Delinquency) <sup>396</sup>	Labour	Begging and Delinquency	Dual Exploitation (Labour or Begging/Delinquency)
Armenia	1	0	0	0	0	0
Austria	0	1	0	0	1	0
BiH	2	0	4	0	0	1
Croatia	0	1	0	0	0	0
Cyprus	0	0	1	0	0	1
Czech Republic	0	0	1	0	0	0
Israel	0	0	0	0	0	3
Italy	8	0	0	15	0	1
France	2	0	0	0	0	0
Germany	2	0	0	0	0	0
Greece	0	0	0	0	0	1
Macedonia	2	1	26	0	0	0
The Province of Kosovo <sup>397</sup>	2	0	4	0	0	2
Moldova <sup>398</sup>	5	0	2	1	0	3
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0
Poland	0	4	0	2	17	1
Romania	5	2	1	0	0	1
Russia	15	4	6	0	3	1
Serbia and Montenegro	4	1	2	0	0	0
Tajikistan	1	0	0	0	0	0
Turkey	4	0	19	3	0	8
Ukraine	7	0	2	2	2	0
United Arab Emirates	0	0	2	0	0	0
United States	1	0	0	0	0	0
Uzbekistan	0	0	1	0	0	0
Unknown	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	62	14	71	22	23	23

In 2003, the majority of victims of begging and delinquency were trafficked either to Poland (four victims) or Russia (four victims). These two destinations accounted for 57.1 per cent of the assisted caseload. In 2004, the primary destination for victims of delinquency – primarily begging – was Poland, accounting for 17 of the 23 (73.9 per cent) of assisted victims. It is perhaps worth noting that many of the victims trafficked to Poland were trafficked as a family.

The other key destination countries for trafficking for begging and delinquency in 2004 – although significantly fewer in number – were Russia and Ukraine. In 2003, victims

<sup>396</sup> This category includes all victims of dual forms of exploitation that included labour and/or begging/delinquency.

<sup>397</sup> <sup>397</sup> The Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro are constituent states of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. However, they are analyzed here as separate republics in an effort to better understand the specifics of trafficking. This should in no way be read as a political statement by the RCP. Similarly, while Kosovo is a province within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, it is also considered separately to better pinpoint trafficking patterns and risks. This, too, should not be read as a political statement on the part of the RCP.

<sup>398</sup> This designates cases of internal trafficking. In some cases, victims were trafficked only internally, while, in other instances, victims were trafficked internally as a first step in international trafficking.

were trafficked primarily within SEE (Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, Moldova and Serbia and Montenegro), although one victim was also trafficked to Austria. Overall, service providers reported that victims were increasingly aware of their final destination at recruitment.

### **Victims' Trafficking Experiences**

**Forms of trafficking:** Victims of labour exploitation were primarily employed as domestic workers, waitresses, sellers, babysitters/nannies, construction workers and agricultural worker. Victims also worked in factories for fish processing or in markets as sellers and packers. In 2004, one usual form of labour exploitation was picking and selling medicinal plants.

More detail about such cases begins to reveal the extent of trafficking and exploitation. One victim was trafficked to Turkey as a domestic worker where for two years she was required to care for an autistic and schizophrenic child. She was on duty 24 hours a day including sleeping with the child. The victim was prevented from leaving this employment because her passport was kept by her employer and because she needed to earn money to pay for her sister's operation.

Another victim – a young woman – was trafficked to Ukraine for unpaid agricultural labour where she was exposed to very harsh working and living conditions. She was in an accident and not given medical care, which compromised her health in the long term. In addition, in one unique case assisted by Salvati Copii, the victim was trafficked for labour, having been promised work in the Foreign Legion.

Most victims trafficked within the category of begging and delinquency were trafficked for begging. In 2004, of the 23 victims trafficked solely for delinquency, 20 (or 87 per cent) were trafficked for begging. Similarly, ten of the 14 victims in 2003 (or 71.4 per cent) undertook begging while trafficked. Other cases of delinquency involved various criminal activities.

Dual forms of exploitation accounted for a significant percentage of victims trafficked for begging/delinquency. In 2004, eight of 31 Moldovans (25.8 per cent) suffered dual forms of exploitation – either having been trafficked for sexual exploitation and delinquency or for labour and delinquency. In 2003, four of 18 victims of begging and delinquency (22.2 per cent) suffered dual forms of exploitation. Similarly, in 2004, eight of 40 cases involving labour trafficking (20 per cent) also involved sexual exploitation or begging/delinquency. In addition, 66 of 128 cases of labour trafficking in 2003 (51.6 per cent) involved in sex exploitation or begging and delinquency.

Victims trafficked for labour and delinquency generally begged or worked as domestic workers. By contrast, victims trafficked for sexual exploitation and delinquency were more likely to be involved in criminal tasks. Of the seven victims in 2004 exploited both for sexual purposes and delinquency, two sold drugs, one facilitated the prostitution of others, one was a thief and one was involved in other criminal activity. Only two of the seven were involved in begging. In addition, these victims were generally either sexually abused by their employer on a regular basis or required to sell sexual services.

How victims were trafficked also differed. In some cases, victims were aware that they would beg but were deceived about conditions. By contrast, others were unaware of what would happen. In one case, an entire family was trafficked to Poland after having been promised employment there. Upon arrival in Poland, the family was told that they would be obliged to beg on the streets with their physically handicapped son. When the family refused, the traffickers took the boy. The parents approached the police who rescued the boy, who had been forced to beg on the streets (Andreani and Ravi, 2004: 93).

**Length of time trafficked:** There is limited data about the periods spent trafficked among victims of labour trafficking. However, of 37 victims trafficked for labour exploitation in 2003, 21 (59.5 per cent) were trafficked for three months or less. Equal numbers of victims – 16.2 per cent each – were trafficked for periods of four to six months and for seven to 12 months. As such, the majority of victims – 91.9 per cent – were trafficked for periods of less than a year, 8.1 per cent of victims were trafficked for more than a year, 5.4 per cent for two years and 2.7 per cent for three years. In 2004, 100 per cent of victims were trafficked for only one month.

Victims trafficked for begging were generally trafficked for periods of less than one year and often for only a few months. It is unclear if this is because of the form of trafficking or because victims were identified. It is worth considering if different forms of trafficking are undertaken for different lengths of time and, if so, why.

**Living and working conditions:** While there is incomplete data about this indicator, what data is available points to relatively good living conditions for victims trafficked for labour exploitation.

While the majority of victims assisted in 2003 experienced “poor” (55 per cent) living conditions, only a handful (12.5 per cent) reported “very poor” living conditions. Moreover, a noteworthy 32.5 per cent reported “good” living conditions, almost triple the number of victims reporting “very poor” living conditions. In 2004, while there was an increase in the number of victims reporting “poor” living conditions (to 66.7 per cent from 55 per cent in 2003), no victims reported “very poor” living conditions and 33.3 per cent reported “good” living conditions.

In terms of working conditions in 2003, the majority of victims reported these were “poor” (60 per cent) or “very poor” (12.5 per cent), while 27.5 per cent reported “good” working conditions. Although far more victims reported “good” than “very poor” working conditions, the working conditions faced by many are a cause for concern. One victim employed as a domestic worker in Turkey worked long hours every day and received no time off. Two other victims trafficked to Ukraine for agricultural labour worked under very strenuous conditions from 4:00 am to 10:00 pm and received no payment.

It is also worth noting that service providers report a greater likelihood that victims of trafficking for labour exploitation will return having earned and saved some money. Over the course of trafficking, they may have sent remittances home and/or may return home with some money. While far less than what was promised, victims of labour exploitation generally have a greater chance than victims of sexual exploitation of returning home with some funds. Earning money may lead victims of labour trafficking

not to perceive themselves as such, in turn, influencing their decision to seek or accept assistance.

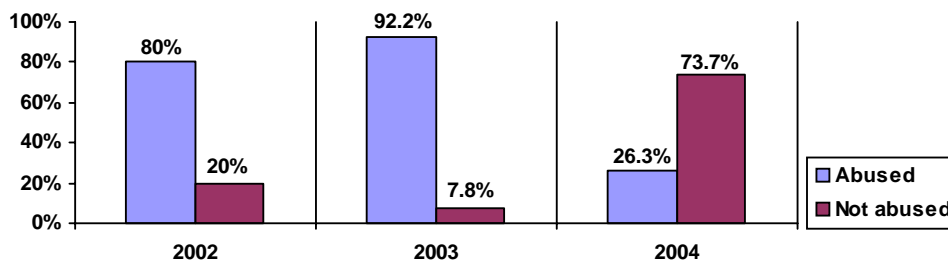
Victims trafficked for begging/delinquency were generally exposed to poor working conditions. Living conditions were also quite poor, with many victims living together in one room. They generally had some freedom of movement, but victims reported that traffickers were particularly attuned to victims who posed flight risks and abused those who might be tempted to flee. This had a restraining effect on the others. Victims were generally deprived of sufficient food and some even returned home malnourished. This is particularly worrying in the case of minors, as lack of nutrition has a deleterious effect on development growth. Victims were often forced to sit in the streets for long periods without moving, without food and exposed to the elements, which in destinations like Poland, Russia and Ukraine can be severe. Those who did not earn enough money were punished with violence.<sup>399</sup>

In many cases, beggars were given a portion of the money that they earned, although generally far lower than what was promised. Often victims of begging returned having earned some money. One service provider expressed concern about the reintegration of this particular group as they have been exposed to the possibility of earning money through begging – EUR 100 to 200 passed their hands in a day – making reintegration in which they receive only minimal financial assistance problematic.

Interestingly, victims trafficked with their children usually were not sent out to beg with their children. Rather, they were assigned other children and their children sent out with other adults, a strategy no doubt serving to constrain escape attempts.

**Abuse:** Victims of labour exploitation assisted in both 2002 and 2003 reported high levels of abuse – 80 per cent in 2002 and 92.16 per cent in 2003. Among victims identified and assisted in 2004, the perpetration of abuse while trafficked changed considerably with only 26.3 per cent of victims suffering abuse.

GRAPH 26  
ABUSE– ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR, 2002 TO 2004



It is unclear why victims of labour exploitation identified in 2004 suffered lower rates of abuse than in previous years. It may be linked to the specific trafficking experience of victims. However, it may also be tied to the trend noted by some service providers in

<sup>399</sup> According to one qualitative study, children trafficked for begging worked on average eight to 12 hours a day/night, and slept for seven to eight hours. Forty-four of the 60 children surveyed worked seven days a week and 21 of them worked seven nights per week. Of the 60 children, only three reported that their employer gave them the money that they had earned, while the remaining 57 said they received no payment for their work (IPP, 2004: 39).



the region whereby traffickers use less physical abuse against victims as a softening strategy to prevent victims accessing assistance and seeking to exit trafficking.

Most victims trafficked for begging and delinquency suffered some form of abuse – sexual, physical or psychological. In 2002, 75 per cent of victims were abused while, in 2003, 100 per cent of victims were abused. In 2004, 88.9 per cent of victims suffered abuse. Some victims were abused when they did not earn enough money for their trafficker, while others suffered abuse when they were disobedient in some way. Some were physically abused, while others were raped and subjected to other forms of sexual abuse (cf. IPP, 2004: 41). Efforts to escape were also a common trigger for abuse. In extreme cases, abuse was a means by which the victim's earning capacity was increased. One victim who did not earn sufficient money had boiling water poured on him with the intention that this injury would make him more "lucrative".

**Mental and physical well-being:** Like victims of sexual exploitation, victims of labour trafficking arrived at the shelter stressed and anxious, generally sleep deprived and malnourished. They tended to have more physical injuries than victims of other forms of trafficking. One victim trafficked to Ukraine for agricultural labour was in an accident while travelling to the fields and broke both her legs and arms. Because she was not taken to the hospital right away, she required surgery upon return to Moldova not only to correct her original injuries but also further damage caused by this lack of treatment.

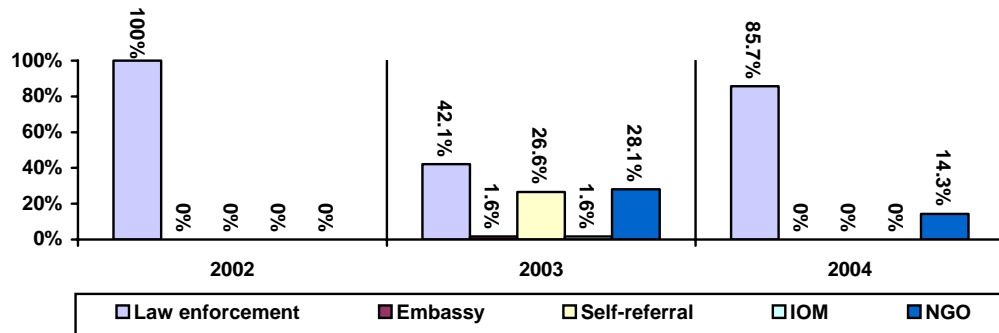
In addition, some victims of labour trafficking were extremely traumatized by their experiences. One victim trafficked to Turkey as a domestic worker returned traumatized after being forced to care for an autistic and schizophrenic child with no time off and very little pay. The victim was finally released by her employer when she had a breakdown due to stress and depression. She is currently receiving psychotherapy as part of her treatment.

The precise impact of trafficking for begging or delinquency has not been systematically documented. In large part, it depends upon the conditions in which victims live. Some victims suffered from kidney problems when they lived in excessive cold or stomach problems when they did not have sufficient food. Victims of begging and delinquency were also stressed and anxious. Where victims were trafficked as a family, the mental and physical well-being of all members was compromised and their stress levels acute. Having been trafficked as a family creates tension and even violence in the family environment as all members seek to cope with their trauma and its attendant feelings of anger, guilt, shame, etc. In addition, the health and assistance needs of these (multiple) victims can place an additional burden on the family economy.

### **Post Trafficking Experience**

**Victim identification and referral:** While most victims between 2002 and 2004 were identified by law enforcement authorities, victims identified and assisted in 2003 were identified by a range of other actors as well. In that year, NGOs, IOM, embassies and victim's themselves were central in identification and referral. In part, this diversification reflects the greater number of victims identified and assisted in that year.

GRAPH 27  
 IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL OF ASSISTED MOLDOVANS TRAFFICKED  
 FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION, 2002 TO 2004



Whereas in 2002 and 2003 all victims of begging/delinquency were identified by law enforcement, in 2004, victims were identified in roughly equal numbers by law enforcement, international organizations and NGOs.

**Re-trafficking:** Rates of re-trafficking specific to victims trafficking for labour, begging and delinquency have not been systematically documented. It would be valuable to do so as a measure of the effectiveness of re-integration and other forms of assistance relative to different types of victims.

Further, the high number of minors assisted in 2004 who have experienced trafficking at a formative stage of life are at particular risk of re-trafficking. Further, where victims have travelled in families and these families are generally returned to poor conditions, the risk of re-trafficking should not be ignored. Service providers reported cases in which mothers assisted at the centre almost immediately returned abroad for begging, generally with their children. One physically disabled woman was returned from being trafficked for begging with two children. She was assisted, including being fitted for a prosthetic leg, but nevertheless left shortly thereafter to return abroad for begging.<sup>400</sup>

**Assistance declined:** While victims of labour trafficking have declined assistance, perhaps more salient is the decision not to access assistance at all. Service providers assert that many victims of labour exploitation do not see themselves as “victims” and so will not seek out this assistance nor will they consider the assistance offered to trafficking victims appropriate to their case and needs.

This again highlights the need to identify the specific needs of different profiles of victims. Existing structures – such as shelters – may not be appropriate. Similarly, reintegration efforts must be fine-tuned to victims of different forms of trafficking. There is insufficient information on this subject for victims trafficked for begging and delinquency.

<sup>400</sup> For more data about re-trafficking rates in Moldova please see *Re-trafficking* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Moldovan Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

## 2.2 Foreign Victims of Trafficking Assisted in Moldova

To date there have been only a handful of foreign victims of trafficking identified and assisted in Moldova. In some cases, victims were in transit in Moldova. In other cases, these victims were exploited in Moldova.

TABLE 12  
NUMBER OF ASSISTED FOREIGN VICTIMS IN MOLDOVA, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign trafficking victims	0	0	0	1	2	3

### 2.2.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims assisted in Moldova

Profiles of foreign victims are far from comprehensive, as these victims are generally assisted for shorter times. However, details presented below are a first step in gaining a better understanding of this profile of victim, the causes and contributors to their trafficking vulnerability, and the forms of assistance appropriate to their trafficking experience.

**Sex:** All foreign nationals identified and assisted in Moldova between 2002 and 2004 were women.

**Age:** Foreign victims of trafficking identified and assisted in Moldova were adult women. In some cases, they were between 18 and 25 years, while in others, they were between 26 and 35 years. No victims were under 18 years of age.

**Country of origin:** Victims trafficked to or through Moldova were exclusively from Russia and the former Soviet Union, as can be seen from the chart below. Moldova represents a transit passage for these foreign nationals *en route* to South-eastern and Western Europe.

TABLE 13  
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN MOLDOVA, 2000 TO 2004

Country of Origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Kazakhstan	0	0	0	1	0	1
Russia	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ukraine	0	0	0	0	2	2
Total	0	0	0	1	2	3

**Forms of trafficking:** These women have been trafficked for both sexual exploitation and labour purposes. One victim from Ukraine was in domestic work and was forced to provide sexual services to men from the town. Similarly, one victim from Kazakhstan was forced to work as a domestic worker as well as in prostitution. In the other case, the victim was trafficked solely for sexual exploitation.

TABLE 14  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING FOR FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN MOLDOVA, 2000 TO 2004

Form of Trafficking	2002	2003	2004	Total
Sexual exploitation	0	0	1	1
Sexual and labour exploitation	0	1	1	2
Total	0	1	2	3

**Intended destination:** Victims were *en route* to different destinations, including Romania in 2003 and Moldova in 2004.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN MOLDOVA

In this section, we analyze the identification and referral mechanism in Moldova (Section 3.1) as well as the assistance and protection available to foreign and national victims of trafficking (Section 3.2).

#### **3.1 Victim Identification and Referral in Moldova**

There is an existing referral system operating in Moldova with partners including the various government sectors, law enforcement, international organizations, NGOs and embassies abroad. The structure is informal with no central organization tasked with the referral and documentation of all victims who are identified and assisted. Instead each organization tracks its own caseload and referrals occur through the specific partnerships of the various assisting organizations – IOM missions, the La Strada network or Salvati Copii's partners organizations and network.

#### **Voluntary Return Programmes from Transit and Destination Countries**

The majority of Moldovan trafficked victims are assisted via voluntary return programmes managed by IOM and local NGOs. The initial identification and assistance takes place in the country of identification (i.e. transit or destination country). To date, the majority of documented voluntary returns have been assisted by IOM operating programmes for trafficked foreign victims in Macedonia, The Province of Kosovo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania and Serbia and Montenegro. However, this has recently changed with the diversification of destinations for Moldovan victims, who are increasingly trafficked to EU countries, UAE, Russia and Turkey.

The range and scope of assistance provided to victims varies according to the particular programmes and practices of service providers in the countries of identification. This assistance typically consists of shelter, medical care, psychosocial care, basic legal information, a humanitarian package, travel documentation and transportation to country of origin. Detailed information about services provided in SEE destination and transit countries is found in the individual country reports.

#### **Foreign NGOs**

Some referrals are initiated by foreign NGOs. In 2003, Salvati Copii (Save the Children) was requested by ISS partners to carrying out assessments in the case of Moldovan minors trafficked to destinations countries. Assessments were carried out for ISS Italy in 12 cases involving minors, ISS Israel in two such cases, ISS Greece in one such cases and ISS Germany in the case of one minor. Similarly, Salvati Copii assisted in the return of victims (male and female) at the request of foreign partners with whom they have cooperative agreements. This included ISS Italy (2), Young Generation Romania (6), Association Papa Giovanni XXIII (3) and others. In such circumstances, the NGO at the destination identifies Moldovan victims, provides temporary housing, secures travel documents and transportation to Moldova, and the Moldovan NGO provides housing and reintegration assistance to victims upon return. In five other cases (three women and two men), Salvati Copii organized the return of victims at the request of family members with Salvati Copii responsible for the identification and return process. In addition, La Strada Moldova receives referral through its international network of partners.

Another recent mechanism for referral is via the Ukrainian NGO *Vera, Nadejda, Liubovi* (Faith, Hope, Love), which is based in Odessa and targets persons arriving at Odessa harbour primarily by boat from Turkey. Potential victims are approached upon arrival and, if found to be trafficking victims, are offered assistance to return to Moldova as well as reintegration assistance. While the environment is not conducive to interviewing victims and deportees are quite rightly suspicious upon being approached, 18 victims have been referred through this channel during the first six months of its establishment. La Strada, which visited the location in October 2003 estimates that 30 per cent of the Moldovan deportees may be victims of trafficking (Andreani and Raviv, 2004: 91).

There is a need for improved (secure) information sharing and referral procedures between service providers in destination and transit countries beyond the existing links. NGO networks, such as the La Strada and Save the Children, should be expanded and, more generally, formal links and referral agreements should be made between organizations in source and destination countries. Ideally, victims should not be limited in the choice of assistance to only cooperating NGOs but rather should be informed about the full range of assistance and reintegration possibilities in Moldova.

### **Moldovan NGOs**

Also important has been the identification and referral of victims by NGOs working in the various communities. For example, the NGO Gencliar Birlili in Gagauzia has identified and either assisted directly or referred to IOM for assistance 56 victims of trafficking in 2003 and 2004. Similar identifications have been made by other community-based NGOs such as Compassion and Interaction. This was a new development in 2003 and 2004 that is likely to result in increased identification of trafficking victims, especially victims of other forms of trafficking, such as labour.

### **Law Enforcement**

The majority of Moldovan trafficking victims are identified by law enforcement bodies in destination and transit countries, offering victims the option of voluntary return programmes. However, some victims are also identified by Moldovan law enforcement authorities, either the border police or in the course of police investigations.

### **Returns upon Extradition**

As a substantial number of Moldovans are deported to neighbouring countries rather than directly to Moldova, cooperative outreach programmes with neighbouring governments and specialized NGOs should be established at relevant extradition locations in Crimea, Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia. One promising example of this kind of outreach involves a Ukrainian NGO that interviews female deportees from Turkey according to an agreement worked out with the Odessa harbour authorities. Through their outreach work at the harbour, NGO representatives provide suspected Moldovan trafficked victims with referrals for assistance in Moldova, including helpline numbers for trafficked victims. Similarly, the NGO Young Generation in Romania cooperates closely with Salvati Copii in Moldova in assisting and referring victims deported from Serbia to Romania. Such programmes should be expanded. It is essential that all such programmes include transportation to ensure that the identified victims reach home (or shelter) in Moldova safely. Without such measures (and the necessary associated funding), there is a risk of these victims being re-trafficked.

## **Helplines**

There are currently three counter-trafficking helplines in Moldova, two of which are operated from Chisinau by local NGOs La Strada and Centre for the Prevention of Trafficking in Women (CPTW). CPTW has also opened a branch and helpline in Ungheni, near the Romanian border.

The La Strada helpline began operations in 2001 and mainly focuses on prevention activities such as providing information about employment and study abroad. Of the 12,274 calls received between 1 September 2001 and 1 December 2004, the majority (61.5 per cent) were directly related to migration, employment abroad, tourism, study abroad, marriage abroad, employment in Moldova, etc.

The helpline also provides assistance for trafficking victims as well as families and friends of suspected trafficking victims. For example, 7.7 per cent calls were from victims of trafficking (including repeat calls and ongoing cases) and 7.8 per cent were about missing persons. In 2004, the helpline received 588 such calls including 218 calls directly from victims, 324 calls from relatives and 46 calls from other organizations referring cases of trafficking. This is relatively consistent with the 597 calls in 2003, of which 188 were directly from victims and 409 were calls from relatives of victims. Victims are either assisted directly by La Strada through its assistance programme or referred for necessary assistance according to a referral system established in partnership with other organizations. While still a small percentage of the total calls received by La Strada – the helpline received 4,301 from 1 January to 1 December 2004 and 3,731 calls in 2003 – a significant number of calls were from victims themselves and translated into referrals. This differs from many of the helplines in the region, which few victims access. It is worth exploring how La Strada's experience of victim identification through the helpline can be replicated in other countries.

The helpline is accessible through a toll-free telephone number and operates seven days a week for 24 hours a day. Helpline operators undergo special training and operators record statistical and other information for each case or caller.

The second and third helplines are operated by the Centre for the Prevention of Trafficking in Women. These helplines are currently available in Chisinau and Ungheni and plans are underway to launch two additional helplines in two other districts of Moldova. They focus on legal assistance, providing free-of-charge information on the risks of being trafficked, about its consequences, about legal employment and migration and the dangers and risks of illegal employment. In addition, CPTW provides free psychological and juridical assistance for the vulnerable categories of population, which includes victims of trafficking. To date, over 2,500 callers have accessed the helpline.

### **3.2 Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in Moldova**

The assistance and protection framework for trafficked victims in Moldova has been geared mainly toward the reintegration of Moldovan victims who have been returned from abroad. IOM and local NGOs provide the vast majority of assistance to foreign and national victims. Services available to beneficiaries range from the basic (i.e. initial accommodation and return transport to home community) to a more comprehensive package of assistance (i.e. accommodation, legal, medical and psychological assistance,

vocational training, job placement). Generally, there is a need for communication between service providers in Moldova and those in countries of destination or transit in order to tailor assistance and reintegration to each trafficking victim.

Existing protection and assistance programmes are largely dependent on funding from donor countries. The government has yet to play a prominent role in the provision of direct services to adult or minor victims of trafficking. Victims assisted in Moldova in 2003 and 2004 were provided with a range of services to meet their immediate and longer-term needs. Details of the various services are outlined below.

### **Shelter**

There are two shelters for trafficked victims in Moldova, both located in the capital city, Chisinau. One is managed by local NGO Salvati Copii and the other one by IOM.

The NGO-managed shelter formerly consisted of private rental apartments, able to accommodate up to 24 victims. However, due to funding problems, the shelter now offers housing for the accommodation of minors. Victims at the NGO-managed shelter are referred offsite for most services, including medical, psychological, legal, education, etc.

The IOM-managed shelter is part of a rehabilitation centre located in a state-owned building and consists of two wings – an “Adults Wing” for beneficiaries over 18 years of age and a “Minors and Child-Friendly Wing” for minors and mothers with their children. The rehabilitation centre has a number of positive attributes. Separate accommodation and assistance for adults and minors is unique within the region and, in addition, the centre provides comprehensive medical, psychosocial and other services under one roof. As well, the centre has flexible entry and exit procedures enabling victims and their families to voluntarily enrol or re-enrol in services at any time. These shelter conditions are quite favourable, although the sustainability of such a centre is in question given that the government has allocated no funds to its continuation in the long term.

In addition, accommodation options for other profiles of victims, particularly adult male victims, victims trafficked for other purposes apart from sexual exploitation and minors are desirable. Accommodation within the existing shelter programmes may not be advisable because of mixed genders, ages and assistance needs.

### **Medical Assistance**

Staff members at the NGO-managed shelter and the IOM-managed shelter offer all trafficking victims free medical care. The NGO-managed shelter arranges medical care for victims according to an agreement with state health facilities and donor funding covers the extra costs. Routine examinations include screening for STIs, gynaecological disorders and pregnancy tests. Where patients require further treatment, they may stay at the hospital for an extended time. Victims at the IOM rehabilitation centre receive all medical tests, examinations, and care onsite. The majority of victims request comprehensive medical evaluations. The medical staff has compiled detailed protocols for gynaecological disorders commonly suffered by trafficked victims, and victims receive individual pre and post-test counselling sessions to acquire understanding of health issues.

Shelter medical staff report that all examined victims had infections and most tested positive for some form of STI upon arrival. Of 672 assisted victims between 2001 and 2004, only 11.7 per cent had no STIs. The remaining 88.3 per cent had one STI (13.53 per cent), two STIs (50.1 per cent), three STIs (21.2 per cent) and four STIs (3.6 per cent). While it is not surprising that so many women manifest these infections given the form of exploitation endured, it is of concern that the majority of these victims were returned through assistance programmes that included medical care and treatment for gynaecological disorders (notably STIs). The efficacy of treatment protocols utilized by care providers in the countries where the victims were first identified and treated need to be questioned.

A notable percentage of victims returning to Moldova were pregnant upon their return as detailed in the victim profiles (see *Physical and mental well-being* in section: *Profiles and Trafficking Experiences of Moldovan Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*). There is a need therefore for services specifically for pregnant women and new mothers, such as pre and post-natal medical care, psychological counselling, longer-term shelter and housing options and family counselling in the context of reintegration. New mothers assisted at the rehabilitation centre are provided with additional assistance, including housing, food and clothing. Access to abortion for trafficking victims who do not want to keep the baby is not facilitated by most service providers, although abortion is legal in Moldova.

HIV tests are conducted on a voluntary basis, free of charge for victims in a specialized national HIV/AIDS centre. Positive results must be shared by the centre with other medical institutions, but are otherwise confidential. Medical service providers state that most trafficked victims request HIV/AIDS tests, an increase from previous years probably due to greater health information at the shelters, increased willingness of medical staff to discuss HIV/AIDS testing with patients and greater awareness of trafficking-related health risks among victims. Nine trafficking victims in Moldova have tested positive for HIV. There is a protocol on the treatment of persons living with HIV/AIDS.

### **Psychological Assistance**

All victims returning to Moldova under assistance programmes are offered psychosocial assistance, although the scope of assistance varies according to the particular assistance programme. Under the NGO-managed return and assistance program, a psychologist meets with all victims and offers short-term counselling – both individual and group counselling – for the duration of stay at the shelter. A recent addition to the psychological assistance component of Salvati Copii's work is the "school for good mommies" programme aimed at reconciliation of victims with their children as well as development of good parenting skills.

Victims at the IOM rehabilitation centre receive comprehensive psychological and psychiatric care with the centre staffed by a psychologist, a psychiatrist, a psychoanalyst, and social workers. The professional staff-to-victim ratio is one of the lowest in the region, and the staff devises individual treatment plans according to international standardized tests. For the duration of their stay at the shelter, victims receive individual and group counselling sessions.<sup>401</sup> Those victims in need of

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<sup>401</sup> The psychiatrist at the rehabilitation centre noted that it was difficult to conduct group counselling for victims from the same area as they were reluctant to speak about their experiences to a person who might relate it to others in



psychiatric care and medication regularly meet with the staff psychiatrist. Common ailments include post-traumatic stress disorder and insomnia.

Centre staff members state that the average victim needs at least a few months of counselling to become psychologically stable, far exceeding the average shelter stay of three weeks. Victims rarely receive follow-up counselling in their home communities, both because services are lacking outside of Chisinau and victims are concerned that members of their home communities will learn of their experience. Longer-term counselling and psychosocial support services should be developed in regions outside Chisinau, in particular in communities of origin and at-risk communities. The professional capacity of NGOs in these areas should be enhanced so that victims can avail themselves of long-term support services without fear of stigmatization.

### **Legal Assistance**

Free legal consultation is provided to women at the rehabilitation centre run by the Centre for the Prevention of Trafficking in Women, based in Chisinau. The Centre also provides free legal consultation outside of the rehabilitation centre. It has formulated a memorandum of understanding with IOM regarding the provision of legal assistance for victims of trafficking willing to testify against their traffickers and/or in need of other relevant legal assistance. According to the agreement, the Centre and service providers coordinate efforts to provide free legal assistance to victims, including: individualized representation for victims testifying against perpetrators; obtaining identification documents for use in the territory of the Republic of Moldova (including for victim's children); establishing and obtaining property rights in the territory of Moldova; dissolving marriages at register offices and courts of the Republic of Moldova; establishing paternal rights at competent authorities of the Republic of Moldova and dividing spouses' joint estates.

While most trafficking victims take the opportunity to speak with the lawyers, the services they most commonly request pertain to identification documents and resolution of family and property matters (marital dissolution, child custody, and property settlements), rather than participation as a witness in legal proceedings.

A critical legal service required by victims is assistance in having identity papers and other necessary documents that were lost while trafficked reissued or obtaining others that the victim did not hold in the past. It has been noted, for example, that approximately two per cent of Moldovan children under the age of five do not have a birth certificate (Catana *et al.*, 2003: 9). The lack of birth registration has been cited as a vulnerability factor in other countries of the region (Albania) as well as around the world (Indonesia and Thailand). Birth registration therefore should be monitored and service providers might consider supporting the registration of vulnerable families as a prevention effort.

Overall, service providers report an increased demand for various forms of legal assistance and counselling. With the increasing number of trafficking cases being

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their home community. Social stigma remains a critical issue in psychological assistance as well as reintegration programmes.

pursued in Moldova,<sup>402</sup> this would be a valuable service for victims. However, general mistrust of the legal system, compounded by a fear of traffickers, and the lack of a witness protection programme means few victims are in fact willing to testify.

### **Witness Protection**

The existing law on state protection for victims and witnesses exists without proper implementation mechanisms or adequate funding. The law does not provide special protection for victims as witnesses and it does not include adequate measures such as alternatives to live testimony, physical separation of victims/witnesses from defendants or other safeguards for protecting privacy and safety of victims and their families. There is a clear need to amend this law to comply with international standards, as outlined in the Palermo Protocol.

In this vein, in 2004, a Draft Law on Prevention and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings was elaborated and sent to all relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions for examination and comments. At the end of 2004, following the compilation of all amendments, the Draft Law was sent to the Parliament where it is currently awaiting examination toward future adoption.

### **Educational Activities**

Little emphasis is placed on educational assistance for trafficked victims in spite of the generally low educational attainment of most assisted victims. Educational reinsertion programmes are uncommon and formal educational reinsertion agreements have not been developed with the government. This may be attributable in part to the sentiment that formal education does not necessarily lead to gainful employment or living wages in Moldova. Typically, victims are more interested in attending vocational training that could lead to immediate earnings.

While these vocational programmes are important, specialized educational reinsertion and alternative education programmes should be developed, especially for minors. A potentially amenable approach for all would be that education programmes include a vocational component, a life-skills orientation and a practical focus on income-generation possibilities within respective communities.

### **Vocational Training and Employment Assistance**

Because most trafficking victims leave Moldova in search of a liveable wage, service providers focus on vocational, employment and business development programmes. These programmes are offered primarily to returning victims. However, in some cases these programmes have also been expanded to include women and girls considered to be at risk of trafficking. Such programmes are undertaken not only by NGOs and international organizations but, significantly, also the Moldovan government.

The Ministry of Labour provides information about employment opportunities to trafficked victims and carries out consultation visits at the reintegration centre in order

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<sup>402</sup> During 2003, the Trafficking in Persons Department at the Prosecutor General's office initiated 189 investigations about trafficking in persons and children, and 71 investigations under the current statute regarding the facilitation of prostitution. Of the 220 cases investigated, 44 indictments were issued and 34 convictions obtained. This represents an increase of 54 per cent from 2002. Nevertheless, only six of the convictions led to prison terms and sentences ranged from three to 15 years (US Department of State, 2004).

to provide information on employment possibilities and vocational training opportunities. The Ministry of Labour also sponsors vocational training courses available in Chisinau, Cahul (south) and in Bălți (north). At present, vocational training courses are offered through several public technical schools in the fields of tailoring, hairstyling, secretarial, agro-business and construction. The Ministry covers the cost of the courses while international organizations and NGOs raise funds for materials and temporary lodging. According to the statistics provided by the reintegration centre, almost 33 per cent of the victims enrolled in courses and most have maintained employment for six months. In addition, IOM and the School of Professions “Insula Sperentelor” established a school to provide professional training to victims of trafficking toward social integration. The School of Professions assures the professional education of victims of trafficking as well as provides accommodation for victims for the duration of training course.

Positive developments among various service providers include emphasis on vocational, business development and micro-credit programmes geared toward sustainable and targeted urban and rural employment. However, these initiatives are still limited to small pilot income-generating projects implemented by local and international NGOs.

There has been some debate about the advisability and sustainability of income-generation activities (IGAs) and small business ventures for trafficked women. Critiques of such strategies have centred around the generally low education level of victims as well the trauma they have suffered, which can inhibit economic success. Many victims are unable to work at even a low stress job for some time after their trafficking experience. Moreover, IGAs are suitable only for small groups of victims of trafficking. In recognition of this fact as well as in an effort to mitigate such obstacles, assistance programmes such as that of the NGO Italian Consortium of Solidarity (ICS) have included a psychologist who pays monthly monitoring visits to each assisted cases, as well as psychosocial and recreational activities aimed at the empowerment of beneficiaries.

Continued and expanded support for such income-generating projects are needed, and these projects should include a balanced approach for both urban and rural workers as well as the establishment of a network of supportive business development services. As well, with increased recognition of the vulnerability of men as well as women, some consideration should be given to similar programmes for returned male migrants, many of whom may have been trafficked, although not assisted. Also critical is employment placement (for male and female victims) in recognition that IGAS are not suitable for all victims. Finally, given the high number of minor victims of trafficking, these job placement programmes should target families/parents of victims as well as minors at risk of trafficking.

### **Alternative Housing Assistance**

Long-term housing assistance is largely non-existent in Moldova. In cases where a victim cannot return to her family, she has few options. Service providers encourage her to locate another family member or friend who can accommodate her. On rare occasions, service providers are able to mobilize funds to subsidize longer-term housing for victims. Temporary lodging is also provided to victims participating in

vocational training programmes with the hope that future earnings can cover future housing costs.

Service providers state that they do not plan to expand housing assistance programmes because it might result in dependence on the assistance structure, rather than provide a long-term housing solution. Furthermore, average rental prices in urban areas of Moldova typically exceed average monthly incomes so that long-term rental agreements are not likely to offer a durable solution for most of these victims. The government should consider subsidized housing options for victims of trafficking as well as other socially vulnerable groups.

### **Family Mediation and Assistance**

At the request of victims at the NGO Salvati Copii and IOM-managed shelters, families are notified about their return to Moldova. Most victims of the NGO shelter stay at the shelter first, undertake mutual visits with their family and then return to their families. The NGO monitors the reintegration process through telephone conversations and home visits. At the IOM-managed shelter, victims typically visit with their families for a couple of days and then return to the reintegration centre for further assistance. In both cases, social assistants at the shelters provide counselling regarding the return and mediation with family members as needed. Most trafficked victims do not wish to reveal their trafficking experience to their family members and social assistants try to facilitate constructive dialogue between the victim and family members. In addition, La Strada has developed guidelines for parents to help them deal with the victim upon her return. La Strada also offers mediation assistance for assisted victims. Such family intervention initiatives should be used in more widely toward a sustainable reintegration process.

Ongoing assistance and mediation for former victims is an area of need. In large part, this is undertaken by organizations working in communities and assisting with the reintegration of returned victims. A number of NGOs are working to support victims in the reintegration process within local communities including, but not limited to, Interaction, Compassion and Gencliar Birlii. While these organizations assist in a number of ways – legal, medical, training and financial assistance – a key feature of their work is psychological assistance and support. This is critical and should be mobilized further, ideally, involving the government and its social welfare system.

### **Material Assistance**

Material assistance and/or a reintegration grant are available for beneficiaries to support their reintegration into their community or begin a new life in a new community. This assistance covers basic needs of beneficiaries and their families; items provided include clothing, hygienic items, food, payment for house/flat utilities, payment for childcare, school kit purchase, etc.

Such material assistance helps to mitigate the poverty that often contributes to trafficking. However, service providers also highlight the delicate balance between assistance and dependency, attention to which is essential.

### **Case Monitoring/Follow-up**

Until very recently, there was little monitoring of trafficked victims' cases and more work is needed in this area. This constitutes a gap not only in Moldova but in other

“source” countries. However, there have been some positive developments in this regard, with an increased number of local organizations working in partnership with assistance organizations in Chisinau to support and assist in the reintegration process. As mentioned above, a number of NGOs based in local communities are working in this area, including undertaking case follow-up. Generally, victims are visited by social workers once a month at home for the first few months. Follow-up monitoring is planned according to the level of reintegration success. Since the majority of victims were vulnerable to exploitation because of dire economic circumstances in Moldova, most case monitoring mechanisms should be and generally are linked with follow-up services related to vocational, educational and/or income-generation programmes.

There are also systemic obstacles to case monitoring that are important to flag. In addition to limited staff and resources, the degree to which victims will be willing to access the services of an organization known within their community to assist trafficking victims is open to question. Many victims may fear the stigma associated with trafficking and be reluctant to maintain contact with such organizations. Further, victims may not be accessible by telephone and they may live in remote, hard-to-reach areas, which take time and resources to access.

### **Assistance for Minors**

In Moldova, there is recognition of the need for assistance programmes specifically for minors. Salvati Copii accommodates minor victims of trafficking and provides reintegration support as does the “Minors and Child-Friendly Wing” at the IOM rehabilitation centre. As well, in recognition of the guardianship role of the state, there is an agreement on the part of service providers to contact the office of the Inspector for Minors for guardianship consent regarding housing and medical care.

A corollary of assistance to minors is assistance to mothers and minors. In a large number of cases, it is a mother and child who require specific assistance. This applies when the mother and child have been trafficked, a victim returns pregnant or with a child from her trafficking experience and when a woman has left her child in Moldova. The “Minors and Child-Friendly Wing” at the IOM rehabilitation centre provides direct assistance and support to this target group upon their return. In addition, Salvati Copii’s “School for Good Mummies” programme, designed to reconcile families separated by trafficking/migration and provide good parenting skills, also targets this group of beneficiaries. More ways should be found to assist this particular category of beneficiaries. These are important measures and constitute good practices in terms of considering and meeting the needs of minors.

The development of programmes for minors is an ongoing process with new groups of at-risk and vulnerable minors regularly being identified whose needs must be met. Most recently, service providers at the “Minors and Child-Friendly Wing” have observed that minors themselves are a diverse group with distinct needs. For example, at the Wing they work with five distinct target groups of minors: 1) minor victims of trafficking (generally 14-16 year old girls trafficked for sexual exploitation); 2) children trafficked with their mother/parent; 3) mothers who return home pregnant or with a baby; 4) children left in Moldova while their mother was trafficked and reunited with the mother during her rehabilitation and 5) minors victims of trafficking (young males, 16-17 years old).

Beyond immediate assistance, there is a need for long-term support and reintegration of minor victims of trafficking. These minors have their own specific assistance needs, which include a safe and healthy home environment, education, basic needs, medical care, etc. Ideally, family reunification should be pursued, accompanied by family counselling and support. However, the issue of family involvement in the trafficking of minors can pose serious difficulties in reintegration. Return to a family that has been complicit in trafficking places the minor in an acutely vulnerable position. At the same time, the poor quality of care in state institutions makes this too a less than ideal alternative.

As an alternative to reintegration, foster care placements should also be considered in the case of trafficked minors, particularly where the family has been complicit. Where this is to be pursued, appropriate training and orientation of foster families is essential to facilitate the successful placement of the minor as well as mitigate tension in the family. Further, while foster care presents one care option to be further explored, it is difficult to have foster care in Moldova when there are so many minors in need.

Standards for treatment of trafficked minors should be elaborated, along the lines of the principles outlined in UNICEF's *Recommendations for Special Measures to Protect Children Victims of Trafficking in South Eastern Europe*.

# COUNTRY REPORT

## THE REPUBLIC OF MONTENEGRO

This section analyzes the current situation of trafficking victims and victim assistance and protection in the Republic of Montenegro. The report is divided into three sections: 1) Number of Foreign and Montenegrin Trafficking Victims Identified and Assisted, 2) Profiles of Trafficking Victims and 3) Overview of the Assistance Framework in Montenegro.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The total number of foreign victims identified and assisted in Montenegro between January 2000 and 31 December 2004 was 42.
- The total number of Montenegrin national victims identified and assisted between January 2000 and 31 December 2004 was nine.
- Montenegro is primarily a country of transit and, to a lesser extent, a country of destination. However, there are recent indications that Montenegrins are also victims of trafficking, having been trafficked both abroad and internally.
- Both foreign and national victims in Montenegro were trafficked primarily for sexual exploitation. However, trafficking for begging and labour have also been documented. Further, some victims suffered both sexual and labour trafficking.
- A handful of male foreign victims were identified in Montenegro. Foreign male victims were trafficked for labour, while one Montenegrin male victim was identified in the transportation phase, likely to be exploited for begging. However, the vast majority of victims assisted in Montenegro were female.
- Minors accounted for an increasing percentage of assisted victims in 2003 and 2004. This was particularly the case among Montenegrin victims, 70 per cent of whom were minors at identification.
- A multiplicity of factors, including economic background, family relations, education and employment, inform victims' vulnerability to trafficking. In Montenegro, foreign victims reported the desire to work as the main contributor to migration. Among national victims, poor family relations emerged as a critical push factor.
- The majority of victims reported poor living and working conditions and suffering physical and/or sexual abuse while trafficked. A number of victims reported prolific abuse, including being rendered unconscious and suffering broken bones. One foreign victim required facial reconstruction as a result of the abuse suffered.
- Foreign victims originated from traditional countries of origin (Albania, Ukraine, Moldova and Romania) as well as some less usual countries, such as Georgia, Lithuania and Mongolia.
- Foreign victims came from different economic backgrounds, ranging from average to very poor. Among national victims, poverty was more common, with victims coming from either "poor" or "very poor" backgrounds.
- Among foreign victims, there was a decline in the use of false documents and illegal border crossings during the transportation process. As many as 66.7 per cent of foreign victims in 2004 crossed at legal crossings and 40 per cent of victims used legal documents (an increase from none).



- Montenegrin victims were trafficking internally as well as to neighbouring countries in the region including Albania, BiH and Macedonia.
- The majority of foreign and national victims were identified and referred for assistance by law enforcement authorities. Other identification and referral agencies included NGOs, helplines and private citizens.
- A number of foreign victims served as witnesses in criminal proceedings against their traffickers. This included victims of sex trafficking as well as men exploited for labour.
- In Montenegro, there is no centralized mechanism for the screening, identification and referral of trafficking victims. Rather, victims are referred on an ad hoc basis, based on institutional links and organizational relationships. This constitutes a gap in the assistance framework.
- Within the Ministry of the Interior, there is an expert team on human trafficking and smuggling. Further, there are anti-trafficking units, tasked with the identification and referral of trafficked victims and which operate in seven centres located throughout the country.
- The identification of male trafficking victims in Montenegro indicates police awareness of other forms of trafficking and different profiles of victims. The case also highlights the lack of services, particularly accommodation options, available for male victims of trafficking.
- In 2005, the Government of the Republic of Montenegro passed the *Law on Programme of Witness Protection*, which provides protection for all victims of crime, including trafficking victims. This law has important provisions, including physical and technical protection of the victim, protection and change of identity and relocation. In addition, temporary residence status is being developed.
- The assistance framework available to trafficking victims in Montenegro has been geared primarily toward return of foreign nationals. However, given the number of Montenegrin victims identified in 2003 and 2004, there is a need to develop programmes geared to national victims, including reintegration components. These should include vocational training, job placement, alternative housing options, family mediation/ counselling and case follow-up and monitoring.
- Specialized assistance for minor victims of trafficking is lacking, constituting a gap in the assistance framework in Montenegro. Service providers must increasingly recognize the specific needs of minors and these should be reflected in the services provided as well as the skills and capacity of staff.

## 1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND MONTENEGRIN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED

The Republic of Montenegro<sup>403</sup> has traditionally been considered a country of transit to the European Union as well as a destination country. The primary form of trafficking has been for sexual exploitation. Data from 2003 and 2004 indicates that Montenegro continues to be both a country of transit and destination, although for labour as well as sexual exploitation. As well, there have been cases of Montenegrin victims trafficked internally and abroad.

Statistics and information about assisted trafficking victims in Montenegro was compiled according to primary data provided by the IOM office in Montenegro, IOM mission in Macedonia, the Women's Safe House and the Montenegrin Women's Lobby.<sup>404</sup> These figures pertain to foreign and Montenegrin women and girls who have generally been trafficked for sexual exploitation. However, 2004 also saw the identification and assistance of men trafficked to Montenegro for labour. An examination of profiles and experiences of these victims will enable more considered interventions to address their needs and redress the trafficking experience.<sup>405</sup>

TABLE 1  
NUMBER OF VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO OR ORIGINATING FROM MONTENEGRO, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign trafficking victims	14	5	9	4	10	42
Montenegrin trafficking victims	0	0	2	3	5	10

The assisted cases in Montenegro primarily related to foreign victims identified within Montenegro and voluntarily returned to their countries of origin. Victims identified as trafficked but who were denied assistance by law enforcement are not included within these figures. In cases where victims declined or were refused assistance, they most likely faced charges of illegal migration or criminal offences, such as prostitution. Such individuals were either expelled at the Serbian border, or taken to *Padinska Skela*, the reception centre for foreign citizens located in Belgrade, from where they were subsequently expelled. In addition, the statistics presented in the table above include the number of Montenegrin women trafficked within Montenegro or in neighbouring countries. While Montenegrin trafficking victims have not been identified in large numbers, their presence makes clear that Montenegrin nationals are nevertheless vulnerable.<sup>406</sup> To capture the full scope of trafficking in Montenegrin nationals, there is a need to access information from destination countries outside of South-eastern

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<sup>403</sup> While the Republic of Montenegro is a constituent state of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, it is analyzed here as a separate body in an effort to better understand the specifics of trafficking to, through, and from the Republic. Further, while citizens of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro constitute one nationality, this report distinguishes between victims resident in either Montenegro or Serbia. This should in no way be read as a political statement on the part of the RCP.

<sup>404</sup> Other organizations in Montenegro that participated in and provided information for the RCP research, include: Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Exterior – Office of National Coordinator, Department for Aliens (Ministry of Interior), Save the Children and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

<sup>405</sup> For a full discussion of how data was collected and the methodology used, please see: *Introduction*.

<sup>406</sup> This trend is not unique to Montenegro but rather is part of a regional trend in which traditional countries of destination and transit, such as Serbia, BiH, Croatia and Macedonia, are increasingly recognized as countries of origin.

Europe. While the RCP sought to collect victim data from a range of destination countries within the European Union, for the most part these efforts were met with reluctance or resistance due to limited resources, insufficient staff time or internal regulations about information sharing.

While the number of identified and assisted victims in Montenegro has always been low, 2003 saw a significant decrease in the identification of victims – from nine in 2002 to four in 2003. This decline is attributable largely to the mishandling of the Moldova case<sup>407</sup> and the subsequent dismantling of the Victim Protection Programme (VPP). While only two victims were identified and assisted in the first half of 2004, the second half of the year saw a spike in identification of victims by law enforcement. Since August, an additional 16 victims were identified, of whom ten accepted assistance. Of these, the majority (eight) were foreign nationals and two were Montenegrin nationals. Four were men trafficked to Montenegro for labour exploitation.

