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Taking Stock
A review of the existing research on trafficking for sexual exploitation

Fafo

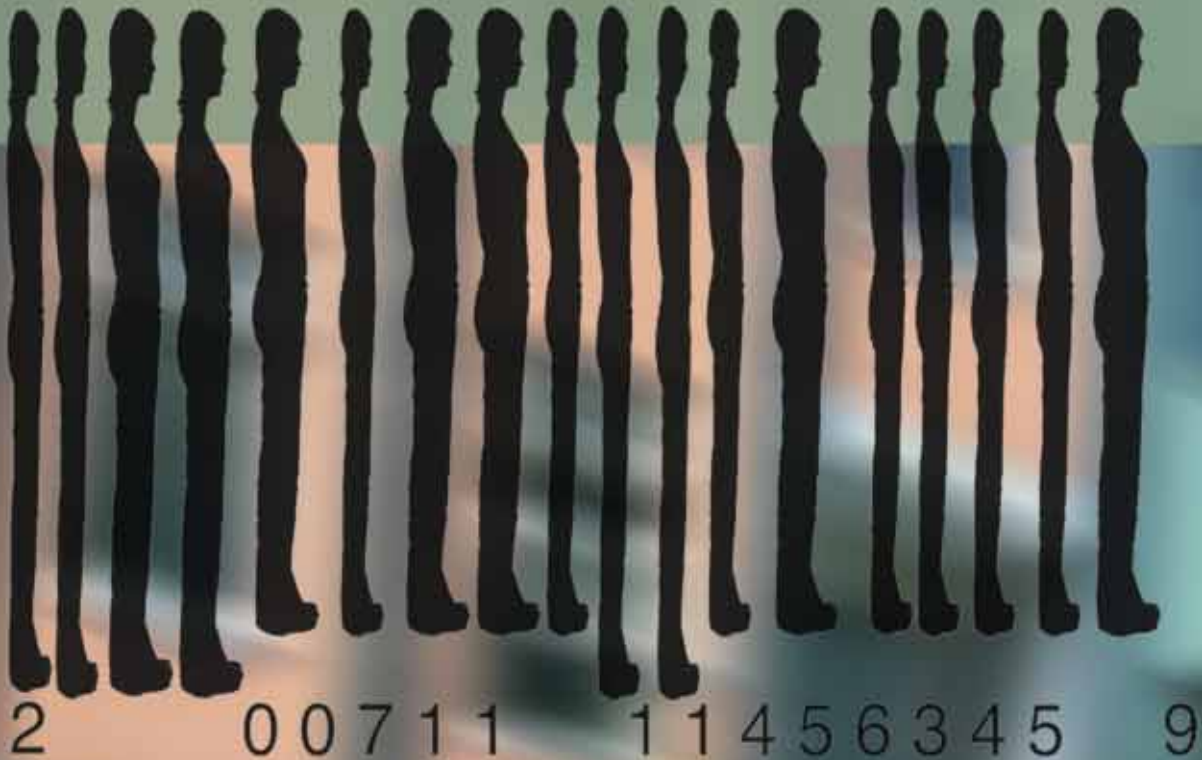Guri Tyldum, Marianne Tveit,
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Innhold

Preface and Acknowledgements

"Taking Stock" concludes a study commissioned by the Norwegian Ministries of Justice and the Police and of Local Government and Regional Development. The main objective of this study has been to critically review existing research and literature on trafficking for sexual exploitation, and identify key themes and knowledge gaps in that literature.

The study has been conducted as part of Fafo's research programme on trafficking and child labour. In the course of a number of studies on human trafficking and related issues, we have come to recognize the need for a thorough review of existing research on the subject. Our study is partly driven by the need to distinguish between, on the one hand, myths and popular (mis-)understandings of human trafficking and, on the other, methodologically and analytically sound research findings. It is also motivated by the desire to delineate the political or normative discourses surrounding the fields of prostitution and immigration from the empirically based studies that map conditions, structures, or strategies within these same fields. Critically examining the relevant political and normative discourses enables us to engage with crucial substantive and contentious debates that, sadly, some authors sidestep entirely; while analysing empirically based studies enables us to get at the questions of *what* we know and *how* we know it in the field of human trafficking. Finally, a review of the current knowledge base is necessary to assess the merits and shortcomings of various methodological approaches that have been used in existing studies, and draw lessons from previous successes and failures. It is our hope that this report can add much-needed analytical clarity to this quickly expanding field, and contribute to the agenda-setting processes currently underway in both the policy and research arenas.

Several persons and institutions have made numerous and valuable contributions to this study. We must first thank Mona Dia of the Ministry of Justice and the Police, and Eli Ferrari de Carli and Eva Haagensen of the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development. Their encouragement and support throughout the project period was vital and appreciated, and we laud their commitment to furthering research within this very challenging field.

Some of our Fafo colleagues have made important contributions to this project. As project director, Lise Bjerkan has had a significant and constructive influence on the project's design and implementation, and has also provided the authors with

1 Introduction

A few years ago, it was fair to say that there was a lack of research in the field of trafficking in women; today, the situation is quite the opposite. The problem is no longer to find reports that analyse the trafficking situation in any given country, but to navigate the virtual mountain of existing reports, many of them readily available on the Internet.

In order to get a sense of where new efforts may be most needed, and learn from earlier successful and less successful methodological efforts, we need an overview of what has already been done. The general reader with a professional, political, or personal interest in the field of trafficking in women will rarely have the capacity to go through all available reports and arrive at a synthesised impression of where the knowledge on this topic stands today. Moreover, although the volume of research produced over the past few years is indeed impressive, quality has not always matched quantity.

The aim of the present report is twofold. First, we intend to give an overview of and insight into the main trends in research in this field. We will summarise what we know about trafficking in women to and within Europe today, as well as how we have come about knowing it – meaning a discussion of research methods used and their implications for the knowledge base. The second aim of this report is to point to areas where it is essential to further research efforts and develop better and more appropriate methodologies.

The way in which the term "trafficking in women" is understood has important consequences for how the phenomenon is explained and approached. In particular, the conceptualisation and practical impact of linkages between trafficking in women, prostitution, and human smuggling continue to be subjects of heated debate. These issues of definition, conceptualisation, and linkages will be further examined in chapter 2 of this report. In chapter 3, we will discuss some challenges in developing estimates of numbers of victims, and critically assess some of the methods used for collecting and analysing primary data. In chapter 4, we will explore some of the central explanations for why trafficking in persons occurs, before turning to challenges in designing counter-trafficking measures, and how the knowledge base on trafficking can be used and expanded in order to improve and evaluate polices and programmes (chapter 5). Finally, in the concluding chapter we will summarise

some of the main findings in this report, and suggest some areas that should be prioritised in future studies on human trafficking.

We have limited the focus in this report to trafficking to and within Europe, and also primarily to trafficking in adult women for sexual exploitation. This choice should not be taken to imply that we consider this type of trafficking to be qualitatively or quantitatively more important than other types of trafficking in persons. It is rather merely a reflection of practical concerns: the need to make the task manageable and ensure consistency in the subjects that are discussed. The focus on trafficking in women for sexual exploitation is also partly a function of the fact that, at present, much of the work done on trafficking is focused on this specific area. Consequently, there is a greater need to take stock of existing work dealing with trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Although we cannot claim to have covered every publication that has been written on the subject, we have attempted to present a broad insight into the field, and to make sure that different ideological, theoretical, and methodological approaches are represented. We have collected materials over the past two years in connection with several other human trafficking research projects carried out at Fafo, and made systematic efforts to update and supplement this list of publications during 2004.

2 The trafficking concept

Trafficking in persons has in recent years become an important topic in the media and political discourse, making "trafficking" increasingly a part of our everyday language. However, this concept is still understood and used differently by different groups, sometimes with significant and meaningful variations. Lack of clarity and consistency in the use of the trafficking concept in scientific discourse may impede the development of the knowledge base, while such inconsistency in political discourse and policymaking may impact negatively on efforts to identify victims, target information campaigns, and prosecute traffickers. In this chapter, we will look at some of the standard uses of the term "trafficking", the main points of conceptual controversy, and the relationship between trafficking and neighbouring concepts and terms.

Trafficking in human beings (re-)appeared on the political agenda in Western Europe in the early 1990s, when the political transitions in Eastern Europe and the wars in the former Yugoslavia led to mass migration of persons from Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Although the worldwide increase in economic migration over the last 40 years has arguably led to more exploitation and abuse of migrants, trafficking in human beings is not a new phenomenon. International awareness of and debates on human trafficking can be traced back to the end of the 19th century, when involuntary prostitution was put forth on the international agenda under the term "white slavery" (Doezema 2002; Derk 2000).