This spike in identification coincides with two recent developments. The first is the training of the border officials in Montenegro by IOM in partnership with the Ministry of the Interior, Department of Border Police and two NGOs – NIKA and Montenegrin Women's Lobby. A total of 301 border officers and seven border officials were trained on trafficking and victim identification. A follow-up training course is planned for judges and prosecutors, which, it is hoped, will lead to prosecution of traffickers. The second development was the mobilization of anti-trafficking units in 2004 in the seven centres located throughout the country as well as at the national level within the Ministry of the Interior. These units are tasked with the identification and referral of trafficking victims within the Republic of Montenegro as well as investigation of trafficking and related violations. These developments help to explain the increased identification of victims in the latter part of 2004 and the identification of men for labour trafficking also signals awareness on the part of some Montenegrin officials that trafficking occurs for purposes other than for sexual exploitation.

Even in the context of Montenegro's small population – approximately 700,000 – the number of assisted victims is low. This is particularly true when viewed against a socio-political backdrop in which smuggling and criminal frameworks are firmly entrenched. Counter-trafficking actors argue that the numbers are unreflective of trafficking realities and assisted victims report that other victims with whom they were trafficked were not identified and assisted. Similarly, victims assisted elsewhere in the region and further a field report being trafficked through Montenegro.

Another issue that may explain the low number of identified and assisted victims is corruption. In December 2002, the Moldova case – in which a Moldovan trafficking victim alleged that several high-ranking Montenegrin officials, including the Deputy Prosecutor, were involved in her trafficking and exploitation – brought the issue of corruption to the fore. While the Montenegrin government has made efforts to combat

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<sup>407</sup> This case arose in November 2002 when a Moldovan woman was identified and referred by a police officer to the Women's Safe House in Podgorica, a shelter for trafficking victims. The woman had been trafficked to Montenegro in 1999 where she had been forced to work as a prostitute and suffered extensive violence and abuse. On the occasions when she tried to escape, she was returned to her traffickers by the police officers she had approached for assistance. Further, in the process of relating her experience, she named numerous government officials as being complicit in trafficking.

trafficking, this issue remains one of concern for victims and counter-trafficking actors alike. In addition, some working on trafficking argue that this issue is a factor in both the limited number of victims being identified and the limited number willing to accept assistance.<sup>408</sup> It is hoped that the increased government commitment signalled by the recent appointment of a new national coordinator will lead to increased identification of victims.

Since illegal migration potentially intersects with trafficking, migration statistics may illuminate the potential scope of trafficking. During 2003, 292 illegal migrants were registered, of whom 275 were male and 17 were female, and 616 persons were deported, of whom 588 were male and 28 were female. In the first six months of 2004, 133 illegal migrants were registered, of whom 126 were male and seven were female, and 356 persons were deported, of whom 343 were male and 13 female.<sup>409</sup> While it is impossible to say exactly how many, it is probable that a significant number were trafficking victims.

## 2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

In this section, we analyze the profiles and experiences of both foreign trafficking victims (Section 2.1) and Montenegrin trafficking victims (Section 2.2). Victims' needs are intimately informed by their specific trafficking experience. Understanding victim's backgrounds as well as the details of their recruitment, transportation and exploitation is an essential starting point in the development of appropriate assistance and services for victims. Because of the limited number of victims, it is difficult to assert the quantitative significance of statistics or distinguish patterns and trends. Instead, these profiles should be read as a summary of available data on victims trafficked to, through and from Montenegro. The information is presented in statistical formats for ease of presentation, with the essential caveat that these are not quantitatively significant findings.

### 2.1 Foreign Trafficking Victims Identified and Assisted in Montenegro

In what follows, we examine the trafficking of foreign nationals to or through Montenegro, including the number of assisted foreign victims, victim profiles and individual characteristics and trafficking experiences.

TABLE 2  
NUMBER OF FOREIGN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS ASSISTED IN MONTENEGRO, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign trafficking victims	14	5	9	4	10	42

The vast majority of identified and assisted foreign victims in Montenegro were foreign women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation. This included three cases of dual

<sup>408</sup> According to IOM Podgorica, to date 12 victims have declined assistance – two in 2001, two in 2002, three in 2003, and five in 2004. In 2004, it is important to note that the victims who refused assistance did so when offered this assistance by the police in the presence of one woman who worked in the bar and had a close relationship with the bar owner. IOM staff maintain that her presence was probably the reason the victims declined assistance.

<sup>409</sup> Interview, Mr. Lazar Jankovic, Head of the Department for Aliens, Ministry of Interior, Montenegro, May 2004.

exploitation in which victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation but also required to undertake labour tasks.

TABLE 3  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN MONTENEGRO, 2000 TO 2004

Form of Trafficking	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Sexual exploitation	14	5	9	4	3	35
Labour exploitation	0	0	0	0	4	4
Sexual and labour exploitation	0	0	0		3	3
Total	14	5	9	4	10	42

The only exception was four male victims trafficked for labour exploitation in August 2004. This represents the first such case in Montenegro.<sup>410</sup> In this instance, four Ukrainian men were recruited with promises of work in a construction firm in Montenegro. The men ranged in age from 24 to 53 and were either married (3) or divorced (1). All of the men were fathers. Their educational backgrounds ranged from middle school (3) to high school (1) and their economic status ranged from “average” (two victims) to “poor” (two victims). Two of the men accepted work to earn money to build a new house, while the third accepted work to pay for his wife’s medical expenses and the fourth to earn a good salary. Three were working at recruitment, while a fourth was not.

All four men paid EUR 300 to go to Montenegro for construction work and were promised a monthly salary of EUR 500. The work and travel was arranged by a tourist agency in Ukraine and they crossed at legal border crossings and travelled on legal documents. Upon arrival, the men were employed at a small, local construction company where they worked as labourers for two months. Their work and living conditions were exploitative – none were given work contracts, conditions were strenuous, they did not receive proper meals and they received only minimal payment. None suffered abuse during trafficking.

The four men were identified by Montenegrin law enforcement when the police received information from Ukrainian Interpol, which had been tracking the activities of the travel agency in Ukraine.<sup>411</sup> The employer/trafficker was arrested and she divulged the location of four, who were referred by law enforcement for assistance. Upon identification and for the duration of the trial, the men were sheltered and assisted by IOM Podgorica and the Montenegrin Women’s Lobby. Four people were charged in this case. During their testimony, the victims were threatened by the traffickers. The men have since been returned to Ukraine under escort. All were offered assistance from IOM Ukraine. None had been trafficked previously.

Of note is the recognition on the part of police that this case constituted trafficking, in spite of a common bias that trafficking is only of women for sexual exploitation. This is a significant and positive shift in law enforcement’s conceptualization of trafficking. The case also highlights the lack of services, particularly accommodation options, available for male victims of trafficking.

<sup>410</sup> Their profiles will not be analyzed together with victims of sexual exploitation so as not to conflate the issues related to these distinct forms of trafficking.

<sup>411</sup> The *modus operandi* of this agency was to bring labourers to Montenegro to work. After a few months, the employer would inform the employees that their visas had not been arranged and that if they went to the police they would be arrested. The employer then arranged their train travel back to Ukraine.

### 2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation

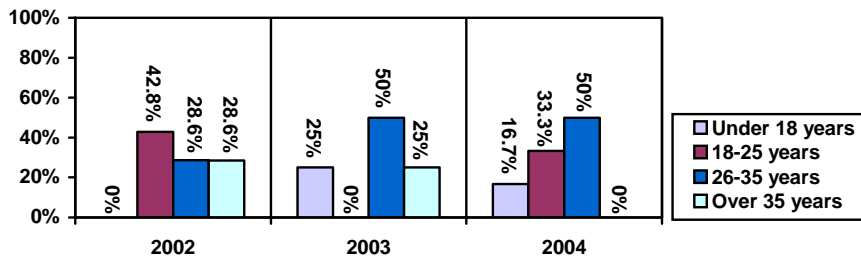
The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of foreign trafficking victims assisted in Montenegro. The majority were trafficked for sexual exploitation, however, in three cases in 2004, victims were simultaneously exploited for labour and sexual exploitation.

#### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics

**Sex:** All foreign victims trafficked for sexual exploitation in Montenegro were women.

**Age:** The age of foreign victims assisted and identified in Montenegro fluctuated quite substantially. Whereas no minors were represented in the 2002, this group accounted for 25 per cent and 16.7 per cent in 2003 and 2004. This is relatively consistent with observations in the region that the number of minors being trafficked is on the increase.<sup>412</sup> Where minors are identified and assisted special consideration must be given to their specific needs.

GRAPH 1  
AGE OF FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2002 AND 2004



In addition, the percentage of victims over the age of 25 fluctuated. The 50 per cent of victims in this category in 2004 marked an increase from 2002 when most victims were between 18 and 25 years of age and a decrease from 2003 when 75 per cent of victims were over 25. The high percentage of adult women over the age of 25 at identification is striking and, arguably, unique within the region and the reasons for it unclear.

**Country of Origin:** Given the limited number of assisted victims in Montenegro, it is difficult to discern any trends. Nevertheless, we can note some key nationalities and how these have shifted over time.

TABLE 4  
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN MONTENEGRO, 2000 TO 2004

Country/Entity of Origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Albania	0	0	0	0	1	1
Georgia	0	0	1	0	0	1
The Province of Kosovo <sup>413</sup>	0	0	0	1	0	1

<sup>412</sup> Because service providers do not systematically record the victim's age at recruitment, it is possible that some victims identified as adults were, in fact, minors at recruitment. As such, a higher percentage of minor victims may have been trafficked had age at recruitment been documented.

<sup>413</sup> While Kosovo is a province within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, it is separated out as a distinct entity in this report in an effort to analyze the specific trafficking context of the province. This should not be read as a political statement on the part of the RCP.

Lithuania	0	0	0	0	1	1
Macedonia	1	0	0	0	0	1
Moldova	7	1	2	0	0	10
Mongolia	0	0	0	2	0	2
Romania	3	2	3	0	0	8
Serbia <sup>414</sup>	3	1	3	0	2	9
Ukraine	0	1	0	1	2	4
Total	14	5	9	4	6	38

The majority of foreign victims assisted between 2000 and 2004 come from Moldova (26.3 per cent from 2000 to 2004). However, there have been no assisted Moldovan victims since 2002. Similarly, another prominent country of origin – Romania – has also not been represented in Montenegro since 2002. Bulgarians were entirely absent from those identified and assisted within Montenegro.

Rather, in 2003 and 2004, the nationalities most represented were Ukrainian and Serbian – each accounting for 33.3 per cent of victims. In 2003, two of the four assisted victims were from Mongolia, a nationality which was not identified before or since that date. And, in 2004, the first victim originating from Lithuania was identified and assisted.

Of note, the number of women identified from the Republic of Serbia has remained relatively constant since 2000, although no Serbian women victims were identified in 2003. Their presence is not surprising given the geographical proximity as well as the strong socio-political links between the two republics that form the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro.

**Ethnicity:** Information available on this subject is limited, as most service providers do not systematically record ethnicity as part of case management. The data available on this subject relates to foreign victims assisted in 2004, of whom none were ethnic minorities. In 2003, there was one ethnic minority, a Roma IDP from The Province of Kosovo.

**Area of origin:** Of the victims assisted in 2004, 80 per cent were from a rural environment, while 20 per cent came from an urban environment. Victims from rural areas were from Ukraine, Albania, Serbia and Lithuania. This is not surprising in the case of Albania, where 57.7 per cent of the population resides in rural areas (UNDP, 2002: 163). However, it is a noteworthy finding for countries like Ukraine and Lithuania where 67.9 per cent and 68.5 per cent of the population respectively live in urban areas (UNDP, 2002: 164). Attention to key source areas is essential for appropriate prevention efforts and can assist in reintegration in source countries.

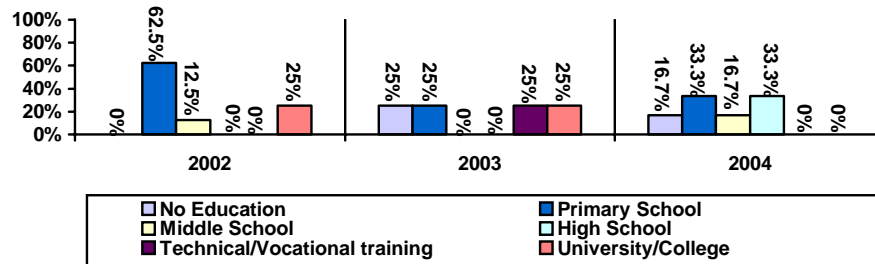
**Education:**<sup>415</sup> The overall trend is one of low education levels among foreign female victims of trafficking identified in Montenegro. This was the case throughout the reporting period.

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<sup>414</sup> While citizens of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro constitute one nationality, this report distinguishes between residents of the Republic of Serbia and Montenegro in an effort to provide a more detailed picture of trafficking patterns, trends and profiles within each republic. It should not be read in any way as a political comment.

<sup>415</sup> Primary school refers to the first eight years of schooling, while middle school refers to grades nine and ten, and high school refers to grades 11 and 12.

GRAPH 2  
EDUCATION LEVEL OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN MONTENEGRO, 2002 TO 2004



Data regarding victims' level of education in 2002 indicates that most of the women possessed a rather low level of education, with 62.5 per cent having only completed primary school and 12.5 per cent having completed middle school. Of note is the foreign victim assisted in 2003 from Mongolia who had completed university or college education.

In 2003, the data available was quite variable. Two of the victims had very limited education – primary school in the case of one Ukrainian victim and none in the case of one Kosovar victim. By contrast, the two victims from Mongolia had quite high education levels with one having attended university and the other having attended high school and subsequently technical training. Both women had also trained as masseuses.

In 2004, assisted victims continued to manifest relatively low education levels, with 66.7 per cent of victims having less than high school education. Indeed 16.7 per cent of victims received no education at all and none of the victims had more than a high school education, as had been in the case in 2002.

Diverse educational backgrounds highlight the need for prevention efforts at all levels of formal schooling as well as in informal venues and for early school leavers.

**Mental and physical disabilities:** In 2004, one victim – a Serbian minor – was mentally disabled at recruitment. This finding meshes with observations made by service providers in Serbia who documented victims with disabilities among assisted victims in 2004. Prior to 2004, one foreign victim assisted in Montenegro by the Women's Safe House was also mentally disabled. It is unclear if this can be deemed a site of vulnerability. If future cases are identified, there will be a need to consider how specific assistance needs can be met. Currently, service providers in Serbia are confronting this issue and their colleagues elsewhere may wish to draw on their experiences.

**Marital and family status:** With few exceptions, throughout the reporting period, victims were unmarried at recruitment.

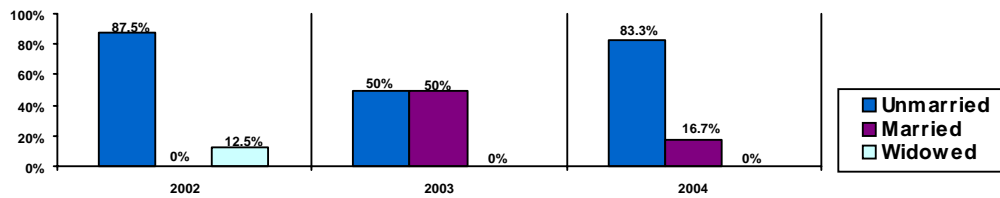
In 2003, all four victims were unmarried at recruitment. While two victims were married at identification they were, in fact, married to their traffickers, having been recruited with promises of marriage.

In 2004, the majority of victims (83.3 per cent) were unmarried while one victim (16.7 per cent) was married. This married victim was promised work by her recruiter but informed that the only way to legally work in Montenegro was to marry him. She



therefore divorced her husband and married her recruiter in Ukraine before her departure, although the marriage was false marriage to camouflage her migration.

GRAPH 3  
MARITAL STATUS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN MONTENEGRO, 2002 TO 2004

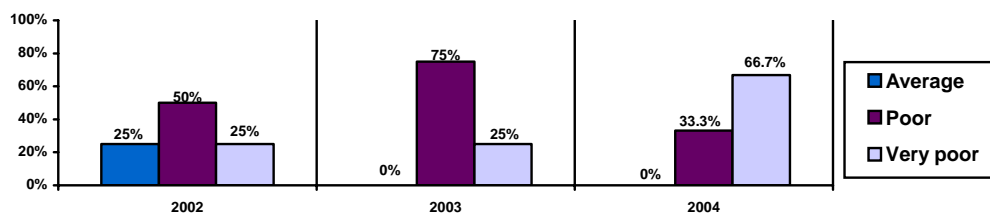


Of victims assisted in 2002, 37.5 per cent were single mothers (with one or two children each) when trafficked. In 2003, one victim (25 per cent) was a single parent with one dependent child. Of the six assisted victims in 2004, three were mothers with one child each and two of these three mothers were unmarried. Single parenthood may have been a factor in these victims’ decision to migrate and a possible site of vulnerability to be considered by counter-trafficking actors in their prevention work in countries of origin. This figure also flags the need for reintegration efforts that consider the specific socio-economic vulnerability of single mothers.

In addition to dependent children, many victims were also responsible for the care of other family members – parents, siblings and elderly relatives – at recruitment. This consideration has particular resonance in Montenegro where such a large share of assisted foreign victims were minors. The number of dependents, too, can serve as a push factor for trafficking. Systematically documenting a victim’s dependents would be valuable and could serve as another, at least partial, explanation of trafficking.

**Economic status:**<sup>416</sup> According to available data, the economic status of victims seems to have deteriorated since 2002, with fewer victims coming from “average” economic backgrounds. More victims in 2003 came from “poor” economic backgrounds than in 2002. As important, the majority of victims in 2004 were from “very poor” economic backgrounds. For these foreign victims, economics contributed to their decision to migrate. This is consistent with the general observation that poverty is an important contributor to trafficking in persons.

GRAPH 4  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN MONTENEGRO, 2002 TO 2004



Nevertheless, given the overall poor economic conditions in many sending countries, poverty *per se* may not be a sufficient explanation. After all, there are many “poor”

<sup>416</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim’s self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

families and individuals who are not trafficked. What distinguishes these from victims is worth investigating with the aim of identifying strategies and behaviours employed by persons with the same limited resources that guard against trafficking.

Further, as most migration requires at least some initial capital, more thought must be given to the relation between poverty, migration and trafficking. It may be the case that while trafficking victims are poor, they are not the poorest of the poor.

**Family and social relations:**<sup>417</sup> Poor family relations appear to be common among foreign victims trafficked to Montenegro.

In 2004, family relations varied but were generally quite poor. One victim reported that “problems at home” was one of the reasons that she had accepted work abroad; another had been raped in her childhood; a third had lost contact with her family after having a child out of wedlock and a fourth reported tense family relations and conflict within the home. Similarly, in 2003, one of the victims, an IDP from The Province of Kosovo, came from an unstable family environment, including having been raped by her brother.

Further, summary data from the Women’s Safe House in Montenegro for the period 2000 to January 2004 notes the complicated family backgrounds of victims assisted in Montenegro, including divorced parents, alcoholic parents, suicidal parent, domestic violence, and incest/rape. Of the foreign victims assisted by the Women’s Safe House between 2000 and January 2004, four victims (from Moldova and Croatia) had alcoholic parents, while two other victims (from Serbia) had been raped, one by her stepfather and the other by her uncle. Three other victims (from Ukraine, Belarus, and Romania) reported coming from homes where they had suffered domestic violence and one (from Romania) had been a victim of incest. In only a handful of cases, primarily victims from Moldova, Ukraine, and Belorussia, were family relations stable. (WSH, 2004: 5).

These findings are particularly significant as frequently victims in destination countries do not feel sufficiently comfortable after only a short time with service providers to openly discuss this topic.

Nevertheless, and as noted above, a number of victims – from Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus – came from stable family environments, showing that even individuals from such backgrounds are vulnerable to trafficking. More subtle family tensions may help to explain vulnerability to trafficking. These might include feelings of isolation, poor communication within the family, etc. Social relations more generally should also be considered. Vulnerable girls/women may manifest signals of social exclusion or other aspects of social disenfranchisement. Analyzing the extent to which family background is a factor in trafficking is important when considering how to mobilize prevention efforts.

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<sup>417</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims’ self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim’s individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim’s relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

## **Recruitment Experiences**

**Living situation at recruitment:** In 2002, 2003 and 2004, all foreign victims were living with their families when recruited.

The high rate of victims being recruited while residing with their families indicates that residence with family is not a resiliency factor in and of itself. Information campaigns must therefore target the family as a whole or parents specifically. Similarly, employment opportunities could also be targeted to families at risk in an effort to prevent trafficking. Further investigation of the specific dynamics within family environments that contribute to trafficking is needed, with particular attention to the specific strategies used by families whose members are not trafficked and their possible implications for broader prevention efforts.

More generally, the data presented is reflective only of the victim's living situation at recruitment. However, in many cases, individuals may have lived in another environment earlier in their lives, such as an institution, that may have contributed to their trafficking. More information is needed about victims' past and present living arrangements to accurately pinpoint trafficking risk.

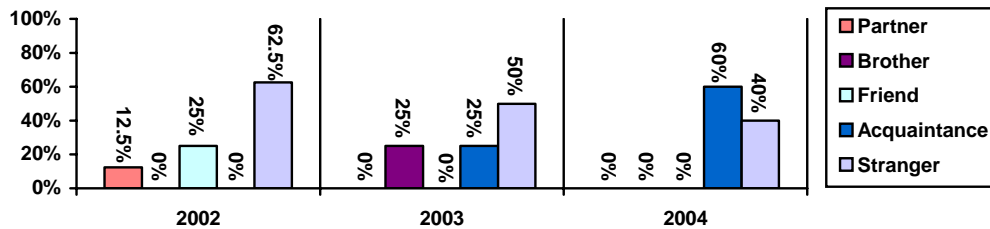
**Working situation at recruitment:** In the years for which there is data (there is none for 2003), most victims were working at recruitment. All foreign victims assisted in 2002 were working at recruitment (as domestic workers and public/private employees). In 2004, 50 per cent of victims were working at recruitment. Those employed worked in different sectors – as a prostitute (33.3 per cent), a waitress (33.3 per cent) and waitress/domestic work (33.3 per cent). Before 2004, no victim had worked as a prostitute at recruitment, suggesting that recruitment was beginning to occur within in the prostitution arena in countries of origin. This finding is of no relevance, however, in terms of an individual's status and right to be treated as a victim of trafficking, although it does highlight the need for prevention efforts that target this particular group.

That so many victims were employed at recruitment is noteworthy. Often working women cannot support themselves or their families, suggesting that the amount of money earned is a more salient factor than employment itself. Underemployment or dissatisfaction with the type of work may also be issues.

**Recruiter:** Contrary to trends noted in other countries of the region, recruiters for victims assisted in Montenegro were primarily men – 87.5 per cent in 2002, 75 per cent in 2003, and 83.3 per cent in 2004.

The victim's relationship to the victim changed over time, with more victims in 2002 recruited by strangers than in 2003 and 2004. While two of the victims were recruited by Serbian strangers, they did subsequently marry them as a means to enter the country.

GRAPH 5  
RELATIONSHIP TO RECRUITER OF FOREIGN VICTIMS  
ASSISTED IN MONTENEGRO, 2002 TO 2004



Of the victims recruited by someone known to them, the precise relationships varied over time. In 2002 and 2003, these relationships were very close – a friend, partner and brother. By contrast, in 2004, 60 per cent recruited by an acquaintance.

**Reasons for leaving home country and type of work promised:** Victims assisted in Montenegro left their home countries primarily to seek employment abroad. In 2004, this was the case for 83.3 per cent of foreign victims.

Work promised in 2004 was primarily in the service sector – with victims offered work as waitresses, domestic workers and in a hotel. Of note is that the one victim working in prostitution at recruitment was not offered this type of work.

TABLE 5  
TYPE OF WORK PROMISED TO FOREIGN VICTIMS  
ASSISTED IN MONTENEGRO, 2004

Type of work promised	2004
Waitress and domestic work	2
Marriage	1
Hotel	1
Unknown	2
Total	6

In a handful of cases, victims were recruited with promises of marriage. While there is not full data on this subject for victims assisted in 2003, at least two victims were recruited with promises of marriage and did, in fact, marry these men. However, they were subsequently trafficked by their “husbands” for sexual exploitation. In 2004, one victim (16.7 per cent) was also promised marriage at recruitment. Marriage as a means of recruitment has been noted in other countries in the regions, most prominently in Albania.

In addition to being promised work, one victim cited problems at home as a further contributor to migration abroad. Given that all foreign victims assisted in 2004 reported poor family relations, it appears that family tension also served as a push factor. At the very least, poor family relations mean that victims lack the family support that might guard against trafficking. It is important to note that poor family relations also pose obstacles to a victim’s return and sustainable reintegration.

### Transportation and Movement

**Border crossings and documents:** The use of false documents among foreign victims in Montenegro declined over time. In 2003, all victims reported travelling on false

documents while trafficked. Victims using false documents were from Mongolia and Ukraine.

In 2004, the number of victims travelling on false documents declined to 60 per cent. Victims using false documents were from Ukraine, Lithuania and Albania, whereas victims using legal documents were from Ukraine and Serbia.

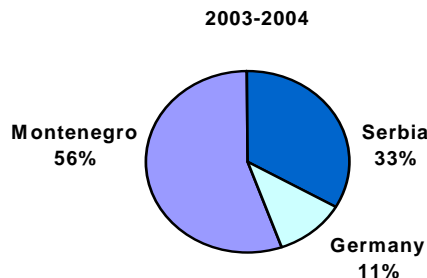
In 2004, 66.7 per cent of victims crossed at legal border crossings, whereas 33.3 per cent of victims (from Albania and Serbia) did not. There is insufficient data on this subject for 2003 and 2002.

The increased legality of transportation – at legal border crossings and using legal documents – is consistent with trends in the region. Legal transportation and documents hinder identification by border officials. In situations where the exploitation has yet to happen, it is very difficult for border officials to effectively warn victims and prevent trafficking. Further, victims themselves may also be deceived by the façade of legal travel and unaware of trafficking until exploitation at the destination.

**Transportation routes:** Until 2002, most foreign victims came from Moldova, Romania, and Serbia and were usually transported by road into Montenegro. According to IOM statistics, most of the victims entered Montenegro *via* Serbia and Romania. In 2003 and 2004, victims came from Ukraine (travelling overland through Romania and Serbia), from Serbia (travelling overland into Montenegro) and from Albania (travelling *via* Lake Skoder).

**Intended destination:** The majority of victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 were aware that they would work and/or live in Montenegro. This indicates that Montenegro is a country of destination for foreign victims at least to some degree. Interventions must be context specific and, in this vein, it is critical that counter-trafficking interventions in Montenegro take into account its role as both destination and transit country.

GRAPH 6  
INTENDED DESTINATION OF FOREIGN VICTIMS  
ASSISTED IN MONTENEGRO, 2003 AND 2004



### Victim's Trafficking Experiences

**Forms of trafficking:** Foreign female victims of trafficking in Montenegro were primarily trafficked for sexual exploitation. In 2003, all foreign women were trafficked for sexual exploitation. However, in 2004, three of six victims were trafficked solely

for sexual exploitation, with the remaining three cases suffering both labour and sexual exploitation.

In instances of sexual exploitation, victims worked in bars and nightclubs where they were forced to provide sexual services to clients. However, in 2004, one of the victims experienced a different form of sexual exploitation. She was forcibly kept for the “personal use”/sexual exploitation of three men, residing with and required to be sexually available to them.

In the three cases of sexual and labour exploitation, two involved victims forced to work simultaneously as waitresses and prostitutes. In the third, the two forms of exploitation occurred over time. The victim was trafficked initially to Germany, where she was forced to provide sexual services and then subsequently trafficked to Montenegro, where she was obliged to undertake domestic service, including caring for her trafficker’s four children.

There have also been other instances of dual forms of exploitation among victims assisted in Montenegro. Of the 58 victims of sex trafficking assisted by the Women’s Safe House in Montenegro between 2000 and 2004, 15 (seven of whom were minors) reported being forced to transfer drugs, munitions and weapons across the border, (WSH, 2004: 6). Where women (and men) are arrested for smuggling arms and drugs from, to or through Montenegro, some consideration should be given to the possibility that these persons are trafficking victims.<sup>418</sup> Further, where victims have been forced to undertake criminal activities but not arrested, they may be less inclined to access or accept assistance, feeling criminally complicit in trafficking and fearful of prosecution. Nine victims assisted in Montenegro between 2000 and 2004 were forced to steal as well as provide sexual services (WSH, 2004: 6). Trafficking for sexual exploitation and delinquency has been observed in other countries including Bulgaria, Moldova and Albania. This is an area to be considered in future research and assistance in Montenegro.

The documentation of dual forms of exploitation is essential in the development of appropriate programmes and assistance. Victims trafficked for labour but who have also been sexually exploited will require many of the same forms of assistance as victims trafficked for prostitution. Victims exploited for criminal activities may require legal assistance to avoid prosecution in some countries. Attention to the precise forms of exploitation is a valuable starting point in both the development and assessment of assistance frameworks. Ideally, dual forms of exploitation should be systematically documented in case management.

**Length of time trafficked:** Service providers report that the length of time foreign victims were trafficked within Montenegro varied from a few months to six years. Further, the length of time trafficked was very individual and did not depend on the victim’s nationality. Moldovans assisted by the Women’s Safe House between 2000 and January 2004 were trafficked for periods that varied from seven months to four years. Similarly, Serbian victims were trafficked for periods ranging from three months to six years.

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<sup>418</sup> In some environments, persons trafficking drugs are themselves in a trafficking situation. Where this is the case, special assistance is required, particularly legal assistance. See Rosenberg, 2003: 114 -155 for a discussion of the possible intersection between trafficking in persons and drugs trafficking.

In 2003, victims were trafficked for substantial periods. With the exception of the Kosovar Roma victim who was trafficked for six months, all other victims were trafficked for substantial periods, five years in the cases of the two Mongolian victims and six years in the case of the Ukrainian victim.

In 2004, the longest period trafficked was that of the Lithuanian victim who had been trafficked for six years, followed closely by one of the Ukrainian victims who had been trafficked for five years. Other victims were trafficked for a period between one and a half months and a year.

The length of time that victims are trafficked is linked to two important issues. The first is the effect of this long-term exploitation on the victim's mental health and physical well-being. More specifically in terms of the victim's psychological state, it is important to consider the dependency created when victims are held for long periods. The significant toll such long-term violence takes on a victim's health must also be considered in the formulation of services, including the amount of time required to stabilize the victim. Long periods spent trafficked may also affect victims in other ways. Separation from family and friends, being forced to live outside of their family environment and being under extreme stress can impede victims' recovery and reintegration.

The second issue concerns the identification of victims by law enforcement. Victims were working and living in public locations, such as bars, nightclubs and restaurants, for months and even years without being identified by authorities, raising questions about the seriousness and efficacy of law enforcement's efforts within Montenegro. Time spent trafficked depends on a number of factors, among which the identification skills and priorities of law enforcement at the destination and the accessibility of services and assistance are crucial. If victims are trafficked for shorter times, it may be due to amplified and improved identification efforts. Further analysis of this indicator, cross-correlated with details of the identification process, would be valuable toward an appreciation of improvements in this area and potentially serve as a means to assess law enforcement's identification efforts as well as the efficacy of outreach measures by social services and civil society.

**Living and working conditions:** In 2004, the working and living conditions of victims were generally poor. In one bar, the living conditions were poor; the victims had very few material possessions and their freedom of movement was strictly monitored. Other victims reported poor living and working conditions, including, being locked in rooms.

Between 2000 and 2004, victims assisted by the Women's Safe House had only limited freedom of movement, with 60 per cent of victims locked in apartments near the nightclub where they worked. Five per cent of victims reported being totally isolated from other victims.

Also significant was the use of coercion and control in the day-to-day lives of victims. In Montenegro, foreign victims reported that, in addition to their recruiters and employers, there were also persons who monitored them in their everyday work. "Controllers" were generally women responsible for keeping victims locked in rooms, controlling them and ensuring their submission, which was done by scaring the women with threats of violence and abuse if they tried to escape or did not obey instructions.

Similarly, a seemingly new tactic involved one woman in the bar who was close to the owner and who served as a “watch-dog”. In one instance in Montenegro, victims were rescued by police and offered assistance. However, the presence of this individual when the assistance was offered led all of them to decline it out of fear of reprisal from the trafficker. This tactic has also been noted in The Province of Kosovo.

It is also important to consider whether victims received any payment. In other countries of the region, victims were given a nominal salary as a means of dissuading them from escape. It is unclear if a similar strategy has been used in Montenegro.

**Abuse:** Abuse was universal among foreign victims trafficked for sexual exploitation in Montenegro. In 2002, 2003 and 2004, 100 per cent of assisted victims suffered abuse while trafficked experience.

In 2003 and 2004, victims suffered a full range of abuse – physical, emotional and sexual. The two Mongolian victims assisted in 2003 exhibited multiple scars on their bodies, in addition to having suffered extensive sexual and mental abuse. One Lithuanian victim endured a beating so severe at the hands of her trafficker/employer that she required hospitalization and reconstructive surgery of her face. When she was first identified, she had a broken nose, bruises all over her body and boot prints on her neck. Another victim from Ukraine was beaten so badly as a result of her attempts to escape that she has been in a coma for months.

Similarly, between 2000 and 2004, the Women’s Safe House (WSH, 2004: 6) reported extreme violence suffered by assisted victims:

- 65 per cent of victims were raped by their pimp, 70 per cent were beaten by their pimp and 19 per cent were wounded by their pimp;
- 75 per cent of victims were raped by customers, 79 per cent beaten by customers and 17 per cent wounded by customers;
- 95 per cent of victims were victims of physical violence and 28 per cent of victims suffered physical damages as a result of violence; and
- 98 per cent of victims were forced to have sexual intercourse without condoms.

Further, the Women’s Safe House reported that victims were exposed to additional abuse when photographed in humiliating positions (89 per cent), had their photos shown on Internet websites (one per cent) and filmed during group sex (five per cent).

**Mental and physical well-being:** Understanding the victim’s physical and mental well-being at identification is critical in the development of victim services in all countries of destination and transit. At identification, victims were suffering from both physical and mental problems that compromised their health and well-being.

- *STIs:* Most victims were infected with STIs at identification. Sexual health was seriously compromised in many cases.
- *Drug and alcohol dependency:* 80 per cent of victims were forced to use drugs and/or alcohol, with the result that many were addicted to one or both substances at assistance.
- *Pregnancy:* In 2002, two victims were pregnant at identification, although they both subsequently chose to have an abortion. While pregnancy has not been an



issue among foreign victims since 2002, the number of victims in Montenegro is too small to support substantive conclusions. However, rates have been notable in neighbouring countries and among national victims and it can safely be presumed an issue of ongoing concern.

- *Psychological well-being:* Victims were psychologically traumatized at identification. One victim, who was pregnant, was hospitalized due to stress and high blood pressure. Another victim was highly traumatized and mentally unstable when identified. Further, 14 per cent of victims attempted suicide. Finally, it is critical to note that the length of time that victims were trafficked – an issue explored above – also significantly affected their physical and mental well-being, often complicated by issues of psychological dependency.
- *General health:* Given the long periods spent trafficked, generally without medical care, it is not surprising that so many victims were in poor health at identification.

There is a lack of information about the long-term health implications of trafficking. Also under-considered is the impact of trafficking on public health generally, including the health costs of trafficking. All research, case monitoring and follow-up, however, must be conducted in a way that does not lead to greater stigmatization of trafficking victims, and with respect for the privacy rights and autonomy of victims.

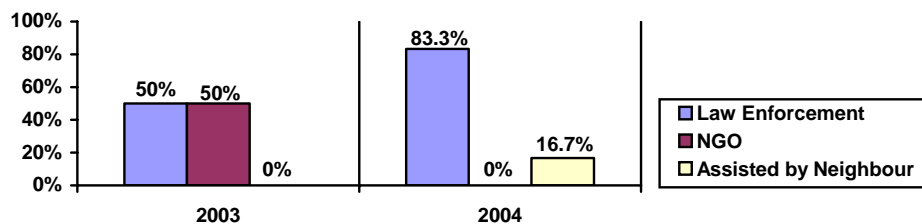
### Post Trafficking Experience

**Victim identification and referral:** Most victims were identified through police investigations and by law enforcement. However sometimes this involved the victim contacting the police herself. A number of victims were identified by service providers and other actors.

In 2003, 50 per cent of the victims were identified by law enforcement, while the remaining 50 per cent were identified by NGO staff.

In 2004, all but one victim was identified and referred for assistance by law enforcement. The other victim approached her neighbour, who worked for an international organization and who facilitated her assistance.

GRAPH 7  
IDENTIFICATION OF FOREIGN VICTIMS ASSISTED IN MONTENEGRO, 2003 AND 2004



**Re-trafficking:** Of the handful of victims assisted in 2004, one victim from Serbia (or 16.7 per cent) had been trafficked previously. In 2003, one of the four assisted foreign victims (25 per cent) had been trafficked previously.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to know the exact rate of re-trafficking. Case monitoring by service providers in countries of origin lasts, at most, 12 months and, in general, is not comprehensive. Further, data regarding re-trafficking rates is based solely on statements made by trafficked victims who may choose not to reveal that they have been trafficked before if they feel it might diminish possibilities for assistance. To obtain more reliable re-trafficking rates, assistance providers must increase the length and scope of the monitoring component within reintegration programmes.

Overall, it is reasonable to assert that re-trafficking is a common phenomenon in source countries. Many victims reported attempting to migrate again shortly after their return because of the need to earn money, lack of opportunity, problems in their home and/or dissatisfaction with the material conditions at home, which are often poorer than those faced while trafficked. Another contributor to re-trafficking may be the difficulties faced in the reintegration process, including stigma and shame associated with sexual exploitation. Debt incurred because of trafficking can also be a catalyst to re-trafficking. Moreover, social environments where bonded labour is both acceptable and common are also conducive to trafficking strategies involving debt creation and make re-trafficking where debts have been incurred even more likely.

**Assistance declined:** In 2004, five foreign victims (all from Serbia), identified in the course of a raid, declined assistance offered by police. However, it is important to note that the context in which they declined assistance. After being identified along with two Montenegrin victims, the police offered assistance to these victims, escorting two of them to one of the shelters to view the lodging available. However, one of the two victims was very close to the employer/trafficker and she dissuaded the other victims from accepting assistance. The case illustrates one of the means by which victims of trafficking are controlled even after identification and release.

In 2003, three victims were assisted initially and subsequently declined assistance. In 2001 and 2002, two victims in each year declined assistance.

## 2.2 Montenegrin Trafficking Victims

In what follows, we examine trafficking of Montenegrin nationals, including the number assisted to date as well as their individual profiles and trafficking experiences.

TABLE 6  
NUMBER OF ASSISTED MONTENEGRIN VICTIMS, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Trafficked victim	0	0	2	3	5	10

It is worth noting that while the number of Montenegrin trafficking victims is low, there has been an increase in the past year. Indeed, the number of victims almost doubled from 2003 to 2004. In the current context, Montenegrin nationals are at risk of becoming trafficking victims both locally and abroad. Of the trafficking victims assisted in 2004, two were trafficked within Montenegro, while three were trafficked abroad to Macedonia. Similarly, in 2003, victims were trafficked both abroad (to BiH) and internally.

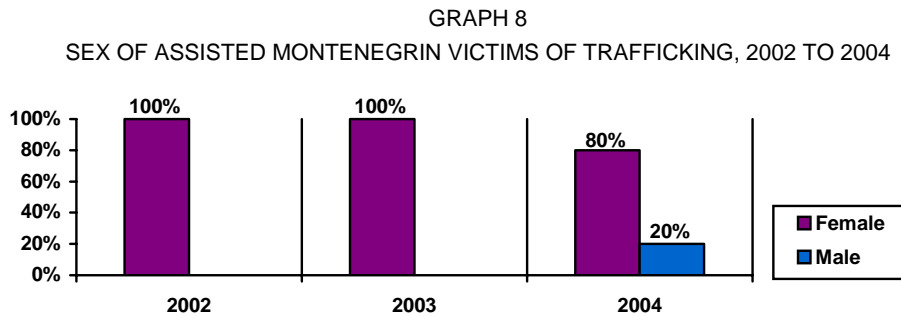
As will be discussed in greater detail in the following section, Montenegrin trafficking victims have been trafficked for different purposes. See *Forms of Trafficking* in the section (below).

### 2.2.1 Profiles and Experiences of Montenegrin Trafficking Victims

Given the limited number of assisted Montenegrin nationals, the following section should be read as a composite sketch of trafficking in Montenegrin nationals and as a starting point toward understanding who is vulnerable to trafficking. While the information is presented in statistical formats, it has to be stressed that the information is qualitative and without statistical significance.

#### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics

**Sex:** With only one exception in 2004, all Montenegrin victims trafficked internally or abroad were female. These female victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation, labour and begging. The one male victim was intended for begging.



**Age:** The age of Montenegrin victims at identification varied over the reporting period, as outline in the table below.

TABLE 7  
AGE OF MONTENEGRIN NATIONAL VICTIMS AT TIME OF IDENTIFICATION, 2002 TO 2004

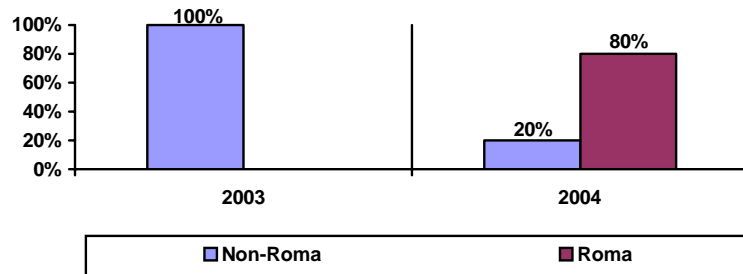
Age of Victim at Identification	2002	2003	2004	Total
Less than 18 years	2	1	4	7
18 to 25 years	0	2	1	3
26 to 35 years	0	0	0	0
+35 years	0	0	0	0
Total	2	3	5	10

Most victims were minors at identification – 100 per cent in 2002, 33 per cent in 2003 and 80 per cent in 2004. Social care actors stress the acute vulnerability of minors not only to being trafficked but also in terms of the effect of trafficking on the development of personality. Psychologists argue that such serious trauma in the developmental stages of life informs the individual’s perceptions in all areas of human relationships, including family relations as well as in intimate relationships with partners and spouses, dampening the prospects for recovery and reintegration.

The remaining national victims, while not minors, were, nevertheless, quite young. In 2004, the remaining one victim (20 per cent) was 19 years of age. And in 2003, the remaining 66.7 per cent were also between 18 and 25 years.

**Ethnicity:** In Montenegro, the number of Roma trafficking victims identified and assisted increased in 2004. Whereas in 2003, none of the victims were Roma, in 2004, the majority of victims were. All three Montenegrin minors trafficked to Macedonia in 2004 were Roma, albeit from the same family and trafficked together. Of the two Montenegrin victims trafficked internally in 2004, one was Roma.

GRAPH 9  
ETHNIC MINORITIES AMONG MONTENEGRIN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004



Since only an estimated four per cent of the population in Serbia and Montenegro are Roma (World Bank, 2001), this represents a very disproportionate share of assisted victims and suggests that Roma are particularly vulnerable to trafficking in persons.

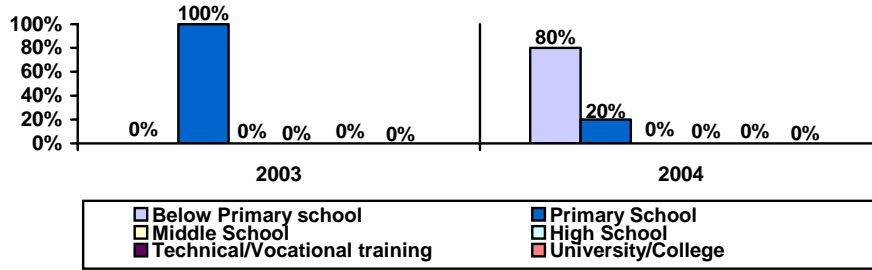
The particular vulnerability to trafficking of ethnic minorities, like Roma, may partly be a function of the broader social and economic vulnerability of such groups. Cultural practices such as early arranged marriages may further exacerbate their vulnerability. The very high representation of Roma among Montenegrin trafficking victims calls for special attention to the specific vulnerability of Roma and ethnic minorities. This issues merits attention both in terms of prevention efforts as well as towards tailoring programmes to address their specific assistance needs.

More cooperation is needed between counter-trafficking actors and organizations already working with ethnic minorities. Further, differences among and within ethnic minority groups must be noted to ensure interventions are appropriate and effective.

**Area of origin:** While there is not full data on this topic, it appears that national victims originated from both rural and urban areas in 2003 and 2004. While some victims originated from the area around Podgorica, others were from the northern part of the country. As no one geographic area in the country is the sole source of victims, thought must be given to broadening the existing geographical distribution of services geared toward sustainable reintegration.

**Education:** The educational attainment of Montenegrin victims was very low, with the majority having only primary school education and often less than primary school education.

GRAPH 10  
EDUCATION LEVEL OF MONTENEGRIN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004



Of course, this low educational attainment has much to do with the young age of the victims and reflects to some degree the limited negotiation skills of victims in the context of migration and/or work. It also highlights the need for prevention programmes through both formal and informal education structures as well as the importance of educational reinsertion programmes as a part of all reintegration efforts.

In addition, there is a link between the education level of victims and ethnicity in 2004. In that year, three of the five victims were Roma. It is widely acknowledged that Roma do not have the same educational and developmental opportunities in Montenegro due to discrimination and marginalization, which is reflected in their generally lower education levels.

**Marital and family status:** All Montenegrin victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 were unmarried at identification. This is consistent with the young age of the victims, many of whom were minors and others who were young adults.

Despite their unmarried status, mothers were, nevertheless, represented among national victims. In 2004, one victim was pregnant at identification and due to give birth in December, while, in 2003, two victims were mothers at identification – one having been a mother at recruitment, while the other became a mother while trafficked. Since two of these three victims became mothers after having been recruited into trafficking for sexual exploitation their single parenthood has no apparent link to their vulnerability to recruitment. Nevertheless, it has significant implications for the sorts of assistance and reintegration programmes they require. Issues to consider include housing options for mothers with babies, training in parenting skills, family counselling to support the return to the family, etc. One of the eight victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 was a single mother when recruited. The socio-economic vulnerability of single mothers in the context of recruitment also merits consideration.

**Economic status:**<sup>419</sup> The economic status of Montenegrin trafficking victims is generally quite poor, with victims describing themselves as coming from either “poor” or “very poor” families. In 2003, all of the victims were “poor”, while, in 2004, victims were both “poor” and “very poor”. Of significance, no national victims assisted between 2002 and 2004 reported coming from “average” economic backgrounds. This

<sup>419</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim’s self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

is reinforced by the Women's Safe House, which reported that victims assisted between 2000 and 2004 were living in extreme poverty (WSH, 2004: 5).

**Family and social relations:**<sup>420</sup> Victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 reported problematic family relations, which probably contributed to their recruitment/trafficking. In 2004, all victims had some family problems. One victim came from a broken home and both she and her sister had been thrown out of their house by their mother while still minors. She was living on the street when recruited. Further, three of the five victims assisted in 2004 were siblings and had been trafficked by their mother and a relative.

Not only do family relations (partially) explain trafficking in some cases, information about family relations is crucial in the development of reintegration plans. In situations of poor family relations, a family and security assessment is necessary along with family mediation and counselling. In some cases of very problematic family relations, alternatives to reintegration are necessary.

### **Recruitment Experiences**

**Living and working situation at recruitment:** At recruitment, all victims in 2003 and the majority of victims in 2004 (80 per cent) lived with their families. Further, in 2004, recruitment of three of five victims (60 per cent) was undertaken by family members. The remaining 20 per cent of victims assisted in 2004 were living on the street at of recruitment. This is a unique finding in Montenegro, not noted in the Republic prior to 2004, and suggests that persons living and working on the street may be important to target in prevention efforts.

Available data indicates limited employment of Montenegrin victims at recruitment. In 2004, one victim worked on the street cleaning car windows, while the others were not working at recruitment. In 2003, victims were unemployed at recruitment and, in 2002, one of two assisted victims was unemployed while the other worked as a waitress.

The high rate of unemployment as well as the prevalence of less than ideal "employment" (i.e. street work) is important. Unemployment or underemployment are key reasons victims are susceptible to trafficking in many contexts, and this seems particularly the case among national victims in Montenegro. Because all assisted victims in 2002, 2003 and 2004 had low education levels, it is not surprising that they were unemployed, apart from street work. These limited options must have made well-paid work abroad enticing.

**Recruiter:** There is no clear pattern in terms of recruiters of national victims. Rather, recruitment patterns varied from year to year, with parents, acquaintances, boyfriends and friends all complicit in recruitment. However, while relationships varied, recruiters of national victims were generally men.

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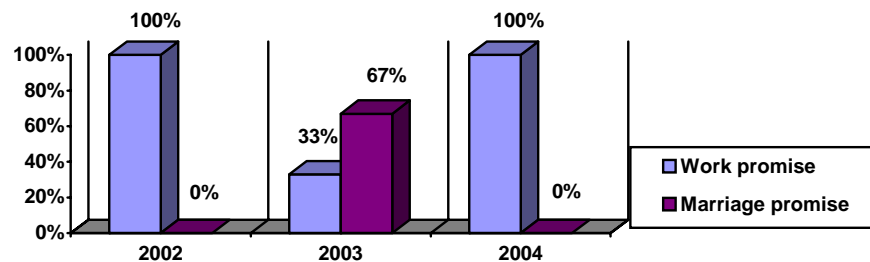
<sup>420</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims' self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim's individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim's relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

In 2002, both victims were recruited by male acquaintances. In 2003, two victims were recruited by their boyfriends, having been promised marriage, and the third victim was recruited by a male friend. In 2004, one victim was recruited by a male acquaintance, another by a male stranger and three (all siblings) were recruited by their mother and a male relative. In the latter case, both victims and recruiters were Roma, while the others were not.

In terms of recruiter's nationality, most were Montenegrin, although, in 2004, one of the recruiters was from Serbia.

**Reasons for leaving home and type of work promised:** Between 2002 and 2004, victims left home either for work (in eight cases) or marriage (in two cases).

GRAPH 11  
REASON FOR LEAVING HOME AMONG ASSISTED MONTENEGRIN VICTIMS, 2002 TO 2004



The most common type of work offered to Montenegrin nationals was in restaurants and bars, generally as waitresses.