In 1904, 12 states convened in a meeting in Paris that resulted in the first international agreement against white slavery (Deflem 2005).[1] This "International Agreement for the Suppression of White Slave Trade" aimed to "combat the compulsive and abusive procuring of women or girls for immoral purposes abroad (United Nations in Derk 2000:4)". In 1910, the scope of the convention was broadened by an agreement to include trafficking in women and girls within national boundaries. The agreement bound the contracting parties to punish any person who, "to gratify the passions of others, hired, abducted or enticed for immoral purposes, even with her consent, a woman or girl under twenty years of age, or over that age in

[1] The original countries were France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Russia, Sweden-Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland, Spain, Portugal and Switzerland. In 1910 the same countries, with the addition of Austria-Hungary and Brazil signed. (Deflem 2005, Bullough and Bullough 1987 in Derk 2000)

case of violence, threats, fraud or any compulsion; notwithstanding that the acts which together constituted the offence were committed in different countries (United Nations in Derk 2000:5)". In 1921, the convention was expanded to cover traffic in boys; and in 1933, the "International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women of Full Age" removed the condition of coercion at the international level, thereby establishing trafficking as the leading of a woman of any age to another country for immoral purposes, even when it takes place with her consent (Derk 2000).

The 1949 United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others (Resolution 317) superseded all previous conventions. Punishable, under this convention, was any person who, to gratify the passion of another, 1) procures, entices, or leads away, for the purposes of prostitution, another person, even with the consent of that person; 2) exploits the prostitution of another person, even with the consent of that person; as well as any person who 3) keeps or manages, or knowingly finances or takes part in the financing of, a brothel; 4) knowingly lets or rents a building or other place or any part thereof for the purpose of the prostitution of others (Derk 2000:5).

During the post-war years, the issue of human trafficking (or white slavery) more or less disappeared from the international agenda. Trafficking in human beings only reappeared on the agenda of the United Nations in the 1990s, with the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 and the World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 (Derk 2000).

Definitions of human trafficking

The Palermo protocol
In December 2000, the international community agreed on a common definition of trafficking in human beings in what is often referred to as the *Palermo protocol*.[2] Because the UN protocol is currently the main point of reference for definitional, policy, and academic debates on trafficking, we will in the following sections examine its content and discuss some of its inherent ambiguities and interpretations. The Palermo protocol defines trafficking in article 3a as:

> … the recruitment, transportation, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or the use of force or of other forms of coercion, of abduction, of

[2] Full title: "Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime".

fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

In article 3b, it is further specified that:

The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used.

Although the development of the Palermo protocol represented an important step towards developing an international consensus on how to understand trafficking in human beings, there are still some ambiguities inherent in the definition and, perhaps more so, the way in which it is commonly used. Two elements pose particular interpretive challenges. The first challenging element concerns how we should understand exploitation, particularly in connection to prostitution; the second relates to the question of what constitutes a position of vulnerability. Below we will discuss some of these ambiguities and their implications, but first we will present an alternative definition used in the trafficking debate.

The U.S. State Department
Several other definitions of trafficking in persons exist, and are particularly prevalent in studies published before 2000; however, following the establishment of the Palermo protocol, most actors adopted its terms as their working definition. The most significant actor not to use the Palermo definition is probably the U.S. State Department[3]

The United States defines "severe forms of trafficking in persons" in the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (P.L.106-386). "Severe forms of trafficking in persons" comprises: "(a) sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; or (b) the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labour or services, through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery". The act also defines coercion, in relatively wide terms, as: "(a) threats of serious harm to or physical restraint against any

[3] This definition is used in the U.S State Department's annual "Trafficking in Persons" report to the Congress, and as basis for their worldwide estimates.

person; (b) any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that failure to perform an act would result in serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; or (c) the abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process (P.L.106-386)".

The U.S. definition is more narrow than that used in the UN system. One of the more significant differences is that there is no mention of exploitation of a position of vulnerability as a form of coercion, nor does the U.S. law explicitly disregard the consent of the victim. It is also worth noting that the actions defined as trafficking in the Palermo protocol – recruitment, transportation, harbouring, and receipt – are in the U.S. definition only specified for labour and services, while no element of movement is specified for sex trafficking. This arguably gives the U.S. definition of sex trafficking a stronger resemblance to forced prostitution.

Delimitations and ambiguities in the trafficking concept

Exploitation

The Palermo protocol sets forth certain actions, conducted by a certain set of means, *for the purpose of* exploitation. Having a "purpose of exploitation" is in other words key to the understanding of human trafficking, as defined by the UN protocol. Thus, in order to determine what should be classified as trafficking – as opposed to e.g. "ordinary" prostitution – we need to understand what constitutes exploitation, particularly "the exploitation of the prostitution of others" and "sexual exploitation".

According to some authors (EC 2004:13), the terms "exploitation of the prostitution of others" and "sexual exploitation" were intentionally left undefined to allow all states, independent of their domestic policies on prostitution, to ratify the protocol. In this regard, it should be noted that the protocol does not have a specific positive or negative position on (voluntary, non-coerced adult) prostitution as such, leaving it to the discretion of individual states (see the section below on human trafficking and prostitution for a discussion of views on prostitution and implications for our understanding of human trafficking).

In the public discourse on trafficking for sexual exploitation, the focus is often on the aspects of movement and coercion – in other words, on the processes through which a person has ended up in a situation of exploitation, rather than the exploitation in itself. In particular, much attention is given to how the person started in prostitution, namely whether they were forced or decided by themselves. Conceptually, this may lead to a distinction between "innocent" and "guilty" victims, where the first group are those that were forced to become prostitutes, while the latter group are those that were either engaged in prostitution before the trafficking situation,

knew they would be prostitutes in the destination country, and/or were willing to remain engaged in prostitution under non-coerced or non-exploitative conditions. In this interpretation, "force" refers only to the way in which a woman becomes a prostitute, and does not deal with outcomes (in terms of exploitation, forced labour or services) (EC 2004).

Problematically, once one tries to distinguish between "innocent" and "guilty" victims, the focus shifts from the acts of the trafficker to the morality of the victim. Thus, rather than the offender standing trial, it is the victim who must prove her "innocence". Julia O'Connell Davidson argues that this focus on the victim rather than the exploitation has serious negative ramifications for policymakers and law enforcement:

> …Unless we can say precisely what is meant by "exploitation", then to define trafficking as the movement of persons for purposes of exploitation is to invite policymakers and others to fall back on prejudices about what constitutes a "proper" and "tolerable" relationship between parent/guardian and child, or husband and wife, or employer and employee, or pimp and prostitute (2005).

Combating this problem requires an understanding of what constitutes exploitation in prostitution (and other arenas where trafficking in human beings is known to take place), and how trafficking should be classified in relation to these activities and arenas. Liz Kelly (2001) lists five ways that women trafficked for sexual exploitation are exploited: being deceived about what their life will be like; not being allowed to control the number of clients; not being allowed to negotiate sexual practice; having their earnings taken at source; and having their movements and options controlled through removal of papers. Similarly, Brunovskis and Tyldum (2004) list four key points in the process when traffickers manipulate and impose restrictions and control: 1) when women are made to enter prostitution against their will, 2) when they are prevented from leaving prostitution, 3) when they are prevented from determining the conditions under which they work, and, 4) when they do not receive money from their prostitution. All four aspects should be understood as scales or continuums, with women under total control at one end and women with total freedom to act at the other, and with a large and often fluid space in-between.

Cumulatively, these perspectives produce an understanding of exploitation that encompasses any limitation that is purposely imposed on a women's (prostitute's) freedom of action or physical or mental wellbeing, which in turn means that all such cases constitute trafficking so long as any of the listed means of coercion are used. It follows that this approach results in relatively large variation in what is classified as trafficking – ranging from the "milder" forms where, for example pimps regulate the number of clients a woman must service each day, to the most severe forms featuring kidnappings and physical violence.

Vulnerable position and the issue of consent

"Exploitation" is not the only contested element of the Palermo protocol; what constitutes "abuse of a position of vulnerability" is also unclear and strongly debated. According to the Palermo protocol, the consent of a victim is irrelevant in cases where the listed means of coercion – including abuse of power or a position of vulnerability – are used. It is unclear, however, how "abuse of a position of vulnerability" should be defined and interpreted. (It should be noted that for people under 18 years, consent to exploitation is irrelevant regardless of whether coercive measures were used. Consequently, any recruitment, transport, harbouring, or receipt of children with the purpose of exploitation is automatically classified as trafficking, even if there is no threat, force, coercion, deception, exploitation of position of vulnerability, or other means of coercion.)