In 2003, two of the three victims were promised marriage as a means of recruitment. This is the first time that this means of recruitment was noted among Montenegrin victims. It is, however, consistent with findings in Albania in which a number of national victims were recruited in this way.

### Transportation and Movement

**Border crossings and documents:** Most Montenegrin victims used illegal border crossings. In 2004, the three victims trafficked abroad were smuggled into Macedonia. In 2003, the one victim trafficked abroad did not cross at legal border crossings, but carried legal documents. In 2002, the victims trafficked to Albania crossed illegally and with no documents.

Often the illegality of movement in the case of minors is due to the young age of victims. That is, minors cannot cross borders without parental consent. However, in 2004, three of the victims were trafficked by their mother and a relative; since these victims were Roma they may have lacked legal documents and official registration in their country of origin.<sup>421</sup>

<sup>421</sup> Many Roma in Serbia and Montenegro are not legally registered and lack documents that allow them to cross borders legally as well as access state assistance.

**Transportation routes:** For victims trafficked to Albania, the route is *via* Lake Skroder, while victims trafficked to Italy generally travelled by boat from the Montenegrin coast. In terms of internal trafficking, transport was generally overland – car or bus – and destinations included the coast, (particularly in the summer), Podgorica and towns in the northeast such as Rozaje.

**Destination:** Destinations for Montenegrin victims varied each year, although in each year victims were trafficked internally as well as abroad. Below is a table of the countries where Montenegrin victims were identified by counter-trafficking actors.

TABLE 8  
COUNTRIES WHERE MONTENEGRIN VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING WERE IDENTIFIED, 2000 TO 2004

Destination	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Albania	0	0	1	0	0	1
BiH	0	0	0	1	0	1
Macedonia	0	0	0	0	3	3
Montenegro <sup>422</sup>	0	0	1	2	2	5
Total	0	0	2	3	5	10

There is often a difference between the destination country promised at recruitment and the actual destination. In 2002, one victim was promised work in Montenegro but was trafficked to Albania, while the other was promised work in Italy but was trafficked within Montenegro.

Victims trafficked within Montenegro were often trafficked to Podgorica as well as to the coast during the summer season. Other destinations included Ulcinj, near the Albanian border, and Rozaje, near the Serbian border.

### Victims' Trafficking Experiences

**Forms of trafficking:** As outlined in the table below, Montenegrin victims of trafficking have been exploited for different purposes. Of the ten Montenegrin victims identified and assisted between 2002 and 2004, 50 per cent were trafficked for sexual exploitation. Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were exploited primarily in bars and nightclubs to provide sexual services to clients. In some circumstances – one case in 2004 – victims of sexual exploitation were also required to undertake labour tasks, such as waitressing or cleaning in the establishment.

TABLE 9  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG ASSISTED MONTENEGRIN NATIONALS, 2002 TO 2004

Form of Trafficking	2002	2003	2004
Sexual exploitation	2	2	1
Sexual and labour exploitation	0	0	1
Labour exploitation	0	1	0
Potential victims <sup>423</sup>	0	0	3
Total	2	3	5

<sup>422</sup> This designates cases of internal trafficking. In some cases, victims were trafficked only internally, while in other instances victims were trafficked internally as a first step in international trafficking.

<sup>423</sup> This designation is used when the individual was assisted for an insufficient time to clearly establish his/her trafficking experience or when the individual was identified and assisted before being exploited but showed strong signs of being in the trafficking process.



In three cases, victims were designated as “potential victims” because they were identified while *en route* to Italy. Every indication was that these victims were to be trafficked for begging and/or delinquency, a form of trafficking not previously documented among Montenegrin victims. These victims were sent abroad by their mother and told they would beg on the streets.

Finally, it is worth noting that one victim of sexual exploitation assisted in 2003 had a baby while trafficked and her trafficker threatened to sell the baby for adoption in Italy. As she escaped before this plan could be realized, we cannot speak of this form of trafficking in Montenegro. It should, however, be flagged as an area of risk to be considered by counter-trafficking actors.

**Length of time trafficked:** There is wide variation in the length of time trafficked for Montenegrin victims. In 2004, three victims were identified immediately upon arrival in Macedonia, having been trafficked for only a few days. In another instance, in 2004, the victim was trafficked for two months. However, some victims were trafficked for longer periods, as in the case of two internally trafficked victims, held for two years (WSH, 2004: 4).

**Living and working conditions and abuse suffered:** According to service providers, the working and living conditions of national victims was “poor” and “very poor” in all cases, with some victims being treated very badly. For example, the Women’s Safe House reported that some victims trafficked within Montenegro were locked in rooms and even tied to radiators to prevent escape.

National victims reported extensive abuse. Most victims assisted in 2002, 2003 and 2004 were abused (sexually and physically) by both recruiters and employers. In addition, victims reported having been threatened with arrest and deportation by traffickers. This is consistent with data about foreign victims who reported extensive abuse while trafficked in Montenegro. Special attention must be paid to the psychological as well as physical needs of victims who have been abused.

**Mental and physical well-being:** The physical and mental well-being of national victims was severely compromised due to trafficking.

- *Sexual and reproductive health:* Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation suffered from STIs and poor reproductive health.
- *General health:* One of the five victims assisted in 2004 was hospitalized shortly after being released by her traffickers due to severe stress and high blood pressure. This victim – pregnant at identification – had a number of health problems. Trafficking of three of the five victims assisted in 2004 was very brief, lessening the impact.
- *Pregnancy:* Also important is that four victims fell pregnant while they were trafficked – one in 2004, one in 2003 and two in 2002.<sup>424</sup> In the case of the victim assisted in 2003, the man who was exploiting her had the intention of selling her baby once it was born. The identification of pregnant victims in 2004 – one of the five victims assisted or 20 per cent – also raises the need to

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<sup>424</sup> The two victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 gave birth to their babies while the two victims assisted by the Women’s Safe House chose to have abortions.

consider services specifically for pregnant women, such as medical assistance (i.e. pre and post-natal medical care), psychological counselling, longer-term shelter and housing options and family counselling in the context of re-integration. Access to abortion for trafficking victims is facilitated by some service providers, although not the majority, despite abortion being legal in Montenegro. Assistance frameworks must consider the particularly vulnerable position of pregnant women in terms of both their physical and mental well-being.

- *Psychological well-being*: In 2003, one of three assisted victims was so severely traumatized at the time of her escape that she tried to commit suicide by jumping off a bridge. The intervention of a fellow citizen prevented her death and she was assisted and returned home. For severely traumatized victims, access comprehensive psychological and perhaps even psychiatric assistance is needed.

### **Post Trafficking Experience**

**Victim identification and referral:** The identification and referral process for national victims is the same as for that of foreign victims. As with foreign victims, most national victims trafficked for sexual exploitation within Montenegro were also identified and referred by law enforcement authorities. In at least one case, however, a victim was identified by law enforcement after being referred there by a fellow citizen. As such, there are other entry points for assistance in the case of Montenegrin nationals.

**Re-trafficking:** None of the national victims assisted between 2002 and 2004 report having been trafficked in the past. Nevertheless, re-trafficking poses serious risks in Montenegro where reintegration options are underdeveloped and where it is not difficult for traffickers to track and threaten victims. For further discussion of re-trafficking, please see: *Re-trafficking in Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked to Montenegro from Sexual Exploitation*.

**Assistance declined:** Some Montenegrin victims have declined assistance. In 2004, two Montenegrin women declined assistance, although one victim later did accept. In 2003, one national victim refused assistance and, in 2002, two national victims refused assistance after staying at the shelter for only a day.

According to service providers, many national victims of trafficking are disinclined to accept assistance because Montenegro is a very small country so that people will know about their participation in the programme. Stigmatization of the victim in the community is therefore a large obstacle in the way of providing assistance. Even in cases where victims might be inclined to accept assistance, service providers report that often the families will remove the victims from their care to avoid stigmatization. As one service provider observed, “They don’t want the women to be assisted. If they are in the shelter, then everyone will know what happened. And the families are ashamed.” On the other hand, in Croatia, a number of trafficking victims initially declined assistance but then later sought out service providers for different types of support and assistance. This may also occur in Montenegro and service providers should try to maintain contact with victims in the event that they require assistance at a later stage. Ideally this follow-up should be undertaken by state social workers, who should provide contact information for assisting agencies.

More generally, reducing trafficking related stigma should be an objective of trafficking awareness efforts.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN MONTENEGRO

In this section, we analyze the identification and referral mechanism in Montenegro (Section 3.1) as well as the assistance and protection available to foreign and national victims of trafficking (Section 3.2).

#### 3.1 Victim Identification and Referral in Montenegro

In Montenegro, there is no centralized mechanism for the screening, identification, and referral of trafficking victims. Rather, victims are identified through *ad hoc* efforts and referred to service providers for requisite assistance. Foreign and national victims of trafficking in Montenegro are identified primarily by law enforcement authorities during police operations and at border crossings. In addition, some identification has occurred through NGO operated helplines.

##### **Law Enforcement**

Assisted victims in Montenegro are identified primarily through law enforcement. Nine of the ten foreign victims identified in 2004 were identified by law enforcement and four of the five national victims were similarly identified. This represents an improvement over previous years in which two of the four foreign victims were identified by law enforcement. In part, this can be attributed to the increased capacity of law enforcement, particularly anti-trafficking units.

Within the Ministry of Interior there is an expert team on human trafficking and smuggling, established in 2001 but not active until 2004. This team is responsible for uncovering human trafficking and smuggling networks. When a potential victim is identified, the police assess whether the victim meets the criteria of a potential victim. If they are satisfied that the individual is possibly a victim of trafficking, the police contact IOM, which conducts a screening interview to determine the victim's status as a trafficking victim. Once identified as a trafficking victim, the victim is referred for assistance at the shelter of the Montenegrin Women's Lobby.

Further, in 2004, anti-trafficking units were established and mobilized in seven centres located throughout the country as well as at the national level within the Ministry of the Interior. They have conducted a number of investigations and this development may serve to explain, in part, the increased identification of victims in the latter part of 2004.

While law enforcement is central in the identification process, recent raids have yielded minimal results. In June 2003, the Montenegrin police conducted coordinated law enforcement actions throughout the country with all suspected catering facilities and nightclubs inspected. However, no cases of human trafficking or prostitution were reported as a result of this action. A few Serbian women were found without residence permits and instructed to register at the nearest Centre for Security. In the course of these police operations, women were generally interviewed and asked whether they

were “forced to work” in the establishment. Service providers report that most women deny any exploitation during their first interview and are not subsequently offered any type of assistance. It is unknown how many women were interviewed by law enforcement during these operations or how many were informed about assistance possibilities. More recently, Operation Mirage, undertaken in May 2004, yielded no trafficking victims. Raids appear to be of limited efficacy an identification tool and law enforcement efforts should shift to more systematic, investigative techniques that yield longer-term results.

As can be seen from the data above, very few victims are identified and referred for assistance by border personnel. Border control stations are not adequately equipped, lacking equipment and a centralized computer data system resulting in a technical incapacity to register personal data or vehicles. However, in 2004, IOM in partnership with the Ministry of the Interior, Department of Border Police and two NGOs – NIKA and Montenegrin Women’s Lobby undertook training of border officials. A total of 301 border officers and seven borders officials were trained on trafficking and victim identification. It is hoped that this will translate into better identification at Montenegro’s borders.

### **Helplines**

Another mechanism for identification of victim is helplines. Both Women’s Safe House and Montenegrin Women’s Lobby operate victim helplines. The Montenegrin Women’s Lobby operates a helpline specifically targeted for trafficking victims, while the helpline of the Women’s Safe House is for victims of all forms of gender-based violence, including trafficking. Both helplines operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. During non-office hours, calls are transferred to mobile phones.

To date, these helplines have not been a significant source of referral in Montenegro. The helpline of the Women’s Safe House received only four calls in 2004 about victims of trafficking and their locations. These four calls were from anonymous citizens reporting cases and locations of trafficking. In two cases, families called to request assistance in locating their missing daughter. In the case of one family, the daughter was accommodated at the shelter after she was identified and rescued through a police action. Threatening calls were another significant component of the calls received. No calls were received directly from victims of trafficking.

Rather than referrals, the Montenegrin Women’s Lobby helpline primarily receives what are termed “informative and educative” calls. These include receiving information from citizens about the location of suspected traffickers and trafficking victims as well as informing citizens about trafficking and its consequences. Of the 1,585 calls received by the helpline in 2003, 1,153 calls (72.7 per cent) were in this category. Other calls were from or about victims or potential victims. This involved victims asking for advice and assistance, providing information about the traffickers, and, in some cases, friends and relative reporting missing women. This accounted for 256 (16.2 per cent) of calls. The remaining 176 calls (11.1 per cent) were threatening calls. In 2004, 883 calls were made to the helpline with 612 calls (69.3 per cent) being information or preventative, 123 calls (13.9 per cent) from family or friends of victims or potential victims, 77 calls (8.7 per cent) from journalists, and 71 (8.1 per cent) threatening calls.

### **Alternative Sources of Identification**

While law enforcement was the primary source of victim identification, other informal means of victim identification and referral were also noted in Montenegro for both national and foreign victims. While all Montenegrin victims were technically identified by law enforcement, in one case the referral to law enforcement was through a fellow citizen. Similarly, in 2003, 50 per cent of the identification and referrals were through NGOs and in 2004, one victim (or 16.7 per cent) was identified after approaching a neighbour for assistance.

### **3.2 Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in Montenegro**

The assistance and protection framework for trafficking victims in Montenegro has been geared mainly toward return assistance for adult foreign victims of sexual exploitation. This reflects the fact that Montenegro has, to date, been largely a transit and destination country. However, a number of Montenegrin victims have also been identified and assisted in the last years so that the provision of services for national victims is also needed.

Victims assisted in Montenegro in 2003 and 2004 were provided with a range of services to meet their immediate and longer-term needs. Details of the various services are outlined below.

#### **Shelter**

There are two shelters for trafficking victims in Montenegro, both of which are located in Podgorica. One shelter is managed by the Women's Safe House NGO and the other by the Montenegrin Women's Lobby in cooperation with IOM. The shelters provide lodging, preliminary legal information, psychological support, medical care and brief vocational courses. For the Montenegrin Women's Lobby's shelter, security is provided by and paid for by the Government of Montenegro. The shelters accept both adults and minors as well as foreign and national victims of trafficking. Both shelters have the capacity to house approximately ten victims.

In 2004, the Women's Safe House accommodated one national two foreign victims, while the Montenegrin Women's Lobby accommodated one national and eight foreign victims. If the relatively low level of identification and referral of victims persists, then the capacity of the Podgorica shelters to provide short-term shelter will be sufficient for victims requiring short-term care.

There is no overnight accommodation for trafficking victims outside of Podgorica, which poses difficulties for victims identified outside of the capital, especially in northeast Montenegro (i.e. Rozaje) and southern Montenegro (i.e. Ulcinj). Overnight, temporary shelter possibilities could be explored with NGOs in Rozaje and Ulcinj.

In addition, thought must be given to accommodation options for other profiles of victims, particularly male victims, victims trafficked for purposes apart from sexual exploitation and minors. Accommodation within the two existing shelter programmes may not be advisable because of mixed genders, ages and assistance needs.

### **Medical Assistance**

Specific services offered to victims are determined on a case-by-case basis. Medical care is voluntary but most shelter beneficiaries request this assistance, especially gynaecological examinations including tests for STIs and pregnancy. According to service providers, most victims trafficked for sexual exploitation required and received treatment for STIs and a few tested positive for pregnancy while residing in the shelter. While most victims require basic medical assistance, sometimes more sophisticated assistance is required. In 2004, for instance, one victim required reconstructive surgery following injuries inflicted by her trafficker/employer.

Service providers have also reported a noteworthy number of victims suffering from drug and/or alcohol dependency. Where this is the situation, attention must be paid to the provision of appropriate services, including possibly detoxification and rehabilitation programmes.

Some trafficking victims required hospitalization for physical ailments and psychiatric disorders. This has usually been handled on an ad hoc basis, and medical facilities sometimes refuse to treat trafficked victims. It has been reported that some hospital doctors use discriminatory practices with trafficked victims because they do not understand the trafficking phenomenon. Sometimes, doctors at state hospitals separated trafficked victims from other patients and other private practitioners were sought who were more sensitive to patients' needs. Difficulties in meeting costs for the treatment of foreign victims are also apparent. Formal agreements are needed in order to secure access to emergency assistance, standard levels of care for victims and appropriate payment schemes.

### **Psychological assistance**

Service providers also report that several victims required psychiatric treatment, especially victims expressing suicidal tendencies. There is a need to improve the standards of psychological and psychiatric care provided to trafficking victims, including the provision of an initial psychological assessment by an experienced professional with specific training in assessment and treatment of traumatized victims. Follow-up counselling should be provided on a regular basis with an orientation toward development of short-term goals and an individualized case plan for the victim.

### **Recreational/Education Assistance**

Some recreational options are available for victims staying in the two shelters. Participation in such activities has a positive effect on the women, and these types of activities should be expanded and further developed. When victims stay at the shelter for longer periods this is particularly important and efforts should be made to provide short-term vocational or educational training where appropriate.

### **Legal Assistance**

The scope of legal assistance provided to trafficking victims in Montenegro has improved in the last year. In addition to victims receiving basic information about their legal rights from NGO representatives and being accompanied to legal proceedings, victims involved in criminal proceedings in 2004 were assisted with interpretation facilities as needed, legal representation, individualized legal advice and protection. A more supportive judiciary is also anticipated in consequence of the planned training for judges and prosecutors.

Also important is the assistance provided by IOM in acquiring the documentation necessary for foreign victims to return home. IOM arranges for the issuance of these documents through the victim's embassy or consulate in Montenegro or in the nearest diplomatic office. The process takes different amounts of time depending on whether victims possess valid identity documentation.

Given the handful of national victims assisted in the past years, a potential area of need is assistance in acquiring documents for national citizens. Such legal documents are essential for national victims to access services such as medical assistance or re-enter the education system. Formal mechanisms and procedures are needed.

### **Witness Protection**

On 1 January 2005, the Government of the Republic of Montenegro passed into force the *Law on Programme of Witness Protection*, which provides protection for all victims of crime, including but not specific to victims of trafficking. Critical components of this law include physical and technical protection of the victim, protection and change of identity and relocation. The law has not yet been implemented. In addition, under the *Law on Criminal Procedure*, Articles 108 and 109 define different methods that can be used to protect the witness including voice modification, protection walls, etc.

Prior to the implementation of this law, witness protection was provided on an *ad hoc* basis with the assistance of IOM. In two cases in 2004 and one case in 2003, (the now famous Moldovan case) victims were resettled in a third country.

### **Temporary Residence Permit (TRP)**

There is currently a draft *Law on Foreigners*, which outlines, in Article 62, the provision of temporary residence for foreign victims of trafficking. This involves a three-month reflection period, followed by the six-month stay period if the victim participates in the criminal procedure. The law is expected to go before the Parliament in June 2005. In the interim, the Ministry of the Interior has drafted an instruction that can be used to regulate the status of victims of trafficking.

In addition to defining rules and standards for the issuance of the temporary visa, the government and service providers must develop an appropriate assistance framework, including medium-term shelters and corresponding rehabilitation assistance programmes for foreign victims who reside in Montenegro.

### **Voluntary Return of Trafficked Victims**

Most foreign victims were returned to their home countries and communities having received some assistance in Montenegro. These victims were returned with the assistance of IOM and were provided the option of reintegration assistance in their home countries. At present, IOM is the primary organization responsible for the assistance package for foreign trafficked victims willing to return home. IOM secures identity papers, travel documents and an exit visa on the beneficiary's behalf and contacts other IOM missions or NGOs in the victim's country of origin to facilitate the transit and reintegration possibilities.

IOM personnel and NGO personnel meet all returning beneficiaries either at the airport or other points of arrival within the country of return and offer overnight

accommodation and transportation to the beneficiary's desired destination. Upon return, most beneficiaries enrol within an assistance programme, at least for a short period, which includes shelter, medical care, psychosocial assistance, a material assistance package and referrals for vocational and employment assistance. Detailed information about the range, scope and participation levels of reintegration programmes in countries of origin are outlined within specific country reports.

### **Reintegration Assistance for Montenegrin Victims of Trafficking**

Reintegration assistance programmes specifically for Montenegrin victims of trafficking are only a recent development and for the most part are undertaken in an *ad hoc* manner, primarily by IOM. This is largely because Montenegro is recognized as a transit and destination country, rather than a country of origin. However, with Montenegrin victims a noteworthy percentage of assisted victims in 2004, this area requires further attention.

Currently in response to the identification of national victims, IOM assists national victims based on a case-by-case assessment. In the case of one victim assisted in 2004 who was pregnant at identification, this included pre-natal and post-natal care for a victim and child as well as housing assistance and employment placement. In the case of another victim with very limited education, this included education and other training as well as housing and medical services. Yet another victim was provided with a scholarship to support her continued education and, in the case of three other minors who were trafficked by family members, reintegration has included an assessment of the family environment and exploration of alternative reintegration options.

A necessary component of reintegration is family assessment, mediation and counselling. This is a critical aspect of any assistance programme for national victims, creating as it does the conditions for safe and sustainable return. Currently, this is being undertaken by IOM staff but there is a need to engage government social workers in this process, particularly given that most assisted Montenegrin victims in 2004 were minors.

At present, the government does not offer any special vocational programs or preferential placement within vocational training or job placement programs for trafficked victims. This is an area of need given the increase in Montenegrin victims identified and assisted in the past three years. Educational re-insertion is also essential, especially given the low education level of many national victims.

### **Assistance for Minors**

Currently, no specialized services are provided to minors in Montenegro. Interview procedures, identification processes, referral mechanisms and the scope of assistance provided to minors are the same as those provided to adults victims of trafficking. While Montenegrin legislation calls for specialized treatment for minor victims of crime, they have not received specialized or standardized services in Montenegro. The state has not appointed official guardians for minors, and service providers state that local Social Work Centres have not been involved in any cases of trafficked minors.

Beyond immediate assistance, there is a need for long-term support and reintegration of minor victims of trafficking. These minors have specific assistance needs, which include a safe and healthy home environment, education, basic needs, medical care, etc.



For foreign victims, these needs will be met in their country of origin. More careful attention is needed for Montenegrin victims. Ideally, family re-unification should be pursued, accompanied by family counselling and support. However, family involvement in the trafficking of minors can be an obstacle in reintegration. Minors need a family environment to support their healthy development and the poor quality of care in state institutions means that this is not an ideal alternative solution. However, return to a family that has been complicit in trafficking places the minor in an acutely vulnerable position.

As an alternative to reintegration, foster care placements should also be considered for trafficked minors. Where this is pursued, appropriate training and orientation of foster families is essential to create understanding of victims' needs and problems as well as to mitigate tension in the family that might compromise the success of the placement.

The lack of standardized procedures and assistance mechanisms for foreign and Montenegrin trafficked minors is a gap in the assistance framework in Montenegro. Standards and specific assistance programs trafficked minors should be elaborated along the lines of the principles outlined in UNICEF's *Recommendations for Special Measures to Protect Children Victims of Trafficking in South Eastern Europe*.

# COUNTRY REPORT

## ROMANIA

This section analyzes the current situation of trafficking victims and victim assistance and protection in Romania. The report is divided into three sections: 1) Number of Foreign and Romanian Trafficking Victims Identified and Assisted, 2) Profiles of Trafficking Victims and 3) Overview of the Assistance Framework in Romania.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The total number of Romanian victims identified and assisted between 1 January 2000 and 31 December 2004 was 1054.
- The total number of foreign victims identified and assisted in Romania between January 2000 and 31 December 2004 was 31.
- Romania is a country of origin for trafficking in persons. It is also transit country for trafficking from the former Soviet Union. Recently, cases of internal trafficking were also documented.
- Romanian victims are trafficked primarily for sexual exploitation. Other forms of exploitation were also documented including, labour, begging, and delinquency. Foreign victims assisted in Romania are trafficked for sexual and labour exploitation. In number of cases, victims were exploited for combination of these purposes – sexual and labour exploitation, begging and sexual exploitation, labour and sexual exploitation.
- The majority of victims assisted in Romania were female. However, men were also among assisted victims, trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency
- Minors accounted for a significant percentage of assisted Romanian victims – ranging from none in some years to 88.9 per cent in another.
- A multiplicity of factors, including economic background, family relations, ethnicity, education and employment, inform victims' vulnerability to trafficking. No one factor explains trafficking among Romanians.
- Members of Roma ethnic minority are highly represented among Romanian trafficking victims. Roma were documented among victims trafficked for sexual exploitation, labour, begging and delinquency.
- Romanian victims of sexual exploitation were trafficked to 22 destination countries in 2003 and 2004, the majority of which were EU countries. With few exceptions, Romanian victims of labour, begging and delinquency were trafficked to the EU.
- Both national and foreign victims were exposed to various forms of abuse while trafficked. Victims sustained sexual, physical and psychological abuse, as well as combinations of these.
- While most victims of trafficking were poor, a noteworthy number were from average or well-off economic backgrounds. For example, roughly 20 per cent of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation in 2003 and 2004 described themselves as coming from “average” economic backgrounds

- While most recruiters were male, more victims were recruited by females than in the past. In addition, approximately seven per cent of victims of sexual exploitation were recruited by male/female pairs.
- In number of cases, Romanian victims were recruited with seemingly legal contracts. Kidnapping and promises of marriage as means of recruitment were also documented.
- The majority of Romanian and foreign victims reported poor living and working conditions. However, victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation reported some improvement over time, with diminished use of violence and receiving some payment.
- With the lifting of *Schengen* visa restriction, many Romanian victims travel more directly to EU countries, some even travelling by air.
- Cases of re-trafficking of Romanian nationals trafficked for sexual and labour exploitation were documented, although rates of re-trafficking varied according to the form of trafficking suffered.
- Romanian and foreign victims were identified and referred mainly by law enforcement authorities, including upon extradition from destination countries. Other identification came through self-referrals, embassies and NGOs. A number of Romanian victims were returned through referral procedures between Romanian NGOs and service providers in destination countries. This stands as a good practice.
- In Romania, there is no centralized mechanism for the screening, identification and referral of trafficking victims. In addition, there is no common methodology for the documentation of cases.
- *The Law on the Prevention and Combat of Trafficking in Human Beings* guarantees victims of trafficking government-sponsored assistance. However, in practice this assistance was not generally made available to victims as procedures for legally identifying “victims” are unclear.
- The assistance and protection framework for trafficked victims in Romania has been geared mainly toward the reintegration of Romanian victims trafficked abroad. Foreign trafficking victims receive the same assistance package provided for national victims.
- Overall, the cost of medical assistance is a serious problem for service providers. Most victims do not have access to free medical assistance, even as Romanian citizens. Costs are currently borne primarily by foreign donors through organizations such as IOM; this may be unsustainable in the long term. Many service providers flag the lack of medical assistance as a critical gap in the assistance framework in Romania.

- Information-sharing and referral procedures between service providers in destination and transit countries are positive and important developments that should be employed more widely in Romania as well as further expanded in the region.
- Deportation of trafficking victims to Romania continues, contravening international standards. Destination countries are obliged to identify and assist trafficking victims.
- Lack of data from destination countries can camouflage the extent of trafficking in Romanian nationals. There is a need to access information from both origin and destination countries to measure the scope of trafficking.

## 1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND ROMANIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED

Romania is a country of origin for trafficking in persons. Romanian victims are trafficked to destinations within South-eastern Europe as well as, increasingly, to the European Union. In addition to trafficking for sexual exploitation, Romanians have been trafficked for labour exploitation as well as for begging and delinquency. Assisted victims include adult women and men as well as minors, both boys and girls. According to some sources, Romania is also a transit country for trafficking from Moldova, Ukraine and other countries of the former Soviet Union.

Statistics and information were compiled according to primary data provided by the following organizations: Social Alternatives, Connexiuni, Reaching Out, Adpare, Young Generation, Armonia Association, Arhiepiscopia Ortodoxa Romana A Timisoarei, Artemis, Save the Children/Salvati Copiii, Transit and Assistance Shelter for Victims of Trafficking, Resource Centre for Combating Trafficking in Persons (Ministry of Administration and Interior), IOM Mission in Bucharest, Koofra (Germany) and Poppy Project (UK).<sup>425</sup> The data generally relate to experiences of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation, although increasingly there have been cases of trafficking for labour exploitation, begging and delinquency. In what follows, we examine the trafficking context in Romania from the perspective of victims. Through an examination of trafficking victims' profiles and experiences, we are better equipped to consider interventions that can address their needs and redress their trafficking situation.<sup>426</sup>

TABLE 1  
NUMBER OF VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO OR ORIGINATING FROM ROMANIA, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Romanian trafficking victims	163	261	243	194	193	1054
Foreign trafficking victims	2	0	3	8	18	31

<sup>425</sup> Other organizations in Romania that participated in the RCP research and provided information include: Center of Urban and Regional Sociology (CURS), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), International Labour Organization / International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC), Ministry of Administration and Interior and Institute for Crime Prevention and Research and Society for Children and Parents (SCOP).

<sup>426</sup> For a discussion of how data was collected and the methodology used, please see *Introduction*.

The above figures comprise the number of Romanian victims identified as trafficked and voluntarily returned to Romania as well as victims forcibly returned to Romania and referred by for assistance upon return. Victims who returned to Romania through a voluntary return programme but declined further assistance are included in the table as they received at least basic assistance.

With the exception of information provided by the NGOs Poppy Project (UK) and Koofra (Germany), the above figures do not include individual profiles of Romanian victims identified and assisted by NGOs or organizations in third countries who were not subsequently returned or assisted in Romania. This is because, with the exception of these two NGOs, no organizations in destination or transit countries provided RCP with detailed victim profiles about assisted Romanian victims. It is reasonable to conclude that with victim profiles from destination countries, these numbers would be far higher.<sup>427</sup> For example, between June 1996 and June 2001, 303 Romanian trafficking victims were enrolled in Italy's (Article 18) social assistance schemes for trafficked victims (Transcrime, 2004).<sup>428</sup> In 2002, approximately 236 Romanian trafficking victims were enrolled in Italy's Article 18 social assistance programme for trafficked victims, data which is not included in these numbers. A further 248 unaccompanied Romanian minors were documented in Italy between August 2001 and January 2003 (Alexandrescu *et al.*, 2003: 14), many of whom were victims of trafficking and none of whom are included in the RCP figures.<sup>429</sup> Further, Romanian trafficking victims assisted by STV La Strada in the Netherlands in 2003 and 2004 (32 and 46 victims respectively) have not been included in these numbers.<sup>430</sup>

The RCP stresses that the lack of data about victims identified and assisted in destination countries represents an important gap in our understanding, particularly when victims are increasingly being trafficked to locations outside of South-eastern Europe. Data from these sources is necessary to highlight: a) the extent of victims trafficked to various destinations, b) various forms of trafficking and c) the specific profiles of a wider range of victims to ensure effective prevention and protection efforts. RCP efforts to collect information from service providers in destination countries were largely unsuccessful as many organizations lacked time and resources to assist in the research or were prevented from doing so by institutional regulations on information sharing between organizations. This gap must be closed for a more holistic picture of trafficking to, through and from South-eastern Europe as well as further a field.

It is important to note that the police database maintained by the Resource Centre for Combating Trafficking in Persons within the Directorate for Countering Organized

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<sup>427</sup> Regular media accounts report the identification of victims of trafficking from SEE. For example, in April, police in Leeds and Sheffield, UK undertook raids on massage parlours in which 47 women – from Kosovo, Albania, Romania and Ukraine – were discovered and detained, believed to have been trafficked into Britain for prostitution (Norfolk, 2004).

<sup>428</sup> In roughly the period covered by this study, there were 2,930 proceedings on trafficking in human beings, with 4.5 per cent of traffickers being Romanians (Transcrime, 2004).

<sup>429</sup> As well, between July 2003 and December 2004, Young Generation and Save the Children (Romania) were involved in the assessment of 520 cases of unaccompanied minors in Italy, many of whom were considered to be trafficking cases (Interview with Marianna Petersel, Young Generation, 24 January 2005, Timisoara, Romania).

<sup>430</sup> Correspondence with Suzanne Hoff, La Strada, Netherlands, 26 April 2005.

Crime and Anti-Drugs in Bucharest<sup>431</sup> began recording trafficking cases in 2004 and captures data from June to December. This database documented 302 Romanian victims of trafficking in persons in that time.<sup>432</sup> Numbers from the police database are not included in the figures as the RCP methodology only accesses assisted victims. Further, because individual victim profiles were unavailable, there was the risk of duplication of profiles. What can reasonably be concluded from this information is that in Romania the number of identified trafficking victims in 2004 may range from 302 (assuming that all victims in the police database are also counted by service providers) to 495 (assuming no overlap between the database and the assisted caseload). Another critical conclusion that has resonance for all countries is that far more persons are trafficked than are captured among assisted victims.

Other indicators serve to illustrate the scope of trafficking in Romania. In 2003, 187 persons were arrested under the trafficking law, resulting in the dismantling of 283 criminal trafficking networks. In addition, 49 individuals were sentenced for trafficking crimes in 2003. In 2003, Romanian authorities sent two trafficking-related corruption cases to prosecution and investigated 15 police officials for trafficking-related corruption crimes, resulting in two dismissals and 13 ongoing investigations (US Department of State, 2004; cf. Futo and Jandl, 2004: 122).

Finally, some potential alternative indicators of trafficking may serve to illustrate the possible scope of trafficking in Romania. In 2003, there were 885 asylum applications lodged with the National Refugee Office, of which only 206 were accepted. In 2004 until November, 608 asylum applications were lodged, of which 130 were accepted.<sup>433</sup> Similarly, in 2002 and 2003, 256 human smugglers were apprehended (Futo and Jandl, 2004: 122). These findings point to higher numbers of foreign trafficking victims to Romania than is captured in the assisted caseload.

## 2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

Below is an exploration of trafficking victim profiles for the various forms of trafficking documented within, to and through Romania. In this section, we analyze the profiles and experiences of Romanian victims trafficked for sexual exploitation (Section 2.1.1) and for labour, begging and delinquency (Section 2.1.2). We also consider the profiles of foreign victims trafficked to Romania (Section 2.2). This analysis is an essential starting point in the development of appropriate assistance and services for victims.

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<sup>431</sup> Hereafter referred to as the database of the Resource Centre for Combating Trafficking in Persons or the police database.

<sup>432</sup> The database also contains data about 287 traffickers identified by police, 255 of whom are men and 52 of whom are women. While the focus of the database is criminal intelligence, it does contain some basic information about victims, which is woven into the section on victim profiles to further supplement data provided by service providers. Victim-specific data includes: sex, age, form of trafficking, nationality, ethnicity, area of origin, means of recruitment and destination country.

<sup>433</sup> Email correspondence, Vasile Dragoi, Head, National Refugee Office, Ministry of Administration and Interior, 13 December 2004.

## 2.1 Romanian Trafficking Victims

In what follows, we examine the context of trafficking in Romanian nationals, from and within the country.

TABLE 1  
NUMBER OF VICTIMS IDENTIFIED/ASSISTED IN OR ORIGINATING FROM ROMANIA, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Romanian trafficking victims	163	261	243	194	193	1054

As is clear from the table below, the majority of Romanian victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation, accounting for 86.1 per cent of victims in 2003 and 85 per cent in 2004. Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation worked in bars, nightclubs, private apartments, escort services, brothels and on the street.

TABLE 2  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG ASSISTED ROMANIAN NATIONALS, 2003 AND 2004<sup>434</sup>

	2003	2004
Sexual exploitation	167	164
Labour exploitation	22	14
Delinquency and begging	5	9
Potential victims <sup>435</sup>	0	6
Total	194	193

Victims were also trafficked for labour in domestic work, agriculture, industry, waitressing and selling, accounting for 11.3 per cent of victims in 2003, decreasing to 7.3 per cent in 2004.

Some victims, albeit few, were trafficked for begging and delinquency. This form of trafficking accounted for 2.6 per cent and 4.7 per cent of victims in 2003 and 2004 respectively. This category includes various acts of delinquency, although, in most cases, these were begging and petty crime. As was the case with labour exploitation, victims of these forms of trafficking were both male and female. In one unusual case, the victim herself, having been trafficked to Italy, was given the choice of what type of work she would do. Her options were to steal, provide sexual services or beg in front of the local grocery store. She chose the latter.

Different forms of trafficking have also been noted in previous research. In one study of trafficking in minors, victims were trafficked for prostitution (32.7 per cent), dancing and massage (21.8 per cent), begging (20 per cent), household activities or agriculture (9.1 per cent) and in other types of activities such as waiter, street vending, fortunetelling or theft (16.4 per cent) (ILO IPEC, 2003b: 1). Similarly, the database maintained by the Resource Centre for Combating Trafficking in Persons in Bucharest<sup>436</sup> documented trafficking for sexual exploitation (247 victims), labour exploitation (46), begging (9), theft (1) and adoption (1).<sup>437</sup>

<sup>434</sup> Prior to 2003, there is insufficient information from service providers to document accurately the forms of trafficking among Romanian nationals.

<sup>435</sup> This designation is used when individuals were assisted for insufficient time to clearly establish their trafficking experience or when the individual was identified and assisted before being exploited but showed strong signs of being in the trafficking process. In the six instances above, the victims did not provide sufficient information to establish clearly the nature of their trafficking experience.

<sup>436</sup> While there were 302 victims in the database, 304 forms of trafficking are listed because, in two instances, victims suffered dual forms of trafficking exploitation.



Victims were also exposed to multiple forms of exploitation in the course of trafficking. Some victims of sexual exploitation were also required to undertake labour tasks such as waitress, dancer or cleaner. Some victims of labour exploitation were also sexually exploited, required to provide sexual services to their employers or, in more extreme cases, “rented out” by the employer for prostitution. In addition, in 2004, victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were also required to beg. This will be discussed in further detail in *Forms of trafficking*, in *Profiles and Experiences of Romanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation* and *Profiles and Experiences of Romanian Victims Trafficked for Labour, Begging and Delinquency*.

Since victims’ needs vary with the nature of exploitation suffered, attention to the precise forms of exploitation is essential in both the development and assessment of assistance frameworks. Victims trafficked for labour but who have also been sexually exploited will require many of the same types of assistance as victims trafficked for prostitution. Victims exploited for criminal activities may require legal assistance to avoid prosecution in some countries.

### **2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Romanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation**

The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of Romanian victims who have been trafficked for sexual exploitation. Also included are victims trafficked for sexual exploitation but who were also required to undertake some labour tasks and, as such, were dually exploited.

TABLE 3  
Romanian Nationals Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation, 2003 and 2004\*

	2003	2004
Sexual exploitation	167	164

### **Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics**

**Sex:** In all assisted cases since 2000, victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation were women.

Nevertheless, there were signs of Romanian males, particularly minors, being trafficked for sexual exploitation to EU countries.<sup>438</sup> One Romanian boy was trafficked to the United Kingdom for sexual exploitation. Because he is currently being assisted in the UK, he does not appear in the profiles presented in this report.<sup>439</sup> Similarly, in the Netherlands, Romanian boys, 16 to 17 years of age, worked in prostitution, a number of whom were trafficked for this purpose.<sup>440</sup>

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<sup>437</sup> The only country in SEE where this form of trafficking has been documented among assisted victims is Bulgaria. See: *Bulgaria Country Report*. That one case is documented in the database of the Resource Centre for Combating Trafficking in Persons flags the risk of this form of trafficking in Romania.

<sup>438</sup> Interview with Anke van den Borne, ECPAT Netherlands, 14 June 2004, Netherlands; cf. Alexandrescu *et al.*, 2003: 31.

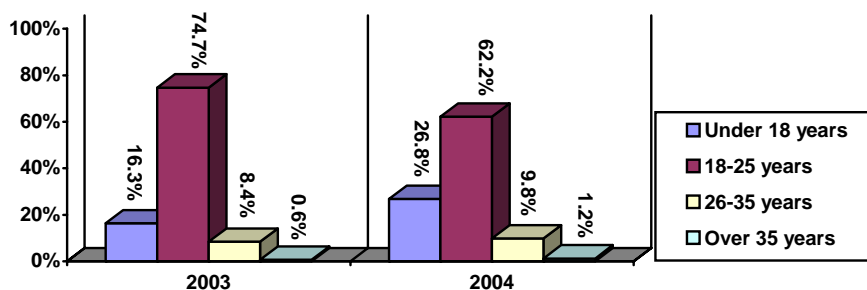
<sup>439</sup> Interview with Gina Maria Stoian, Adpare Foundation, 25 January 2005, Bucharest, Romania.

<sup>440</sup> Interview with Anke van den Borne, ECPAT Netherlands, June 2004; cf. IOM, 2001: 1999-2000.

**Age:** In both years, victims were primarily between 18 and 25 years, consistent with data from throughout the region.<sup>441</sup>

What is striking is the high representation of minors, accounting for 16.3 per cent in 2003 and spiking to 26.8 per cent in 2004. Further, it is possible that this is an underestimation as most service providers document the victim’s age at identification rather than at recruitment, making it likely that some victims identified as adults were, in fact, minors when trafficked. That one quarter of all assisted victims in 2004 were minors is cause for concern and underlines the need for targeted prevention efforts, both in terms of awareness-raising and in terms of economic development support for families.

GRAPH 1  
AGE AT IDENTIFICATION OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Older victims – above 25 years – were not heavily represented in either year. Interestingly, Romanian victims of sexual exploitation were less likely to be older than victims from other source countries, such as Moldova.<sup>442</sup> Still, one service provider described one victim assisted by her organization as, although 42 years old, in every other way a “typical trafficking victim”. As such, age was not always a definitive factor in vulnerability.

**Ethnicity:** There is limited information available on this indicator as most service providers do not systematically record ethnicity as part of case management. The information presented here is therefore incomplete and meant only to flag that ethnicity may be linked to trafficking vulnerability in Romania as it appears to be in some other countries of the region .

Two victims of sexual exploitation in each year were from ethnic minorities – one Hungarian and one Roma – accounting for 1.2 per cent of victims in each year. Similarly, the organized crime database documented two victims (of Hungarian ethnicity), accounting for 0.7 per cent of victims. As an estimated seven per cent of the

<sup>441</sup> This is also consistent with data from the police database in which 64.4 per cent of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were between 18 and 25 years of age. The police database, however, documented more victims over 25 year of age (21.5 per cent of victims) than those assisted by services providers (nine per cent in 2003 and 11 per cent in the 2004). Similarly, police identified fewer minors (14.2 per cent of the police database) as compared to the number of minors among assisted victims (16.3 per cent in 2003 and 26.8 per cent in the 2004).

<sup>442</sup> From 2000 to 2004, between 14.6 per cent and 23.3 per cent of Moldovan victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were between 26 to 35 years. Between 0.3 per cent and 3.6 per cent were over 35 years of age. For more details, see *Moldova Country Report*.

population are ethnic Hungarians and four per cent are Roma (World Bank, 2001),<sup>443</sup> it appears that ethnic minorities are not disproportionately represented among Romanian victims of sexual exploitation. However, data from a qualitative survey of trafficking in minors found that 14.6 per cent of trafficked minors were of Roma ethnicity (ILO-IPEC, 2003b: 20).

Interestingly, both German and Hungarian ethnicities factor heavily among migrants but not trafficking victims. Because of the normative nature of migration for these groups and their knowledge of existing migration channels they are arguably less vulnerable to trafficking. More surprising is that Roma – a social group that is widely recognized as socially vulnerable and marginalized and that has figured prominently among assisted victims in other parts of the region – were only minimally represented among assisted victims. This may be a function of the limited data about this variable. It might also be because Roma victims were less willing or able to access the assistance offered to trafficking victims. The inclination and ability of victims of different social groups to access services is an issue to consider.

Prevention and protection efforts must be tailored to address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of ethnic minorities and more cooperation is needed between counter-trafficking actors and organizations already working with ethnic minorities. Further, differences among and within ethnic minority groups must be understood and considered to ensure interventions are appropriate and effective.

**Area of origin:** In 2003 and 2004, roughly equal numbers of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were originally from rural and urban areas. That is, in 2003, 52.8 per cent of victims originated from urban areas, while, in 2004, 49.7 per cent were originally from urban areas.<sup>444</sup>

However, this is only part of the picture. While approximately half of all victims were originally from rural areas, in fact, many were recruited in urban centres – towns and capitals – rather than rural areas. These victims were generally attending school in an urban centre as few villages have high schools. They commuted on a daily or weekly basis to the school or were living in a dormitory or apartment in town while studying. In many cases, they faced difficulty in adjusting to their new lives, which possibly created space for abuse and manipulation by recruiters and traffickers. Given that so many victims of sex trafficking from Romania were recruited along these lines, it is worth considering targeting some prevention efforts at this specific group, including through schools in urban areas.

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<sup>443</sup> According to Romania's 2002 census, 2.5 per cent of the population were self-declared Roma, although other estimates put the number closer to 6.7 per cent (Kovacs, 2004).

<sup>444</sup> This is consistent with the overall demographics of Romania; approximately 55.1 per cent of the Romanian population live in urban areas (UNDP, 2002: 163)

TABLE 4  
AREAS OF ORIGIN OF ASSISTED ROMANIAN VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING, 2003 AND 2004<sup>445</sup>

Areas of Origin	2003	2004
Moldova	65	55
Transilvania	19	20
Muntenia	18	29
Banat	12	11
Dobrogea	10	11
Oltenia	8	6
Total	132	132

The high percentage of victims coming from Moldova – 49 per cent in 2003 and 42 per cent in 2004 – underlines the need to establish regional priorities in future prevention and assistance programmes in Romania. It also raises the question of adequate resources for assistance service providers in this and other source regions.

Some victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 originated from the southern part of Romania. This represents a shift from previous years in which the majority of victims originated from the poor regions of the northeast, such as Moldova. This may indicate that poverty is not the sole or even primary push factor for trafficking. It may also indicate that targeted prevention efforts in the Moldova region have had some effect.

**Education:**<sup>446</sup> Most Romanian victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation assisted in 2003 and 2004 had a middle school education. This is slightly below the average education level in Romania.<sup>447</sup>

In 2004, more victims had a middle school education than in 2003 and there was a simultaneous decrease in the number of victims with only primary school education. This finding is striking given that the number of minor victims increased from 16.3 per cent in 2003 to 26.8 per cent in 2004.

While education levels were generally below average, victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, nevertheless, were drawn from a range of educational levels and lack of education was not a direct indicator of trafficking. These statistics reinforce the need for continued and expanded prevention activities targeting girls from primary school to high school level, within both the formal educational structures and other informal channels.

That eight to nine per cent of victims in both 2003 and 2004 had less than primary school education highlights the need for expanded prevention activities in non-formal

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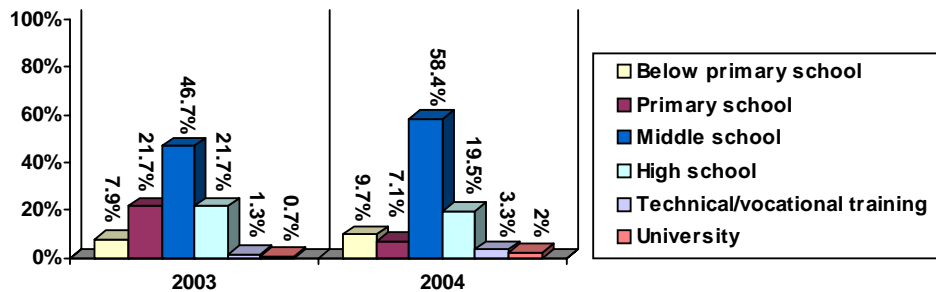
<sup>445</sup> These areas of origin reflect only the IOM caseload, although this accounts for 79 per cent of assisted victims in 2003 and 80.1 per cent in 2004. According to the database of the Resource Centre for Combating Trafficking in Persons within the Directorate for Countering Organized Crime and Anti-Drugs in Bucharest, the majority of its 302 victims originate from Moldova (104 cases), Transilvania (89 cases), Muntenia (86 cases), Dobrogea (12 cases), Banat (10 cases) and Oltenia (3 cases). These areas of origin were not specific to victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, although the majority of those in the databases (81.8 per cent) were trafficked for this purpose.

<sup>446</sup> Primary school is from grade one through eight, middle school is grade nine and ten, and high school from grade 11 to 12.

<sup>447</sup> According to the UN Statistics Division (2004), school life expectancy for females (number of years of formal schooling) in Romania is 12 years.

venues that target school leavers. Follow-up analysis to assess the impact of awareness programs and ways to enhance their efficacy is also needed.

GRAPH 2  
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Another interesting point to highlight is that relatively low education levels may be due partly to a lack of interest in education by this profile of victims. According to one survey of young women at risk of trafficking, vulnerable women viewed education as a valueless strategy for succeeding in life. They felt it was impossible to get a job solely with a university education and without connections (Alexandru and Lazaroiu, 2003: 27). As such, the low education levels of many victims may be tied to perceptions of the value of education as much as to an actual lack of opportunity. Where this is the case, efforts must be made to encourage female enrolment at higher levels and perhaps to strengthen the connection between education and earning capacity by introducing more vocational or practical components in the curriculum.

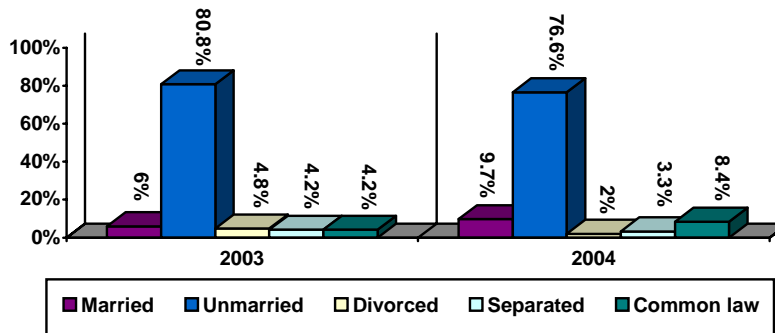
**Mental and physical disabilities:** In 2003 and 2004, one service provider assisted two victims who suffered from “mid-range mental retardation”. This accounted for 0.6 per cent of victims in 2004 and 0.6 per cent of victims in 2003. In addition, another service provider reported having assisted two schizophrenic victims during 2004. It is, however, unknown if the schizophrenia preceded recruitment, rendering the victims more vulnerable to trafficking, or if the schizophrenia was induced or amplified by the trafficking experience. From this data it appears that women with mental disabilities have not been targeted for recruitment for trafficking for sexual exploitation.<sup>448</sup>

**Marital and family status:** Consistent with data throughout the SEE region, most assisted victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation were unmarried at recruitment. This was also consistent with the overall age of victims, a striking percentage of whom were minors.

In 2003, 10.2 per cent of assisted victims were in a long-term relationship, either married or in a common-law relationship. This percentage almost doubled in 2004 to 18.2 per cent. Also represented are victims who were either separated or divorced – nine per cent in 2003 and 5.2 per cent in 2004.

<sup>448</sup> This stands in contrast to other countries in the region where there are preliminary signs that the mentally disabled are being targeted in the recruitment process.

GRAPH 3  
 MARITAL STATUS OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED  
 FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Most victims in both 2003 and 2004 were without children. However, in a number of cases victims were also mothers – 38 cases (22.8 per cent) in 2003 and 45 cases (27.4 per cent) in 2004. Further, single mothers accounted for a small but noteworthy percentage of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation – 11.4 per cent in 2003 and 14.4 per cent in 2004.

Victims with children, especially single mothers, may urgently seek opportunities abroad in an effort to support their family and so be especially vulnerable to trafficking. One 22-year-old, unmarried mother of two migrated because she lacked work options within her community. She needed money not only to support her children but also her mother, who suffered from schizophrenia. This highlights the need for trafficking prevention that targets single mothers as well as vulnerable families as a whole, including economic support and opportunities. In addition, mothers have some specific assistance needs, such as accommodation with their children, learning good parenting skills, family counselling to reconcile families separated by trafficking/migration, *etc.* In addition, there is likely a special need to support the reintegration of single mothers who are often socially and economically vulnerable.

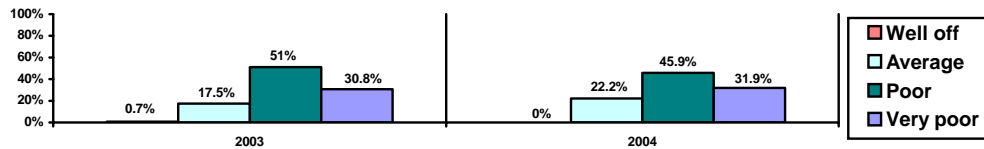
It is important to consider what happens to children when a mother, especially, a single mother, migrates abroad. Some children were left in the care of family members, while others were left in state childcare institutions.<sup>449</sup> Guardianship rights may prove an issue for some returning mothers who have relinquished these. Legal assistance may be required to address this specific issue. One Romanian woman trafficked to Macedonia returned home to find that her child had been taken by the Centre for Child Protection and her most urgent priority was to re-establish her guardianship rights.

In addition to dependent children, many victims were also responsible for the care of other family members – parents, siblings and elderly relatives – at recruitment. Systematically documenting a victim’s dependents, including but not limited to dependent children, would be useful in gauging the importance of this possible push factor for trafficking.

<sup>449</sup> Many service providers argue that children raised in state institutions are particularly vulnerable to trafficking as they lack family support and life skills needed when they leave the institution. In addition, where parents were absent and caregivers (grandparents, relatives, neighbours) were less than diligent in their care responsibilities, minors may not have attended school or developed basic life skills.

**Economic status:**<sup>450</sup> Most victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 described themselves as either “poor” or “very poor”, as detailed in the graph below. These combined categories accounted for 81.8 per cent of victims in 2003 and 77.8 per cent in 2004. This corroborates the argument that poverty and economics are central contributors to trafficking.

GRAPH 4  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



On the other hand, many “poor” and “very poor” people are not trafficked. It would be valuable to identify any strategies are used by this group to guard against trafficking that might be replicated in prevention efforts. That is, rather than only considering the characteristics and behaviours of victims who are trafficked, it would be equally valuable to consider cases where persons (with the same economic, educational, social etc. background) were exposed to the same dangers but were not trafficked.

It also cannot be ignored that roughly 20 per cent of victims in both years were from “average” economic backgrounds and a tiny percentage of victims in 2003 were from “well-off” economic backgrounds. Examining cases of trafficking victims from more stable economic backgrounds and how they were recruited might illuminate alternative contributors to trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Finally, it is worth highlighting that one survey of trafficking vulnerability found that there was no difference in actual income between families of women vulnerable to trafficking and the average household. Rather, differences lay in perceptions of wealth and poverty, with “vulnerable women” and their families more likely to perceive their current financial situation as unsatisfactory. In short, aspirations for higher standards more than objective poverty differentiated the two groups (Alexandru and Lazaroiu, 2003: 34-36). This may hold true more broadly and reinforces the value of looking beyond simple single cause explanations for trafficking.

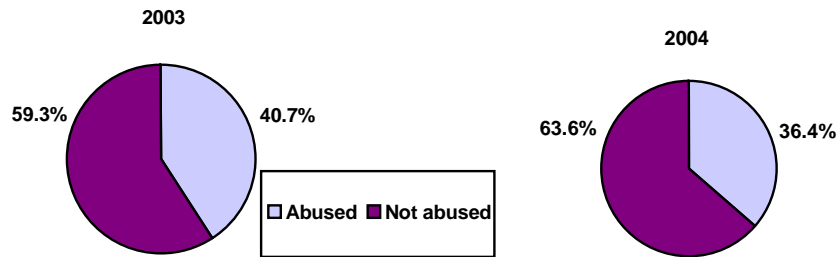
**Family and social relations:**<sup>451</sup> Overall, in 2003 and 2004, domestic violence, abuse and problems in the family were quite pronounced, as noted in the graph below.<sup>452</sup>

<sup>450</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim’s self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

<sup>451</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims’ self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim’s individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim’s relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

<sup>452</sup> These findings are generally consistent with the rate of violence in the population at large. In one survey of 290 respondents, 24.1 per cent reported being hit by their husband or partner, and 9.3 per cent reported their partner had stabbed or used a weapon against them (Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, 1995). Further, data from the Forensic Hospital in Bucharest found that 28 per cent of women treated there were beaten by an intimate partner (Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, 1995).

GRAPH 5  
 VIOLENCE AND PROBLEMS IN THE HOME, ASSISTED ROMANIANS  
 TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004<sup>453</sup>



The high rate of violence in the homes of many victims points to abuse as an important contributor to a victims' willingness to migrate.<sup>454</sup> One victim trafficked to Italy for street prostitution accepted work abroad because her stepfather was an abusive alcoholic. She wanted to leave this environment and accepted a "risky" work offer in her desperation. Similarly, one woman was so regularly and severely beaten by her husband that she accepted work abroad as a means of escape.

However, the flipside of these statistics is that the majority of Romanian victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation did not suffer violence in the home. A large number of victims originated from stable, normal family environments. As such, it is essential to look beyond the issue of family strife or violence for explanations of trafficking vulnerability. Some thought must also be given to the specific vulnerability of victims from stable homes. It may be that sense of security fostered in stable, happy homes promotes the development of a spirit of adventurousness and independence that can lead a young woman to rebel against social norms.

Another issue that offers no easy explanation is single-parent families. In 2003, 17.6 per cent of victims came from a single-parent family, increasing to 19.2 per cent in 2004. The degree to which this family structure is problematic or may result in trafficking is unclear. Some single-parent families are economically vulnerable and conflictual, while others are stable, economically secure and healthy environments. More subtle family tensions can also serve to increase vulnerability to trafficking. One survey of risk factors noted a lack of communication between parents and vulnerable daughters (Alexandru and Lazaroiu, 2003: 31).

<sup>453</sup> The majority of reported problems were domestic violence (30.8 per cent of victims in 2003 and 33.1 per cent in 2004). Additionally, 1.4 per cent of victims in 2003 and 1.3 per cent in 2004 suffered incest, while 8.5 per cent of victims in 2003 and two per cent in 2004 had at least one parent who abused alcohol.

<sup>454</sup> Interestingly, various service providers report differently on this issue. One shelter reported that 100 per cent of the victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 were physically abused prior to being trafficked. In addition, there were a few cases of sexual abuse and in approximately 80 per cent of cases one of the parents, usually the father, abused alcohol. Similarly, another service provider from one of the primary source regions reported that most of the victims came from "disorganized families", which included divorced parents, mothers with multiple male partners, physical abuse and alcohol abuse. By contrast, another service provider reported that 90 per cent of assisted victims came from stable families and reported no problems or abuse within their families. It is unclear why service providers report such different experiences of abuse.

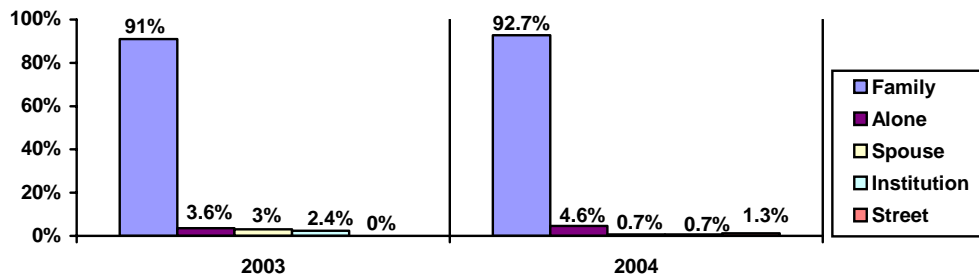


Also salient may be social relations more generally. This same survey found that vulnerable girls/women were generally poorly integrated in social circles, which created feelings of insecurity and abandonment (Lazaroiu and Alexandru, 2003: 5-6, 40).

## Recruitment Experiences

**Living situation at recruitment:** Romanian victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation generally resided with their families at recruitment.

GRAPH 6  
LIVING SITUATION AT RECRUITMENT OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



As so many victims were unmarried at recruitment and most unmarried women in Romania live with their families until marriage, the result is not surprising. However, the data is slightly deceptive in that, according to service providers, many of the victims were in fact studying at school and living away from family during or around the time of recruitment. While their primary place of residence was with their family, additional detail about this point allows more accurate identification of the precise location and mechanisms for recruitment. For example, twelve victims who reported living with their family at recruitment were, in fact, away at school when recruited.<sup>455</sup>

As well, living with family means different things in different cases. In one instance, the victim lived with her mother, stepfather and two stepbrothers in what was a dysfunctional and abusive environment. In another instance, the victim raised her two children, while living with her mentally ill mother. In a third instance, the family environment was that of an unproblematic nuclear family. Without more precise information about family living situations, it is difficult to disentangle to the various threads of trafficking vulnerability.

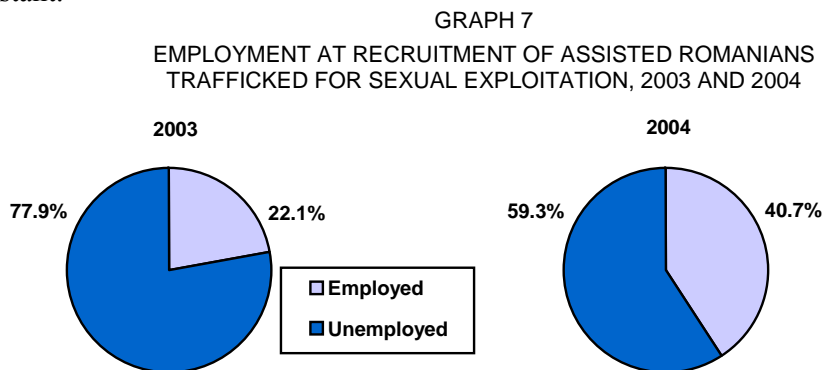
In both 2003 and 2004, a number of victims were living in institutions at recruitment – 2.4 per cent in 2003 and 0.7 per cent in 2004. Many service providers assert that more victims than those documented were from state institutions. To some degree, this discrepancy is due to the manner in which data is collected. That is, documenting the victim's living situation at recruitment does not reveal whether victims have ever lived in an institution. Victims may have lived in an institution while growing up but now live with a husband and children. The victims may be living alone or with a spouse.

<sup>455</sup> Other research corroborates the finding that young women who live alone or with a school or workmate were particularly vulnerable to trafficking (Galat *et al.*, 2001; cf. Alexandru and Lazaroiu, 2003: 16).

The victim may have been in state care in the past but is now living with parents or relatives again. Significantly, while victim profiles document only four victims in 2003 and one victim in 2004 who lived in institutions, discussion with one service provider revealed at least five cases of victims who had at one point in their lives lived in an institution. Further, two victims who were living on the street at recruitment in 2004 had grown up in institutions.<sup>456</sup> Growing up in institutions can leave individuals especially vulnerable in terms of social development and negotiation skills combined with the lack of a family or social safety net.

More precise indicators in data collection as well as more detailed information from service providers are needed to better illuminate the factors that contribute to trafficking in women from Romania, and the SEE region in general.

**Working situation at recruitment:** Of victims identified and assisted in 2003, most – 77.9 per cent were unemployed at recruitment. This changed quite radically in 2004, with twice as many victims (40.7 per cent) employed at recruitment than in the previous year. Occupations including agricultural worker, waitress, seller, labourer, prostitute,<sup>457</sup> domestic worker, factory worker, baker, cook, industrial worker and shop assistant.



While there is clearly a link between employment and trafficking, it is not always direct. Also important but not always documented are rates of underemployment: whether persons are working in fields for which they trained or earnings are sufficient to support the person and their dependents. This information is a critical component of a victim’s employment status. Further, as one service provider observed, “Many of the women are employed when they are recruited. They work in the fields with their family

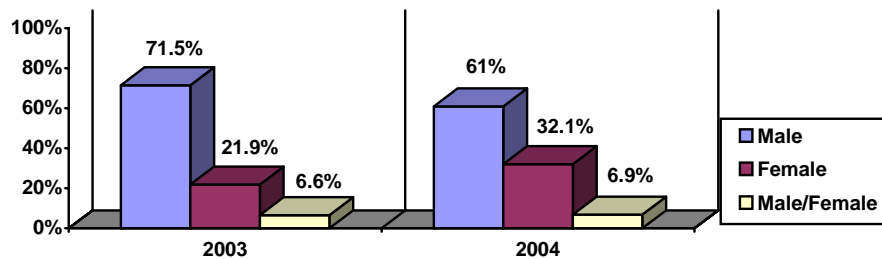
<sup>456</sup> In 2004, 0.9 per cent all children in Romania lived in residential care institutions – 38,599 children reside in state residential care and 5,104 children in residential institutions run by NGOs (ILO-IPEC, 2003: 6). This risk factor has particular resonance in the current years as a large number of children living in institutions (a result of the baby boom at the end of the Ceausescu era) will soon leave them. Some thought needs to be given to the acute vulnerability of this group not only in terms of trafficking but also as a potentially socially marginalized group. Programmes for this target group – semi-independent living programmes, job placement, housing assistance and/or life skills training – could serve as a general protection scheme as well as a trafficking prevention initiative.

<sup>457</sup> It is important to note that this finding is of no relevance in terms of an individual’s status and right to be treated as a victim of trafficking. It highlights, however, the need for prevention efforts that take into account the potential vulnerability of this particular group.

or as a waitress or as a shop assistant. The issue is not about unemployment, it is about wanting better employment’<sup>458</sup>.

**Recruiter:** Romanian women trafficked for sexual exploitation were for the most part recruited by men, although the number of male recruiters decreased in 2004.

GRAPH 8  
SEX OF RECRUITERS OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



It is also interesting to note that approximately seven per cent of victims in both years were recruited by a male/female pair. It is unclear whether and how recruitment techniques of male/female pairs differ from those of individuals.<sup>459</sup> It is possible that this strategy is used because women might be more inclined to trust a couple than a single man. However, more information about this type of recruitment is needed. This finding can also be examined in the broader context of the changing *modus operandi* of traffickers, noticed in the SEE region.

In terms of women recruiters, it is worth considering whether the ten per cent increase observed in 2004 reflects a trend and in what type of recruitment. At least in part, these women “recruiters” were women who had themselves been recruited and then encouraged by the trafficker to invite their friends to also work abroad. This is a very effective strategy as it plays on the existing trust between friends and requires little effort or manipulation on the part of the trafficker. In this light, it is noteworthy that 24.5 per cent of victims in 2003 were recruited by a friend, a percentage that increased to 36.8 per cent in 2004. Acquaintance – the predominant relationship between victim and recruiter – also plays on elements of trust in recruitment.

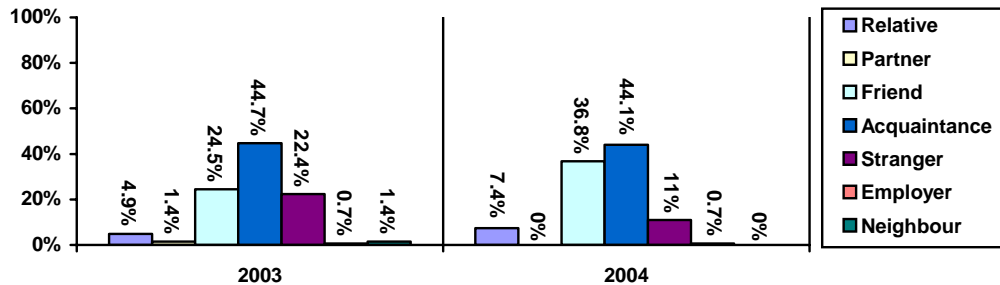
While 22.4 per cent of victims in 2003 were recruited by strangers, this group halved in 2004 to only 11 per cent. Some recruitment by strangers was through agencies, indicating that awareness raising campaigns highlighting the potential risks of job agencies and newspaper advertisements have been effective. One service provider reported that some assisted beneficiaries were recruited by a person they thought was a legal agent. They went to apply for a government-sponsored labour exchange programme. Outside the government building they were met by an “agent” who offered the same conditions and type of work and presented what appeared to be a legal contract. The victims were subsequently trafficked to Spain. The use of seemingly legal contracts by recruiters to mask real intentions has increased. This trend has been

<sup>458</sup> Interview with Iana Matei, NGO Reaching Out, Pitesti, Romania, 25 January 2005.

<sup>459</sup> In Bulgaria, in this situation, the woman usually recruited the victim, while the man dealt with the escort/transportation. See *Bulgaria Country Report*.

noticed throughout the region and indicates the development of new strategies by traffickers to lend a façade of legality to recruitment and transportation.

GRAPH 9  
RELATIONSHIP TO RECRUITER OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS  
TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



An interesting finding was that 1.4 per cent of victims in 2003 were recruited by their partners (cf. ILO-IPEC, 2003b: 33). Such cases are generally consistent with the “lover boy phenomenon” documented in destination countries such as the Netherlands<sup>460</sup> whereby the man initiates a relationship with the girl/woman with the intention of exploiting and trafficking her.<sup>461</sup> This form of recruitment is strategic, creating a sense of affection and dependency that serves to prevent victims from recognizing and exiting trafficking.

For the most part, recruiters of Romanian nationals were themselves Romanian citizens – 88.6 per cent in 2003 and 96 per cent in 2004. In a handful of cases, victims were recruited by foreign nationals. In 2003, this included Bulgarian, Greek, Italian, Moldovan, Russian and Serbian nationals. In 2004, foreign recruiters were Albanian, Dutch, Italian and Moldovan.

A recent survey found that the Romanian public is quite aware of the stereotypical trafficker. However, when a person who breaks the stereotype proposes a job, the risk of trafficking increases as these persons are not treated with the same level of suspicion and alarm (Alexandru and Lazaroiu, 2003: 6-7). More sophisticated representations of recruitment must be a part of prevention and awareness raising programmes to address this gap. Further, the fact that recruiters are known to the victims (in 77.6 per cent of cases in 2003 and 89 per cent in 2004), signals that awareness-raising efforts must inform potential victims of dangers within their immediate environment.

**Reasons for leaving home country and type of work promised:** Almost all victims in both 2003 and 2004, were recruited with promises of work, although the specific type of work varied. Most work was in traditionally female roles in the service sector or as caregivers – i.e. waitress, dancer, nanny, domestic worker and seller. Low income, under- or unemployment, and limited opportunity were all reasons for Romanian women to seek and accept work abroad. In addition, some victims accepted work to support sick relatives or to deal with an economic crisis in the family. It must be noted

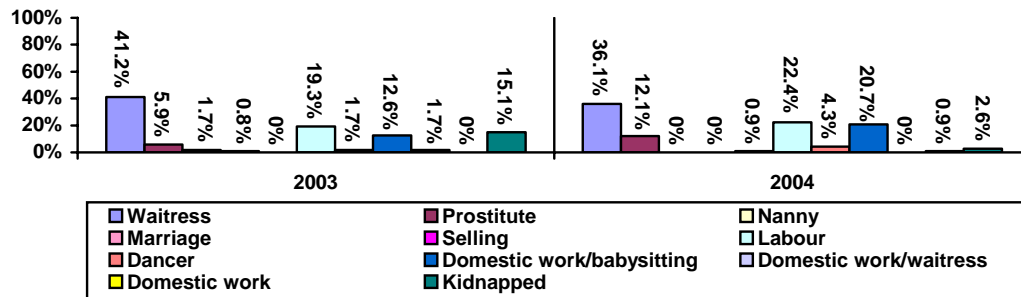
<sup>460</sup> For an explanation of the “lover boy phenomenon” and this specific recruitment technique, see Noten and van den Borne, 2004.

<sup>461</sup> There were indications of the emergence of this trend in Serbia among national victims trafficked for sexual exploitation and in Moldova. See *Serbia Country Report* and *Moldova Country Report*.

that while more people were aware of the risks of going abroad (due in large part to the awareness raising efforts of counter-trafficking organizations), many still chose to take the risk, given the lack of options at home.

Traffickers have regularly adapted their work offers to the most recent employment interests of the public. For example, most Romanians are aware of new opportunities for legal agricultural work in Spain. Traffickers take advantage of this situation by pretending to arrange agricultural employment in Spain, subsequently exploiting the victims there or in other countries. In 2003 and 2004, roughly 20 per cent of victims had accepted work as labourers.

GRAPH 10  
TYPE OF WORK PROMISED TO ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



The number of victims promised work as a dancer tripled from 2003 to 2004. Generally, the work offered was as a cultural dancer, of traditional Romanian dances.<sup>462</sup> In some cases, such recruitment was legitimate, whereas in others it was not. One victim had migrated previously as a cultural dancer without problems but on her second job, for which she signed a legal contract, she was sent to Greece where she (and four other girls) were forced to sexually serve clients. At least five victims in 2004 and two victims in the first month of 2005 were recruited in this way, signalling a potentially new recruitment strategy.

It is also important to note that 5.9 per cent of victims in 2003 and 12.1 per cent in 2004 accepted work in prostitution. It is unclear whether women were increasingly willing to accept this type of work as an occupation or recruitment for trafficking was increasingly targeting women already engaged in prostitution. If the latter, prevention efforts and safe migration programmes must target prostitutes to make them aware of their rights and options should they be faced with a trafficking situation. It is also critical that they be aware of their legal status if they migrate to engage in prostitution abroad. More generally, in the absence of sustainable, income-generating opportunities in Romania (or outside of Romania as legal migrant workers), women will continue to migrate abroad with all of the attendant risks.

In addition, women may accept work abroad because of poor family and social conditions at home. In many cases, the victim's marital and family status served as a contributor to trafficking. One victim assisted in 2004 was motivated to migrate

<sup>462</sup> Recruitment for cultural dance is a trend noted in other areas of the world. Indonesian women – from West Java and Bali – were recruited as “cultural dancers” to Japan; many were subsequently trafficked into prostitution. See Surtees, 2003: 96-97.

because she sought to escape her abusive partner. While she had reported him to the police, they did not arrest him and she sought escape. In another instance, a married woman accepted a work offer abroad because she and her husband were unable to find work in Romania to support their family.

Trafficking is also facilitated by the frequency and social acceptability of migration in Romania.<sup>463</sup> The model of a successful migrant can serve as a significant push factor for victims. Some parents want their daughters to work abroad. Not only abusive family environments influence girls' decisions to leave; non-abusive parents who think that migration is a viable strategy to succeed in life and to support ones family can also unwittingly make their children vulnerable (Alexandru and Lazaroiu, 2003: 6, 16, 50).

According to one study, vulnerability to trafficking is also shaped by a propensity to break official and informal rules. These vulnerable girls are rather independent and can be seen as "risk-takers". In general, they do not feel close to their families and do not believe in the overriding importance of family. They also do not value education as the means to achieve success, tend to think that money would justify the acceptance of any job and display a lower than average trust in public institutions (Lazaroiu and Alexandru, 2003: 5). Trafficking victims are seldom discussed as adventurous and independent minded, but they are also active decisions makers, whose decision process merits further examination.

A striking number of victims in 2003 – 15.1 per cent – were kidnapped. While this number decreased in 2004 to 2.6 per cent, it is a trend that must be recognized and addressed. It is curious that such overt manifestations of trafficking go undetected despite so much awareness raising effort and training of law enforcement and other authorities. This is significant cause for concern and more analysis of these cases is needed (about routes, use of documents, experiences) to understand why forcibly trafficked women escape detection.

### **Transportation and Movement**

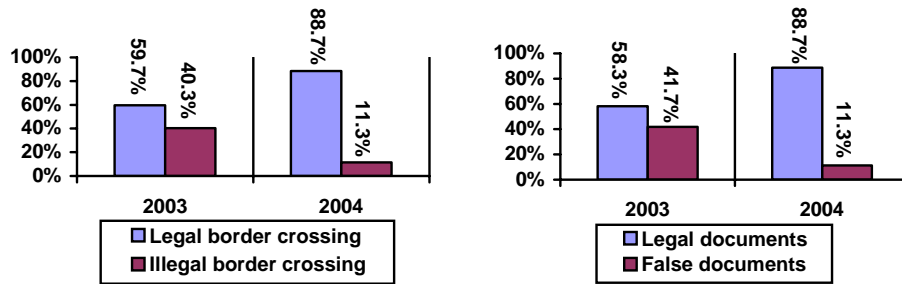
**Border crossings and documents:** Most Romanian women trafficked abroad for sexual exploitation used legal border crossings. This was true in 59.7 per cent of cases in 2003 and in a dramatic 88.7 per cent in 2004.

Similarly, most victims used legal documents when crossing borders, with 2004 seeing a significant increase in this trend, from 58.3 per cent to 88.7 per cent. This is partly due to the increased ease of travel for Romanian citizens into *Schengen* countries. The use of legal border crossings and documents may contribute to the limited number of Romanian victims being identified and assisted, a point highlighted by service providers in Romania.

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<sup>463</sup> In August 2003, ten per cent of the adult population (approximately 1.8 million people) was working abroad and between 12 to 17 per cent of the total number of households had at least one member working abroad since 1990 (Lazaroiu, 2003: 5, 12).

GRAPH 11  
 BORDER CROSSINGS AND LEGAL DOCUMENTS OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS  
 TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



**Transportation routes:** Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation used various transportation routes depending upon the destination country. Those travelling to Balkan countries generally crossed through Serbia and were routed onward from there. Most victims were transported by middlemen to the countries of destination where they were handed over to bar and nightclub owners.

The lifting of *Schengen* visa restrictions facilitated travel to the European Union for Romanian citizens. To cross into the *Schengen* region, victims were generally instructed to declare tourism as the purpose of their travel, thereby legally exiting Romania and entering the transit or destination country. This has masked migration from Romania and largely explains the limited number of victims being identified and assisted compared to the numbers presumed to be trafficked from Romania.

**Destination country:** Romanian victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were trafficked to 22 destination countries in 2003 and 2004. EU countries accounted for 56.1 per cent of destinations in 2004, an increase from 41.9 per cent in 2003.<sup>464</sup> The increasing number of Romanians trafficked to EU countries was probably at least partly linked to the removal of the visa requirements into *Schengen* countries for Romanian citizens, and with them, the chance of identification in the transportation/border-crossing phase of trafficking.

Italy was the primary destination country in 2004, accounting for 29.9 per cent of victims that year, an increase from 22.6 per cent in 2003. The second most common destination in 2004 was Spain,<sup>465</sup> accounting for 15.2 per cent of victims in 2004. This constitutes a sharp rise, from 6.6 per cent of victims assisted in 2003. Some possible explanations for Spain's increasing prominence as a destination country include linguistic and cultural similarities as well as a large Romanian community in Spain. More generally, Spain is a country with high demand for unskilled or semi-skilled migrant workers and there have been recent government-sponsored labour migration programmes between the two countries, which has heightened interest in the country.

<sup>464</sup> The statistics may be higher still, as 17.7 per cent of destination countries in 2003 and 13.2 per cent in 2004 were unknown.

<sup>465</sup> For example, in August 2004, the Spanish national police broke up a Romanian network that had trafficked 13 Romanian women into sexual exploitation in Spain (El Mundo, 2004).

Other new destination countries include Turkey, which did not appear as a destination in 2003 and yet accounted for 3.7 per cent of victims assisted in 2004.<sup>466</sup> Greece is also a new destination, with twice as many victims identified in 2004 as in 2003. The increased identification of victims from these two countries was partly due to their proximity. However, in addition, both countries were increasingly active in efforts to combat trafficking, including the establishment of mechanisms for identification, referral and assistance. As such, increasing numbers may reflect enhanced counter-trafficking effort and capacity more than an actual increase in victims trafficked there.

TABLE 5  
DESTINATION COUNTRIES FOR ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004<sup>467</sup>

Destination Country/Entity	2003	2004
Albania	2	2
Austria	1	0
Belgium	0	1
BiH	9	5
Bulgaria	1	0
Croatia	0	1
France	4	0
Germany	5	0
Greece	5	10
Ireland	1	1
Italy	37	49
The Province of Kosovo <sup>468</sup>	7	5
Macedonia	46	7
Netherlands	2	1
Poland	0	2
Portugal	0	3
Romania <sup>469</sup>	0	12
Serbia and Montenegro	10	3
Spain	11	25
Switzerland	0	2
Turkey	0	6
United Kingdom	4	0
Unknown <sup>470</sup>	22	29
Total	167	164

Of interest is the decreased number of victims being trafficked to the Balkan countries. In 2003, 38.1 per cent of victims were trafficked to Macedonia, while only 4.3 per cent

<sup>466</sup> This was consistent with the emergence of Turkey as a destination country for Moldovan citizens.

<sup>467</sup> Destination countries for victims identified in the police database included Italy (105), Spain (89), France (30), Poland (20), Czech Republic (14), Germany (11), Romania (13), Hungary (8), Austria (6), Portugal (6), Greece (4), Saudi Arabia (3), Belgium (2) and Serbia (2). In some cases, victims were trafficked to more than one destination. As 81.8 per cent of victims in the police database were trafficked for sexual exploitation, this information provides us with valuable insight about destination countries not captured in the assisted caseload. Other destination countries for Romanian victims trafficked for sexual exploitation in isolated cases included Cambodia, Canada or South Africa (ENACT and STC, 2004: 61), although these destinations did not appear in the assisted caseload.

<sup>468</sup> While Kosovo is a province within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, it is separated out as a distinct entity in this report in an effort to analyze the specific trafficking context of the province as well as to provide a more detailed picture of trafficking patterns, trends and profiles within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro and the region.

<sup>469</sup> This designates cases of internal trafficking. In some cases, victims were trafficked only internally, while, in other instances, victims were trafficked internally as a first step in international trafficking.

<sup>470</sup> Sometimes, the victim's country of destination was not recorded by the service provider. This was generally so when the victim was assisted for only a very short time and it was difficult to document comprehensive case files.



were trafficked there in 2004. Similar observations can be made about Serbia and Montenegro and BiH. This represented a substantial change.

In 2003, 7.3 per cent of victims were trafficked internally. This was an increase from 2003 when no victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation within the country. This may signal the rise of internal trafficking in Romania but more information is needed. Research on prostitution in the Romanian context would be a valuable starting point in identifying who had been trafficked.

Finally, given the increased number of victims trafficked to EU countries, there is a need to collect victim data from these destinations. If Romanian victims remain in destination countries under residency options, this lack of data inhibit an understanding of the scope of trafficking and camouflage the extent of trafficking from the country.

### **Victims' Trafficking Experiences**

**Forms of trafficking:** In 2003 and 2004, Romanian victims were forced to provide sexual services in a range of locations – in brothels, in bars and nightclubs, on the street, through escort agencies and in private apartments. In one striking case reported in the media, a woman was trafficked for prostitution over the Internet in Romania, kept in an apartment and forced to sell sex over the Internet.<sup>471</sup>

How victims were exploited was very much tied to their destination country as detailed below:

- *France and Italy:* Victims were generally forced to work in street prostitution. Some women in Italy were also exploited in private apartments. Minor victims of sexual exploitation in Italy were generally kept in hotels to avoid detection by police.
- *Germany and Austria:* Victims tended to be based in bars and brothels.
- *Balkans:* Victims were increasingly kept in private homes or apartments – more hidden from the police – and either forced to perform sexual services at this location or transported to the client.
- *Turkey:* Victims generally lived in hotels and their trafficker or supervisor took them directly to the client's house or to a hotel room. Arrangements for sexual services were made by telephone. In three exceptional circumstances, victims were forced to provide sexual services on the street.

One emergent form of trafficking was the exploitation of women in private bars and apartments. In a minority of cases – less than 15 per cent – victims were sexually exploited in private houses and bars. This has particularly been true in the Balkan region, although there have been similar cases in Italy and Spain. Generally, victims were helped to escape by a client and then became his “privately owned girlfriend”. The guise of a relationship led victims to tend to develop strong emotional attachments, increasing their acceptance of the situation and lowering their motivation to escape. This arrangement also placed obstacles in the way of reintegration, including a pronounced risk of re-trafficking. Some Romanian victims in the Balkans were also

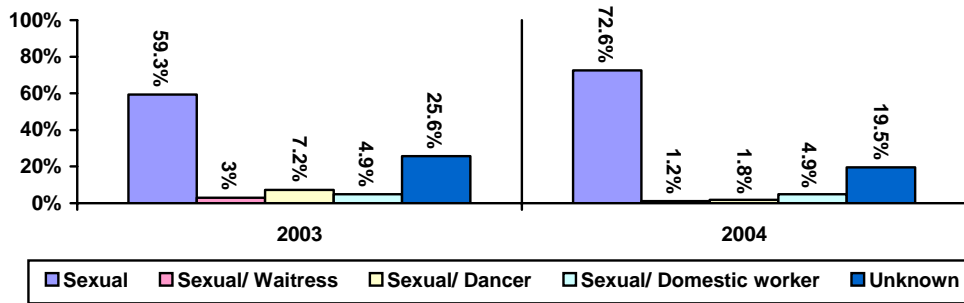
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<sup>471</sup> Interview with Gina Maria Stoian, Adpare, 25 January 2005, Bucharest, Romania. Similar signs have been identified in BiH and Moldova. See individual country reports for more detail.

kept privately by a single man who required them to provide sexual services to him upon demand, often along with domestic labour.

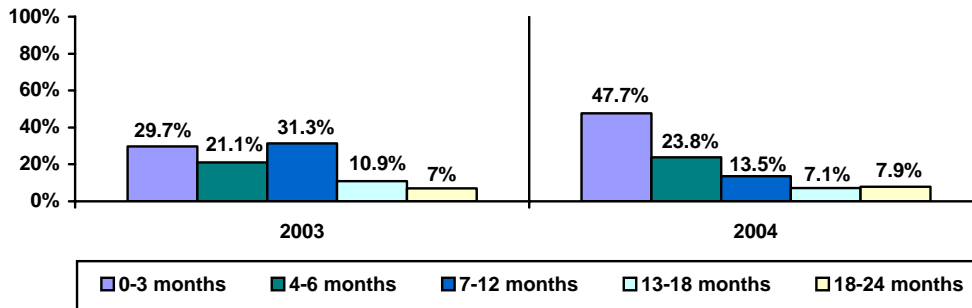
In addition, a minority of victims endured multiple forms of exploitation, as detailed in the graphs below. Generally, this dual exploitation involved a combination of sexual exploitation and labour tasks, such as dancer, waitress or domestic worker. In 2004, 1.2 per cent of victims were required to beg as well as provide sexual services.<sup>472</sup> Dual forms of exploitation were most frequently encountered among women trafficked to the Balkan region. Victims were forced to work both as prostitutes and as waitresses, cleaners or bartenders in the restaurant where they provided sexual services. In other cases, victims exploited for sex were obliged to perform domestic labour for this employer. By contrast, in EU countries dual forms of exploitation were less common.

GRAPH 12  
ASSISTED ROMANIANS SUFFERING DUAL FORMS OF EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



**Length of time trafficked:** Most victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation assisted in 2003 (82.1 per cent) were trafficked for periods of less than one year. Only 18 per cent of victims were trafficked for periods of more than one year.

GRAPH 13  
LENGTH OF TIME TRAFFICKED OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



In 2004, victims were increasingly trafficked for shorter periods; 71.5 per cent were trafficked for periods of less than six months, 47.7 per cent from 0 to 3 months and 23.8 per cent from four to six months.

<sup>472</sup> The rate of dual forms of exploitation may be higher still with 26.4 per cent of victims in 2003 and 19.5 per cent in 2004 not having provided sufficient detail on this subject to draw conclusions.

Victims trafficked for shorter times are likely to be less traumatized and physically ill at identification, reducing the assistance needed as well as the amount of time required to stabilize the victim prior to return to Romania. Conversely, long periods spent trafficked create pronounced trauma as well as, in some cases, dependency on and affection for the trafficker.<sup>473</sup> Attention to how this relationship and dependency affects the victim's recovery is essential. Long periods of time spent trafficked may also affect victims in other ways. Separation from family and friends, living outside of a family environment and being under extreme stress can impede victims' recovery and reintegration.

Time spent trafficked fluctuates with a number of factors, including the level of repression endured by the victim, identification skills and priorities of law enforcement at the destination and the accessibility of services and assistance. Where victims are trafficked for shorter times, it may be due to amplified and improved identification efforts. Further analysis of this indicator, cross-correlated with details of the identification process, would be valuable in assessing law enforcement's identification efforts as well as the efficacy of outreach measures by social services and civil society.

**Living and working conditions:** Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation worked in various locations – bars, brothels, streets, private homes, etc. These locations largely determine victims' working conditions; for example, work on the street often means greater abuse by pimps and police.

The majority of victims in 2003 and 2004 reported “poor” or “very poor” working and living conditions. One victim reported being fed only once a day and being regularly abused. Nevertheless, Romanian victims trafficked for sexual exploitation reported improvements in their living and working environments from 2003 to 2004. Fewer victims in 2004 reported “very poor” living conditions (from 51.5 per cent in 2003 to 43.1 per cent in 2004) and almost three times as many assisted victims reported “good” living conditions, from 4.4 per cent in 2003 to 11.1 per cent in 2004. Despite signs that conditions have improved in the past year, the majority of victims still lived in negative conditions, with 53.3 per cent in 2004 reporting “poor” living conditions.

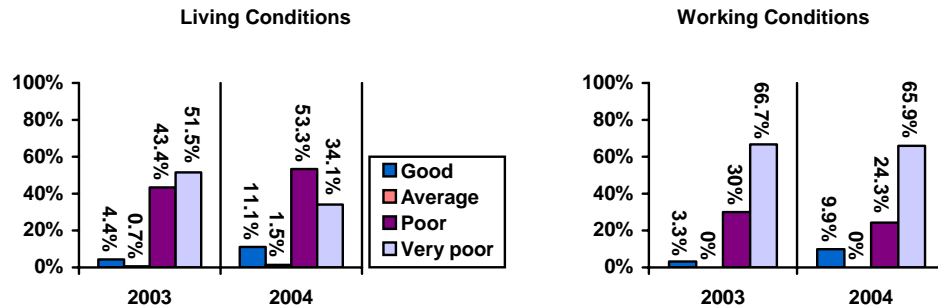
Similarly, more victims in 2004 reported “good” working conditions (9.9 per cent) than in the previous year (3.3 per cent). However, 2004 also saw similar numbers of victims reporting “very poor” working conditions, 65.9 per cent in 2004 and 66.7 per cent in 2003.

More generally, service providers report the diminished use of violence and increased use of manipulation tactics, such as paying a minimal salary, providing clothing and even allowing the victim some leisure time and freedom of movement.

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<sup>473</sup> Many psychologists referred to this phenomenon, a trend akin to “Stockholm Syndrome”. Stockholm Syndrome describes the behaviour of kidnap victims who, over time, become sympathetic to their captors. The name derives from a 1973 hostage incident in Stockholm, Sweden at the end of which several kidnap victims resisted rescue attempts and refused to testify against their captors.

GRAPH 14  
LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



These findings are generally consistent with observations in other countries, signifying what might be deemed the “professionalization” of the trafficking industry in which traffickers make a strategic decision to use more subtle forms of control and coercion. These improved conditions may lower the motivation of victims to exit their trafficking situation and to access assistance. As well, victims may be less likely to recognize themselves as victims, which influences their feelings of responsibility for the work they undertook while trafficked.

According to one study, a common feature of trafficking from Romania is debt bondage (ILO-IPEC, 2004: 14). The extent of debt bondage as a mechanism in trafficking in persons from, through or within SEE has been little considered to date. It is an area which merits further attention, as the issue of debt not only serves a means of control in the destination country, but also as an obstacle to reintegration when the debt – to family, a local moneylender, the trafficker – discourages victims from returning to their home communities.

**Abuse:** All victims suffered some form of abuse while trafficked. Moreover, accounts of abuse were compelling. One victim trafficked to Macedonia was regularly abused by her various “owners” – beaten with a rubber stick, threatened with a gun and beaten about her head until unconscious. However, over time, reports of multiple forms of abuse declined – from seven victims in 2003 and none in 2004.

TABLE 6  
ABUSE SUFFERED BY ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004

Form of Abuse Suffered	2003	2004
Sexual	96	108
Physical	34	20
Psychological	9	7
Sexual, psychological, and physical	3	0
Sexual and psychological	2	0
Sexual and physical	2	0
Unanswered	21	29
Total	167	164

Most service providers observed that abuse suffered was closely tied to where victims were trafficked. Those trafficked to the Balkans – Serbia, BiH and Macedonia – suffered more frequent and more severe levels of abuse than those trafficked to European Union countries, such as Italy, Spain and Germany. Victims trafficked to the

Balkans and EU countries are therefore likely to have somewhat different assistance needs.

**Mental and physical well-being:** A victim's mental and physical well-being is significantly affected by their specific trafficking experience. In the case of Romanian victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, the affects were myriad.

- *STIs and reproductive health:* Overall, victims had gynaecological infections and many tested positive for some form of STI upon arrival. However, this number decreased over time as more thorough medical treatment was available in many destination countries. On the other hand, victims who were infected suffered more serious diseases such as syphilis and condyloma.<sup>474</sup>
- *Drug and alcohol dependency:* Alcohol and narcotic addiction has not proven a significant problem to date, with only one victim in 2003 addicted to alcohol and one in 2004 addicted to drugs. One victim underwent detoxification in the Netherlands prior to return, while the other was assisted through an outpatient facility in Bucharest.
- *HIV/AIDS:* To date, no cases of HIV were documented among assisted Romanian victims. HIV tests are available and service providers encourage victims to take the test. Two victims in 2003 were infected with hepatitis B.
- *Pregnancy:* An estimated 15 per cent of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were either pregnant upon return or had undergone an abortion a short time before returning to Romania. Such victims – young mothers who in many cases have been severely traumatized – require special and longer-term assistance not only in terms of recovery but also toward equipping them with good parenting skills. In addition, some consideration should be given to the possible long-term psychological impact of the often violent circumstances in which the child was conceived on the mother/child relationship.
- *Psychological well-being:* Victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 suffered depression, anxiety, aggression, insomnia, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other psychological problems. Further, the IOM rehabilitation centre reported two psychiatric cases in 2003 as well as another two cases in 2004. More generally, victims expressed acute feelings of guilt and shame as a result of their trafficking experience, sometimes due to the type of work undertaken or sometimes due to their inability to earn sufficient money to assist their families. These feelings are manifested in various ways, including depression, violence and aggression, which victims may target toward their families or children. These feelings and behaviours are significant obstacles in the reintegration process, further exacerbated by the lack of psychological support and assistance in the rural part of the country, where the majority of victims originated.

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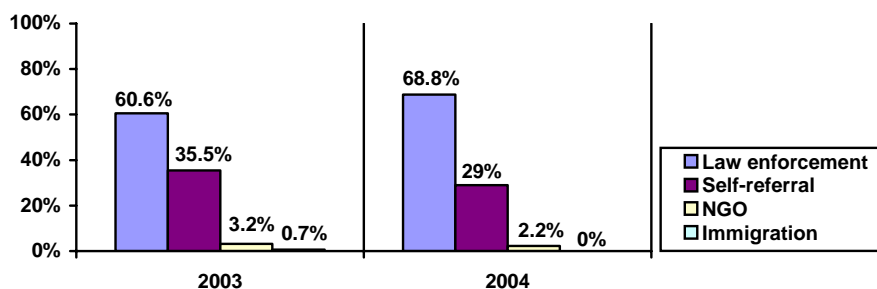
<sup>474</sup> Of victims assisted by IOM in 2003, two were infected with candida, two suffered from syphilis, one was infected with condyloma vaginal and five victims had vaginal infections with trichomonas. In 2004, two victims suffered from syphilis, one was infected with condyloma vaginal, three victims had vaginal infections with candid and four victims had vaginal infections with trichomonas.

The long-term health implications of trafficking remain a gap in our understanding and, as such, in our ability to respond. There is a need for more information sharing among service providers as well as long-term follow-up health care for victims. However, such measures must be conducted in ways that do not further stigmatize trafficking victims and which guard their privacy.

## Post Trafficking Experience

**Victim identification and referral:** Romanian victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were identified mainly by law enforcement authorities in both 2003 and 2004.<sup>475</sup> However, a significant minority of victims were self-referred. In some cases, this involved accessing assistance in the destination country, while, in other cases, victims sought assistance following their return to Romania.

GRAPH 15  
IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



To a large degree, this increase in self-referrals is linked to the destination country of victims. Previously, primary destination countries were in the Balkan region and victims were usually identified by law enforcement. However, in 2004, more victims were returned from EU countries where NGOs are very active in social interventions and have programmes designed to reach out to and identify the victims.

**Re-trafficking:** In Romania, 13.3 per cent of victims assisted in 2003 had been trafficked previously. In 2004, this decreased to 4.4 per cent of assisted victims. It is unclear to what we can attribute this decline. Ideally, it should signal the effectiveness of re-integration programmes and the development of sustainable livelihoods in sources areas.

Re-trafficking poses a serious risk to women trafficked for sexual exploitation. Some victims reported attempting to migrate again shortly after returning because of the need to earn money, lack of opportunity, problems in their home or dissatisfaction with the material conditions at home, which are often poorer than those faced while trafficked. Another contributor to re-trafficking may be the difficulties faced in the reintegration process including stigma and shame associated with sexual exploitation. Another factor is whether or not the victim incurred debt as a result of trafficking and needs to repay

<sup>475</sup> Victims assisted by Reaching Out in 2003, while identified by law enforcement, were often identified through the intervention of clients. In a number of instances, clients contacted the police on the victim's behalf or provided her with contact information for the embassy to enable her to access assistance (Kvinnoforum, 2003: 8). As such, clients can and often were also a means of identification and referral.

this debt to the trafficker or moneylender. Where victims incur debt, the need to recoup this money can fuel their decision to migrate again.

It is difficult to know the exact rate of re-trafficking. Case monitoring by service providers lasts generally no more than 12 months. As well, data regarding re-trafficking rates is based solely on statements made by trafficked victims, who may choose not to reveal that they were trafficked previously if they feel it might diminish possibilities for assistance. For more reliable re-trafficking rates, assistance providers must increase the length and scope of the monitoring component within reintegration programmes as well as establish mechanisms for exchange of information on shared caseloads. Further investigation into predominant push factors for re-trafficking is critical in developing appropriate sustainable reintegration programmes.

**Assistance declined:** There is insufficient information about this indicator to draw substantive conclusions. Rather, we rely on experiential accounts from service providers who reported some instances of victims referred to them declining assistance. In one case, all victims returned from one of the Balkan countries in 2003 declined assistance. When one of the victims later accepted assistance, she explained that she and her friends had initially declined assistance because of the poor treatment that they had received while in a shelter in the destination country. It is unclear if this was dissatisfaction with the shelter model itself, with the specifics of the shelter model in the Balkans (i.e. closed shelters for foreign victims, limited activities, etc.) or mistreatment by shelter staff. However, this example makes vivid the need for monitoring of and quality control in all assistance structures.

In addition, six Romanian victims identified in Serbia in 2003 declined assistance. All had been working in the same bar and some had been trafficked there in the past. Over time, they started earning money and were granted some freedom of movement, both of which were part of the owner's strategy to discourage escape. Consequently, they started perceiving themselves as employed under good conditions, rather than as trafficking victims. Once they were referred for assistance, they declined it and opted instead for deportation.

### ***2.1.2 Profiles and Experiences of Romanian Victims Trafficked for Labour, Begging and Delinquency***

The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of Romanian victims trafficked for labour exploitation, begging and/or delinquency.

TABLE 7  
ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR,  
BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004

	2003	2004
Labour exploitation	22	14
Begging and delinquency	5	9

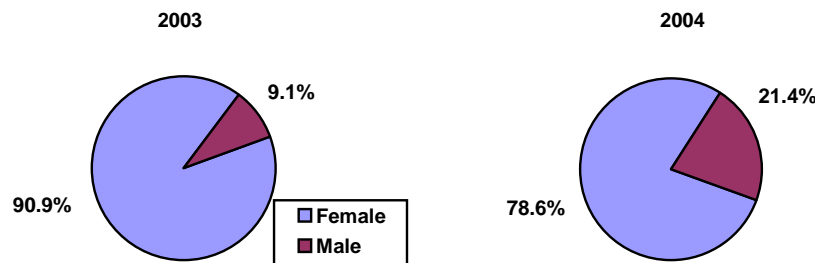
Given the limited number of assisted victims for these forms of trafficking, it is impossible to draw statistical conclusions. Nevertheless, the following provides some insight into the background and experiences of these victims as well as establishes some baseline information from which to chart changes and development. Wherever possible and appropriate, distinctions are made between the different forms of trafficking.

Significantly, the database maintained by the Resource Centre for Combating Trafficking in Persons includes 46 cases of trafficking for labour exploitation. While some of these cases may overlap with the assisted cases presented here, it is evident that there are more cases of trafficking for labour exploitation than those that have been assisted. This may indicate that victims of labour exploitation do not access assistance and the reasons for this must be considered. It may be because victims of labour exploitation see themselves as “unlucky migrant workers” rather than trafficking victims. It may also be because the assistance framework, primarily designed to meet the assistance needs of victims of sexual exploitation, does not offer appropriate services and support for victims of labour trafficking. Another possibility is that victims of labour trafficking are not always referred for assistance upon identification by law enforcement, in which case, efforts must be made to improve the referral process for all forms of trafficking.

### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics

**Sex:** The majority of victims of trafficking for labour exploitation assisted in 2003 and 2004 were women. There were, however, also instances when male victims of labour exploitation were identified and assisted – two in 2003 and three in 2004.

GRAPH 16  
SEX OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



In part, the low representation of men among assisted victims can be attributed to the tailoring of identification and assistance programmes to female victims. As well, men may be less inclined to access assistance, as seeking help may conflict with established images of manhood as strong and self-supporting. Nevertheless, men are trafficked for labour exploitation and must be considered a target group for assistance. That service providers in 2004 have identified male victims signals the emergence of a more nuanced identification procedure in both countries of destination and Romania.

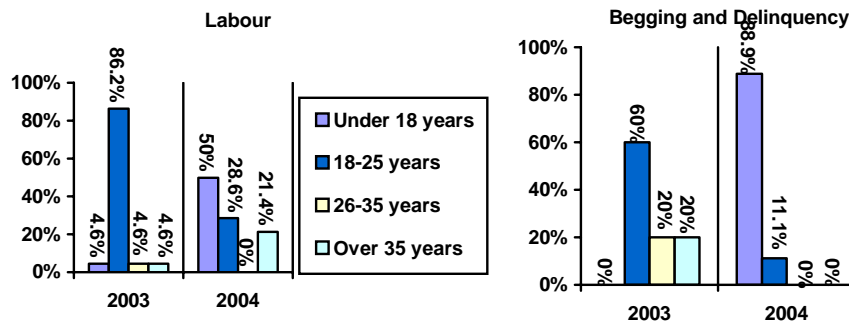
Approximately half of victims trafficked for begging and delinquency were male. Two of the five victims assisted in 2003 were male, while four of the nine victims assisted in 2004 were male. This stands in contrast to Romanian victims trafficked for sexual exploitation or labour, most of whom were women. It also contrasts with the gender of assisted victims for trafficking for begging and delinquency in other countries in SEE, where most victims were women or girls.

**Age:** In 2003 and 2004, the ages of victims trafficked for labour varied substantially. The majority of victims in 2003 were between 18 and 25 years, with only a minority of



minors (4.6 per cent) identified.<sup>476</sup> In addition, a minority were between 26-35 years (4.6 per cent) and over 35 years of age (4.6 per cent). A spike in the number of minor victims was seen in 2004, from 4.6 per cent in 2003 to 50 per cent.<sup>477</sup> Similarly, in 2004, more victims were over 35 years, from 4.6 per cent in 2003 to 21.4 per cent.

GRAPH 17  
AGE AT IDENTIFICATION OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR  
LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004



Similarly, the age of victims for begging and delinquency changed dramatically from 2003 to 2004. In 2003, assisted victims trafficked for begging and delinquency were all adults, one of whom was over 35 years of age. However, in 2004, 88.9 per cent of assisted victims were minors.<sup>478</sup>

It is unclear what accounts for this dramatic change. That half of all assisted victims in 2004 were minors is cause for concern. Special consideration must be given to their specific assistance needs. Also striking was the number of older victims, an age group not generally represented among trafficking victims. Both findings flag the need for programmes tailored to these specific age groups.

**Ethnicity:** There was limited information available on this indicator, as service providers do not systematically record this information as part of case management. As a general observation, Salvati Copii asserts that minors of Roma ethnicity were heavily represented among victims trafficked for labour, begging or delinquency.<sup>479</sup> Further, data from a qualitative study of trafficking in Romanian minors documented that 14.6 per cent of victims were of Roma ethnicity (ILO-IPEC, 2003b: 20). The link between this form of trafficking and ethnicity merits further examination.<sup>480</sup>

<sup>476</sup> This is potentially an underestimation as it documents the victim's age at identification rather than at recruitment. Some victims who were identified as adults may have been minors when originally trafficked. Unfortunately, most service providers do not systematically record the victim's age at recruitment, making it difficult to calculate accurately the number of trafficked minors.

<sup>477</sup> These findings stand in sharp contrast to the victims of trafficking for labour exploitation documented in the police database for 2004, all of whom were adults. Ten of the 46 (21.7 per cent) victims were between 18 and 25 years of age, while the remaining 36 victims (78.3 per cent) were over 25 years of age. The disparity between assisted victims and the police database raises questions about whether the age of victims makes them more (or less) likely to be offered, access or accept assistance.

<sup>478</sup> Interestingly, only two of the ten cases of begging and delinquency in the police trafficking database were minors. The majority were over 25 years of age.

<sup>479</sup> Interview with Daniela Nicolaescu and Daniela Munteanu, Salvati Copii, Romania, January 2005.

<sup>480</sup> For further information, see *Ethnicity* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Romanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

**Area of Origin:** Most victims trafficked for labour exploitation were recruited in urban rather than rural areas, 71.4 per cent in 2003 and 70 per cent in 2004. This is consistent with findings from victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. The precise areas of origin are detailed below.

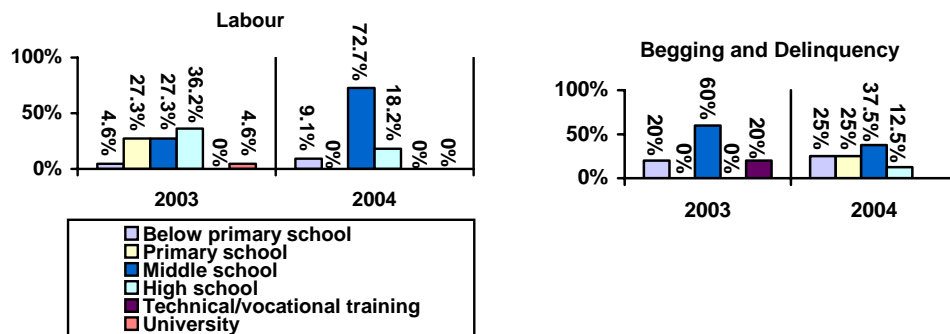
TABLE 8  
AREAS OF ORIGIN OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004<sup>481</sup>

Area of Origin	2003	2004
Moldova	14	4
Transilvania	1	0
Muntenia	5	1
Banat	0	4
Dobrogea	0	1
Oltenia	1	0
Total	21	10

Victims of trafficking for begging and delinquency originated from both rural and urban areas. In 2003, all victims were from urban areas, while in 2004, 50 per cent were from rural areas and 50 per cent were from urban areas. Areas of origin included Banat and Muntenia in 2003 and Moldova, Banat and Dobrogea in 2004.

**Education:** All Romanian victims trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency attended some formal schooling. However, overall they had low education, including, in some cases, less than primary education. Low educational attainment, at least in 2004, is reflective of the low age of victims.

GRAPH 18  
EDUCATION OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR,  
BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004



However, a number of victims had high school as well as university education. In both years and for both forms of trafficking, most victims had either primary or middle school education<sup>482</sup>

<sup>481</sup> These areas of origin reflect only the IOM caseload, although this accounts for the majority of victims in 2003 and 7.1 per cent in 2004. According to the database of the Resource Centre for Combating Trafficking in Persons within the Directorate for Countering Organized Crime and Anti-Drugs in Bucharest, the majority of its 302 victims originated from Moldova (104 cases), Transilvania (89 cases), Muntenia (86 cases), Dobrogea (12 cases), Banat (10 cases) and Oltenia (3 cases). Although these areas of origin were not specific of trafficking for labour exploitation and only 15.23 per cent of cases in the database were related to this form of trafficking, they give some indication of source areas within the country.

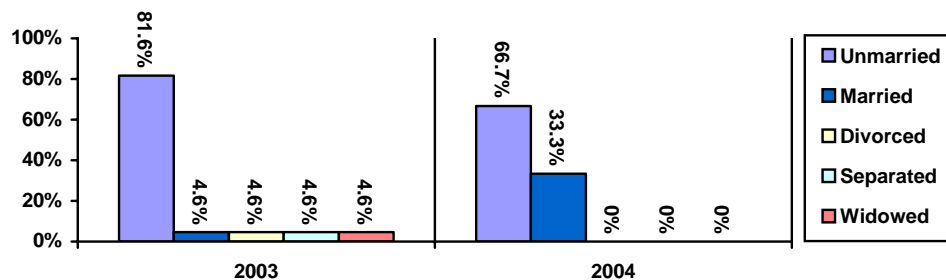
These statistics highlight the diverse educational attainment of trafficking victims and reinforce the importance of awareness raising at various levels within the Romanian educational system as well as through informal channels. For further discussion of the relationship between education and trafficking in the Romanian context, see *Education* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Romanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

**Mental and physical disabilities:**<sup>483</sup> Among victims trafficked for labour exploitation in 2003 and 2004, no cases of mental or physical disabilities were recorded. Among victims of trafficking for begging and delinquency, there was inadequate data to draw conclusions. In 2003, at least one of five victims had a physical disability. However, there was no data about this indicator in 2004.

Other sources, however, flag the possibility of a link between trafficking and disability. According to one research report, 21 victims trafficked abroad for begging were disabled (ILO-IPEC, 2004:13). Generally, in Romania, persons with disabilities face social stigma, a lack of specialized services and insufficient financial support, all of which may exacerbate vulnerability to trafficking. The main rationale for migration in the case of one physically disabled male victim, assisted in 2003, was his inability to find employment. If a correlation between the two variables is established, service providers will be faced with the need to access and devise appropriate services for disabled victims. This difficulty has been faced in Serbia. Sharing of strategies between countries may be valuable.

**Marital and family status:** While the majority of victims trafficked for labour in both 2003 and 2004 were unmarried, their percentage decreased markedly in 2004. In addition, there were far more married victims in 2004 (33.3 per cent) than in the previous year (4.6 per cent). More married victims in the caseload may indicate a different profile of victims being trafficked for labour exploitation in 2004, slightly older with families to support.

GRAPH 19  
MARITAL STATUS OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION,  
2003 AND 2004



<sup>482</sup> Middle school education is slightly lower than average education levels of the Romanian population generally. According to the UN Statistics Division (2004), school life expectancy for females (number of years of formal schooling) in Romania is 12 years.

<sup>483</sup> In 2001, the number of disabled children in Romania was 58,688, of which 1,058 lived in special residential care institutions (ILO-IPEC, 2003b: 7).

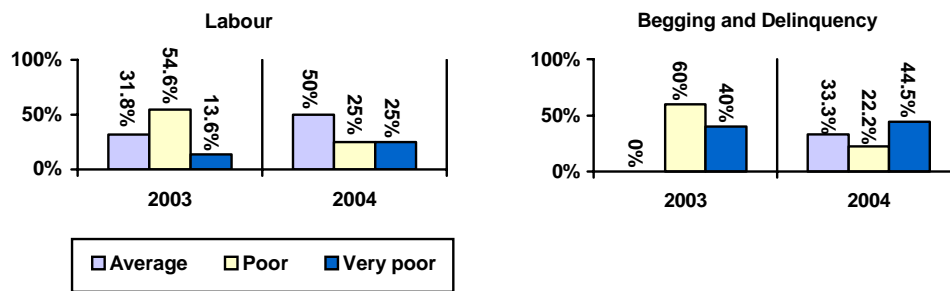
Victims trafficked for begging and/or delinquency were generally unmarried, consistent with their young age. In 2003, 80 per cent of victims were unmarried and 20 per cent divorced. In 2004, 88.9 per cent were unmarried and 11.1 per cent were in a common-law relationship.

In 2003, three of 22 victims of trafficking for labour (13.6 per cent) had children. Two victims were single mothers, constituting 9.1 per cent of victims. In 2004, six of the 14 victims (42.9 per cent) had children and two victims (14.3 per cent) were single mothers, a slight increase from the previous year. Among victims of begging and delinquency, three victims in 2003 (60 per cent) had children and were single parents. In 2004, one victim was a parent (11.1 per cent), but was living in a common-law relationship. As such, there were no single parents in 2004 among victims of begging and delinquency.

The presence of mothers, and especially single mothers, highlights the potential social-economic vulnerability of this group in Romania as well as the need for programmes within sending countries that can address the needs of children growing up without parental care. For further discussion of the link between family status and trafficking, see *Marital and family status* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Romanian victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

**Economic Status:**<sup>484</sup> Overall, victims of trafficking for labour, begging and delinquency came from “poor” economic backgrounds. As such, there was a strong correlation between a victim’s economic status and the risk of trafficking.

GRAPH 20  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR  
LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004



Also striking, however, is that in 2003 and 2004 more victims of labour were from “average” economic backgrounds than from “very poor” economic backgrounds. This differs from victims of sexual exploitation who, in 2003 and 2004, were more commonly “poor” or “very poor”. Further, in 2004, one-third of victims trafficked for begging and delinquency were from “average” economic backgrounds. These findings are consistent with recent research on vulnerability to trafficking in Romania, which found that intending migrants do not usually have a very low financial status. Moreover, in terms of an objective measurement of income, there is little difference

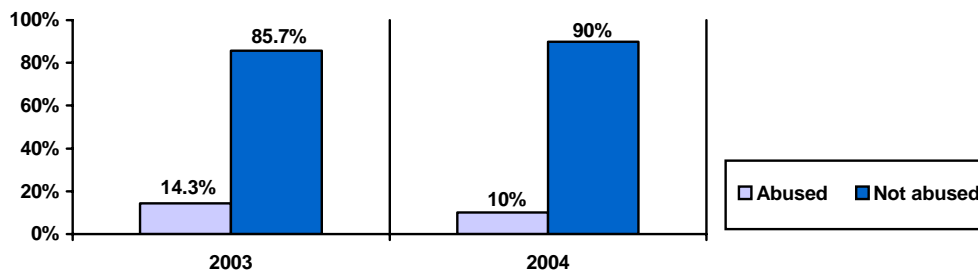
<sup>484</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim’s self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

between households of vulnerable girls and average households (Alexandru and Lazariu, 2003: 34).

This finding contradicts the common assertion that poverty and economics is the central contributor to trafficking. It would be worthwhile to investigate further the particular trafficking circumstances of victims from average economic backgrounds in an effort to pinpoint the alternative contributors to these forms of trafficking. For further discussion of this topic, see *Economic status* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Romanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

**Family and social relations:**<sup>485</sup> The family environment of victims trafficked for labour exploitation appears to be more stable than among those trafficked for sexual exploitation, with lower rates of domestic violence and abuse in the home. Domestic abuse was suffered by 14.3 per cent of victims in 2003 and ten per cent in 2004. Where violence occurs, it can potentially contribute to an individual's willingness to migrate. However, the majority of victims did not suffer domestic abuse, highlighting the need to look beyond the issue of family strife for explanations of trafficking vulnerability, particularly in cases of labour exploitation.

GRAPH 21  
DOMESTIC ABUSE AND VIOLENCE – ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



It may also be worth considering the number of victims of labour exploitation originating from single-parent families as they are often assumed to be more socially and economically vulnerable or more prone to tension and problems. The degree to which this family structure plays a role in trafficking is unclear. On one hand, some single-parent families are economically vulnerable and/or are rife with conflict, while others are stable, healthy and economically secure environments. In 2003, 14.3 per cent of victims and 20 per cent in 2004 came from single-parent families.

Among victims trafficked for begging and delinquency, the small number of assisted victims limits the conclusions that can be drawn. From what information is available (only six of the 14 victims assisted in 2003 and 2004 responded), equal numbers of victims came from homes where there was domestic violence (three victims) as those who reported no conflict within their family (three victims). Although lacking

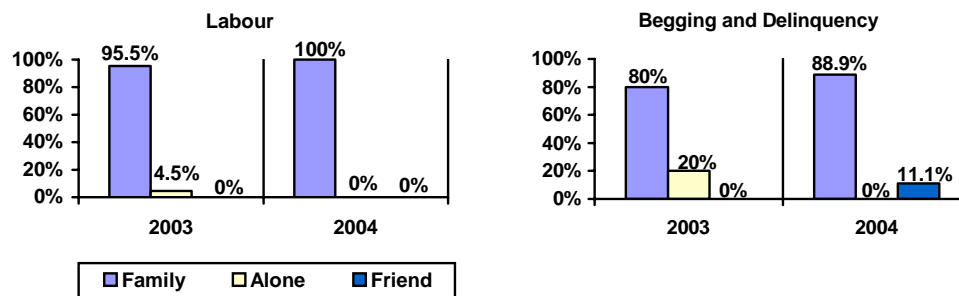
<sup>485</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims' self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim's individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim's relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.

statistical significance, these findings do suggest that victims of trafficking for begging and delinquency originated from households where there were both good and bad family relations and that both profiles of victims must be considered in terms of prevention and protection efforts.

## Recruitment Experiences

**Living situation at recruitment:** In both years, the vast majority of victims trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency resided with their families at recruitment. This finding, consistent with many countries in the region, flags the need for prevention programmes that target families as a whole alongside those for specific target groups. Prevention should include not only awareness raising efforts but also more efforts directed at reducing vulnerability, such as employment placement and vocational training for “at-risk” groups. However, to effectively undertake such prevention efforts more specific information is needed about the composition of the family at recruitment. This information could also be usefully cross-correlated with other indicators such as economic background and family relations.

GRAPH 22  
LIVING SITUATION AT RECRUITMENT, ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR  
LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004



Strikingly, no victims were residing in an institution at recruitment in spite of the high number of children in Romania in state institutions. However, as is discussed in a previous section,<sup>486</sup> the way in which data is collected does not always accurately portray this indicator. Some victims living alone or with friends may have been raised in an institution. This is corroborated by the findings of one survey in which one victim who had been raised in a state residential care institution was living on the streets at recruitment and had done so for years (ILO-IPEC, 2003b: 20). This was also noted among Romanian victims of sexual exploitation.

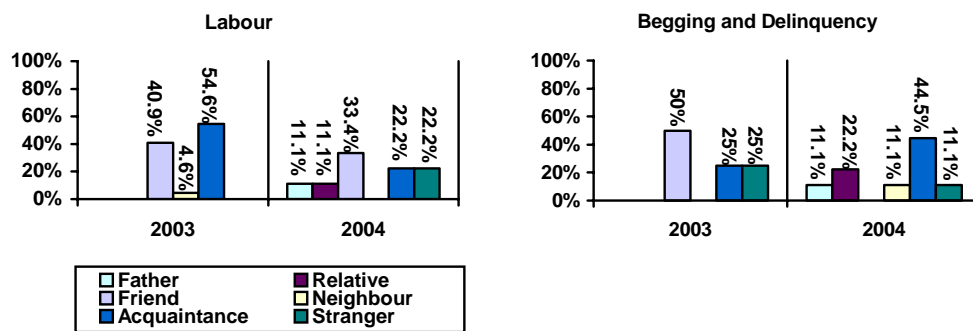
**Working situation at recruitment:** In most cases of trafficking for labour exploitation, unemployment was a central issue. Victims were unemployed in 81.8 per cent of cases in 2003 and 100 per cent of cases in 2004. In addition, almost without exception, unemployment was the main reason for the decision to migrate. In the handful of cases in which victims were working at recruitment, they were employed as labourers, drivers, farm workers and, in one case, as a prostitute.

<sup>486</sup> See *Living situation at recruitment* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Romanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

All victims of trafficking for begging and/or delinquency were unemployed at recruitment. To some degree, this can be attributed to the young age of victims who, ideally, should have been in school rather than the labour market. Nevertheless, there appears to be a strong correlation between unemployment and vulnerability to these forms of trafficking.

**Recruiter:** Most recruiters in 2003 were male (81.8 per cent), a composition that changed in 2004, with almost equal numbers of male (55.6 per cent) and female (44.4 per cent) recruiters.<sup>487</sup> Among victims of trafficking for begging and delinquency, men were recruiters in 100 per cent of cases.

GRAPH 23  
RELATIONSHIP TO RECRUITER OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED  
LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004



A victim's relationship to the recruiter can be a central facilitator in recruitment. Where the victim has an existing relationship with the recruiter, he or she is less likely to be suspicious of the work offered and promises made. Certainly, this is borne out among Romanian victims of labour exploitation, begging and delinquency, most of whom were recruited by someone known to and trusted by them.

Moreover, many Romanian minors trafficked for begging and delinquency are accompanied by parents or relatives. Some parents stay with the child in the destination country, while others return to Romania, leaving the child with relatives or friends.<sup>488</sup> This issue of family involvement in trafficking raises questions about reintegration possibilities as well as the risk of re-trafficking. In the context of trafficking for begging and delinquency, where many victims were minors, attention must be paid to these family dynamics.

Recruiters for labour were generally of Romanian nationality – 90.9 per cent in 2003 and 88.9 per cent in 2004. In all but one case assisted in 2004 (where the recruiter was from BiH), all victims of trafficking for begging and delinquency were recruited by a Romanian national.

<sup>487</sup> This is consistent with recruiters for trafficking for sexual exploitation. In 2003, 71.5 per cent of victims were recruited by males, a percentage which decreased to 61.1 per cent in 2004.

<sup>488</sup> Interview with Daniela Nicolaescu and Daniela Munteanu, Salvati Copii, 27 January 2005, Romania; cf. ENACT and STC 2004: 64.

Prevention programmes must take into account the role that trust and contacts play in both the migration and trafficking process and include information about recruiters coming from the victim's close environment.

**Reasons for leaving home country and type of work promised:** Reasons victims left home did not differ substantially from those of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation. They included low income, lack of employment and limited opportunities at home. Victims generally left home because of an offer of work. Victims trafficked into labour were offered a range of service sector jobs – as waitresses (11 cases), dancer (one case) and babysitter/nanny (two cases). This does not differ from the type of work offered to victims of sexual exploitation. In addition, eight victims trafficked for labour were offered work as labourers. Victims trafficked for begging were offered begging (2), petty crime/criminal activity (4) and labour (3).

In addition, three victims trafficked for begging and delinquency were recruited with promises of marriage. This recruitment strategy has also been noted in Albania. It would be valuable to learn more about this method of recruitment, including the promises made, the precise relationship to the recruiter, etc. to better understand how to combat it. While the numbers involved are few, it is a technique also used for victims of sexual exploitation as well as in other countries in the region.

Also salient is the normative aspect of migration abroad. Romanian society tends to view migration, legal and illegal, as a socially acceptable economic strategy, which influences a victim's willingness to accept work. Further, some people may be pressured by family to migrate to fulfil what may be seen as a responsibility or obligation to family. For further detail, please see section: *Reasons for leaving home country in: Profiles and Experiences of Romanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation.*

### **Transportation and Movement**

**Border crossings and documents:** Increasingly, victims trafficked for labour exploitation passed borders legally (63.2 per cent in 2003, 81.8 per cent in 2004) and with legal documents (63.2 per cent in 2003, 90.9 per cent in 2004). Victims trafficked for begging and delinquency also generally crossed at legal border posts (75 per cent in 2003, 66.7 per cent in 2004) and used legal documents (75 per cent in 2003, 77.8 per cent in 2004).

This trend has also been noted throughout the region as a strategy of traffickers to render victims less visible. Nor is it surprising as Romanian citizens are able to enter the *Schengen* region without visas. However, it is interesting in the context of passing through or to the Balkans, as Romanian citizens have been required to obtain a visa to enter Serbia since 2004.

**Transportation routes:** Transportation routes for victims of labour did not vary substantially from those of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation. For more detail, please see: *Transportation routes* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Romanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation.*

**Destination Country:** In 2003, victims trafficked for labour went primarily to the Balkans, accounting for 68.2 per cent of victims assisted in that year. The remaining



victims (31.8 per cent) went to European Union countries, such as Italy, Belgium and Spain. However, this changed in 2004 with a more diverse pool of destinations documented. In 2004, 35.7 per cent of victims (roughly half the number of victims as the previous year) went to the Balkans, with an almost equal number of victims (28.6 per cent) sent to European Union countries. Only slightly fewer victims – 21.4 per cent – were trafficked within Romania for labour exploitation.<sup>489</sup>

TABLE 9  
DESTINATION COUNTRIES OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR  
LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004<sup>490</sup>

Destination Country/Entity	2003	2004
Belgium	2	0
BiH	2	1
Croatia	0 (1)	4
Greece	0 (1)	0
Italy	4 (3)	2 (9)
The Province of Kosovo <sup>491</sup>	1	0
Macedonia	8	0
Romania <sup>492</sup>	0	3
Serbia and Montenegro	4	0
Spain	1	2
Unknown <sup>493</sup>	0	2
Total	22 (5)	14 (9)

\*The first numbers presented are the countries of destination for victims of trafficking for labour exploitation, while the numbers in brackets and in blue are those of trafficking for begging and delinquency.

With the exception of one victim trafficked to Croatia, all Romanians trafficked for begging or delinquency were sent to EU countries. While all assisted victims in 2003 and 2004 were trafficked abroad for begging and delinquency, other research has noted internal trafficking for this purpose, with victims generally trafficked from the northwest of the country towards the big cities (ILO-IPEC, 2003b: 12).

<sup>489</sup> In addition, there were indications that some labour migration occurring within Romania was, in fact, trafficking. For example, media recently documented the case of a boy being sold by his parents to farmers in the south of the country to work on a pig farm. In all respects this was a case of trafficking and, in the course of investigation, it transpired that this was a common practice in many villages where people were trafficked for internally labour (Interview with Daniela Nicolaescu and Daniela Munteanu, Salvati Copii, 27 January 2005, Romania).

<sup>490</sup> Destination countries for victims identified in the police database include Italy (105), Spain (89), France (30), Poland (20), Czech Republic (14), Germany (11), Romania (13), Hungary (8), Austria (6), Portugal (6), Greece (4), Saudi Arabia (3), Belgium (2) and Serbia (2). Sometimes, victims were trafficked to more than one destination. While only 3.31 per cent of victims in the police database were trafficked for begging/delinquency and 15.2 per cent trafficked for labour exploitation, this information reveals potential destination countries not captured in the data on assisted victims. Other countries of destination for Romanian victims of trafficking for begging and delinquency noted in other research and media accounts include France, Spain, Belgium, Poland, the Czech Republic, Germany and Austria. Some victims interviewed spent transit periods in Hungary, Slovenia or Poland, before reaching Western Europe (ILO-IPEC, 2003b: 30). However, none of the assisted victims in 2003 and 2004 were trafficked to any of these destinations

<sup>491</sup> While Kosovo is a province within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, this province is separated out as a distinct entity in an effort to analyze the specific trafficking context of the province as well as to provide a more detailed picture of trafficking patterns, trends and profiles within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro as well as the SEE region more generally. This should in no way be read as a political statement by the RCP.

<sup>492</sup> This designates cases of internal trafficking. In some cases, victims were trafficked only internally, while, in other instances, victims were trafficked internally as a first step in international trafficking.

<sup>493</sup> In some cases the victim's country of destination was not recorded by the service provider. This usually occurred when the victim was assisted for a very short time and it was difficult to document comprehensive case files.

Some victims trafficked for labour were sent to the country of destination where they were promised work, while others were not. In all cases of begging and delinquency, victims were trafficked to the country where they had been promised work.

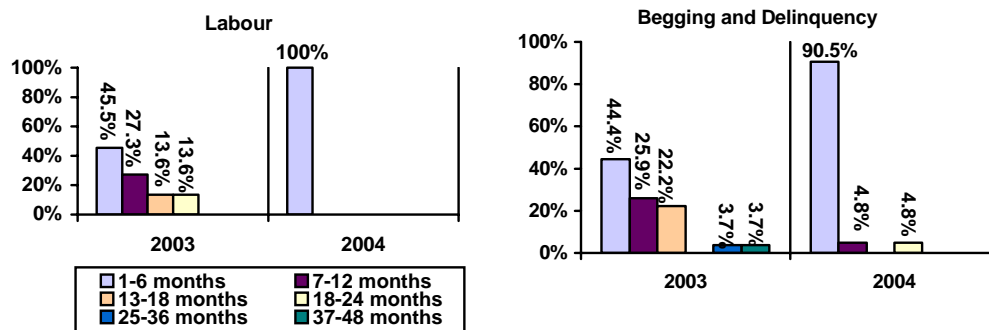
### Victim’s Trafficking Experiences

**Forms of trafficking:** Victims trafficked for labour exploitation were employed as agricultural workers, domestic workers, waitresses and dancer-entertainers. To some degree, the form of labour exploitation was linked to the destination country. In the Balkans, the major forms of labour exploitation were domestic worker, waitress and dancer-entertainer. By contrast, exploitation as a labourer was more likely to occur in destinations such as Spain, Belgium and Croatia. One 42-year-old man was promised a well-paid job in Belgium as electronic engineer. Once in Belgium he worked as an engineer without a contract, with excessive working hours and without any payment.

Among victims trafficked for begging and delinquency, the form of trafficking differed. In 2003, all five victims (100 per cent) were trafficked for criminal activity. In 2004, six of the victims (66.7 per cent) were trafficked for petty crime, while three victims (33.3 per cent) were trafficked for begging. There were also instances in which victims suffered multiple forms of exploitation. One victim in Italy was forced to beg as well as do all of the domestic work for the family with whom she was living. In addition, she was sexually abused.

**Length of time trafficked:** In 2003, victims were primarily trafficked for periods of less than a year. In 2004, victims endured shorter periods of exploitation, with all victims trafficked for periods less than six months. Discrepancies in lengths of time trafficked may be due to variable skills in identification in destination countries, short trafficking cycles in some networks, different destinations or other factors.

GRAPH 24  
LENGTH OF TIME TRAFFICKED – ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004



Nevertheless, some victims were trafficked for long periods – as much as four years in one case of begging and delinquency. Long periods of trafficking can create pronounced trauma as well as

dependency on and affection for the trafficker<sup>494</sup>. Attention to how this relationship and dependency influences the victim's recovery is essential.<sup>495</sup>

**Living and working conditions:** In both years, living conditions for victims of labour trafficking were, for the most part, “poor”. However, some changes occurred that may signal an overall improvement in living conditions. From 2003 to 2004, fewer victims endured “very poor” living conditions. As well, more victims in 2004 reported “average” living conditions.

GRAPH 25  
LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004



Working conditions for labour trafficking were consistent in both years. Most victims – 70 per cent to 80 per cent – suffered either “poor” or “very poor” working conditions. One woman, trafficked as a domestic worker, was locked in the house and denied any freedom of movement. In addition, she was constantly under surveillance by her employers who had installed cameras to monitor her work and activities. This constant monitoring proved psychologically damaging for the victim and she returned severely traumatized by her experience.<sup>496</sup>

However, in a minority of cases, working conditions were “good”. In 2003, 28.6 per cent of victims reported “good” working conditions and 20 per cent did so in 2004.

Among victims of begging and delinquency, living conditions were “poor”. This is consistent with research on trafficking of minors for begging, which found victims exposed to harsh living conditions, deprived of proper housing, adequate food and rest time and exposed to the risks of street life (ILO-IPEC, 2003b: 38).

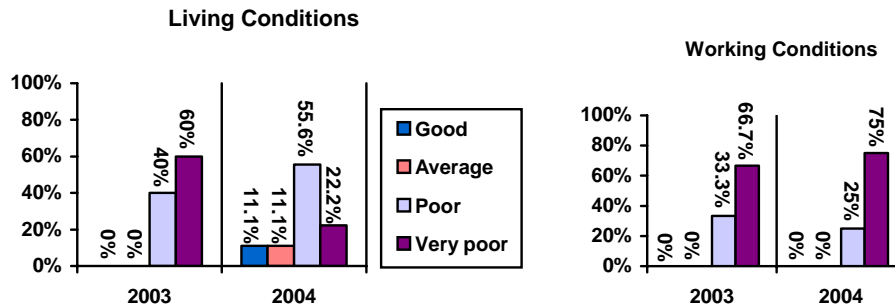
In 2004, an improvement in victims' living conditions was observed with some victims reporting “average” or “good” conditions. Of note, there were no parallel improvements in the working conditions of victims.

<sup>494</sup> In the context of field research throughout SEE, many psychologists referred to this phenomenon, a trend akin to the “Stockholm Syndrome”, in which victims become sympathetic to their captors over time. The name derives from a 1973 hostage incident in Stockholm, Sweden at the end of which several victims resisted rescue and refused to testify against their captors.

<sup>495</sup> For further discussion of the time trafficked and how this links with assistance, see section *Length of time trafficked* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Romanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

<sup>496</sup> Both legal and illegal workers face problematic conditions. Recently, a Romanian migrant worker who migrated legally to Israel as a nurse found herself faced with a different salary and longer hours than promised. When she refused to work under such conditions, the manpower agency clerk confiscated her passport and called the Immigration Administration to arrest her (Kav La'Oved, 2005)

GRAPH 26  
WORKING AND LIVING CONDITIONS OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004



**Abuse:** For victims of labour exploitation, abuse was common. Only 4.6 per cent in 2003 and none in 2004 suffered no abuse while trafficked. Similarly, all victims of begging and delinquency in 2003 were subjected to physical abuse while trafficked. By contrast, in 2004, victims reported a variety of types of abuse.

TABLE 10  
ABUSE SUFFERED BY ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED  
FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004

Form of Abuse Suffered	2003	2004
Sexual	0	3 (1)
Physical	13 (4)	7 (2)
Sexual and physical	0	0 (1)
Psychological	8	1 (3)
Physical and psychological	0	1
None	0	0 (1)
Unknown	0 (1)	2 (1)
Total	22 (5)	14 (9)

\*The first numbers presented are the countries of destination for victims of trafficking for labour exploitation, while the numbers in brackets and in blue are those of trafficking for begging and delinquency.

Abuse suffered was determined partly by the destination to which victims were trafficked. Service providers report more prolific abuse when victims were trafficked to the Balkans than to EU countries. Nevertheless, victims trafficked to EU countries in both years also suffered abuse.

Of note was the use of sexual violence in 2004 for victims of both labour and begging/delinquency. Abuse was used as a means to break down the victim's resistance to the trafficker as well as increase their work efficiency. Particularly worrisome is the impact that these forms of abuse may have on minors, who accounted for most victims in 2004.

**Mental and physical well-being:** The precise impact of trafficking for labour, begging or delinquency has not been systematically documented. In large part, it depends upon the conditions in which victims lived and worked as well as the length of time trafficked. Some victims suffered kidney problems due to excessive cold or stomach problems due to insufficient food. Overall, victims returned stressed and anxious and deprived of sleep. Most required psychological and medical assistance. Trafficking for these forms of exploitation can sometimes the same traumatizing effects as sexual

exploitation. This is particularly likely to be true when victims are exposed to sexual abuse, as was increasingly the case, with more victims reporting such abuse in 2004.

Where victims have been trafficked as a family, the mental and physical well-being of all members has been compromised and their stress level will be acute. This is likely to create tension and even violence in the family environment, with members not always able to process feelings of anger, guilt, shame, etc. In such circumstances, family counselling and similar support is vital. In addition, the health and assistance needs of these (multiple) victims can place an additional burden on family economy which service providers must consider in the development of reintegration plans.

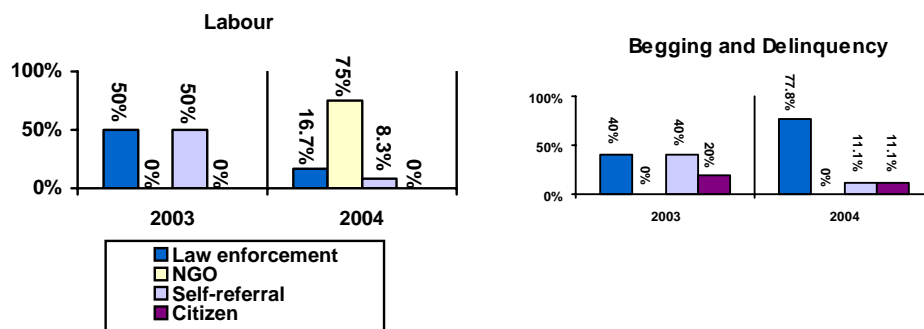
### Post Trafficking Experience

**Victim identification and referral:** The identification of victims of labour trafficking changed substantially from 2003 to 2004, with a significant decrease in identification by law enforcement. In 2004, most victims were identified by NGOs. This is a striking change from 2003 and signals that more organizations in both the Balkans, Romania and EU countries are equipped and active in identifying victims of trafficking.

Among victims trafficked for begging and delinquency, there was an opposite trend, with more victims identified by law enforcement authorities in 2004 than in 2003. The greater identification by law enforcement authorities may be due to an increased awareness of this form of trafficking. This awareness is essential toward the appropriate care and protection of trafficking victims.

Self-referred victims also declined substantially in 2004, among victims of labour, begging and delinquency. Reasons for these changes are detailed in *Victim identification and referral* in section *Profiles and Experiences of Romanian Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*.

GRAPH 27  
IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL OF ASSISTED ROMANIANS TRAFFICKED FOR LABOUR, BEGGING AND DELINQUENCY, 2003 AND 2004



**Re-trafficking:** In two instances – one in 2003 and one in 2004 – victims trafficked for labour exploitation were trafficked previously. This accounted for 4.6 per cent of assisted victims in 2003 and 7.1 per cent in 2004.

It is unclear if re-trafficking is more or less likely among victims trafficked for labour exploitation, begging or delinquency. This is an area worth investigating, both as a

measure of the success of reintegration programmes as well as an assessment of the degree to which the form of trafficking impedes successful reintegration. In addition, as family complicity was probable in a number of cases of minors in 2004, special attention must be paid in the development of reintegration efforts to mitigate the risk of re-trafficking.

It is perhaps worth noting that in research on returning illegal migrants conducted initially upon their return and after a three-month period, a significant minority of migrants had already left the community, generally to migrate abroad. Not only was this return migration due to a desire to earn money but also because of difficulties faced in reintegration. In some cases, marriages had broken apart and a number of migrants reported fractured social relations.<sup>497</sup> Each of these points is also relevant in the case of re-trafficking and reintegration efforts.

Finally, in social environments where bonded labour is both acceptable and widespread, efforts to redress this practice must be rooted in a firm understanding of the conditions that create and support its continuation. Where this is not done, re-trafficking is likely.

**Assistance declined:** It is unknown how many victims of labour exploitation, begging and delinquency declined assistance. However, this may be a common practice as many illegal Romanian migrants returned through the IOM assisted voluntary return (AVR) programme declined all but monetary assistance.<sup>498</sup> Other forms of assistance – primarily training or educational reintegration – take time away from work, a luxury that many feel they cannot afford when responsible for supporting a family. Sometimes assistance may be declined due to a suspicion of humanitarian organizations providing it, as civil society organizations are a relatively new phenomenon in the country.

It is also reasonable to assume that many returned victims of trafficking for labour exploitation never access assistance. As one service provider asserted, “Most won’t complain even though they suffer exploitation and abuse while working. When we tell them that they have been victims of trafficking, they don’t care because they are used to the exploitation they suffered. And if they come back with money, they never complain.”<sup>499</sup> Such attitudes may render victims trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency more vulnerable to re-trafficking, as they will accept other work offers in an effort to earn money. Consequently, specific assistance and re-trafficking prevention programmes must be developed in light of these variables.

## 2.2 Foreign Victims of Trafficking Assisted in Romania

To date there have been a small number of foreign victims identified and assisted in Romania. Some were assisted by IOM in Bucharest and others by Young Generation in Timisoara.

TABLE 11  
MINIMUM NUMBER OF ASSISTED FOREIGN VICTIMS IN ROMANIA, 2000 TO 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign trafficking victims	2	0	3	8	18	31

<sup>497</sup> Interview with Sebastien Lazaroiu, CURS, 28 January 2005, Bucharest, Romania.

<sup>498</sup> Interview with Monica Joita, IOM, 25 January 2005, Bucharest, Romania.

<sup>499</sup> Iana Matei, Reaching Out, 25 January 2005, Pitesti, Romania.

When compared with national victims, profiles of foreign victim are less comprehensive as these victims were generally assisted for shorter periods. However, the details presented below are a first step in gaining a better understanding of foreign victims trafficked to or through Romania.

### **Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics:**

- **Sex:** In 2003, all foreign victims of trafficking were women. By contrast, in 2004, a significant number of foreign men were identified. Of the 18 victims, 11 (or 61.1 per cent) were men.
- **Age:** In 2003, all victims were adult women, ranging from 20 to 37 years of age at recruitment.<sup>500</sup> Most victims were between 26 and 35 years. In 2004, victims ranged from minors (two cases or 11.1 per cent) to 34 years of age, with most victims between 18 and 25 years.
- **Marital and family status:** In 2003, equal numbers of victims were married and unmarried. Half of the victims were mothers. In 2004, 11 victims were unmarried, six married and one divorced. Only four of the victims had children.
- **Education:** Victims' education varied. In 2003, victims generally had middle school education, although one victim had less than primary school. Victims in 2004 had middle school in the majority of cases, although a few had only primary school, one had a high school education and one had completed university.
- **Country of origin:** In 2003, seven victims originated from Moldova and one from Ukraine. In 2004, 17 victims originated from Moldova and one from Russia.

**Recruitment experience:** Victims were promised different types of work when recruited. In 2003, this was primarily domestic work, although one victim was offered work in industry. In 2004, 17 victims were offered labour work (in textiles, agriculture, construction), while one, a Russian woman, was recruited with the promise of marriage. Some victims were recruited in person by someone they knew, while others were recruited through an artistic or employment agency.

**Trafficking experience:** Foreign victims assisted in Romania experienced various forms of trafficking in a number of different destination countries.

- **Forms of trafficking:** Of the eight victims assisted in 2003, seven were trafficked for sexual exploitation and one for begging. Of the 18 victims assisted in 2004, 14 were trafficked for labour and four for sexual exploitation.
- **Destination countries:** Of the 31 foreign victims assisted since 2004, 11 were trafficked to Romania (for sexual exploitation),<sup>501</sup> 16 were trafficked to Serbia (two for sexual exploitation and 14 for labour) and four were trafficked to Italy (three for sexual exploitation and one for begging).
- **Living and working conditions:** Victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation endured long working hours without pay. They were abused sexually as well as

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<sup>500</sup> Because Young Generation Romania systematically documents the victim's age at recruitment, it is possible to provide an accurate rate of trafficking in minors.

<sup>501</sup> This is consistent with observations from other sources that Romania is a destination or a temporary destination for victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation (cf. ILO-IPEC, 2003b: 12).

physically and were kept locked away under constant supervision. Generally, victims of labour exploitation were not abused, although there were a few exceptions to this. Working and living conditions were poor and average.

**Post trafficking experience:** Apart from four cases in which victims escaped the traffickers by themselves and sought assistance, law enforcement authorities identified these victims. In some cases, it was border police in Temis county who identified victims following their deportation from Serbia. In other cases, Romanian police rescued victims through police operations.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN ROMANIA

In this section, we analyze the identification and referral mechanism in Romania (Section 3.1) as well as the assistance and protection available to foreign and national victims of trafficking (Section 3.2).

#### 3.1 Victim Identification and Referral in Romania

Romanian and foreign victims are mainly identified and referred through: (1) voluntary return programmes from transit and destination countries, (2) NGOs, (3) returns upon extradition, (3) law enforcement and, increasingly, through (4) self-referrals and (5) embassies.

In Romania, there is no centralized mechanism for the screening, identification and referral of trafficking victims. Rather, victims are identified through *ad hoc* efforts and individual contacts among various organizations and agencies. This represents a substantial gap in the identification and assistance of victims. Some efforts have been made toward a more coordinated approach to victim assistance, with the establishment of the Institute for Crime Prevention and Monitoring Victim Assistance, tasked with the documentation of trafficking cases as well as monitoring assistance to victims. This Institute began work in September 2004 and is currently mapping out its plans for work and action. Chief among these is the establishment of a reporting mechanism that will consolidate data from all counter-trafficking actors from government and civil society.

#### **Voluntary Return Programmes from Transit and Destination Countries**

Most identified and assisted victims return to Romania through voluntary return programmes run by IOM according to a *Memorandum of Understanding* with the Romanian Ministry of Interior. Initial assistance takes place in the country of identification with a range of services provided to victims. Typically, this consists of shelter, medical care, psychosocial care, basic legal information, a humanitarian package, travel documentation, material assistance and transportation to country of origin. Detailed information about services provided in South-eastern European destination countries is provided in the individual country reports.

In addition, IOM is the referral agency assisting foreign women to return from Romania to their countries of origin. These referrals are typically conducted upon law enforcement's identification of victims, in cooperation with neighbouring IOM missions.



### **Foreign and Romanian NGOs**

Until recently, very few referrals were initiated by NGOs in destination countries. However, there has been an increase in returns conducted according to cooperation agreements between Romanian and Western European NGOs from Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Spain, Serbia and Montenegro and Macedonia. In 2003, Salvati Copii (Romania) was requested by ISS partners to carry out assessments in the case of Romanian minors trafficked to these destination countries. Following assessments, Salvati Copii assisted in the return of victims (male and female) at the request of foreign partners with whom they have cooperative agreements. In such circumstances, the NGO at the destination identifies Romanian victims, provides temporary housing, secures travel documents and transportation to Romania and the Romanian NGO provides housing and reintegration assistance to victims upon return. In addition, the Romanian NGO Young Generation cooperates with Salvati Copii in Moldova to return Moldovan victims identified in Romania or deported to Romania by authorities in destination countries. Similarly, the NGO Connexiuni works closely with service providers in destination countries, such as France or Belgium, to return and assist victims. More recently, the NGO Esperanza in Spain has been working closely with other NGOs and IOM to return victims identified there.

These information-sharing and referral procedures between service providers in destination and transit countries are positive and important developments that should be employed in greater profile in Romania. In addition, while a number of other SEE countries employ similar referral procedures, it could also be further expanded in the region. Ideally, victims should not be limited in the choice of assistance to only the initial assisting organizations. This would ensure that victims are offered the most appropriate reintegration assistance to meet their specific needs.

### **Returns upon Extradition**

Official data regarding extradited victims is unavailable at this time. Most cases that are referred for assistance by border police in western Romania have been extradited from neighbouring countries such as Serbia and Montenegro. In addition, victims were extradited from EU countries and returned through the airport in Bucharest.

In general, it is difficult to know if police systematically screen deportees in an effort to identify victims of trafficking. Some service providers report that border police – both at land borders and the airports – have neither adequate staff to screen all deportees nor the specific skills needed to appropriately interview suspected trafficking victims. Others point out there have been improvements in this regard evidenced by the identification of at least 17 victims deported from Serbia but recognized by Romanian border police as victims. Such positive developments should be encouraged and there is the need to develop and conduct discussions and training for border police toward the development of techniques of interviewing and identifying trafficking victims.

It is also important to stress that trafficking victims are being deported from various destination countries, including the EU. This constitutes a gap in protection in countries of destination. The deportation of trafficking victims is contrary to international standards on the treatment of victims and attention must be paid to this practice in EU countries of destination. There is a need for the appropriate screening and identification of trafficking victims at the destination as well as the provision of appropriate services.

Destination countries must uphold obligations of victim protection and the rights of trafficking victims.

### **Law enforcement**

Law enforcement authorities play a significant role in the identification of victims of trafficking, at both origin and destination. It is these law enforcement authorities who offer victims the option of voluntary return programmes when abroad or who refer victims for assistance when identified in Romania. Victims are also identified in Romania either by the border police or by the Directorate for Countering Organized Crime and Anti-Drugs in Bucharest, which has identified and documented in its database 302 victims of trafficking from June to December 2004.

### **Self-referral**

In 2003 and 2004 an increasing number of victims were assisted after referring themselves for assistance. In 2003, 35.5 per cent of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were self referred, and 29 per cent of victims in 2004. This represents a change from previous years in which extremely few victims contacted service providers on their own initiative and is due partly to the increased visibility and accessibility of service providers. As well, it reflects a change in the countries of destination – increasingly EU rather than Balkan countries, which have a different identification and referral process. In EU countries, NGOs are very active in the field of social interventions and they have programmes designed to reach out to victims of trafficking.

### **Embassy**

In a number of cases, victims trafficked to Balkan countries were identified by their consulates or embassies in the destination country. For example, four victims from Romania were identified by the Romanian embassies in Croatia and Serbia. It is valuable to consider embassy staff as potential identifiers of trafficking cases and embassies as entry points for intervention and assistance that have not been extensively explored by counter-trafficking actors. Training of Romanian embassy staff abroad is a valuable initiative.

### **Helplines**

There is no dedicated helpline for victims of trafficking in Romania. Service providers identify this as a gap both in outreach to victims and trafficking prevention through the provision of safe migration information. There is a need, therefore, to establish a helpline, particularly in countries of origin where victims may seek assistance some time after their return. In Moldova, the La Strada helpline has been a valuable tool in victim identification and referral.

A hotline about organized crime has reportedly yielded information related to trafficking in persons, including sexual exploitation within Romania and illegal migration abroad. Service providers report that this instrument would likely yield further information about trafficking if it were free as well as anonymous.

## **3.2 Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in Romania**

The assistance and protection framework for trafficked victims in Romania has been geared mainly toward the reintegration of Romanian victims trafficked abroad, primarily for sexual exploitation.

Under Law 678 (*Law on the Prevention and Combat of Trafficking in Human Beings*), which was articulated in 2001, victims of trafficking are guaranteed government-sponsored assistance. A point of concern is that service providers have noted that this assistance has generally been available only to victims who agree to be involved in legal proceedings. In practice, this means that few victims have received the state-sponsored assistance outlined in Law 678. Further, there is no definition of the term “victim” in the law. As such, various individuals and organizations understand the term “victim” differently.

Victims assisted in Romania in 2003 and 2004 were provided with a range of services to meet their immediate and longer-term needs. Services ranged from basic (i.e. initial accommodation and return transport to their home communities) to more comprehensive packages of assistance (i.e. accommodation, legal, medical and psychological assistance, vocational training, job placement). Existing assistance and protection services in Romania are largely managed by a local NGOs and IOM and largely dependent on funding from donor countries, although the government is increasingly assuming responsibility for victim assistance.

### **Shelters**

There are currently many different shelters providing short and longer-term accommodation to trafficking victims in Romania, all at various stages of development and operation. There are two main types of shelters – government-run transit centres and NGO-operated middle to long-term shelters, including various components of reintegration.

There are nine transit shelters for minor victims of trafficking located in various counties around Romania. These were recently established by the National Authority for Child Rights Protection, with the technical assistance of Save the Children Romania. These are short-term shelters that can accommodate victims for a period of 15 to 30 days, during which time they are stabilized and an assessment is conducted about longer-term options, including reintegration. To date, these shelters have accommodated 12 minor victims of trafficking. They are located in the following counties: Bucharest, Iasi, Satu Mare, Suceava, Botosani, Galati, Piatra Neamt, Timisoara, Oradea and Arad.

In addition, Chapter V of the Romanian Law 678 calls for the establishment of ten temporary, short-term shelters in ten counties around Romania.<sup>502</sup> The legislation states that Romanian and foreign victims may stay in council shelters for up to ten days, or longer if the victim takes part in criminal proceedings. The legislation implies that cooperation with law enforcement is a condition for shelter stay and services, a stipulation that needs to be corrected; shelter stay and victim services should not be contingent upon cooperation with law enforcement. To date, shelters have been established in five of the ten counties and have assisted a handful of victims.

Other mid to long-term shelters are located throughout the country – in Bucharest, Timisoara, Pitesti, Cluj, Iasi and Hunedoara. Local NGOs manage all but one of the

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<sup>502</sup> These shelters – to be under the authority of local county councils – are to be located in the counties of Arad, Botosani, Galati, Giurgiu, Iasi, Ilfov, Mehedinti, Satu-Mare and Timis.

shelters. The other, located in Bucharest, is managed by the Ministry of Interior and the Romanian Orthodox Church and supported by IOM.

Most shelters offer short to mid-term assistance, although some offer longer-term options:

- *Bucharest*: The shelter in Bucharest offers accommodation for six months with the option to stay longer or to be accommodated in alternative housing offered by its partner NGO.
- *Pitesti*: Reaching Out in Pitesti provides long-term shelter (lodging and services for up to two years) to trafficked victims.
- *Timisoara*: Young Generation in Timisoara offers mid to long-term assistance, up to one year. The shelter of the Arhiepiscopia Ortodoxa Romana A Timisoarei offers up to one year of sheltering assistance
- *Iasi*: Social Alternative's shelter in Iasi offers shelter for four to eight months.
- *Hunedoara*: The Connexiuni shelter in Hunedoara provides shelter for up to one year.
- *Cluj*: The Artemis Shelter in Cluj provides short-term accommodation for victims of either trafficking or domestic violence.

All but one of the shelters provides lodging exclusively to victims of trafficking; the other shelter (in Cluj) provides lodging and services to both victims of trafficking and domestic violence. All of the shelters are located within private apartments or houses, except for the shelter managed by the IOM and Ministry of Interior, which is located within a building owned by the Ministry of Internal Affairs/National Office for Refugees. All of the shelters are open shelters, where national beneficiaries are unrestricted. Foreign nationals who are assisted must be escorted when leaving the shelters.

In addition, thought must be given to accommodation options for other profiles of victims, particularly male victims, victims trafficked for purposes apart from sexual exploitation and minors. Accommodation within the existing shelter programmes may not be advisable because of mixed genders, ages and assistance needs.

### **Medical Care**

Each of the shelters provides voluntary, confidential, free-of-charge medical care for trafficked victims. Shelters usually used the services of private physicians according to informal relationships because of discriminatory behaviour against victims by public institutions. Ideally, this practice should be replaced by more structured, government-sponsored and therefore sustainable medical assistance for victims. Sensitization of medical professionals must be tackled as a part of this.

While the range of medical services varies somewhat among organizations, almost all victims request and receive gynaecological examinations and a general health check-up. Most victims test positive for vaginal infections and some form of sexually transmitted infection (STI). Further, according to one service provider, victims are increasingly diagnosed with more serious STIs, such as syphilis and condyloma.

Service providers arrange HIV testing and pre and post-test counselling for trafficking victims upon request. Testing and counselling facilities are located throughout

Romania, and service providers have not reported any problems in obtaining tests for beneficiaries. However, the cost of the test is often an issue. While some associations offer free HIV tests, the results take weeks to process, which is stressful for the victim. As such, sometimes service providers prefer to use a private clinic where results are received more quickly. To date, shelter providers report that no trafficking victims have tested positive for HIV.

Overall, the cost of medical assistance is a serious problem for service providers. Most victims do not have access to free medical assistance even as Romanian citizens. Costs are currently borne primarily by foreign donors through organizations like IOM, a practice that may not be sustainable in the long term. Many service providers flag the lack of medical assistance as a key gap in the assistance framework in Romania. Complimentary medical assistance for both foreign and national victims of trafficking is needed, in adherence to international standards as outlined in the UN Convention on Transnational Crime and its associated Protocols.

### **Psychological Assistance**

Each of the shelters provides psychological counselling to trafficking victims. This may involve individual and group counselling. Shelters either have a psychologist on staff or an agreement with an external psychologist to provide services at the shelter. In addition, shelter staff, generally trained social workers, provide counselling and support on a day-to-day basis. The scope and depth of the counselling varies considerably, and is very much tied to the specific needs of victims and their length of time resident at the shelter.

Service providers report that most trafficking victims show signs of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and most victims need at least three to four weeks of individualized counselling and support before departing the shelters. As the majority of victims only spend a few days or weeks at a short-term shelter, they are unlikely to receive sufficient counselling and support services unless they can access such services in their home communities. While service providers do refer victims for these services wherever possible, there are areas of the country where such services are unavailable or inadequate in supply. This may hinder the recovery and reintegration of victims. The limited geographic distribution and availability of psychological assistance to support reintegration constitutes an area of need in the Romanian assistance framework. Minors and young adults who grew up in orphanages typically require specialized counselling and life skills training for longer periods than other victims.

A few beneficiaries have required psychiatric care, and a relatively small number required psychiatric hospitalization. When a psychiatrist is needed, the physician refers the victim to a specialized psychiatric institution. Service providers have not reported any difficulties in obtaining psychiatric care for beneficiaries.

Romania's counter-trafficking legislation states that Romanian and foreign victims of trafficking are entitled to psychological and psychiatric counselling, but the legislation is vague and does not state who will provide these services, or the standards according to which they will be provided. This needs to be clarified to address this area of need.

As of January 2005, the Service for Victims' Protection and Social Reintegration of the Offenders was mobilized to provide and refer trafficking victims for psychological

assistance in the Bucharest area. This government service can be mobilized to assist victims in the future. Similar services are needed outside of Bucharest.

### **Education Assistance**

Education reinsertion is the primary form of education assistance offered to victims and is focused on minor victims of trafficking. In such circumstances, service providers facilitate the victim's reinsertion into the mainstream school system, a task that is not without its difficulties. Service providers report that school authorities are reluctant to reinsert victims outside the regular start of school in September. Additionally, many victims prefer to take weekend or evening classes so that they can work at the same time, something that is not always possible in all areas of the country.

Apart from educational reinsertion for minors, there is little emphasis on formal educational assistance programmes for trafficked victims. Most programmes classified as "educational" programmes for adult victims of trafficking are, in fact, focused on vocational training and employment skills, rather than broad-based educational development. Given the generally low education level of assisted victims, further education and alternative education programmes are insufficiently developed and encouraged. In recognition of a beneficiary's need for income-generating prospects, such educational programmes should be developed in conjunction with, rather than instead of, vocational and employment training programs.

### **Vocational Training and Employment Assistance**

Each of the shelters arrange for vocational training and employment assistance for interested beneficiaries. However, different organizations possess varying degrees of access to funds and types of training. In addition, it is unclear whether the courses in which victims are enrolled are always consistent with their skills, interests and employment prospects within their home communities. Further, follow-up information regarding whether these courses led to sustainable employment is lacking. A beneficiary's access to particular programmes may depend on the specific county employment office. According to Romania's trafficking law, the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity should develop vocational training programmes and employment schemes (including programmes for employers granting trafficked victims priority in the hiring process) for persons at risk of trafficking or trafficking victims. Under this legislation, council employees are supposed to organize short-term vocational and training programmes for trafficking victims and grant priority counselling and mediation to find jobs. Although some service providers report that they are able to access these services for beneficiaries, others report that these county offices do not provide adequate services to trafficked victims. While local employment offices do not have special programmes for victims of trafficking, there are local NGO initiatives in which the Employment Agency is an active partner.

Job placement is a critical follow-up to all vocational training. While all service providers make efforts in this area, they enjoy varying degrees of success. One organization sought out "protected workplaces"<sup>503</sup> for their clients, where the employer was aware of the victim's experience and could understand problems in the workplace

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<sup>503</sup> Service providers highlight that one of the difficulties with stable employment for victims is that many work environments (for all citizens) within Romania are exploitative, requiring long hours of work, low wages and harsh conditions. While such work environments are particularly problematic for victims, the issue of labour rights and social protection needs to be addressed for the society as a whole, not only within the context of victims of trafficking.

arising from it. In other circumstances, clients of this organization pursued employment of their own initiative and social workers assisted victims in preparing an application, preparing for the interview and providing support during employment. Because economics is very often at least one of the push factors for trafficking, training and job placement gain critical importance in creating preconditions for sustainable reintegration and preventing re-trafficking. More resources should be allocated to offer comprehensive vocational and job-finding assistance to beneficiaries. Ideally, such services should also be offered to victims deemed at risk of trafficking as a prevention effort.

### **Legal Assistance**

While there have been improvements in the provision of legal assistance, the lack of qualified legal representation remains a gap in victim assistance and protection in Romania. Often victims are identified at the border by law enforcement officers and shortly thereafter expected to sign statements about their trafficking experience. Many times victims do not have access to legal consultation before or even after providing a statement to the police.

Service providers have increasingly accessed legal assistance for clients. IOM offers psychological and legal assistance to victims asked to testify in international trials. Adpare and Save the Children employ a lawyer to provide legal information to victims as well as legal representation as needed. Of importance is that victims are afforded legal assistance in all areas related to their successful return and reintegration, including custody issues, divorce and property rights, etc. This is an important service, as all trafficked victims should have an opportunity to meet with a qualified lawyer, irrespective of whether they provide statements to law enforcement or testimony against traffickers in court. Service providers should further develop service agreements with qualified, experienced lawyers trained specifically in matters related to trafficking.

One area of concern for service providers, however, is the handling of trafficking cases by the police and judiciary. They report that, while there have been improvements in sensitivity and awareness of the issue of trafficking, more change is needed. Further, many counter-trafficking actors argue that after a statement is collected from a victim, little action is subsequently taken by the police and that police are often unwilling to proceed before a number of statements have been taken against one trafficker. This poses problems – both psychological and in terms of security – for the victim who may have to face her trafficker daily in spite of having given a statement. Further, a court monitoring system is needed to systematically review trafficking cases and make targeted recommendations for specific areas of improvement.

Legal assistance is not only critical in terms of legal proceedings but also in terms of normalizing the status of the victim and acquiring legal documents. Upon arrival in Romania, many victims are without their identity papers. However, issuing new identity papers requires travel to the area of origin, returning to collect the documents and, in cases where the family does not own the land where they reside, returning every six months to renew these papers. In addition to the time and cost involved, this is stressful for both service providers and victims. The government should facilitate this process in the case of trafficking victims, especially as it affects access to medical care, educational reinsertion and possible employment.

### **Witness Protection**

A law on witness protection exists in Romania, guaranteeing victims various forms of protection, including the right to change identity and relocation. However, many counter-trafficking organizations see the law as unrealistic and not implementable given the lack of financial resources. To date, no victims of trafficking have benefited from this law. In addition, a new law passed in May 2004 – Law 211/2004 – protects victims of crime, including trafficking victims. This law outlines the free assistance available to victims of crime as well as includes provisions for compensation of the victim. As of January 2005, 13 victims of violent crime were protected under this law, although none were victims of trafficking.

### **Family Mediation and Assistance**

As most trafficking victims prefer to return to be reintegrated in their families and home communities, there is a need for appropriate family assessment and mediation. Currently, all service providers in Romania offer family mediation and assistance prior to reintegration. With the consent of the beneficiary, service providers contact the family to advise them of the intended return of the beneficiary. Depending on whether or not the beneficiary wants the service provider to explain aspects of trafficking experience to the family, service providers will offer initial counselling to the family as well. In order to better assess the family environment, some of the counsellors meet with the family first, and then meet the family with the daughter/relative present.

It is also expected that service providers conduct an assessment of the safety and advisability of the victim's return to her home environment. However, not all service providers have sufficient guidelines to make this decision. Given the high rate of abuse within many families of trafficking victims, questions need to be asked about the safety and advisability of return for many victims. Similarly, where family members have been involved in the trafficking, there are serious issues about the advisability of reintegration, at least in the short term. Service providers should receive more specific training and guidance regarding conducting a proper safety assessment of the home environment, providing counselling for dysfunctional families and exploring alternative options for family placement in difficult cases. More investment is needed in this aspect of assistance to support sustainable recovery and prevent re-trafficking.

### **Housing Assistance**

According to service providers, many trafficked victims cannot return to their families because of problems/conflict within their homes, lack of acceptance and the risk of re-trafficking. In other cases, victims return immediately to their home and then seek assistance, having found reintegration in their home environment untenable. Some victims are without a family to return to, having been raised in institutions. These are all serious problems for victims, given the general lack of long-term shelter possibilities for victims in Romania. Apart from the shelters themselves, only one organization (in Bucharest) offers socially-protected living options for victims within their programme.

Overall, the wage to housing ratio for Romanian trafficked victims is better than that of victims in other countries. However, in order to save enough money to rent a private flat, most victims would require rent-free accommodation while working for at least three to six months. With more mid-term shelters available, more victims would be in a position to secure longer-term rental agreements for private housing. While Law 678



states that victims of trafficking should receive priority access to social housing, NGOs report that victims have not yet received these social housing benefits. There is a need to access these housing options.

### **Case Monitoring/Follow up**

Romanian service providers have made significant improvements in case monitoring and provision of follow-up services. The NGOs Young Generation and Reaching Out maintain contact with beneficiaries up to 12 months after they depart the shelter. This continued contact serves as a reminder to the beneficiary that she can access counselling or other supportive services, and it enables the NGO to better assess the level of the beneficiary's reintegration. The IOM shelter refers beneficiaries in need of medium to long-term services to NGOs within their communities, and these NGOs are tasked with service provision and maintaining regular contact with the beneficiaries for at least several months. Other NGOs follow up with their caseload for up to a year after departure from the assistance programme, including, in some cases, site visits to the victim's home community. Where victims decline shelter assistance upon return to Romania, opting to return immediately home, IOM refers beneficiaries to NGOs tasked with service provision and assistance within their communities. Where the victim is integrated in a community without NGOs or service providers, IOM staff are tasked with case monitoring and assistance. This longer-term assistance and follow-up is essential in providing meaningful, supportive services for victims. It is also imperative as a means to gauge re-trafficking rates and assess the success of reintegration programs.

There are systemic obstacles to case monitoring that are important to flag. In addition to limited staff and resources, victims themselves may be reluctant to maintain contact with caseworkers, fearing it will draw unwanted attention to them in their communities. Further, victims may not be accessible by telephone and they may live in remote, hard-to-reach areas, which take time and resources to access. Some victims move frequently, which also complicates ongoing contact.

### **Material Assistance**

Each of the shelters provides basic humanitarian packages to victims, as well as reinstallation grants. In one creative initiative by an NGO in Bucharest, 13 families in the Netherlands each send EUR 30 a month to the trafficking victim to provide them with material support. The victim must make a monthly plan on how money will be spent, as a means of developing life skills and making the necessary steps toward independence. These various forms of material assistance help to mitigate the poverty that often is a contributor to trafficking. However, service providers also highlight the delicate balance between assistance and dependency and ongoing attention to this equation is essential.

### **Assistance for Minors**

The Romanian government has devoted attention and funding to issues regarding child exploitation, child abuse and child trafficking, yet improvements in services for children have been slow and uneven. The National Authority for Child Protection leads an inter-ministerial working group tasked with developing proposals for legal, education and social measures for trafficked minors. However, the government's implementation of these proposals is scattered and depends upon the will of local child protection committees. For example, while border authorities are legally required to

notify child protection officials when they identify an unaccompanied minor or potential victims, this does not always happen in practice.

To date, NGOs provide most direct services for trafficked minors, with little support from local child protection committees. Further, past cases involving trafficked minors were not handled much differently from cases of trafficked adults. Procedures for identification, referral and assistance of minors were *ad hoc* without specific regard for the particular needs and rights of minors. This changed somewhat in late 2004 when the government – with the technical assistance of Save the Children Romania – established transit centres for minor victims of trafficking. Save the Children has been instrumental in providing technical assistance and capacity building in the child-friendly operation of these transit centres. Similarly, one NGO in Bucharest is currently discussing ways to create and further enhance the social networks of their assisted minors through peer support, with a view to assisting them in developing normal behaviours and enhancing their self-esteem. In assisting minors, NGOs and international organizations must either obtain approval from the victim's parents or obtain guardianship approval.

In addition, NGOs in Pitesti, Timisoara and Deva have cooperative agreements with Italian NGOs that identify trafficked Romanian minors, contacting them to undertake home assessments to assess the advisability of the minor's return. If it is deemed safe for the minor to return, the Romanian NGO meets the minor at the border and escorts him/her to a shelter for a brief stay that includes a medical examination and some psychological counselling. The Romanian NGO must also contact the child protection committee within the minor's home community regarding the minor's arrival. NGO service providers visit the child in his/her home once or twice a month, and provide material assistance, psychosocial assistance and other services as needed. Because many of these minors did not attend school regularly or at all before they were trafficked, NGOs and local child protection workers must place particular emphasis on reinsertion into the mainstream school system as well as any necessary tutoring.

To date, most minors are reintegrated within their home communities, partly because of the lack of alternatives. However, the minor's return is not always possible or advisable and service providers must work with child protection committees to locate a suitable alternative such as a foster home or an NGO-managed maternal centre. There is also a need for the expansion of specialized direct and follow-up services in particularly difficult minor cases.

One service provider asserted that authorities discourage placement at institutions due to the poor quality of care and because institutions are overburdened. However, according to the service provider, this has been exaggerated to the point that return to the family is preferred even when it is clearly dangerous for the minor. In such cases, interventions must fit the "best interests of child". Foster care is an alternative to family reintegration that can be explored in greater profile.<sup>504</sup>

In terms of minors, who were a noteworthy percentage of victims in 2003 and 2004, trafficking for sexual exploitation is particularly problematic for its influence on the

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<sup>504</sup> Foster care is a viable option within Romania. In September 2002, 41,782 children were in foster families, of which some 60 per cent were in the care of relatives and 30 per cent in the care of the professional caregivers (ILO-IPEC, 2003b: 6).

development of the minor's sexual identity. Service providers also flag the issue of traumatic attachment to the trafficker, which can have particular resonance in the case of minors. Specific assistance services for minors that address and incorporate these specific counselling issues and needs are therefore important.

### **Assistance for Foreigners**

Foreign victims receive assistance similar to that of returning Romanian national victims. To date, few foreign victims of trafficking have been identified and assisted in Romania. Those assisted have primarily been Moldovan victims who enjoy cultural and linguistic similarities with Romania, making assistance easier and more comforting. The two main organizations assisting foreign victims are Young Generation in Timisoara and IOM in Bucharest. Each organization organizes victim return within their network of partner organizations.

### **Temporary Residence Permits**

Under an emergency ordinance 194/2002 in *Law 357/2003*, three articles (Article 98, 99 and 100) outline the toleration of stay for foreigners suspected of being victims of trafficking in human beings. The toleration is granted for a period of up to six months, which can be extended for another six months as needed, as well as for the duration of criminal proceedings at the request of the prosecutor. One shortcoming of this toleration of stay provision is that it allows for only limited movement within the country. Nevertheless, this is an important component of victim assistance.

While Romania is not yet a signatory to the Tirana Commitment, discussions are underway to sign the declaration as well as take necessary measures to amend legislation to adequately support the temporary stay of foreign trafficking victims. It is anticipated that this will be amended by December 2005. The government and service providers must develop an appropriate assistance framework, including medium-term shelters and corresponding rehabilitation assistance programmes for foreign victims who reside in Romania.

# COUNTRY REPORT

## THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

This section analyzes the current situation of trafficking victims and victim assistance and protection in the Republic of Serbia. The report is divided into three sections: 1) Number of Foreign and Serbian Trafficking Victims Identified and Assisted, 2) Profiles of Trafficking Victims and 3) Overview of the Assistance Framework in Serbia.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The total number of foreign victims identified and assisted in Serbia between 1 January 2001 and 31 December 2004 was 169.
- The total number of Serbian victims identified and assisted between 1 January 2001 and 31 December 2004 was 45.
- Serbia is country of transit and destination for trafficking victims. However, there are recent indications that Serbia is becoming a country of origin, with a number of Serbian nationals trafficked abroad and internally.
- Both foreign and national victims trafficked to, through and within Serbia were primarily trafficked for of sexual exploitation. As well, a growing number of victims were trafficked for labour, begging and/or delinquency. Indeed, about one-third of assisted foreign victims in 2004 were trafficked to Serbia for labour. There were also victims, both national and foreign, who were dually exploited, for sexual and labour purposes.
- The majority of victims assisted in Serbia were female. However, cases of male victims, trafficked for labour and begging, were also documented. Indeed, in 2003, 85.7 per cent of foreign victims trafficked for labour or begging were male. This stands in contrast to the 100 per cent of foreign victims trafficked for sexual exploitation who were female. Among Serbian nationals, only one of 21 victims in 2004 was male.
- Minors accounted for a notable percentage of assisted victims in 2003 and 2004. This was particularly true among Serbian victims, who were minors in 20 per cent of cases in 2003 and 65 per cent of cases in 2004. Minors were trafficked for sexual exploitation, labour and begging and/or delinquency.
- A multiplicity of factors, including economic background, family relations, education and employment inform victims' vulnerability to trafficking. Both foreign and national victims in Serbia reported work as the main catalyst for their migration.
- Foreign victims assisted in Serbia had relatively high education levels in 2004, an increase over previous years. A large percentage of victims (66.7 per cent) had attended high school, 8.3 per cent had attended vocational school and 16.7 per cent had attended university. This belies assertions that only the poorly educated are trafficked.
- Since 2001, there was a steady increase in foreign victims originating from "average" economic backgrounds, from 2.9 per cent of victims in 2001 to 53.8 per cent in 2004. In such cases, material aspiration more than poverty *per se* was an important push factor for trafficking.
- Members of the Roma ethnic community were represented disproportionately among Serbian trafficking victims. Members of Hungarian and Romanian

minorities were also among assisted victims. This signals that ethnic minorities may be particularly vulnerable to trafficking in Serbia.

- Whereas foreign victims of sexual exploitation were more likely to cross borders legally, foreign victims trafficked for labour were more likely to cross illegally.
- Anecdotal information suggests “poor” to “average” living and working conditions while trafficked for both foreign and Serbian victims. Foreign victims of sexual and labour exploitation reported lower rates of abuse than Serbian victims who often reported multiple forms of abuse while trafficked.
- A number of victims assisted in Serbia – both foreign and Serbian – were recruited by a spouse or boyfriend. It is possible that some men started relationships with women as part of the recruitment process. Prevention efforts must be specifically tailored to counteract this new and insidious recruitment method.
- There were preliminary indications in Serbia that persons with mental and physical disabilities were particularly vulnerable to trafficking and were being specifically targeted in recruitment. In 2004, six of 21 Serbian victims (28.6 per cent) had some form of mental or physical disability when recruited.
- The majority of foreign and national victims were identified and referred for assistance by law enforcement authorities. Other identification agencies included embassy staff, the Centre for Social Work and self-referrals.
- In Serbia, there is a formal national referral system. The Agency for Coordinating Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings is tasked with identification and referral of trafficking victims. Victims identified by law enforcement, service providers or other persons contact the agency, which is responsible for referring the victims for appropriate assistance and protection.
- The assistance and protection framework for trafficking victims in Serbia has been geared mainly toward return assistance for adult foreign victims of sexual exploitation. With the identification of Serbian victims in 2003 and 2004, the lack of reintegration programmes constituted a gap in assistance. In response, in June 2004, the NGO Atina began implementing a reintegration programme for Serbian victims, including educational/vocational programmes, housing, medical assistance, family mediation, job placement, etc. This programme is a good example of reintegration support for national victims. However, there is a need to expand reintegration services beyond Belgrade.
- The lack of specialized assistance and protection services for minors represents a gap in the assistance framework in Serbia. Existing services need to be tailored to the needs of minors. As well, there is a need to enhance the skills of all frontline personnel, including law enforcement, in terms of interviewing and communicating with minors.

- The identification of “potential victims” (victims who have not yet been exploited but were in the trafficking process) signalled significant improvement in the efforts of law enforcement authorities, particularly the border police. However, a number of victims of labour trafficking were deported from Serbia to Romania without being identified, flagging the need for improved skills in the identification of other forms of trafficking.
- Services for trafficking victims in Serbia are concentrated in Belgrade. There is a need to develop and train a geographically disparate network of social assistance actors in Serbia – government and NGO – to support victims in the reintegration process.
- The Centre for Social Work in Sombor has developed an integrated system for assisting victims. This is a good example of social workers assisting trafficking victims. That the system functions independent of any donor funding is of note and this model should be replicated throughout Serbia as well as further a field.
- Various government ministries have significant roles to play in supporting the disparate aspects of sustainable reintegration. It is essential that government agencies become increasingly involved in prevention and protection of trafficking victims.
- In 2004, the Ministry of the Interior passed an instruction that allowed for temporary residence permits (TRPs) for foreign trafficking victims. Serbia is only one of three countries that has afforded foreign nationals this protection.
- There have been substantial improvements in the judiciary, including the sensitive handling of a trafficking case in 2004 by the special prosecutor as well as cross-border cooperation with SECI centre in 2004 in two criminal proceedings.
- In order to facilitate meaningful recovery and social reintegration of Serbian victims, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy and its corresponding Centres for Social Work must increase their willingness and capacity to provide direct psychosocial services to victims on a medium-term basis.

## 1. NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND SERBIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IDENTIFIED AND ASSISTED

The Republic of Serbia<sup>505</sup> has traditionally been considered a country of transit, with foreign victims arriving in or transiting through Serbia from other South-eastern European countries as well as further a field. Serbia also serves as both a destination and temporary destination for trafficking victims. Victims trafficked to and through Serbia were primarily trafficked for sexual exploitation. However, more recent data signals a growing number of victims (male and female) trafficked to and through Serbia for labour purposes and/or begging. In addition, there is recent evidence that Serbia is becoming a country of origin, with a noteworthy number of Serbian victims trafficked both internally as well as abroad, primarily for sexual exploitation.

Statistics and information about victims trafficked in Serbia were compiled according to primary data provided by the Agency for Coordinating Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings,<sup>506</sup> IOM Mission in Belgrade, Anti-Trafficking Team (Ministry of the Interior) and the NGOs Atina, Counselling Center against Family Violence (CAFV) and ASTRA.<sup>507</sup> In addition, this section includes information from service providers outside of Serbia that assisted victims who were trafficked to, through or from Serbia but not assisted there: Young Generation (Romania) and Hope and Homes (The Province of Kosovo).<sup>508</sup> These figures pertain to foreign and Serbian victims trafficked to, through or from Serbia and relate to experiences of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation, labour and begging, a better understanding of which will lead to improved interventions to address the needs and redress the trafficking experiences of victims.

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<sup>505</sup> While the Republic of Serbia is a constituent state of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, it is analyzed here as a separate body in an effort to better understand the specifics of trafficking to, through and from the Republic of Serbia as well as the Republic of Montenegro. Further, while citizens of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro constitute one nationality, this report distinguishes between victims resident in either Montenegro or Serbia. This should in no way be read as a political statement on the part of the RCP. In addition, although Kosovo is a province within the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, in this report it is separated out as a distinct entity. This is done in an effort to provide a more detailed picture of trafficking patterns, trends and profiles within and between each country/entity of the region and also should not be read as a political statement on the part of the RCP.

<sup>506</sup> The Agency for Coordinating Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings (hereafter referred to as the Agency) was initially called the Referral and Counselling Centre (RCC). This body was an initiative of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy, with the support of OSCE, toward the development of a national referral mechanism for victim assistance within Serbia. The Agency began operations in late March 2004. The Agency, as part of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy, is tasked with the identification and referral of trafficking victims in Serbia. This includes the development and maintenance of a database to register all victims of trafficking identified and referred for assistance in Serbia. The database, when fully operational, will be the central repository for all victim data in Serbia. It will not, however, include victims who have been trafficked to and through Serbia and assisted elsewhere.

<sup>507</sup> Other organizations in Serbia that participated in the RCP research and provided information include: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE); National Coordinator (Ministry of Interior); Department of Border Police (Ministry of Interior); Anti Trafficking Centre (ATC); Victimology Society of Serbia; Provincial Secretariat for Labour, Employment and Gender Equality; Wise, Persistent, Liberal, Authentic (MILA); Energy, Vision, Action (EVA); Centre for Social Work – Sombor; Beosupport; Incest Trauma Centre; Group 484; Catholic Relief Service (CRS); Save the Children; Kvinna till Kvinna; SOS village and Roma Information Centre.

<sup>508</sup> For a full discussion of how data was collected and the methodology used, please see: *Introduction*.



TABLE 1  
NUMBER OF ASSISTED VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO OR ORIGINATING FROM SERBIA, 2001 TO 2004

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign trafficking victims	36	53	37	43	169
Serbian trafficking victims	1	10	13	21	45

The figures presented in the table above comprise the number of trafficked foreign victims identified within Serbia and voluntarily returned to their countries of origin. Victims who were identified as trafficked but refused return assistance were not included.<sup>509</sup> In addition, the table includes the number of Serbian victims identified abroad as well as those identified within the country. To capture the full scope of trafficking in Serbian nationals, there is a need to access information from destination countries outside of South-eastern Europe. For example, three Serbian victims were trafficked to and assisted in the Netherlands by STV/La Strada in 2003 and 2004.<sup>510</sup> While the RCP sought to collect victim data from a range of destination countries within the European Union, for the most part, these efforts were met with reluctance or resistance due to limited resources, insufficient staff time or internal regulations about information sharing.

Many counter-trafficking actors in Serbia argue that the figures presented in the table above do not adequately reflect the scope of trafficking in Serbia as a country of destination, transit or origin. The ASTRA helpline registered calls about 62 victims of trafficking in 2002 and 2003 and 68 victims in 2004.<sup>511</sup> Similarly, assisted victims report the presence in bars and brothels of many more victims than are actually rescued, which also signals greater numbers than those being assisted.<sup>512</sup>

As important is evidence of Serbia as a transit country. As was noted in the RCP's first annual report, many victims trafficked through Serbia were never identified or assisted. Of note, in 2004, 12 of the 43 foreign victims identified and assisted in Serbia were identified while in transit, which indicates that some steps have been taken by law enforcement to identify victims in transit. At present, victims from Romania, Bulgaria and Albania transit through Serbia *en route* to EU countries. Further, the rate of illegal migration provides some indication of the number of foreign nationals crossing Serbia's state borders – 855 in 2003 and 929 in the first ten months of 2004 (Zlokas and Djuraskovic, 2004).

It is also becoming increasingly apparent that Serbian victims are being trafficked within Serbia as well as abroad.<sup>513</sup> While there were 13 assisted national victims in

<sup>509</sup> Prior to 2003, there is no record of victims declining assistance. However, six foreign victims in 2003 and three foreign victims in 2004 declined assistance. To date, only one Serbian victim – in 2004 – declined assistance.

<sup>510</sup> Correspondence with Suzanne Hoff, La Strada, Netherlands, April 26, 2005.

<sup>511</sup> Email correspondence with Tamara Vukasovic, Astra, Belgrade, Serbia, November 15, 2004, cf. Astra 2003: 15 ; ASTRA 2004: 4. That being said, not all calls were directly from victims. In 2004, Astra registered eight calls directly from Serbian victims and two from foreign victims. (Correspondence with Marija Andjelkovic, ASTRA, Serbia, May 11, 2005).

<sup>512</sup> One victim rescued in 2005 reported 10 other victims being kept in the location from where she had been rescued. Other victims reported similar findings.

<sup>513</sup> This trend is not unique to Serbia, but rather is part of a regional trend in which traditional countries of destination and transit, like Montenegro, BiH, Croatia and Macedonia, are increasingly recognised as countries of origin.

2003 and 21 in 2004, many argue that this is only a fraction of the trafficking in Serbian nationals. In 2002 and 2003, ASTRA's SOS Hotline registered calls about 39 Serbian trafficking victims (ASTRA, 2003: 15), more than four times the number assisted in that year. Similarly, ASTRA registered calls about 55 Serbian nationals in 2004 (ASTRA, 2004: 4), more than twice as many victims as were assisted that year. This trend is consistent with the strong desire among many Serbian nationals to migrate abroad and the risk attendant in this migration.<sup>514</sup>

Another barometer of trafficking is the number of criminal proceedings currently being pursued. In 2003, 14 criminal charges were brought against 46 persons because of 81 criminal acts related to trafficking in women. During the first ten months of 2004, 36 criminal charges were submitted against 75 persons due to criminal activities related to trafficking in human beings (Article 11B) (Zlokas and Djuraskovic, 2004).

## 2. PROFILES OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

Below is an exploration of victim profiles for national and foreign victims trafficked to, from and through Serbia for various forms of exploitation. In this section, we analyze the profiles and experiences of foreign trafficking victims (Section 2.1) and Serbian trafficking victims (Section 2.2). Victims' needs are intimately informed by the specific dynamics of their trafficking experience, making understanding of these dynamics an essential starting point in the development of appropriate assistance and services for victims.

### 2.1 Foreign Victims of Trafficking in Serbia

In what follows, we explore the profiles and trafficking experiences of foreign nationals trafficked to or through the Republic of Serbia.

TABLE 2  
NUMBER OF ASSISTED FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO SERBIA, 2001 TO 2004

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Foreign trafficking victims	36	53	37	43	169

The majority of foreign victims in Serbia were trafficked for sexual exploitation. However, recently other forms of trafficking have been identified, such as for labour and begging, particularly in 2004 when more victims were exploited for labour than for sexual purposes.<sup>515</sup> There have also been cases of trafficking for labour and begging as well as dual forms of exploitation – for sexual and labour exploitation. As well, while women have been the most common victims, increasingly there are cases of trafficking in men. For example, in 2004, one male Serbian victim was identified and assisted and

<sup>514</sup> A recent survey of economics students at Belgrade University found that almost 84 per cent would leave Serbia and try their luck in the European Union, America or Australia. The students were worried about their futures and the situation in the country. As well, more than half of the students described their lives as average, bad or very bad (Politika, 2004). In another survey of Serbian youth (between 16 and 35 years of age), up to 43 per cent of those surveyed said that they would leave the country if a chance to do so was available (B92, 2004).

<sup>515</sup> In some cases, victims of labour exploitation were identified and assisted in Serbia. However, most were only identified after deportation from Serbia and upon arrival in Romania (Interview with Mariana Petersel, Director, Young Generation, Timisoara, Romania, 9 May 2004). This raises concerns about the identification and referral procedures among Serbian border officials along the Romanian border.

the ASTRA hotline logged two calls about male trafficking victims.<sup>516</sup> For more detail, see *Forms of trafficking* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation, Labour and Begging*. The identification of other forms of trafficking in Serbia flags the need for a broadened and more inclusive identification criteria for trafficking victims as well as specific assistance programmes tailored to trafficking victims.

### **2.1.1 Profiles and Experiences of Foreign Victims Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation, Labour and Begging**

The information presented below details the profiles and experiences of foreign victims trafficked to Serbia for sexual exploitation, labour and begging. This analysis will include victims who have been trafficked for one as well as multiple forms of exploitation. These disparate forms of trafficking merit attention as sites of vulnerability and assistance needs may differ accordingly. Therefore, wherever possible, we distinguish among victims trafficked for sexual exploitation, labour and begging. This analysis is an effort to present both a general overview of different forms of trafficking as well as some baseline information about different profiles of victims for future analysis and comparison.

TABLE 3  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING, FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO SERBIA, 2001 TO 2004

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Sexual exploitation	34	51	34	11	130
Labour exploitation	2	2	3	17	24
Labour and sexual exploitation	0	0	0	2	2
Begging	0	0	0	1	1
Potential victims <sup>517</sup>	0	0	0	12	12
Total	36	53	37	43	169

The analysis to follow, however, does not consider “potential victims” who have been assisted in Serbia. This category, detailed in the chart above, refers to potential victims identified while in transit and prior to exploitation.<sup>518</sup> These women were identified as “at risk”, having manifested strong signs of being in the trafficking process. This group – 12 victims in 2004 – accounts for 27.9 per cent of foreign victims in 2004 and 7.1 per cent of foreign victims from 2001 to 2004.<sup>519</sup> These “victims” were identified by law

<sup>516</sup> Email correspondence, Tamara Vukasovic, Astra, Belgrade, Serbia, November 2004.

<sup>517</sup> This designation is used when the individual was assisted for an insufficient time to clearly establish his/her trafficking experience or when the individual was identified and assisted before being exploited but showed strong signs of being in the trafficking process.

<sup>518</sup> In one instance, four Moldovan women were travelling in the company of one man who held their passports and documents. They had been promised employment as domestic workers in Italy, had paid large amounts of money to the recruiter, knew little about their route, destination or the work to be undertaken. They were identified at the Croatian border by border officials. In another case, a minor Iraqi girl was identified while in transit at Belgrade airport *en route* to Denmark. She was travelling with a male relative who promised to adopt her and take her to study in Denmark. She accepted and left without the consent of her parents. Her documents were false.

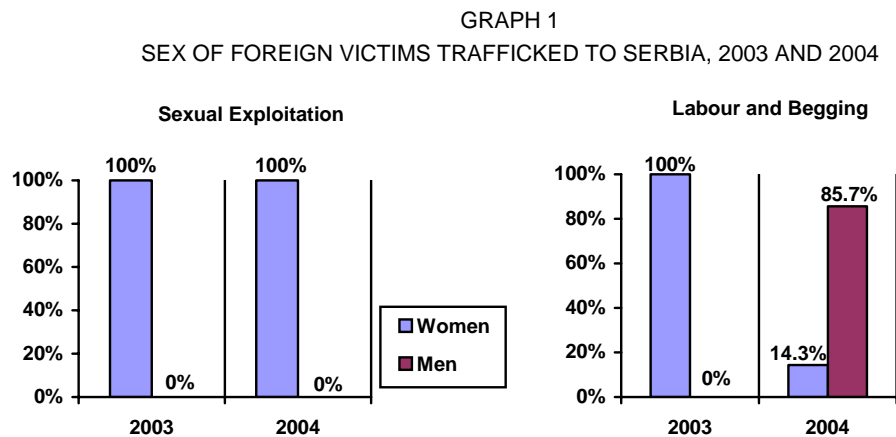
<sup>519</sup> All were women, with the youngest victim (from Iraq) being 12 years old and the eldest (from Georgia) being 46 years of age. Half were minors, which may have led to their identification by law enforcement, as minors cannot cross borders without a parent or parental consent. Women/girls identified while in transit originated both from traditional countries of origin, Moldova (4) and Romania (3), as well as countries from which victims have not originated in the past, such as Georgia (2) and Iraq (1). In addition, women were trafficked from areas considered destination and transit, such as Montenegro (1) and Kosovo (1). Their intended destinations included: Croatia (1), Cyprus (1), Denmark (1), Hungary (2), Italy (4), Serbia (1) and the United States of America (1). While most were offered work as labourers (4) and domestic work (2), one victim was kidnapped, one was promised a better life and

enforcement authorities, generally at border crossings. Their identification while in transit signals an increased awareness on the part of law enforcement in Serbia and their counterparts in Croatia, Romania and BiH.<sup>520</sup>

### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics

**Sex:** All victims of sexual exploitation identified and assisted in the Republic of Serbia since 2001 were women.

Similarly, victims trafficked for labour between 2001 and 2003 were also exclusively women. However, in 2004, the majority of the 18 victims trafficked for labour and begging were, in fact, male. This represents a change from previous years and stands in sharp contrast to foreign victims trafficked for sexual exploitation. It signals a need to consider not only other forms of trafficking but other profiles of victim in terms of prevention, protection and identification.



**Age:** Until 2004, the majority of foreign victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were between 18 and 25 years when identified in Serbia. However, in 2004, this age range accounted for only 30.8 per cent of victims, with the majority of victims (53.8 per cent) over 25 years. As such, the age of foreign victims increased markedly in 2004. Significantly, in 2004, as many victims were over 35 years of age as were between 18 and 25 years.

Overall, the number of victims over 35 years of age increased in number during the reporting period, from none in 2001 to 30.8 per cent in 2004. Victims from this older age group were from Ukraine and Romania. Strikingly, the age category of over 35 years was in some years (2003 and 2004) more prevalent than the representation of minors. As well, older victims were more likely to be dually exploited for labour and

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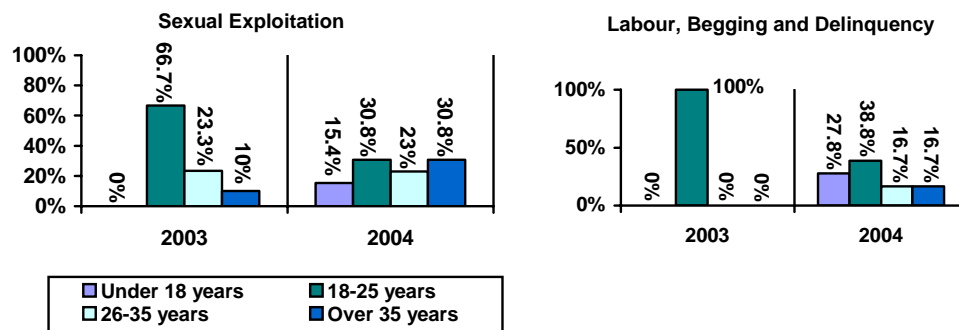
education abroad through an informal adoption process and one victim was promised a study opportunity in the USA.

<sup>520</sup> In addition to these cases, other police action in Serbia has resulted in the identification of victims prior to exploitation. One police investigation in Belgrade in 2004 led to the closing down of an employment agency suspected of trafficking. The police raided the premises and found 20 women in the process of recruitment (as hairdressers and cosmeticians to work in United Arab Emirates) whose contracts included some suspicious clauses that signalled the risk of trafficking. This example, too, highlights the increased action on the part of law enforcement to combat trafficking. While examples are not many, they nevertheless signal a step forward.

sexual purposes. In 2004, the victims of dual forms of exploitation were 37 and 41 years old.

The percentage of foreign minors trafficked for sexual exploitation fluctuated during the reporting period, with minors representing 29.4 per cent of victims in 2001, seven per cent in 2002, 0 per cent in 2003 and 15.4 per cent in 2004. Minors were from Romania, Moldova and Albania. While minors constitute a noteworthy percentage of foreign victims in 2004, the numbers were far fewer than among Serbian victims. However, this reflects the victim's age at identification rather than at recruitment so that some victims who were identified as adults were possibly minors when trafficked. Service providers in Serbia do not systematically record victim's age at recruitment, making it difficult to calculate accurately the number of trafficked minors.

GRAPH 2  
AGE OF FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO SERBIA, 2003 AND 2004<sup>521</sup>



The seven foreign victims trafficked for labour/begging between 2001 and 2003 were between 18 and 25 years at identification. However, in 2004, the age of foreign victims was far more diverse – ranging from under 18 to 48 years. While the largest number of victims (38.8 per cent) were between 18 and 25 years of age, a striking minority (27.8 per cent) were minors at recruitment.<sup>522</sup> In addition, some victims were in an older age range – 16.7 per cent between 26 and 35 years and 16.7 per cent over 35 years of age. A broader age range appears to be more common among victims trafficked for labour and begging.

**Country of origin:** Foreign victims of sexual exploitation originated from various countries. Until 2004, Moldovan was the most prevalent nationality. However, in 2004, no Moldovans were identified as sexually exploited in Serbia.<sup>523</sup> By contrast, Ukrainian

<sup>521</sup> In 2002, all foreign victims of trafficking for labour and begging were between the ages of 18 and 25 years at identification. Foreign victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in 2002 were minors (seven per cent), 18 to 25 years (57.9 per cent), 26 to 35 years (33.3 per cent) and over 35 years (1.8 per cent).

<sup>522</sup> In the case of these victims, it was possible to document the victim's age at recruitment rather than at identification because the service provider had systematically documented this information. This is a more precise way to gauge the rate of minors being trafficked and, ideally, should be replicated in the case management of other service providers.

<sup>523</sup> Four Moldovans were identified and assisted within Serbia in 2004 and there were indications that they were likely to be trafficked for sexual exploitation. However, they were identified and assisted while in transit, before being exploited. They are listed as "potential victims" and, therefore, are not analyzed in the section on foreign assisted victims.

victims were increasingly represented, accounting for 23.5 per cent in 2003 and 76.9 per cent in 2004.

Significantly, not a single Bulgarian citizen trafficked for sexual exploitation was assisted within Serbia over the last four years despite a shared border with Serbia. Possible explanations include expedited expulsion measures for Bulgarian victims (because of their proximity to the border), cooperation between Serbian and Bulgarian trafficking networks or the increased accessibility of EU countries with the lifting of *Schengen* visa restrictions for Bulgarian citizens.

There was also a very low incidence of victims from former Yugoslav countries. While few former Yugoslav countries have yet to become substantial countries of origin, there are recent signs that this is changing. As such, the absence of citizens from former Yugoslav countries may indicate that Serbia is not an attractive destination in the region and serves more as a transit country for these nationalities.

TABLE 4  
COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN FOR FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO SERBIA, 2001 TO 2004

Country of Origin	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Albania	0	0	0	1	1
Belarus	2 (2)	0	0	0	2 (2)
Bulgaria	0	0	0	0 (1)	0 (1)
Moldova	18	25 (1)	15	0 (14)	58 (15)
Romania	9	15 (1)	11 (2)	2 (3)	37 (6)
Russia	1	1	0	0	2
Ukraine	4	10	8 (1)	10	32 (1)
Total	34 (2)	51 (2)	34 (3)	13 (18)	132 (25)

\*The first numbers presented are the countries of origin for victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation while the numbers in brackets and in blue are those of trafficking for labour exploitation and begging. The one victim trafficked for begging was from Bulgaria.

Most victims of trafficking for labour and begging between 2001 and 2003 originated from Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine and Romania. However, in 2004, the bulk of victims were from Moldova, accounting for 77.8 per cent. In addition, Romanians accounted for 16.7 per cent of assisted victims. In addition, in 2004, a Bulgarian victim (5.6 per cent of victims) was identified for the first time, having been trafficked to Serbia for begging.

**Ethnicity:** Information available on this subject is limited, as most service providers do not systematically record it as part of case management. Service providers documented only one instance – in 2002 – of a Romanian victim of sexual exploitation from an ethnic minority, Roma.<sup>524</sup> There is no record of ethnic minorities among assisted victims of labour and begging. The degree to which ethnicity informs vulnerability to trafficking from, through or to the region is unclear and requires further examination.

**Area of origin:** In both 2003 and 2004, most victims came from rural areas. This is consistent with residence patterns in Moldova where 58.4 per cent of the Moldovan population live in rural areas (UNDP, 2002: 164). However, it is striking when considering victims from Ukraine and Romania, countries where only 32.1 per cent and 44.9 per cent of the populations live in rural areas. As such, it may be possible to speak

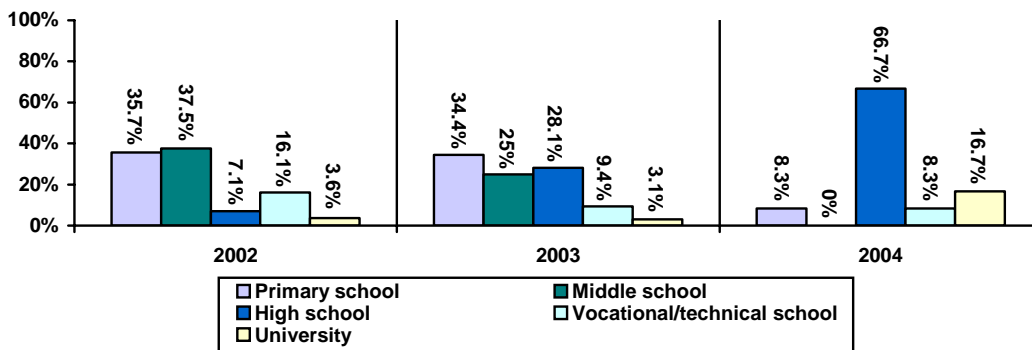
<sup>524</sup> In 2004, two of the “potential victims” – one from Kosovo and one from Montenegro – were of Roma ethnicity. However, as potential victims, they are not included in the analysis above.

of the acute vulnerability of rural residents in these countries. There is insufficient information about this indicator from victims of labour and begging to draw conclusions.

**Education**<sup>525</sup>: Traditionally, victims with primary or middle school education comprise the majority of victims, as evidenced in the graph below. However, in 2004, this changed somewhat with assisted victims having higher education levels. A larger percentage of victims (66.7 per cent) had attended high school, 8.3 per cent had attended vocational school and 16.7 per cent had attended university. Only 8.3 per cent of the victims in 2004 had low levels of education, having attained only a primary school education.

Reasons for this trend require further consideration. It indicates that among foreign victims trafficked to Serbia, higher education is no guard against trafficking. In addition, it contrasts with previous years and may signal rising education levels of victims generally. At the same time, it may also reflect the increased number of victims originating from Ukraine, where victims tend to have relatively high education levels.

GRAPH 3  
EDUCATION LEVELS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION,  
2002 TO 2004



By contrast, victims trafficked for labour or begging had generally low education levels, usually only primary or middle school, as outlined the chart below. Of note, however, were the few victims with higher education. Perhaps most notable was the victim – a 47-year-old Moldovan woman assisted in 2004 – who had a university education.

TABLE 5  
EDUCATION LEVELS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR LABOUR AND BEGGING, 2001 TO 2004

Educational Attainment	2001	2002	2003	2004
Less than primary school	0	0	0	0
Primary school	0	1	1	4
Middle school	1	1	1	12
High school	0	0	1	1
Vocational training	1	0	0	0
University	0	0	0	1
Total	2	2	3	18

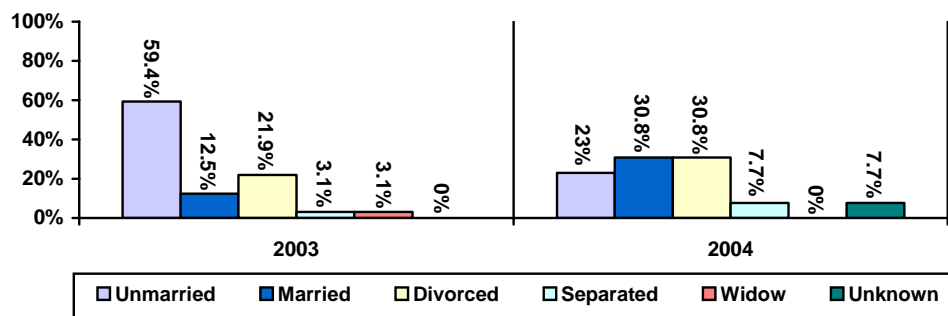
<sup>525</sup> Primary school is the first eight years of schooling, while middle school is the ninth and tenth years and high school is the eleventh and twelfth years.

**Mental and physical disabilities:** Service providers reported that for the first time, in 2004, one victim trafficked for sexual exploitation (or 8.3 per cent) had a mental disability. As 28.6 per cent of Serbian victims assisted in 2004 were mentally or physically disabled, there is reason to believe that this is an emergent trend. Mentally disabled victims require the provision of specifically tailored assistance programmes. Further, if this trend develops, thought must be given to prevention efforts that take into account the intellectual capacity of victims as well as the recruitment methods and manipulations used.<sup>526</sup>

Among victims trafficked for labour and begging, one victim (or 5.6 per cent), the minor trafficked for begging, had a physical disability. He was without hands, which presumably was considered an advantage in begging.

**Marital and family status:** Until 2004, victims trafficked to Serbia for sexual exploitation were primarily single women with no children, comprising 60.6 per cent of victims in 2002 and 59.4 per cent in 2003. However, in 2004, unmarried women were only 23.1 per cent of foreign victims, with most victims either married (30.8 per cent) or divorced (30.8 per cent).

GRAPH 4  
MARITAL STATUS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 AND 2004<sup>527</sup>



The percentage of assisted victims who were mothers was relatively constant in 2002 (40.4 per cent) and 2003 (46.9 per cent). In 2004, the percentage of mothers increased dramatically to 61.5 per cent. It is possible that the economic burden on parents creates the space for trafficking of mothers.

In addition, the presence of single parents is noteworthy, ranging from 25 per cent to 35 per cent between 2001 and 2004. Recognition of the particular vulnerability of single mothers should guide prevention efforts in countries of origin like Moldova, Ukraine and Romania. These prevention efforts must go beyond awareness-raising campaigns to address the root causes through employment placement and income-generation schemes. The presence of mothers, especially single mothers, also flags the need for programmes within sending countries that can address the needs of children growing up

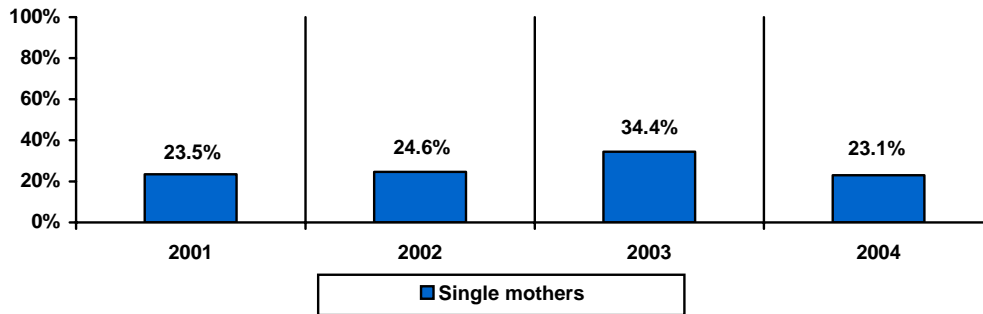
<sup>526</sup> For further discussion please see: *Mental and physical disabilities* in section: *Profiles and Experiences of Serbia Trafficking Victims*.

<sup>527</sup> In 2002, 60.6 per cent of foreign victims of sexual exploitation were unmarried, while 17.9 per cent were married, 12.5 per cent were divorced, 5.4 per cent living in a common-law relationship, 1.8 per cent were separated and 1.8 per cent widowed.



without parents. It also highlights the importance of parenting programmes and family counselling to support the reintegration efforts of returning mothers.

GRAPH 5  
SINGLE MOTHERS AMONG FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2001 TO 2004



Victims trafficked for labour, assisted between 2001 and 2003, were of diverse marital status. Victims assisted in 2001 were widowed and married, while victims assisted in 2002 were married and single and, in 2003, victims were single and separated. In 2004, while there is also a range of marital situations, most victims (61.1 per cent) were unmarried. To some degree, this may be attributable to the large number of minors. The remaining victims were married (33.3 per cent) or widowed (5.6 per cent).

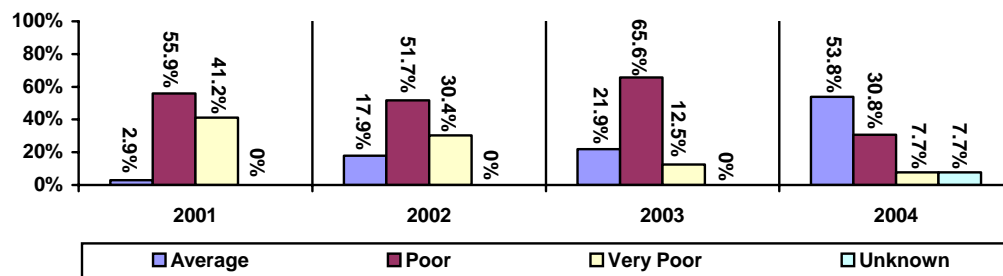
Also of note is the number of victims who were parents at recruitment. Between 2001 and 2003, three of the seven (42.9 per cent) victims were mothers and all were single mothers. In 2004, only four of the 18 victims were parents (both fathers and mothers). Three were married, while one is widowed. As such, the rate of single parents in 2004 was only 5.6 per cent.

Family dependents, too, can serve as a push factor for trafficking. In addition to dependent children, victims were also responsible for the care of other family members, including parents, siblings and elderly relatives. This consideration has particular resonance in Serbia where a large number of foreign victims of labour exploitation were minors. Systematically documenting this variable in case management, including but not limited to children, would be valuable. Analysis of this indicator will give a better idea of the links between family status and trafficking.

**Economic status:**<sup>528</sup> While it is generally assumed that poverty is the primary cause of trafficking, recent data about foreign victims trafficked to Serbia challenges this assumption. Since 2001, there was a steady increase in foreign victims originating from “average” economic backgrounds, from 2.9 per cent of victims in 2001 to 53.8 per cent in 2004. In such cases, material aspiration more than poverty *per se* can be an important push factor for trafficking.

<sup>528</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim’s self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

GRAPH 6  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2001 TO 2004



This is not to suggest that poverty is not a central issue in terms of trafficking vulnerability. The majority of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation were from “poor” or “very poor” economic backgrounds. Further, all countries from which victims originated were characterized by generally poor economic conditions. However, 2004 saw a change, with only 30.8 per cent originating from “poor” economic conditions and 7.7 per cent from “very poor” backgrounds. The declining number of victims originating from “poor” or “very poor” backgrounds constitutes a considerable shift in economic composition and suggests that there are other critical contributors to trafficking that must be considered alongside real economic need and poverty.

The economic status of victims of trafficking for labour exploitation and begging varied. In 2001, victims originated from “average” economic backgrounds, while, in 2002, they were “poor” and “very poor”. In 2003, two of the three victims were poor, while the other was from an “average” economic background. In 2004, 61.1 per cent of victims originated primarily from “poor” economic backgrounds, while a significant minority (38.9 per cent) came from “average” economic backgrounds. This finding is consistent with foreign victims trafficked for sexual exploitation, who, in 2004, were increasingly drawn from “average” economic backgrounds.

**Family and social relations:** Service providers report that many foreign victims had “good” or “normal” family relations prior to trafficking. Only a few were from problematic homes or had experienced domestic violence.

However, this data cannot be interpreted directly. First, violence is subjective so that what is perceived by some to be “normal family relations” may be considered “poor” or “abusive” by others. One victim who initially reported no violence in the home went on to refer to abuse by her father. When asked why she did not say that she had been abused, she explained that this was not really abuse because she had deserved it. Second, victims may not feel comfortable speaking about abuse until they have developed a trusting relationship with the counsellor, not always feasible in Serbia given the relatively short time that foreign victims were assisted there. Data from service providers in countries of origin, such as Moldova and Romania, documented high rates of violence and problems within the home among assisted victims.<sup>529</sup>

<sup>529</sup> Among Romanian victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, 30.3 per cent of victims in 2003 and 33.1 per cent in 2004 suffered such violence in their homes (see: *Romania Country Report*).

Further, research on violence against women also reveals high rates of domestic violence in countries such as Ukraine, Moldova and Romania. As most foreign victims came from these sending countries, it is probable that findings will change over time, with victims more willing to divulge negative experiences to a trusted counsellor during reintegration.

Among victims of trafficking for labour and begging, there was insufficient data to draw substantive conclusions. However, in at least one case (that of a Ukrainian woman) domestic violence was the primary motivation for her accepting work abroad. Not only was she regularly abused during her ten-year marriage but her husband also forced her to have sex with his friends and beat her violently any time she asked for a divorce. The link between trafficking for labour or begging and domestic violence requires further attention.

It may also be in the more subtle family tensions or the lack of strong family relationships that we can identify behaviours that serve to increase a victim's vulnerability to trafficking issues, such as poor communication, strained relations or an extended family household. Further, in countries such as Moldova and Romania where migration for work is an accepted economic strategy, families may exert subtle pressure on daughters or wives to accept work abroad. Also salient may be social relations more generally including issues of social inclusion and disenfranchisement.

### **Recruitment Experiences**

**Living situation at recruitment:** Most foreign victims were residing with their families at recruitment. Among victims of sexual exploitation, this group accounted for 92.8 per cent of victims in 2002 and 90.6 per cent in 2003. Similarly, with the exception of one victim in 2002 who lived alone at recruitment, all foreign victims of labour and begging assisted between 2001 and 2004 lived with family. This finding, consistent with many countries in the region, flags the need for prevention programmes that target families as a whole alongside those for specific target groups.<sup>530</sup>

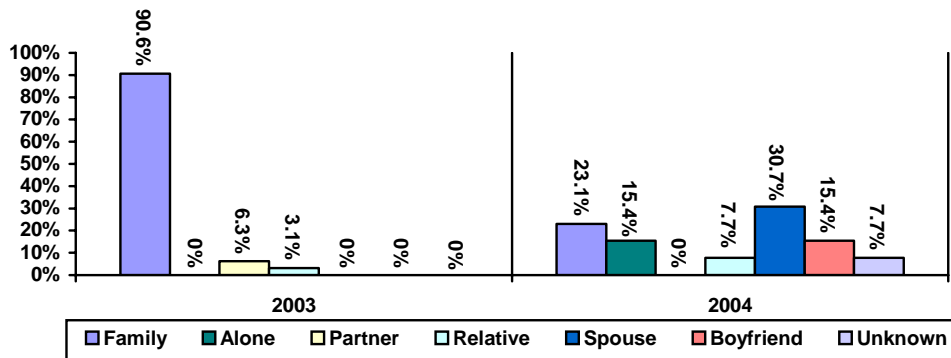
However, in 2004, fewer victims of sexual exploitation were living with family at recruitment. Even when victims living with a spouse or relative are included, the number of victims living in a family environment was still only 61.5 per cent, a significant decline from previous years. It is unclear to what we can attribute this shift.

Some victims lived alone at recruitment. As most women in South-eastern Europe live in family environments, living alone may indicate a problematic family background that they have sought to escape. It might also indicate a victim who was raised in an institution but has since left. Alternatively, it might indicate women who are more adventurous, independent minded and inclined to rebel against social convention.

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<sup>530</sup> However, to undertake such prevention efforts more specific information is needed about family living environments, such as the composition of the family at recruitment and whether it is a nuclear or extended family household. This information could also be cross-correlated with other indicators such as economic background and family relations.

GRAPH 7  
LIVING SITUATION AT RECRUITMENT, FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 TO 2004<sup>531</sup>



It is important to note that the data presented is reflective only of the victim's living situation at recruitment. The individual may have lived in another environment, such as an institution, earlier in life, which may have contributed to their trafficking but is not captured in the data.<sup>532</sup> As such, more information is needed about past and present living arrangements to accurately pinpoint trafficking risk.

**Working situation at recruitment:** In 2002 and 2003, most victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were employed at recruitment (97.7 per cent in 2002 and 93.7 per cent in 2003). This finding contradicts the assumption that it is only the unemployed who migrate or that there is a direct correlation between trafficking and unemployment. Rather, employment alone may not be a sufficient deterrent to migration, with many people in source countries reporting underemployment as well as unsatisfactory salary and working conditions. To be employed in the poor economies from which many assisted victims originated may not, to any significant extent, mitigate trafficking. These results suggest that the correlation may not be direct or inevitable. In 2004, the employment profile of victims of sexual exploitation shifted quite substantially for reasons that are unclear, with only 38.5 per cent of victims employed at recruitment.

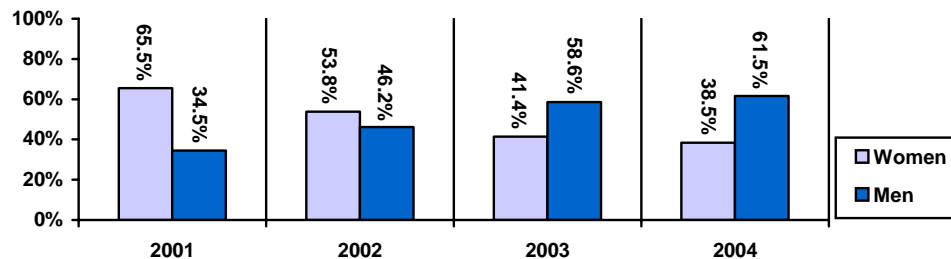
Among victims of labour exploitation assisted between 2001 and 2003, three were employed and four were not. In 2004, most victims were unemployed at recruitment (72.2 per cent), which is unsurprising given that a significant minority of them were minors. What is striking is that so few of these victims – 11.1 per cent – were attending school at recruitment. Of those who were employed, one was vending in the streets, while the others were a professor and a nurse. This unusual finding shows vividly that even good employment in some countries of origin may fail to meet the needs and aspirations of citizens and thereby create space for trafficking in persons. Until employment in countries of origin can address issues such as low wages, poor working conditions and underemployment we can anticipate a continued willingness to accept work abroad, with all of the attendant risks.

<sup>531</sup> In 2002, 92.8 per cent of victims were living with family at recruitment, while 3.6 per cent were living alone and 3.6 per cent were living in another unspecified arrangement.

<sup>532</sup> A childhood spent in institutions informs individual's development and negotiation skills. Further, upon departure from these institutions the victim has no safety net or social support, which is usually provided by family or extended family. As such, these individuals may be especially vulnerable to trafficking.

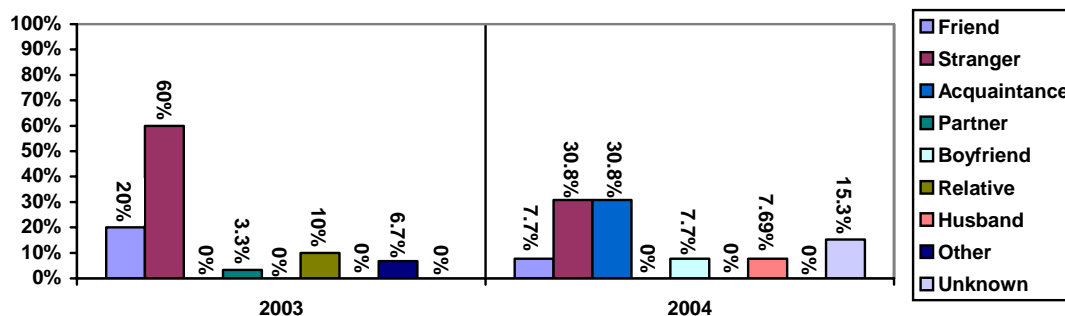
**Recruiter:** In both 2001 and 2002, more victims of sexual exploitation were recruited by women than by men, as detailed in the graph below. It is worth noting that whereas Romanian and Ukrainian victims were recruited by men and women in equal numbers, the majority of Moldovan victims assisted both in 2001 and 2002 were recruited by a woman, 77.8 per cent and 58.3 per cent respectively. In 2003 and 2004, this pattern changed substantially with more victims of sexual exploitation recruited by men.

GRAPH 8  
SEX OF RECRUITER OF FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2001 TO 2004



“Stranger” was the relationship most commonly cited by victims in both 2002 and 2003. By contrast, in 2004, as many victims were recruited by an acquaintance (30.8 per cent) as by a stranger (30.8 per cent), indicating a change in recruitment methods from previous years. Indeed, overall, more victims were recruited by someone known to them.

GRAPH 9  
RELATIONSHIP TO RECRUITER OF FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED  
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2003 TO 2004<sup>533</sup>



Of interest is the number of victims who were recruited by a spouse or boyfriend, raising the possibility that some men start relationships with women as part of the recruitment process, consistent with the “lover boy phenomenon” in the Netherlands.<sup>534</sup> If so, prevention efforts will need to be specifically tailored to counteract this insidious recruitment method.

<sup>533</sup> In 2002, 78.5 per cent of victims were recruited by a stranger, 16.1 per cent by a friend, 3.6 per cent by a partner and 1.8 per cent by someone of an unspecified relationship.

<sup>534</sup> The “lover boy” phenomenon is a recruitment strategy noted in the Netherlands in which a man initiates a relationship with the girl/woman with the intention of exploiting and trafficking her. For further explanation of this specific recruitment technique, see Noten and van den Borne, 2004.

Recruiters for labour and begging were men and women as well as friends and strangers.<sup>535</sup> In 2004, most victims (14 of 18) were recruited by friends – 12 by males and two by females. All of these victims were from Moldova and recruited by persons of Moldovan nationality. Two of the 18 victims – one Romanian male minor and one Bulgarian male minor – were recruited by their mothers. The victim's close relationship to the recruiter is cause for concern and should be considered in the development of awareness-raising efforts. In only two of the 18 cases were victims not intimately connected to the victims – one male acquaintance and one male stranger.

**Reasons for leaving home country and type of work promised:** Victims of labour, begging and sexual exploitation primarily left their home countries for employment abroad to improve their living standards. This was often tied to poor economic circumstances generally and under- or unemployment at recruitment. In one remarkable case, a Moldovan woman trafficked to Italy and assisted in 2003 explained that she knew the risks and was aware that in all likelihood her migration would lead to being trafficked. However, she was so desperate for work that she took the risk with the intention of escaping her trafficker after a few months and then applying for asylum.

Victims later trafficked into sexual exploitation were generally offered service sector jobs in occupations considered “women's work”.<sup>536</sup> Very few victims – 4.4 per cent in 2002 and none in 2003 or 2004 – were aware that they would work as prostitutes. The relatively high number of victims in each year who were promised work as a dancer/entertainer should also be noted. No victims in 2003 or 2004 admitted to awareness that sexual services would be required as a part of this job. However, service providers observe that these denials may be tied to stigma and shame and that many victims may have had some inkling of what the work would involve, as these activities are known to often have a connection to prostitution.

In 2004, 88.8 per cent of victims trafficked for labour and begging were offered labour work (agriculture, construction and industry), while 5.6 per cent were offered domestic work and 5.6 per cent were told they would beg.

While work was a central catalyst for migration, not all victims were poor, (see *Economic status* above) which suggests that other factors must be considered as contributors. These might include one or a combination of the following: poor or unsupportive family relations, material aspirations beyond what is possible in the country of origin, adventure, the normative acceptability of migration as an economic strategy.<sup>537</sup> In at least one case assisted in 2004, that of a Ukrainian woman trafficked for labour, the victim accepted work abroad as she needed money to pursue further

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<sup>535</sup> In 2001, victims (from Belarus) were recruited by female strangers, while, in 2002, recruitment (of Moldovan and Romanians) was by male strangers. In 2003, Romanian victims were recruited by male and female friends, while the Ukrainian victim was recruited by a female stranger.

<sup>536</sup> In 2002, 65.2 per cent of victims were offered work as domestic workers, while the remaining 34.8 per cent were offered work as *au pair*/babysitters, dancer/entertainers or prostitutes. In 2003, 50 per cent were promised work as dancer/entertainers, 30 per cent as domestic workers, ten per cent as *au pair*/babysitter and ten per cent an unspecified type of work. In 2004, 38.4 per cent of victims were offered work as a dancer/entertainer, 23.1 per cent as waitress and 15.4 per cent as labourer. In 23.1 per cent of cases, the type of work offered was unknown.

<sup>537</sup> Given that so many foreign victims trafficked for labour were from Moldova, the normative acceptability of migration in this country may also have served as a catalyst for migration.

education. In another case, a Ukrainian woman accepted work abroad in an effort to escape her abusive marriage.

### **Transportation and Movement**

**Border crossings and documents:** Prior to 2004, most foreign victims trafficked for sexual exploitation crossed borders illegally – 60.7 per cent in 2002 and 75 per cent in 2003 – although in both years they all carried legal documents. In 2004, most victims of sexual exploitation travelled to Serbia legally (53.8 per cent), whereas 15.4 per cent crossed illegally. In 30.8 per cent of cases, border crossing details were unknown. The majority of victims (76.9 per cent) used legal documents, while 15.4 per cent used no documents and 7.7 per cent used false documents. These findings can usefully be juxtaposed with those of the victims identified in transit in Serbia. The majority of these victims (66.7 per cent) travelled with no documents, which made identification easier for law enforcement. The use of legal documents serves as a means to avoid detection while crossing borders, a trend that is noticeable throughout the region and raises the need to further refine methods to detect victims travelling by legal means.

Similarly, victims of labour exploitation and begging generally crossed borders illegally. In 2004, only one of 18 victims (5.26 per cent) crossed at legal border crossings.<sup>538</sup> By contrast, most victims used legal documents. Of the 18 victims, 16, including three of the five minors, travelled on legal documents, accounting for 88.9 per cent of victims. This calls for further investigation as minors can only travel with their parents or with written parental consent, raising questions about the role of parents in the migration/trafficking process.

**Transportation routes:** Most foreign victims travelled to or through Serbia overland. The route depended on the victim's country of origin.

- *Moldova and Romania:* Victims generally travelled overland through Romania and crossed into Serbia through a new route for illegal crossings in the Vrsac region. Migrants were transported by minibus to the Serbian border where they were illegally transferred into Serbia.
- *Ukraine:* Routes from Ukraine were either overland (train or bus) through Hungary or directly to Serbia by plane.
- *In transit:* Where Serbia was a transit country *en route* to Italy, victims were generally transported overland through Serbia and Croatia and then by sea to Italy or overland through Croatia and Slovenia.

### **Victims' Trafficking Experiences**

**Forms of trafficking:** To date, trafficking for sexual exploitation was the predominant form of trafficking experienced by foreign victims trafficked to or through the Republic. Victims of sexual exploitation accounted for 78.1 per cent of foreign victims assisted from 2001 to 2004. The majority worked in bars and nightclubs. However, it is widely agreed that in response to police operations throughout Serbia, numerous public

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<sup>538</sup> Three of the seven victims of labour and begging assisted in 2001 and 2002 crossed legally, while four of the seven victims assisted in 2002 and 2003 crossed illegally.

establishments where prostitution could be found were closed. Instead, traffickers appear to have shifted many victims to “on-call agencies” in private locations. For example, the ASTRA hotline in 2003 registered 23 calls reporting trafficking within escort agencies. Consequently, victims have become harder to identify and, therefore, to assist. Since the majority of assisted cases had been working in bars and brothels, this information may not be representative of the working situation of all victims trafficked for sexual exploitation in Serbia. In another case in 2004, the victim (who was promised marriage) was kept in a private home and sexually exploited there.

TABLE 6  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING, FOREIGN VICTIMS TRAFFICKED TO SERBIA, 2001 TO 2004

Forms of Trafficking	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Sexual exploitation	34	51	34	11	130
Sexual and labour exploitation	0	0	0	2	2
Labour exploitation	2	2	3	17	24
Begging	0	0	0	1	1
Total	36	53	37	31	157

In the past, only a handful of assisted victims were trafficked for labour exploitation. However, in 2004, 17 of 31 cases were trafficking for labour exploitation.<sup>539</sup> Foreign victims of labour and begging accounted for only 14.2 per cent of foreign victims between 2001 and 2004, but this rose to 39.5 per cent in 2004. The majority of victims of labour exploitation were men from Moldova. While trafficked to Serbia they were not identified or assisted in the country but rather were identified after being deported to Romania. In addition, one foreign victim – a Bulgarian minor – was trafficked for begging.

In 2003 and 2004, victims trafficked for labour worked in agriculture, industry, domestic work, waitressing and construction. In some cases, victims were tasked with multiple forms of labour. One victim worked in agriculture and as a domestic worker. In another instance, a victim worked in a café as well as cleaned her employer’s home. In addition, one victim – a Romanian of 47 years – was trafficked for domestic work and another victim – a minor boy from Bulgaria – was trafficked for begging.

As well, in two instances in 2004, two victims were dually exploited – both for sexual and labour purposes. These victims were older women, over 35 years of age, from Romania and Ukraine. One victim worked in prostitution and as a waitress in a bar, while the other worked as a domestic worker and was also sexually exploited.

Understanding victims’ particular configuration of exploitation is valuable in addressing their specific needs and as a starting point in both the development and assessment of assistance frameworks. Victims trafficked for labour but who have also been sexually exploited require many of the same types of assistance as victims trafficked for prostitution; victims exploited for criminal activities may require tailored legal assistance to avoid prosecution and so on.

<sup>539</sup> Other anecdotal information corroborates the assertion that labour trafficking is common. According to a recent report on Serbia, secondary sources reported over 100 men from various countries who were potentially victims of trafficking for labour exploitation. Victims were reportedly from Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey, Iraq, China, Romania, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Serbia (Copic *et al.*, 2004: 138-9). Similarly, in May 2003, eight Chinese citizens (six male and two female) were identified as trafficking victims for labour exploitation and destined for Italy via Croatia (Copic *et al.*, 2004: 141). However, as none of these individuals were formally identified and assisted as trafficking victims, they do not appear in this analysis.



**Length of time trafficked:** In 2003 and 2004, most foreign victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were trafficked for only a few months before they were identified and referred for assistance. In only three cases (23.1 per cent) was the victim trafficked for one year.

Similarly, most victims of labour exploitation and begging were trafficked for brief periods. In 2004, all victims were trafficked for approximately one month. It is unclear whether trafficking for labour or begging is generally for longer or shorter times than for sexual exploitation.

Where victims are trafficked for shorter times, this may be due to improved identification efforts. Further analysis of this indicator cross-correlated with details of the identification process is a means by which to assess law enforcement's identification efforts as well as the efficacy of outreach measures by social services and civil society.

The limited exploitation period bodes well for the successful and speedy recovery of these victims. Victims trafficked for shorter periods were often less likely to be traumatized and physically ill at identification, which reduced the assistance required and the time needed to stabilize the victim. Of course, this was variable and depended on the victim's working and living conditions while trafficked as well as the amount of abuse suffered. The correlations between lengths of time trafficked and the physical and psychological effects of trafficking are worth exploring. Long periods spent trafficked and separated from family and friends, living outside of a family environment and being under extreme stress may impede recovery and reintegration in ways that should be explored in more depth.

**Living and working conditions:** There is insufficient information about the living and working conditions of foreign victims of sexual exploitation to draw conclusions. Anecdotal information, however, suggests generally poor conditions. One victim was kept locked in a room naked as a deterrent to escape. Another reported being fed only once a day and receiving only summer clothing, even during the winter months.

Among victims trafficked for labour exploitation, working conditions ranged from "poor" to "average". While 55.5 per cent of victims reported "poor" working conditions, a noteworthy minority (27.8 per cent) described their work conditions as "average". Another 16.7 per cent of victims did not specify working conditions. While some victims received payment, many did not. One Ukrainian woman forced to work in agriculture and as a domestic worker for two years received no payment at all. Information about living conditions is insufficient to draw conclusions.

**Abuse:** Foreign victims trafficked for sexual exploitation reported lower rates of abuse and exploitation in recent years. In 2001, 82.4 per cent suffered abuse while trafficked, with many victims suffering multiple forms of abuse – sexual, psychological and physical – at the hands of traffickers, employers and clients. This was also the case in 2002, when 71.2 per cent of victims suffered abuse. By contrast, in 2003 and 2004, 41.4 per cent and 46.3 per cent of victims suffered abuse. Abuse experienced ranged from a combination of all three forms of violence (sexual, physical and psychological) to singular abuse such as sexual (in two cases) and mental (in one case).

Similarly, victims of labour and begging reported a decreasing frequency of abuse. In 2001 and 2002, 100 per cent suffered abuse while trafficked. However, in 2003, no victims suffered abuse. In addition, in 2004, only one of 18 victims (5.6 per cent) was abused while trafficked.

This decrease in abuse is consistent with the behaviour of traffickers and employers in other countries, such as BiH, where foreign victims also report better working and living conditions and less abuse. That trafficking is increasingly becoming a “business” with some profit sharing is one explanation for this. When traffickers appeared to operate with greater impunity, fearing neither authorities nor consequences, conditions were akin to slavery. More recently, traffickers are providing more motivation for victims to remain in their “employment”, which also makes their activities less conspicuous.

**Mental and physical well-being:** Most victims of sexual exploitation were in poor physical and mental condition at identification. Some of the ailments are outlined below:

- *Reproductive health:* Most victims trafficked for sexual exploitation required medical treatment for gynaecological problems and most were suffering from STIs.
- *Alcohol and drug dependency:* In 2003, one foreign victim was addicted to drugs and three were addicted to alcohol. In 2004, one foreign victim was addicted to alcohol.<sup>540</sup>
- *Psychological and psychiatric condition:* Most victims were suffering from shock and experienced anxiety and stress during their tenure at the shelter. In many cases, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was experienced for a number of weeks. Some victims were acutely traumatized and required psychiatric treatment, including two foreign victims in 2003. In addition, one foreign victim in 2003 attempted suicide.

For victims of labour trafficking, there was insufficient data to draw substantive conclusions. However, understanding how the experience of being trafficked for labour or begging differs from being trafficked for sexual exploitation is important in defining the assistance and protection needs of victims of this form of trafficking.

It is also important to gain a better understanding of the long-term health implications of trafficking. Information and analysis on this aspect of trafficking is lacking. More information sharing among service providers as well as long-term follow-up health care for victims would help to begin to fill this gap. However, such measures must be conducted in ways that do not further stigmatize trafficking victims or violate their privacy.

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<sup>540</sup> This strategy – to create addiction and dependency – is not unique to Serbia and has been noted elsewhere in SEE as well as further a field.

## **Post Trafficking Experience**

**Victim identification and referral:** Foreign victims of sexual exploitation were mainly identified and referred for assistance by law enforcement units – 100 per cent in 2001, 80.9 per cent in 2002, 96.7 per cent in 2003 and 92.3 per cent in 2004. Most were identified by the police in the course of investigations or targeted raids, while a small but increasing number were identified at borders.

Of significance in Serbia was the referral of foreign victims of sexual exploitation by consular or embassy representatives, accounting for 19.2 per cent in 2002 and 3.3 per cent in 2003. To date, a number of foreign victims, primarily Ukrainian citizens, have sought assistance by contacting their embassies or consulates.

Victims of labour exploitation were also generally identified by law enforcement – 100 per cent in both 2001 and 2002. This changed in 2003 when only one of three victims was identified by law enforcement, the other two were identified by their embassy. In 2004, all but one victim (94.4 per cent) were identified by law enforcement, the other (5.6 per cent) having sought assistance of his own initiative. Of note, most foreign victims of labour trafficking in 2004 were not assisted in Serbia, but rather following deportation to Romania and identification by Romanian officials. This, arguably, indicates that Serbian border authorities were sometimes inadequately equipped to identify victims of trafficking for other forms of exploitation and highlights the need for training and sensitization of frontline counter-trafficking personnel in the changed profiles of victims as well as other forms of trafficking and exploitation.

**Re-trafficking:** There is incomplete information about this indicator for both 2003 and 2004 for all forms of trafficking. The issue of re-trafficking is an important one and, to some degree, can serve as a measure of the success of reintegration programmes in countries of origin. The lack of opportunity for sustainable reintegration upon return as well as the lack of protection for returned victims from their traffickers must be considered within the assistance framework of both destination and countries of origin. In addition, the stigma attached to having been trafficked and/or worked as a prostitute creates barriers to successful reintegration, which also can contribute to re-trafficking.

**Assistance declined:** In 2003, six victims declined assistance, preferring to return home independently. In 2004, two victims trafficked for sexual exploitation declined assistance. No victims reportedly declined assistance in 2001 and 2002. It is important to consider why some victims, albeit few in number, declined assistance when the only other option available to them is deportation.

None of the foreign victims trafficked for labour exploitation to Serbia declined the assistance offered to them either in Serbia or in Romania, where most were identified. As a first step in appreciating why victims decline assistance, it is perhaps worth considering why victims of trafficking for labour exploitation were more consistently willing to accept assistance than victims of sexual exploitation.

## 2.2 Serbian Trafficking Victims

In what follows, we examine the context of trafficking in Serbian nationals, particularly the number of assisted Serbian victims and the profiles and trafficking experiences of assisted victims.

TABLE 7  
NUMBER OF ASSISTED SERBIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2001 TO 2004

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Serbian trafficking victims	1	10	13	21	45

Since 2001, Serbian nationals have been identified and assisted in the country in steadily increasing numbers. In 2004, Serbian victims accounted for 32.8 per cent of all assisted victims, up from 26.5 per cent in 2003 and 15.9 per cent in 2002.<sup>541</sup>

### 2.2.1 Profiles and Trafficking Experiences of Serbian Victims

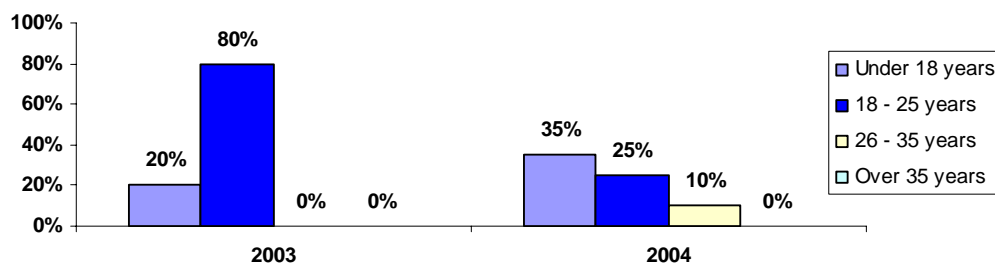
Below we outline the profiles and experiences of Serbian victims trafficked for various forms of exploitation – sexual, labour and/or begging/delinquency. The intention is to better understand victims’ trafficking circumstances as well as assistance and protection needs.

#### Victim Profiles and Individual Characteristics

**Sex:** From 2001 to 2003, all Serbian nationals trafficked either abroad or within Serbia were women. However, in 2004, male trafficking victims were also identified. One of the 21 Serbians assisted (or 4.8 per cent) was male.

**Age:** In 2003, the majority of Serbian trafficking victims (80 per cent) were between 18 and 25 years of age. This is consistent with earlier years in which most victims fell within this age range. The remaining 20 per cent of victims were minors, a significant percentage of assisted victims.

GRAPH 10  
AGE OF ASSISTED SERBIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004



In 2004, the majority of victims – a striking 65 per cent – were under 18 years at recruitment.<sup>542</sup> This high representation of minors<sup>543</sup> among national victims in both

<sup>541</sup> It is unclear if the increased identification of national victims is due to the emergence of trafficking in Serbian nationals or if trafficking in nationals has existed but gone unrecognized. Both are probably true to some degree. There may be a rise in the number of national victims due to increased border controls throughout the region, including Serbia. At the same time, many service providers argue that there have long been victims of trafficking within the country who were assisted as working children or street children.

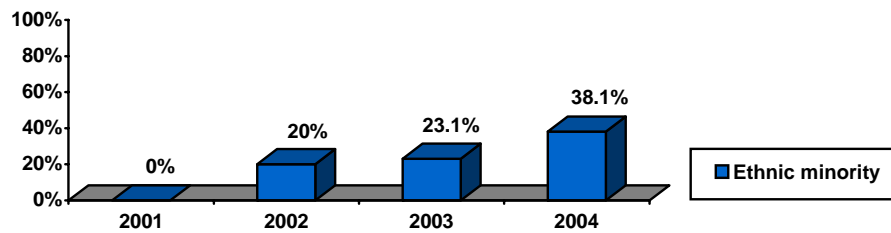
2003 and 2004 is consistent with findings from other Balkan countries that had previously been countries of destination and transit but are increasingly manifesting signs of being countries of origin. Similarly, this finding stands in contrast to foreign victims trafficked to Serbia who were, for the most part, adults at identification.

Caregivers stress the acute vulnerability of minors not only to being trafficked but also in terms of the long-term impact of trafficking. Psychologists argue that such serious trauma in the developmental stages of life informs the individual's perceptions in all areas of human relationships, including family relations and relationships with spouses.

Of the remaining Serbian victims assisted in 2004, 25 per cent of victims were 18 to 25 years and the remaining ten per cent were 26 to 35 years.

**Ethnicity:** In Serbia, a noteworthy number of victims were from an ethnic minority, as detailed in the graph below. In 2003, 23.1 per cent of victims were from ethnic minorities, while, in 2004, a striking eight of 21 assisted victims (38.1 per cent) were from ethnic minorities.<sup>544</sup> The majority victims were of Roma ethnicity, although victims were also of Hungarian ethnicity (one in 2002) and Romanian ethnicity (two in 2003).<sup>545</sup>

GRAPH 11  
ETHNICITY OF ASSISTED SERBIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2001 TO 2004



These findings are particularly remarkable given that only an estimated four per cent of the population in Serbia and Montenegro are Roma (World Bank, 2001). Roma comprise a disproportionate share of assisted victims and (along with ethnic minorities generally) appear particularly vulnerable to trafficking in persons in Serbia.

Ethnic minorities like Roma may be vulnerable to trafficking because of their particular socio-economic status and social disenfranchisement. In addition, among Roma, some cultural traditions, such as arranged and early marriage, can generate additional trafficking risks. However, it is not always the victim's conformity to cultural norms

<sup>542</sup> In this case, it was possible to document the victim's age at recruitment rather than at identification, making the results more accurate. Had the victim's age at identification been documented, minors would have accounted for 60 per cent of victims in 2004. This highlights the importance of documenting age at recruitment in case management.

<sup>543</sup> This spike in the number of minors was consistent with calls from the ASTRA helpline in 2004 (from 1 January to 1 November), which logged 27 calls in reference to cases of trafficking in minors (Email correspondence, Tamara Vukasovic, ASTRA, Belgrade, Serbia, November 2004). From January to April 2005, two of the ten victims assisted by IOM were minors.

<sup>544</sup> From January to April 2005, 20 per cent of assisted Serbian nationals were ethnic minorities.

<sup>545</sup> Consistent with this finding is that in 2004 (1 January to 1 November) the ASTRA hotline logged 17 calls from victims or their families in reference to cases of trafficking in victims who came from ethnic minorities. In addition, recent media accounts flag the issue of trafficking among Roma (see World Bank, 2004; Kurir, 2004; CRS, 2003).

and standards that leads to trafficking risk. In the case of one Serbian national identified and assisted in 2004, it was precisely her desire to escape an arranged marriage and her rebellion against cultural norms that led her to accept a job offer abroad.

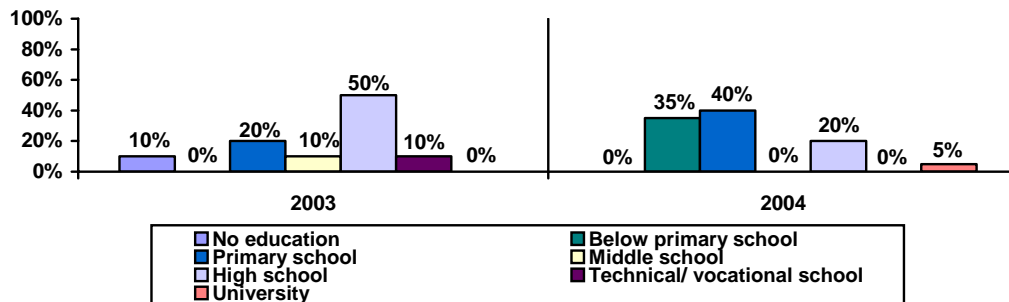
Given the high representation of Roma among Serbian trafficking victims in 2004, special attention should be paid to this site of vulnerability in terms of both prevention and protection efforts. For both types of programmes, more cooperation is needed between Roma organizations and counter-trafficking actors within the country. Further, differences among and within ethnic minority groups must be understood and considered to ensure appropriate and effective interventions.

**Areas of origin:** In 2004, most victims originated from rural and peri-urban settings. In only a handful of cases were Serbian victims from an urban environment. This is a change from the previous year in which more victims came from urban environments, particularly small towns. There was not one geographic area in the country from which victims originated, making it important to consider the geographical distribution of services geared toward sustainable reintegration. Links should be made with social workers and service providers throughout the country. Also needed is communication and sharing of skills specific to assisting trafficking victims between counter-trafficking service providers in Belgrade and service providers throughout the country.

**Education:**<sup>546</sup> From 2003 to 2004, there was a decline in the education levels of Serbian victims. While in 2003, 50 per cent of victims had high school education, this declined to 20 per cent in 2004. Indeed, in 2004, the vast majority of victims (75 per cent) had primary school education or below. This finding may be due, in large part, to the overall young age of Serbian victims assisted in 2004, 65 per cent of whom were minors at recruitment. Nevertheless, this limited educational attainment raises a number of critical issues in terms of reintegration, not the least of which is the need to consider the educational reinsertion and adult education programmes.

The five per cent of victims in 2004 with university education was unusual. This woman, from a relatively affluent family, fell victim to trafficking not because of low education but rather because at university she began to experiment with drugs and developed an addiction.

GRAPH 12  
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF ASSISTED SERBIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004



<sup>546</sup> Primary school is the first eight years of schooling, while middle school is the ninth and tenth years and high school the eleventh and twelfth years.

**Mental and physical disabilities:** An emergent site of trafficking vulnerability among Serbian nationals is that of mental and physical disabilities. In 2004, six of 21 victims (28.6 per cent) had some form of mental or physical disability. Two of the victims had physical disabilities, while four suffered from mental disabilities.<sup>547</sup> Prior to 2004, there were also mentally disabled trafficking victims. One mentally retarded girl was sexually exploited for two years by her father and subsequently by a man who forced her into prostitution (cf. Copic et al., 2004: 123).

This profile of mentally disabled victim may be particularly vulnerable to trafficking because they can be more easily manipulated. This is a serious challenge for prevention efforts – with a need for awareness-raising strategies matching the intellectual capacity of disabled victims. In addition, mentally and physically disabled victims have specific assistance needs. This is proving an obstacle for Serbian service providers, who are finding it difficult to access appropriate services to support such victims in the long term. There is a dearth of facilities for mentally-disabled victims generally in Serbia and a complete absence of such services for disabled trafficking victims. There is a need for the long-term accommodation of victims (such as semi-independent living), specialized training, appropriate employment placement in a protected workplace and long-term case follow-up.

**Marital and family status:** Of victims assisted in 2003, 100 per cent were unmarried at recruitment. One (7.7 per cent) was a single mother. In 2004, 90 per cent of victims were unmarried at recruitment. The remaining ten per cent were divorced or in a common-law relationship. In addition, two victims (or ten per cent) were single mothers at recruitment.

While the rate of single mothers is lower than among foreign victims, it is nevertheless an important finding as it signals potential reasons for the victim's migration/trafficking – the need to support her family – as well as the vulnerability of female-headed households (FHH). This information points to a potential entry points for intervention in trafficking prevention work – in particular, employment and income generation targeting those mothers and families deemed vulnerable to trafficking. The need to support other dependents (parents, siblings, spouse) may equally contribute to vulnerability in some cases.

Guardianship may prove an issue for some returning mothers and legal assistance may be required. One Serbian victim faced difficulty in gaining access to her child, whom she had left in the care of the child's father. Access was mediated by social workers in the reintegration programme. There may also be a need for alternative accommodation options for victims with children who cannot be accommodated at the reintegration shelter as well as programmes in good parenting and family reconciliation.

**IDPs/refugees**<sup>548</sup>: Among 21 victims, two (9.5 per cent) were displaced persons. It is unclear the degree to which their displaced status contributed to trafficking. However,

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<sup>547</sup> The ASTRA hotline received similar data through its helpline where four calls were logged in reference to disabled trafficking victims (Email correspondence, Tamara Vukasovic, ASTRA, Belgrade, Serbia, November 2004).

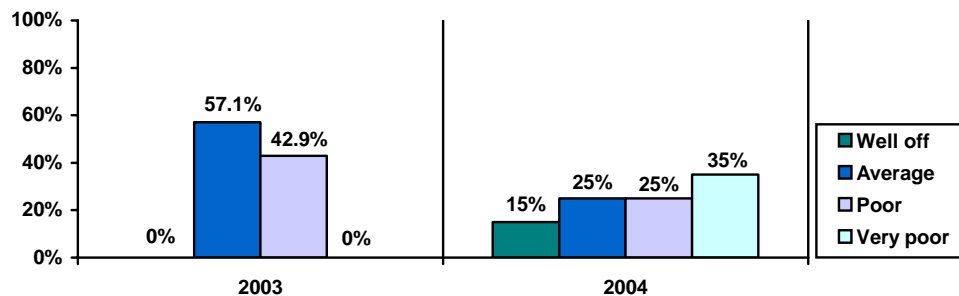
<sup>548</sup> The terms “internally displaced person” (IDP) and “refugee” are used interchangeably in this section as the fragmentation of Yugoslavia into various nation states problematizes their usage. Depending upon when the person was displaced, they can be considered either a refugee or IDP. What is essential for the purpose of this research is not the political issues surrounding their displacement but rather how this displacement has (or has not) contributed

it is an area that merits further study and attention as IDP and refugee women have proved particularly vulnerable to trafficking in other environments.

According to UNHCR, more than 188,000 refugees from Croatia, 100,000 refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina and 225,815 refugees/IDPs from The Province of Kosovo and Metohija live in Serbia and Montenegro (Tanjug, 2004). As such, large numbers of persons may potentially be affected.

**Economic status:**<sup>549</sup> In 2003, the majority (57.1 per cent) of assisted Serbian victims came from “average” economic backgrounds, as compared to the 42.9 per cent from “poor” economic backgrounds. No victims reported coming from a “very poor” background. This is noteworthy given that abject poverty is often assumed to be a central push factor in trafficking.

GRAPH 13  
ECONOMIC STATUS OF ASSISTED SERBIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004



In 2004, victim’s economic background was more polarized, with 35 per cent being “very poor” and 25 per cent “poor”, meaning that 60 per cent of victims were from economically disenfranchised backgrounds. At the same time, 2004 also saw the identification of victims from more affluent backgrounds, 25 per cent from “average” and a notable 15 per cent from “well-off” economic backgrounds.

For the 15 per cent from well-off backgrounds, economics was not a cause of trafficking. One victim came from an affluent academic family and was attending college where she began to experiment with drugs. She was trafficked when she tried to earn money to pay for her drug habit. This finding further reinforces the importance of looking beyond economics alone to understand contributors to trafficking.

**Family and social relations:**<sup>550</sup> In 2004, three victims (19.1 per cent) suffered violence prior to trafficking – one case of domestic violence and two cases of rape. However, the degree to which this violence triggered migration varied from case to case. One victim

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to trafficking vulnerability. Also salient is how displaced status affects access to resources, such as health care or education.

<sup>549</sup> This section must be read with the caveat that economic status is based on the victim’s self-described economic situation, rather than on an objective measure of wealth. Further, each country in SEE has different economic standards and conceptions of “poor” or “average” vary accordingly.

<sup>550</sup> Analysis of family relations is based on victims’ self-described assessment of family and home relations. As such, it is not only informed by the victim’s individual subjectivity, but also linked to the victim’s relationship with the interviewer, with victims less likely to provide intimate details about family violence and conflict in the absence of an existing relationship of trust.



had an alcoholic father who had stopped drinking for many years. When he resumed, he began to abuse his wife and children and the daughter left to escape this violence. By contrast, in the case of the victim who was raped by her neighbour as a child, variables other than this violence led to trafficking.

In addition, eight victims assisted in 2004 (38.1 per cent) came from a one-parent family. While divorce or a being single-parent family does not inevitably result in a bad family environment, it can contribute to economic difficulties as well as tension. In two cases, the family environment following the parents' divorce was poor and fraught with stress and tension. In both instances, the parents' divorce was particularly adversarial and the parents deeply involved their daughters in this conflict over a period of years. Against this backdrop of chronic conflict, the girls sought avenues of escape, which rendered them vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation.

Family relations were often a contributor to trafficking, but more information is required to appreciate how and when it serves as a catalyst for trafficking. More subtle family tensions may also serve to increase vulnerability to trafficking, such as poor communication within the family, rebellion against strict parenting, etc. As well, some victims may have been pressured by family or spouses to migrate in an effort to earn money to support their family. This is particularly probable in countries where migration is a commonly accepted survival strategy.

It is also worth considering relations within families where members are not trafficked to identify any behaviours and strategies that may guard against trafficking. One study in Indonesia noted that families in which daughters were not trafficked tended to be those with good communication skills within the family (Save the Children, 2004).

Comprehensive information is needed about the family environment to develop reintegration plans. Where family conflict is chronic, questions must be asked about the advisability of reintegration. Where the conditions that contributed to trafficking remain the same, reintegration is neither advisable nor a realistic solution. Consideration must also be given to how family mediation and case monitoring can support reintegration into formerly problematic environments.

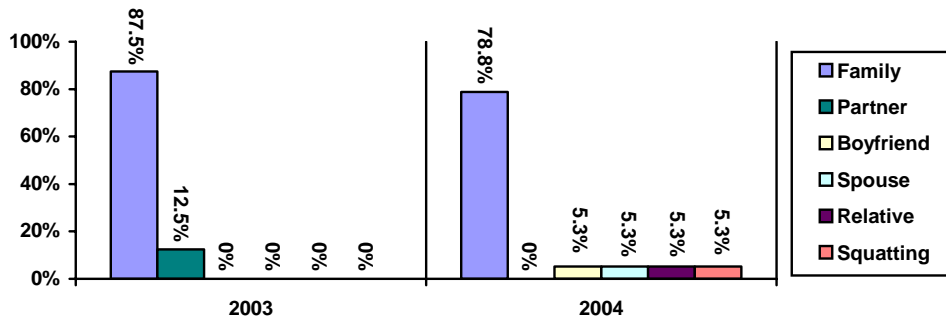
Social relations more generally may also serve as a catalyst for trafficking. Women and girls who feel socially excluded or have poor relations with their peers may be particularly vulnerable to trafficking. In addition, women or girls who are rebellious, adventurous or independent minded may be at special risk. As such, it is important to consider the victim's broader social environment in assessing risk of trafficking.

### **Recruitment Experiences**

**Living situation at recruitment:** As is common throughout the region, Serbian victims generally resided with family at recruitment – 87.5 per cent in 2003 and 78.8 per cent in 2004. This is not surprising given that many children in Serbia live with their parents until and even after they are married. It would be valuable, however, to learn more about these family living environments to understand how they may (or may not) have contributed to the victim's vulnerability as well as the advisability of reintegration upon return. Further, while victims resided with their families at recruitment, they may not have always lived with their families. One victim, who was

living with her mother when recruited, had spent most of her childhood in foster care. This supplementary information is essential in understanding the victim's trafficking vulnerability.

GRAPH 14  
LIVING SITUATION AT RECRUITMENT, ASSISTED  
SERBIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004

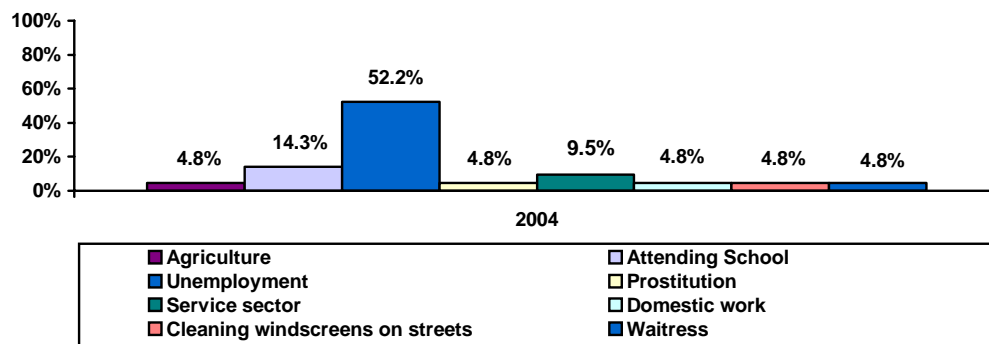


Victims assisted in 2004 also had other residential arrangements at recruitment – 10.6 per cent resided with a spouse or boyfriend, 5.3 per cent with a relative and 5.3 per cent in a squat settlement.

**Working situation at recruitment:** There is limited data on the employment of Serbian victims at recruitment. Of those who responded to this question in 2003 (and only six of the 13 victims), four were public/private employees, one was self-employed/family work and one was unemployed.

In 2004, information about the victims' employment or activities at recruitment was more complete, as outlined below. Most (52.2 per cent) were unemployed. However, others were employed, but presumably not satisfied with their salary, type of work or working conditions. Of note is the 14.3 per cent of victims who were attending school at recruitment, a percentage that should be much higher given that 65 per cent of victims were minors at recruitment. Educational programmes are essential in the reintegration process to redress the limited education of minor victims.

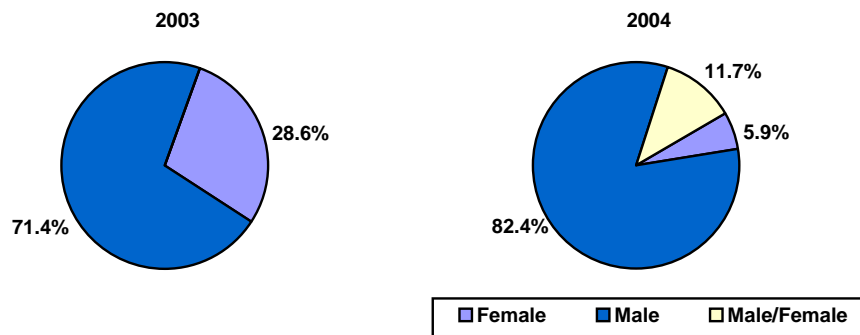
GRAPH 15  
WORK AND ACTIVITIES AT RECRUITMENT OF ASSISTED SERBIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS 2004



**Recruiter:** Recruitment of Serbian nationals was primarily by men, a percentage that has increased slightly in 2004. In addition, in 2004, a few victims (11.7 per cent) were

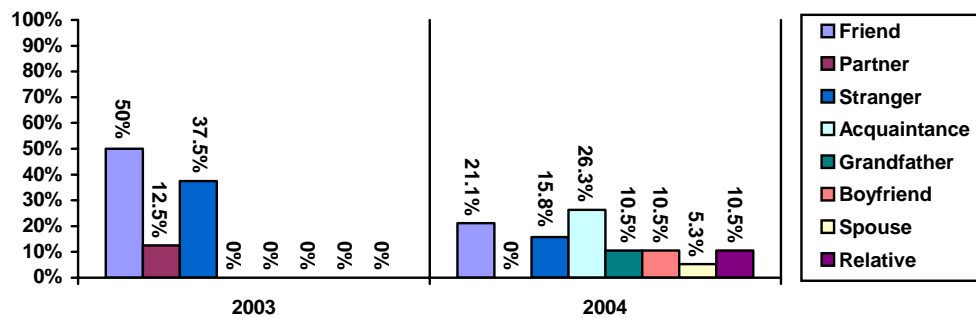
recruited by a male/female couple. This is the first time this recruitment style has been noted in Serbia. It may have been used to reduce the victim’s suspicion of recruiters, as victims may be less reluctant to accept work from a woman. In Bulgaria, for instance, when a victim was recruited by a male/female couple the recruitment was generally by the female while the male was responsible for arranging documents and travel. More detail is needed about male/female recruitment in Serbia.

GRAPH 16  
SEX OF THE RECRUITER OF ASSISTED SERBIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004



The victim’s relationship to the recruiter varied slightly, with victims recruited by persons both known and unknown to them. In 2003, the majority of victims (62.5 per cent) were recruited by someone known to and trusted by them. This included friends and partners. Only 37.5 per cent were recruited by strangers, including one victim who was kidnapped as opposed to recruited.

GRAPH 17  
RELATIONSHIP TO RECRUITER OF ASSISTED SERBIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004



In 2004, the number of victims recruited by someone known to them increased further, to almost double that of 2003. Indeed, the majority were recruited by someone with whom they had an intimate relationship, including various family members. Only 15.8 per cent of Serbian victims were recruited by strangers. Recruitment practices that implicate persons known to the victim are particularly difficult to counteract.

It is important to note the 10.5 per cent of victims recruited by a boyfriend and 5.3 per cent by a spouse in 2004. In most cases, the relationship was initiated as a means of recruitment, similar to the “lover-boy phenomenon” observed in the Netherlands and other EU countries. This type of recruitment plays on the victim’s emotions, creating both affection for and dependency on the trafficker/lover and ensures her “willingness” to be prostituted and her reluctance to leave this arrangement. One victim, even after months in the reintegration programme, continued to express affection for her

lover/trafficker. When she did come to realize the deception, it caused her enormous insecurity in terms of relationships and seriously impaired her ability to trust and love.

Recruiters were primarily Serbian (76.4 per cent), although there were also recruiters from The Province of Kosovo (17.7 per cent) and Albania (5.9 per cent).

**Reasons for leaving home and type of work promised:** The majority of victims assisted in both 2003 and 2004 left home in search of work and in response to limited opportunities at home. Victims were offered a range of work options including: prostitution, travel agent, flower shop assistant, bar hostess and waitress. In addition, three were told they would beg.

The two victims offered work in prostitution are noteworthy as it is a tendency not previously noted among assisted Serbian victims. It is generally assumed that victims who accept prostitution were working as such previously, an assertion that is not borne out in this instance.

While work was often the reason for leaving home, it was not always (or exclusively) in response to economic need. In one case – that of a Roma girl – the victim accepted work abroad to escape an arranged marriage. Her rebellion against social convention resulted in her being trafficked.

In addition to work as a motivation, two victims were trafficked forcibly – one kidnapped and taken to The Province of Kosovo and one forcibly taken to BiH. In both circumstances, the women/girls were forced into prostitution.

In other cases, social conditions at home contributed to trafficking. Two victims left when their parents divorced and the tension made living at home untenable. In another case, the victim left because her alcoholic father began to abuse her.

### **Transportation and Movement**

**Border crossings and documents:** In 2003, only two of 13 Serbian victims were trafficked abroad. Data from 2004 is insufficient to discern any trends about the use of legal as opposed to illegal border crossings.

The use of legal documents increased slightly from 30.8 per cent in 2003 to 33.3 per cent in 2004, a trend that makes identification more difficult for law enforcement personnel. It is essential that law enforcement personnel, especially officers at border crossings, be aware that trafficking victims can and often do use legal documents during trafficking.

**Transportation routes:** To reach Italy, Serbian victims generally travelled overland through Croatia and Slovenia or to Croatia and then by sea to Italy. Travel to nearby countries of destination like BiH, Croatia and Slovenia was overland.

**Destination country:** Serbian victims were trafficked to destination countries both within the SEE region as well as further a field. Primarily Serbian victims were trafficked abroad in 2003, with the majority (nine victims or 69.2 per cent) trafficked to

Italy and, more specifically, to the city of Verona. Other victims were trafficked within SEE to The Province of Kosovo, Macedonia and Romania.<sup>551</sup>

TABLE 8  
DESTINATION COUNTRIES OF ASSISTED  
SERBIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004

Destination Country	2003	2004
BiH	0	3
The Province of Kosovo	1	0
Italy	9	0
Macedonia	2	1
Montenegro	0	2
Romania	1	0
Serbia <sup>552</sup>	0	14
Slovenia	0	1
Total	13	21

In 2004, most Serbian victims were trafficked internally. A number of victims were also trafficked internally as a first step in trafficking abroad. One victim was dually exploited in Serbia – for sexual exploitation and as a shop assistant – and then later trafficked to Italy where she was forced to work as a prostitute. The identification of internally trafficked victims signals improvements in the identification skills and procedures of law enforcement authorities in Serbia.

### Victims' Trafficking Experiences

**Forms of trafficking:** As outlined in the table below, Serbian victims were trafficked primarily for sexual exploitation. This was the case until 2004, when victims of more diverse forms of trafficking were identified and referred for assistance. The identification of other forms of trafficking must be credited largely to a greater awareness on the part of counter-trafficking actors and greater skills in identification, rather than the emergence of other forms of trafficking.

TABLE 9  
FORMS OF TRAFFICKING OF ASSISTED SERBIAN NATIONALS, 2001 TO 2004

Forms of Exploitation	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Sexual exploitation	1	10	13	12	36
Labour exploitation	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual and labour exploitation	0	0	0	3	3
Begging and/or delinquency	0	0	0	3	3
Potential victims <sup>553</sup>	0	0	0	3	3
Total	1	10	13	21	45

<sup>551</sup> In addition to traditional sending countries in the region and the EU area, there are also signs of other possible destinations for Serbian victims. In 2004, 7.9 per cent of calls to the Astra hotline were to about employment abroad and the Middle East emerged as a potential destination in the context of these queries (Interview with Tamara Vukasovic, ASTRA, Belgrade, Serbia, 15 October 2004).

<sup>552</sup> This designates cases of internal trafficking. In some cases, victims were trafficked only internally, while, in other instances, victims were trafficked internally as a first step in international trafficking.

<sup>553</sup> This designation is used when the individual was assisted for an insufficient time to clearly establish his/her trafficking experience or when the individual was identified and assisted before being exploited but showed strong signs of being in the trafficking process.

Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation suffered it in different forms. In some cases, victims were sexually exploited in bars, while others worked in nightclubs or through escort agencies. When Serbian victims were trafficked to Italy, they generally worked in street prostitution or in a brothel. Of note is that for the first time, in 2003, one victim (a minor) trafficked internally for sexual exploitation was found to be working in street prostitution in Belgrade. In 2004, two Serbian victims (one adult and one minor) were exploited in street prostitution.<sup>554</sup>

In addition, there were three documented cases of labour and sexual exploitation. One minor girl from Serbia was required to work both as a waitress and prostitute. Another victim worked in a flower shop during the day and was sexually exploited at night. She was then later sent to Italy where she worked in street prostitution. In a third case, the victim was forced to work in her trafficker's restaurant during the day and provide sexual services at night. This was consistent with many victims of sexual exploitation trafficked from and to SEE who were required to perform labour tasks alongside sexual services.

In 2004, three Serbian victims were trafficked for begging and/or delinquency. Two victims were exploited exclusively for begging, while one was exploited for begging and petty crime. All three victims were minors (11, 12 and 14 years at identification) and of Roma ethnicity. These minors suffered long periods of exploitation, having been trafficked for one to four years. They came from very poor economic circumstances, had very limited education (all below primary school) and were living with family or relatives at recruitment. One of the three victims was physically disabled. Other sources further corroborate the presence of alternative forms of trafficking among assisted victims. For example, the ASTRA hotline, which primarily receives calls from national victims, in 2004, logged calls about four cases of trafficking in minors (two boys and two girls) for the purpose of begging in 2004. Similarly, a newspaper article from December 2004 detailed the arrest of a man accused of trafficking his five children for begging within Serbia (BETA, 2004; cf. Kurir, 2004).

Strikingly, there were no identified and assisted Serbian victims who were trafficked for labour exploitation, although some national victims were required to undertake labour as well as provide sexual services. However, anecdotal evidence points to the recruitment of Serbian and Montenegrin men for labour in the EU, especially Germany, Austria and Switzerland (Copic *et al.*, 2004: 143).

Finally, three victims in 2004 were what we can term "potential victims", identified prior to exploitation as showing strong indications of being in the trafficking process. One victim was to be sold by her grandfather into marriage but she ran away from home before this could happen. The other two women were identified in transit, stopped at the border by law enforcement authorities who detected strong signs of trafficking.

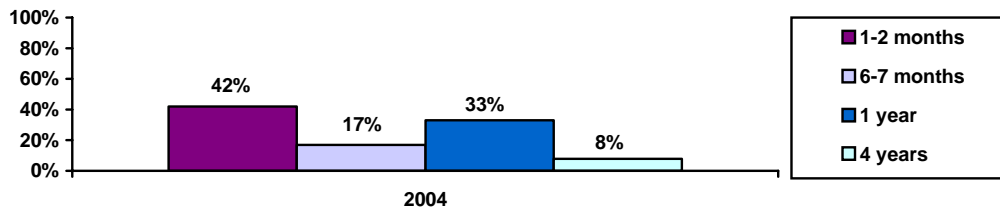
**Length of time trafficked:** The length of time that Serbian victims were trafficked ranged from a few months to a few years. In 2004, some victims were trafficked for one to two months (five victims), while others (two victims) were trafficked for slightly longer periods, such as six to seven months. Four victims were trafficked for one year

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<sup>554</sup> Serbian victims are increasingly being exploited in street prostitution. From January to May 2005, four Serbian victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were forced to work in street prostitution.

and, in one unusual case, the victim (who was only 14 at identification) was trafficked for four years.

GRAPH 18  
LENGTH OF TIME TRAFFICKED, SERBIAN NATIONALS, 2004



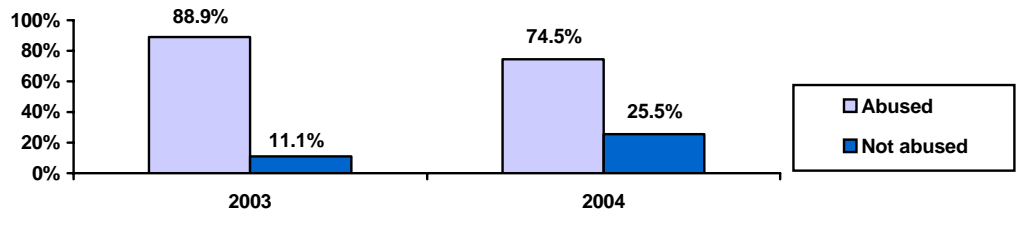
All five victims assisted in 2004 who were trafficked for one year or more were minors at recruitment. This signals the greater difficulty faced by minors in exiting trafficking. As well, it raises issues about the specific needs of minors whose developmental stages of life have been shaped by trafficking. There is a need to design and develop specific assistance/reintegration programmes that are able to meet the needs of trafficked minors as well as support their families in the reintegration process.

**Living and working conditions:** There is insufficient quantitative information about victims' work or living conditions to draw strong conclusions. Impressionistically, it can be said that living and working conditions were generally poor. Nevertheless, in 2004, a handful of victims described working conditions as "satisfactory" and even "good". One victim was neither abused nor mistreated by her employer and received 30 per cent of the money she earned (although she had been promised 50 per cent). In another instance, the victim's employer withheld a portion of her salary each month to encourage her to save some of her earnings, money that she was later given by the employer. Further, five victims experienced freedom of movement and little or no abuse. This is consistent with a regional trend in which traffickers in many countries provided better living and working conditions as a strategy to prevent victims from exiting trafficking and/or accepting assistance offered to them.

**Abuse:** In 2003, 88.9 per cent of victims reported having suffered abuse while trafficked. Often victims suffered multiple forms of abuse and exploitation.

In 2004, Serbian victims suffered different levels of abuse. The majority (74.5 per cent) suffered some form of abuse, although this represents a decrease in abuse from the previous year. In some cases, this was at the hands of the client, while, in others, it was at the hands of the employer, recruiter or trafficker.

GRAPH 19  
ABUSE SUFFERED WHILE TRAFFICKED BY ASSISTED SERBIAN VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004





Of that 74.5 per cent of victims who suffered abuse, 52.9 per cent suffered it in multiple forms (sexual, physical and psychological). Also of note is the 23.5 per cent of victims who suffered no abuse while trafficked. In these instances, the victim had a compatible relationship with the trafficker and the control exerted was psychological, with the victim manipulated into feelings of affection, loyalty and sometimes even love.

Psychological pressure created a somewhat different form of control and dynamic in the trafficking process. One victim expressed regret at having reported on her trafficker as he had always treated her well and because she still had feelings for him. This type of residual emotion poses problems for psychologists. In addition, it means additional risk that the victim may return to the trafficking situation.

Victims who have suffered extensive abuse are also a challenge for service providers in terms of providing the necessary medical and psychological support. Given that so many Serbian victims were minors at identification, it can be assumed that the psychological effect of trafficking experienced will be particularly acute. That such traumatic events occurred during the developmental stages of life can only have a negative and probably long-term impact.

**Mental and physical well-being:** Overall, Serbian victims of trafficking suffered generally poor physical and psychological health. Most did not receive medical attention while trafficked and so were in poor physical and mental health at identification.

- *Reproductive health:* The majority of Serbian victims required medical treatment for gynaecological problems. Many had contracted sexually transmitted diseases and were treated for these and similar infections.
- *Physical condition:* A number of victims were treated for physical injuries sustained while trafficked, including broken bones.
- *Alcohol or drug dependency:* Between 2003 and 2004, five Serbian victims (or 14.7 per cent) were addicted to alcohol or drugs.
- *Psychological and psychiatric condition:* Victims also often suffered from shock during their first days in the shelter, and PTSD was experienced for at least a couple of weeks. Psychiatric care was needed in some cases, including by three Serbian beneficiaries in 2004 and one in 2003. In addition, in 2004, two Serbian victims attempted suicide.

## **Post Trafficking Experience**

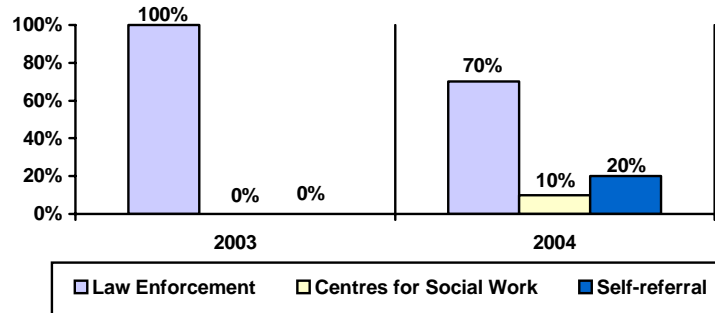
**Victim identification and referral:** In 2003, all assisted victims were identified and referred for assistance by law enforcement authorities. In 2004, victims were identified by different actors, signalling greater awareness of trafficking among the general public as well as professionals and caregivers. Ten per cent of victims were identified through Centres for Social Work, an agency that had not been involved previously in the identification of victims. This improvement may be due partly to the training provided to social workers by OSCE over the course of 2004.<sup>555</sup> Also significant was the 20 per

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<sup>555</sup> While there have been improvements in the work of social workers, more attention is needed to supporting and fostering engagement of social workers in trafficking cases. Logically, identification of Serbian victims should be made by social workers in the course of their work, outreach and interaction the community. Social workers must also be central in the reintegration process, including case monitoring.

cent of victims who accessed services on their own through self-referrals. This is likely due to the increased visibility of service providers in recent years.

GRAPH 20  
IDENTIFICATION OF ASSISTED SERBIAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, 2003 AND 2004



Although some Serbian victims were identified and referred for assistance in the course of police operations, most were identified by law enforcement units in third countries and returned to Serbia under a voluntary organized return program. There is a need for increased identification within Serbia. The case of one victim assisted in 2003 and 2004 illustrates the urgency of this issue. This girl – 12 years old at recruitment – worked as a prostitute for three years in Serbia without being detected by the police, raising serious questions about the efficacy of victim identification efforts in Serbia.

**Re-trafficking:** In 2003, there was insufficient data about this indicator. In 2004, three of 21 victims (14.3 per cent) had been trafficked previously. These victims of re-trafficking were trafficked for sexual exploitation (two victims) and sexual and labour exploitation (one victim).

Prior to 2004, there was no formal reintegration assistance available for national victims of trafficking. All reintegration efforts were supported by IOM on an *ad hoc* basis. This may explain, in part, how national victims ended up in situations that lead to re-trafficking. The lack of adequate reintegration programmes in the past (including family mediation, job placement, educational reinsertion) may have increased the vulnerability of victims to re-trafficking. It remains to be seen how the reintegration programme will influence rates of re-trafficking among Serbian victims in the future. Systematic reintegration efforts are essential in preventing re-trafficking. Re-trafficking rates can be used by caregivers involved in reintegration as a partial measure of the effectiveness of these programmes.

**Assistance declined:** In 2004, one national victim declined assistance. However, the victim, with whom service providers had remained in contact, did accept reintegration assistance after a few months. This finding is consistent with the situation in Croatia where many victims initially declined assistance – even for periods up to a year – and then subsequently accepted this support. Such a finding signals the difficulties faced by many victims when trying to recuperate independently. Follow-up with national victims who have declined assistance may be necessary for service providers in Serbia as some victims may, in the long term, regret the decision to decline assistance. Social workers in the victim’s area of origin should ideally have this role.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IN SERBIA

In this section, we analyze the identification and referral mechanism in Serbia (Section 3.1) as well as the various types of assistance available to foreign and national victims of trafficking in Serbia (Section 3.2).

#### 3.1 Victim Identification and Referral in Serbia

During much of 2004, the official identification and referral of victims in Serbia operated according to the then recently established national referral mechanism supported and outlined by the OSCE. According to this model, any organization that came into contact with a potential victim was to contact the “mobile team”, which was established in early October 2002 for the screening and processing of the identified victims of trafficking.<sup>556</sup>

The mobile team comprised the Agency for Coordinating Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings, which is a part of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy, and two local NGOs – ASTRA and Counselling Against Family Violence (CAFV). In theory, when anyone came into contact with a suspected trafficking victim, that person would contact the mobile team, which was tasked with officially identifying the victim and referring him or her for assistance based on their specific needs and situation. In most cases, this involved referral for accommodation and assistance to one of the two shelters in Belgrade.

In 2004, OSCE conducted training for police units throughout Serbia to improve their knowledge of trafficking as well as inform them of the mobile team and the Agency’s work and role in the victim identification process. Similar overtures are required to reach the 143 social work centres in Serbia. As each of Serbia’s social work centres contains multidisciplinary teams tasked with providing assistance to vulnerable and disadvantaged persons, an increased role for these centres within the referral and services process for victims of trafficking should be further encouraged and supported.

While operational for 2004, this mechanism changed in December 2004 when the mobile team was dissolved and responsibility for the identification of victims was taken on solely by the Agency in cooperation with the organization who identified the victim. Roles and responsibilities among the various service providers, including CAFV, Atina, ASTRA and IOM, were then mapped out with cooperation agreements finalized in early 2005.

Nevertheless, while the official identification is done by the Agency for Coordinating Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings, in practice initial contact with the victim is through various actors, including law enforcement, the SOS helpline and, in a handful of cases, embassies. Details of this identification and referral process are outlined below.

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<sup>556</sup> While established in 2002, the mobile team only became fully operational in early 2004. Prior to this, identification was *ad hoc*, with some victims referred to IOM and some directly to the shelter.

## Law Enforcement

Many Serbian victims were identified by law enforcement units in third countries or within Serbia proper. Foreign victims were identified mainly by law enforcement authorities through investigations and police operations. During Operation Mirage 2004, 1,500 premises and 1,000 persons were checked, including 545 women who were checked as potential victims of trafficking and eight victims of trafficking were identified.<sup>557</sup> Within the Ministry of Interior's Border Police and Aliens Department, an anti-trafficking team was established in 2002 and operates within the Belgrade City Police. This team is responsible for uncovering human trafficking networks and protecting trafficking victims.

Fewer foreign victims were identified at border points, although this changed in 2004. Indeed, of the foreign nationals identified in 2004, 12 were identified while in transit attempting to cross borders, suggesting an improvement in the identification skills of border officials in Serbia and along its neighbouring borders. To some degree, this increased identification in transit reflects the extensive training provided to border police during 2003 and 2004.<sup>558</sup> However, victims of labour trafficking in Serbia were still deported by border police without being recognized as victims of trafficking. They were only identified as victims of trafficking by the Romanian authorities, highlighting the need for increased skills in the identification of other forms of trafficking.

According to the *Law on Movement and Sojourn of Foreigners*, police directly transferred foreign women who lack proper documentation, including potential trafficking victims, to the *Reception Centre for Foreign Citizens*, where they are accommodated while return arrangements are made. Pursuant to an Administrative Agreement signed between the Federal Ministry of Interior and IOM in August 2001, the Centre's officials must provide accommodation and meals for trafficked victims and IOM reimburses the Centre for these costs. However, in practice, since 2003, the police have increasingly referred suspected victims of trafficking directly to the shelter in Belgrade for assistance, to IOM for a screening interview or, more recently, to the Agency.

Foreign women without proper documentation can be charged with prostitution, illegal border crossing and illegal residency in Serbia, along with possession of false documentation, if that is the case. Sentences range up to 40 days of detention or a fine. In 2003, one service provider reported the case of two Moldovan women who, on arrest at the Serbia-Romania border, were not identified as trafficking victims and instead were charged with travelling on false documents and served the corresponding prison sentence.

In 2004, a number of Serbian victims trafficked internally were identified, which signals improvements in the identification skills and procedures of law enforcement authorities in Serbia.

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<sup>557</sup> Information from the Meeting of the National Team in Belgrade, Serbia, 29 June 2004.

<sup>558</sup> To date, 537 border police from Serbia and Montenegro have been trained. Various training sessions and technical equipment were provided by IOM, the British Impact Team, OSCE and the United States Embassy.

Overall, Serbian law enforcement units are still in transition and lack resources. While this has improved substantially in Belgrade and other urban centres in 2004, there is a need to expand these efforts throughout the Republic. In order to increase their operational capacity, the anti-trafficking unit requires more resources, direct communication and information-sharing channels with counterparts in neighbouring countries.

### **Helpline**

Another tool in the identification and referral process in Serbia is the SOS helpline operated by ASTRA, a Belgrade-based NGO. ASTRA manages the helpline, which mainly provides preventive information on human trafficking and employment conditions abroad. The SOS helpline also gathers information about girls and women reported missing by their families, which is then passed to relevant law enforcement representatives. The visibility of the helpline is high in Belgrade and preventive material distribution is organized throughout the year, covering almost all regions of Serbia.

In 2003 and 2004, the helpline logged 663 and 953 calls respectively, a small percentage of which were directly from victims of trafficking who were either still in a trafficking situation or, more commonly, had escaped trafficking. ASTRA noted a five per cent increase in 2004 in the number of calls directly related to trafficking over the previous year. In 2002 and 2003, ASTRA registered calls about 62 victims of trafficking, 39 of whom were citizens of Serbia (ASTRA, 2003). In 2004, ASTRA registered calls about 68 victims of trafficking, 55 of whom were Serbian nationals. Further, of this number, 55 victims were newly identified in 2004 (ASTRA, 2004). The helpline is accessible Monday to Friday from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

### **Embassies**

The Romanian and Ukrainian consular representatives in Belgrade call IOM directly in Belgrade for return assistance when contacted by a citizen who is a suspected trafficking victim. The consular representatives contact IOM to formally identify the victim and refer them for assistance. Victims are subsequently transferred to the shelter and later provided with return assistance. With the establishment of the Agency, consular representatives should contact the Agency for this referral process. However, in 2004, no victims were identified by embassy/consulate staff. Awareness of trafficking by some consular staff is important and creates a valuable entry point for identification of trafficking victims. The training and sensitization of consular staff by traditional countries of origin (as well as countries like Serbia that are emerging as countries of origin) should be pursued to a greater extent.<sup>559</sup> Thus far, eight women have sought assistance by contacting their embassies or consulates, although none in 2004.

### **Voluntary Return of Trafficked Victims**

Since 2001, several trafficked Serbian nationals have been identified in third countries and returned to Serbia through the IOM voluntary return assistance programme. In 2004, three were identified in BiH and one was identified in Slovenia. These referrals

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<sup>559</sup> As a good example, the Serbian and Montenegrin Ministry of Foreign Affairs trained consular personnel in Belgrade based embassies, particularly targeting those countries known to be countries of origin. Similar initiatives would be valuable in other countries of the region.

were typically conducted after identification by law enforcement authorities and subsequently referred for assistance.

### **3.2 Assistance and Services for Victims of Trafficking in Serbia**

The assistance and protection framework for trafficking victims in Serbia has been geared mainly toward return assistance for adult foreign victims of sexual exploitation. This reflects the fact that Serbia so far has largely been a transit and destination country. However, the number of identified and assisted Serbian victims has risen over the past year and in response a programme tailored for Serbian victims was established in June 2004. This programme, managed by the Belgrade NGO Atina, is focused on the reintegration of Serbian nationals.

IOM and local NGOs from Belgrade provide the majority of assistance to foreign and national victims. The government has yet to play a prominent role in the provision of direct services to trafficking victims. This changed somewhat in March 2004 with the establishment of the Agency for Coordinating Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings, which is a part of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy. While the Agency does not provide direct services to victims, it is tasked with referral of victims and ensuring appropriate assistance. This is a first step in greater involvement of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy in trafficking assistance and protection. However, the Agency is under-resourced and is composed of only two staff members. Further, its roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy are not formally mapped out. Also missing is a formal list of (government-sponsored) services to which identified victims are entitled. Currently, costs for most services (medical, psychiatric), including for national victims, is borne by assisting organizations and foreign donors.

Victims assisted in Serbia in 2003 and 2004 were provided a range of services to meet their immediate and longer-term needs. Details of the various services are outlined below.

#### **Shelter**

There are two dedicated shelters for trafficked victims in Serbia, located in Belgrade. One is a short to mid-term shelter managed by the NGO Counselling Centre against Family Violence (CAFV). The shelter provides lodging, medical care, psychosocial assistance and legal assistance to foreign and Serbian victims. The other is a shelter/transition house for national victims of trafficking managed by NGO Atina, which is longer-term in nature and oriented toward the reintegration of national victims.

The CAFV shelter accepts foreign and national victims of trafficking as well as adult and minor victims of trafficking. The shelter provides a range of assistance, including lodging, medical care, psychosocial assistance, assistance processing identity papers and legal assistance. At the behest of the Ministry of the Interior, the shelter cannot grant freedom of movement to foreign beneficiaries lacking a legal status in the country.<sup>560</sup>

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<sup>560</sup> The closed nature of the shelter is due to the illegal status of these foreign citizens as well as the security concerns attendant in trafficking. In the absence of an open facility, alternatives should be explored to mitigate this additional stress on the victims. This might include regular (escorted) field trips and activities or a garden within the shelter compound, which would allow victims fresh air and exercise.

There is no established maximum stay for foreign or Serbian victims. The length of stay for foreign victims depends primarily on the duration of the process for procuring travel documents, the time required by authorities for the initial investigation and the eventual issuance of an exit visa. Law enforcement bodies have demonstrated a tendency to delay issuance of exit visas in an effort to obtain more evidence from victims. One service provider reported an instance in 2003 in which three Moldovan victims were denied exit visas for a period of six months. Assisting agencies maintain that this was done in an effort to ensure their presence as witnesses in the trial against their traffickers. This practice subordinates victims' rights to law enforcement efforts.

The length of stay for national victims varies greatly depending on the victim's psychological stability and whether there is a family to which to return. One Serbian victim was resident in the shelter for 18 months. Longer stays were due to the lack of mid and long-term housing and reintegration possibilities for national trafficking victims. To some degree, this gap has been filled by the Atina transition house with its reintegration programme. However, given the limited capacity of the programme (six victims), it is not able to serve all national victims. In some situations, they are still accommodated in the shelter run by CAFV until more appropriate assistance options are identified. In other situations, victims opt to return to their families in the short-term while assistance options are explored.

The long-term shelter, or transition house, managed by NGO Atina is geared specifically toward the reintegration of national victims of trafficking. The transition house provides the full package of "basic need" services including lodging, medical care, psychosocial assistance, assistance in processing identity papers and legal assistance. In addition, reintegration services focus on educational reinsertion and/or vocational training, life skills, job placement, family mediation and counselling.

Some thought should be given to the advisability of accommodating national victims of trafficking in programmes for other forms of violence. In BiH, one organization working on reintegration has found national victims of trafficking to be suitable beneficiaries within their programme of victims of violence, particularly since many victims have suffered domestic violence as well as trafficking. In Serbia, where many national victims have also suffered these dual forms of abuse, a similar strategy may be appropriate and more sustainable in the long term.

Gaps exist in the overall distribution and availability of safe houses in Serbia. There are no overnight shelter possibilities for victims identified by law enforcement units outside of the Belgrade area. Law enforcement bodies and service providers should explore the possibility of temporary safe houses in various locations throughout Serbia to provide short-term accommodation until the victim can be transferred to Belgrade for assistance. Given the limited identification of victims, it is unrealistic to establish dedicated shelters for trafficking victims outside of Belgrade. It would be preferable to consider a dedicated room for trafficking victims within existing shelters for violence or within the existing institutions managed by the centres for social work.

In addition, thought must be given to accommodation options for other profiles of victims, particularly male victims, victims trafficked for purposes apart from sexual

exploitation and minors. Accommodation within the two existing shelter programmes may not be advisable because of mixed genders, ages and assistance needs.

### **Medical Care**

Both shelters offer voluntary medical examinations. The medical examination takes place at the CAFV shelter and the physician refers beneficiaries to specialists if needed. Most national victims referred to the Atina transition house receive a preliminary medical examination while assisted at the CAFV shelter. Additional medical care is provided by both organizations, as needed.

The shelters have informal agreements with private clinics for gynaecological examinations. The majority of the women required medical treatment for gynaecological problems. STI tests are conducted on a voluntary basis, and most beneficiaries request these tests and receive some treatment for STIs. Pregnancy tests are conducted on a voluntary basis and many of the beneficiaries request them.

HIV tests are not proposed to shelter beneficiaries. Foreign beneficiaries generally receive HIV tests in their home country rather than in a country of transit and destination. More pressing is that these tests be made available as a part of the reintegration services for national victims. Pre- and post-test counselling and HIV tests are available in Belgrade, and the NGOs assisting victims should consider incorporating the possibility of these tests into medical care options.

Between 2003 and 2004, a number of victims were addicted to alcohol or drugs at identification. This requires special assistance sometimes including hospitalization for formal detoxification programmes. A few trafficked victims required hospitalization for physical ailments and psychiatric disorders, but no specific protocols or agreements exist with hospitals regarding medical care, privacy standards and costs for victims requiring hospitalization. These cases are presently handled on an *ad hoc* basis.<sup>561</sup>

Service providers have faced difficulties in obtaining hospitalization for national victims at local rates when they do not hold proper identification or social insurance documentation. Formal agreements are needed to secure access to emergency assistance, standard levels of care for victims and appropriate payment schemes. The Agency (tasked with the identification and co-ordination of the assistance to victims) should play a key role by making formal arrangements with relevant ministries and public hospitals on the treatment of both foreign and national victims, including the provision of free medical care to all victims.

### **Psychological Assistance**

Clinical psychologists provide psychosocial care to foreign and Serbian victims assisted by both CAFV and Atina. The psychologists have developed an assistance structure for beneficiaries including an initial diagnostic interview, followed by individual and group counselling sessions. Service providers report that approximately 90 per cent of victims are still suffering from shock during their first days in the

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<sup>561</sup> For instance, the police took a foreign victim who suffered spinal injuries after trying to escape from a trafficker to the hospital. However, the hospital would not perform surgery on the victim until funds were guaranteed to cover the cost of the surgery. After a few days, IOM learned about the case and provided the necessary resources. Equally disturbing, the victim was photographed while in hospital and her picture and name were published in the Serbian media.



shelter/transition house, and PTSD is prevalent for at least a couple of weeks. After the victims enter the recovery phase, the psychologists work with them in a more therapeutic and goal-oriented approach. For foreign victims who stay at the shelter for more than a couple of weeks and all national victims included in the long-term reintegration programme in the transition house, psychologists explore personality issues and offer individual counselling on a more in-depth basis. One obstacle in counselling services is language, with translation needed when working with many foreign victims.

If a beneficiary requires psychiatric treatment, s/he is usually referred to a psychiatrist who can make a referral for psychiatric care and hospitalization if necessary. While, a relatively few victims required outpatient psychiatric care, the number has increased. In 2003, three beneficiaries (one Serbian and two foreign) required psychiatric hospitalization and, in 2004, three victims (all Serbian) required psychiatric treatment.

With the identification of Serbian victims, there is a need to consider the provision of psychological support within the reintegration process. The geographic distribution of such services is a critical issue, with limited psychological support services available outside Belgrade.

### **Recreational Activities**

Shelter residents have limited access to recreational activities. Most beneficiaries elect to participate in recreational, psychosocial and educational activities when given the opportunity. The shelter psychologist notes that participation in such activities has a positive effect on beneficiaries and these types of activities should be expanded. When victims stay at the shelter for longer periods this is particularly important, and efforts should be made to provide short-term educational or vocational training where appropriate.

### **Legal Assistance**

Four categories of legal assistance are provided to beneficiaries, as detailed below:

1) *Documentation assistance necessary for return home*: IOM is primarily responsible for obtaining identity and travel documents needed to return to home country. The majority of foreign victims assisted in Serbia do not possess proper identity documents and require IOM's assistance in making appropriate arrangements with embassies or consular sections. If victims possess at least one form of identity documentation, the process of obtaining travel documents takes only a few days. In the absence of any identification, the process can take three to four weeks.

2) *Legal information regarding status as a victim of trafficking*: Lawyers associated with the CAFV and Atina shelters provide general legal information pertaining to issues of trafficking, migration and legal procedures. Victims receive information *via* written materials and information sessions. Participation in these sessions is voluntary, although the majority of beneficiaries chose to participate. Legal assistance is tailored to foreign and national victims.

3) *Individualized legal advice and representation for victims who participate in legal proceedings against traffickers*: Lawyers also provide individualized advice and representation to victims who participate in legal proceedings against their traffickers.

Lawyers accompany victims/witnesses to all legal proceedings, a right guaranteed in Serbian legislation. Official court translators are available for foreign victims, and no problems have been reported in obtaining official translation in trafficking cases. Judges in recent cases have respected this right and, in many circumstances, victims have been offered an opportunity to avoid direct confrontation with the defendant(s). While prosecutors have improved their skills, there is general consensus that more improvement is needed. In addition to specialized training for prosecutors, international organizations and NGOs should support monitoring of prosecutorial management of trafficking cases.

There have been a number of court proceedings in Serbia related to trafficking.<sup>562</sup> While Many critiques have been levelled against the judiciary, it is important to mention the positive experience of one service provider with the Belgrade district court's section of organized crime and the Special Prosecutor. In this case, a national victim was serving as a witness in the criminal proceedings against her traffickers and court officials proved extremely sensitive to the situation of the victim. She was offered the option to be excluded from testifying (even though she is legally required to testify) or, if willing to testify, protection of her identity and the right to testify in a closed court. In addition, the Special Prosecutor allocated the protection team to protect victim's security. Such practices build a victim's trust in the legal process and create an environment in which prosecution is a feasible option for the victim. In addition, the SECI centre has, on two occasions, facilitated and supported the return of two foreign victims who had been trafficked to Serbia and were willing to participate in criminal proceedings as witnesses. Such cross-border cooperation in criminal proceedings is a good practice that should be pursued throughout the region.

Under Serbian legislation, civil damages can be attached to criminal cases. This option has been pursued in only a few cases. It is a positive development that victims have started to seek such damages, but the mechanisms and possibilities for confiscation of traffickers' assets are still unclear in Serbia. Victims may also pursue separate civil claims against traffickers, but such cases are quite costly and time consuming.

4) *Assistance in acquiring documents for national citizens*: Assistance with the processing of legal documents for national victims is an area of need identified by service providers. Such legal documents are essential for national victims to access services such as medical assistance and re-enter the education system. To date, response has been *ad hoc* and various actors are working to establish formal mechanisms for this process. Of concern, one victim has been in the reintegration programme for 12 months and is still unable to access identity documents. Another victim has been without identity papers for six months. As the Agency is a part of the government apparatus and tasked with coordinating victim assistance, it is precisely with regard to these features of assistance that it can and should play a support role, formalizing such procedures in order that services and assistance can be accessed.

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<sup>562</sup> In 2003, 14 criminal charges were brought against 46 persons because of 81 criminal acts related to trafficking in women. During the first ten months of 2004, 36 criminal charges were submitted against 75 persons due to criminal activities related to trafficking in human beings (Article 11B). Of these, 12 were criminal charges submitted against 19 persons because of trafficking in women and children for sexual exploitation - trafficking in children (Zlokas and Djuraskovic 2004).

### **Witness Protection**

Currently in Serbia, there is no witness protection programme in place for victims of trafficking in Serbia. However, Article 504p of the Criminal Procedures Code regulates the protection of witnesses in criminal procedures in general. This article has been used in the past in cases of trafficking. In one instance, the prosecutor applied this article, assigning a police unit to protect the victim and her daughter. In addition, the prosecutor initiated the resettlement of this victim to a third country. The primary limitation of this article is that there is no budget allocated for its implementation, and in this case, IOM was required to cover the costs incurred. Such initiatives, including the allocation of appropriate funding, should be used in greater profile. In addition, there is a draft law on the *Protection of Persons Who Participate in Criminal Proceedings*, which could potentially be mobilized in the protection of victims of trafficking who serve as witnesses in criminal proceedings.

### **Temporary Residence Permit (TRP)**

One important development in 2004 was the provision of temporary residence permits by the Republic of Serbia, initiated by the Ministry of the Interior in May 2004. Serbia is one of only three countries in SEE with this provision. This is follow-on action from Serbia's signature in December 2002 of the Tirana Statement of Commitment regarding the legalization of trafficked victims' status, including issuance of temporary residence permits. In Serbia, temporary residence may be permitted for trafficking victims for three months for the purpose of protection and assistance during the recovery period before return to the country of previous residence. This reflection period is not conditioned upon cooperation with law enforcement. Further, temporary residence may be granted for a period of six months if the victim cooperates with the relevant authorities in the process of investigation. Where a victim actively participates in court proceedings as a witness, temporary residence may be permitted for a period of one year. In 2004, albeit only in November, one victim applied for and was granted a three-month temporary residence permit. From March to May 2005, seven applications from victims were lodged and accepted, with all victims receiving a three-month permit. While the provision of temporary residence permits is a positive step, two aspects of the current instruction are problematic. The first is the compulsory administrative fee of 4,700 dinars (approximately US\$ 75.00), which cannot be waived by persons unable to pay. The second is that the provision of a six-month temporary residence permit is contingent upon the victim's willingness to participate in legal proceedings in Serbia.

Serbia is currently drafting a new *Law on Foreigners*, which will replace the *Law on Movement and Sojourn of Foreigners*. This new law will include provisions for the protection of victims, including an amended TRP regulation. In addition to defining rules and standards for the issuance of the temporary visa, the government and service providers must develop an appropriate assistance framework, including medium-term shelters and corresponding rehabilitation assistance programmes for foreign victims who reside in Serbia. Also essential is ensuring movement of foreign victims with TRPs.

### **Voluntary Return of Trafficked Victims**

At present, IOM is the primary organization responsible for the assistance package for foreign trafficked victims willing to return home. IOM secures identity papers, travel documents and an exit visa on the beneficiary's behalf and contacts other IOM missions or NGOs in the victim's country of origin to facilitate transit and reintegration

possibilities. IOM personnel and NGO personnel meet all returning beneficiaries either at the airport or other points of arrival within the country of return and offer overnight accommodation and transportation to the beneficiary's desired destination. Upon return, most beneficiaries enrol in an assistance program, at least for a short period. Services include shelter, medical care, psychosocial assistance, material assistance package and referrals for vocational and employment assistance. Detailed information about the range, scope and participation levels of reintegration programs in countries of origin are outlined within specific country reports. At present, staff at the shelter do not communicate with service providers in destination countries. Such communication would be valuable to ensure continuity in the services provided and would allow service providers in the country of origin to access critical information. This type of direct information exchange and case planning should be encouraged.

### **Reintegration Assistance**

Until June 2004, reintegration possibilities for Serbian victims of trafficking were limited. This was due, in large part, to the perception of Serbia as a country of transit and destination. However, in response to the identification of more Serbian victims of trafficking, the NGO Atina commenced a reintegration programme to meet the needs of national victims. In addition to legal, psychological and medical assistance, the reintegration programme is designed to meet the specific needs of individual beneficiaries. The programme offers assistance on a case-by-case basis, including individually tailored counselling and assistance in education, vocational training, job placement and family mediation as well as general cultural, social and sport activities. Atina has developed an informal network of various organizations offering educational, developmental and social programmes. In addition, the organization has developed contacts with and sought the assistance of service providers in areas of origin to support the victim upon departure from the reintegration programme. Ideally, a network of service providers throughout the country should be similarly mobilized.

For national victims of trafficking who are willing to accept reintegration assistance outside the framework of the transition house,<sup>563</sup> IOM cooperates with local Centre for Social Work and NGOs to organize an assistance programme. In such cases, reintegration assistance is geared primarily towards assistance in vocational training and/or education, with IOM responsible for case monitoring and follow-up.

More sustainable reintegration efforts should be envisaged and implemented within the framework of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy. One positive example is that of the Centre for Social Work in the municipality of Sombor. While not targeted specifically at trafficking victims, the Centre for Social Work has developed an integrated assistance framework, in cooperation with medical and law enforcement authorities, to better meet the needs of minors and the socially vulnerable. This has included supporting the reintegration of Serbian trafficking victims. This model is implemented without outside funding or support and was developed at the initiative of the local authorities. Such models should be further replicated throughout the country and region.

Service providers report that Serbian victims are most interested in receiving initial medical care, vocational training and educational assistance. At this time, the

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<sup>563</sup> This is primarily the case with victims who live far from Belgrade or who wish to return to their families.

government does not offer any vocational training programmes or preferential placement within vocational training programs for trafficked victims. Clearly, more comprehensive assistance programmes are needed, especially in the area of vocational training and job placement. Such programmes should be developed by local NGOs in cooperation with appropriate governmental authorities, such as the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy.

Further, to facilitate meaningful recovery and social reintegration of Serbian victims, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy and its corresponding Centres for Social Work must increase their willingness and capacity to provide direct psychosocial services to victims on a medium-term basis. Direct counselling and support services should be provided to victims in cooperation with local NGOs. Also within the framework of social care are centres of care for disabled persons. Given the representation of mentally and physically disabled persons among national victims, some training is also needed for these caregivers. More generally, there is a significant role to be played by various government ministries in supporting the disparate aspects of sustainable reintegration.

Finally, the geographic distribution of services must be considered. Currently, most assistance is concentrated in Belgrade and there is little long-term support for victims who return to families outside of the capital. There is a need to develop and train a geographically disparate network of social assistance actors in Serbia – government and NGO – to support victims in the reintegration process.

### **Family Mediation and Counselling**

Currently, this role is filled by IOM staff when a victim accepts reintegration assistance and by the Atina staff when the victim is in the reintegration programme. This is a critical aspect of any programme of assistance for national victims, creating as it does the conditions for safe and sustainable return. This programme should be expanded to involve trained psychologists as well as access to services outside of Belgrade. The high percentage of minors among national victims makes the need for this mediation especially strong. Mediation and counselling can prove essential in avoiding re-trafficking.

### **Housing Assistance and Job Placement**

There is also a need for subsidized alternative housing options for adult victims. Victims who cannot return to their families are in a particularly vulnerable state because housing costs are prohibitive and social allowances are insufficient for renting a room in an urban area. To save enough money to rent a private flat, most victims would require rent-free shelter for three to six months while they worked and saved money.

Job assistance and employment placement are two other areas that merit urgent attention. So far this has been done on an *ad hoc* basis and the majority of victims in the Atina programme have been assisted in finding work. Similar assistance has not been provided to those who are returned to their families through IOM. This is an area that will require more attention, with the spike in national victims being assisted.

### **Assistance for Minors**

Serbian legislation calls for specialized treatment of minors who are victims of crime, who are unaccompanied or otherwise vulnerable and in need of protection. However, to date, no foreign or national minor victims have received specialized or standardized services in Serbia. There are no specialized interview procedures, identification processes or formal referral mechanisms in place for trafficked minors, nor has the state appointed legal guardians for these minors. Neither is there accommodation specifically for minor victims of trafficking.

In addition, the assistance framework for trafficked minors (both foreign and national) remains, at present, essentially the same assistance package as for adult victims of trafficking. The accommodation of minors within an adult-oriented assistance framework and without specialized assistance is cause for concern. Thought should be given to the extent to which these programmes manage to meet the specific needs of minors and what adaptations are needed.

The Centres for Social Work – located throughout the country – have an important role to play in the assistance and protection of minors, although their participation so far has been quite limited. One exception is the Centre for Social Work in Sombor, which has played an important role in assistance/reintegration programme for one trafficked minor from the same municipality. Centres for Social Work must become increasingly active in the protection and eventual reintegration of Serbian trafficking victims, especially with respect to guardianship for Serbian minors. While there have been a number of recent training sessions for social workers through the OSCE, there is need to continue supporting the capacity building and training of social workers on trafficking and related service provision.

Beyond immediate assistance, there is a need for long-term support and reintegration of minor victims of trafficking. These minors have specific assistance needs, which include a safe and healthy home environment, education, basic needs, medical care, etc. Ideally, family reunification should be pursued, if a family and risk assessment deems this advisable, accompanied by family counselling and support. Formal family and risk assessment procedures should be developed. The issue of family involvement in the trafficking of minors poses serious risks in the reintegration process. While minors need a family environment to support healthy development, return to a family that has been complicit in trafficking places the minor in an acutely vulnerable position. At the same time, the poor quality of care in state institutions means that this is not an ideal alternative solution. As an alternative to reintegration, foster care placements should be considered for trafficked minors. Where this is to be pursued, appropriate training and orientation of foster families is essential to facilitate the successful placement of the minor as well as mitigate tension in the family.

Finally, standards for treatment of trafficked minors in Serbia should be elaborated along the lines of the principles outlined in UNICEF's *Recommendations for Special Measures to Protect Children Victims of Trafficking in South Eastern Europe*.

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IOM International Organization for Migration  
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations  
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

# REGIONAL CLEARING POINT