This lack of clarity creates vexing problems when it comes to identifying victims of trafficking, particularly when the victims have consented to the exploitation. According to the Travaux préparatoires, the interpretive notes to the Palermo protocol, the abuse of a position of vulnerability should be understood as "any situation in which the person involved has no real and acceptable alternative but to submit to the abuse involved". But how can we determine that a person is subjected to unacceptable exploitation if the person in question claims that the treatment is acceptable? Some practitioners have argued that disregarding a woman's consent takes away her agency – essentially reducing her to a child, treating her as if she cannot determine what is in her own interest, and "protecting" her from exercising her own free will (Doezema 2002). Conversely, a number of actors have emphasised that our understanding of trafficking for sexual exploitation has to include situations in which a person both consented to travel and consented to do sex work, even if no force or deception is involved (Doezema 2002).

There is little doubt that many of the women that end up as victims of trafficking are in a desperate situation at the time of recruitment, and that it is exactly this vulnerability that traffickers exploit (Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004). However, being in a vulnerable position when entering prostitution does not automatically entail trafficking: prostitution only falls under the trafficking definition when vulnerability is exploited by other actors, for example by imposing restrictions limiting the woman's freedom or threatening her mental or physical wellbeing. We are still far from a consensus, in both theory and practice, as to how severe this exploitation needs to be in order for it to be classified as trafficking – which entails an obligation to protect and prosecute according to trafficking legislation. Perhaps even further away is a concretisation of our understanding of "a vulnerable position". At one extreme, it is possible to argue that if "real and acceptable alternative […] to the abuse involved" means any situation better than the abusive situation, then any woman that chooses to accept exploitative conditions could be classified as a victim of

trafficking, on the assumption that she would have chosen the non-exploitative alternatives if there were any. Such an understanding of exploitation of a vulnerable position may be too wide for practical purposes, as it would classify any exploitation – of migrants, women in prostitution, and the population in general – as trafficking. On the other hand, if we limit our definition to those that need to accept a situation of exploitation in order to secure sheer physical survival for themselves and dependants, we risk ignoring some of the most important mechanisms that traffickers use: the systematic exploitation of persons with limited networks, information, or human resources, and of their dream of improving their own and their family's lives.

For the time being, we can only conclude that we know too little about the conditions under which migrants, women in prostitution, and others come to accept exploitation and, consequently, we cannot construct proper demarcations of what constitutes trafficking versus what constitutes an exercise of free will. Future research should focus on improving our understanding of agency and consent with regard to exploitation in prostitution, as well as the mechanisms that traffickers take advantage of in this regard.

Human trafficking and human smuggling

In approaching the migratory element of human trafficking, a clear distinction should be made between human trafficking and human smuggling. Human smuggling is defined in the UN Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants[4] as: "the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or permanent resident". The main distinction between human trafficking and human smuggling thus lies in the purpose of the movement of people: the purpose of smuggling is the illegal crossing of borders, whereas the aim of trafficking is the exploitation of the trafficked person. In other words, attempts to prevent smuggling primarily concern the protection of the state against illegal migration, while anti-trafficking work primarily concerns the protection of the individual person against exploitation and abuse (EC 2004).

The existence of these two distinct definitions does not, however, automatically identify victims of trafficking versus persons that are smuggled, as it may be unclear at the time of movement whether a person is trafficked or smuggled. The victims themselves – not to mention border officials – may not know the ultimate purpose for which they are moving, nor the ultimate conditions they will find themselves

[4] Full name: The Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

in. At the point of crossing borders, victims of trafficking commonly believe they are being smuggled into a country to earn money under non-exploitative conditions – only to learn at a later stage that they have been deceived. Persons placing themselves in the hands of smugglers surrender a degree of control over their fate, and for some this may result in their being trafficked into sexual exploitation (Kelly 2002). But again, smuggled persons are not, and will not become, victims of trafficking if there is no purpose of exploitation.

It is important to emphasise that illegal border crossings are not a prerequisite for trafficking, such that people that have obtained legal documents and entered a country legally may still be victims of trafficking. Furthermore, the migration element in the trafficking protocol does not require cross-border movement, meaning that trafficking can also happen within countries.

The blurring of the trafficking and smuggling concepts has arguably been promoted by governments or agents interesting in increasing immigration controls. In a perverse way, the trafficking phenomenon can be a welcome tool for politicians, in that it apparently represents a form of forced migration that simultaneously involves the violation of the human rights of the trafficked person and a threat to national sovereignty and security. Arguably, therefore, governments can use trafficking as an excuse to present restrictive immigration controls as if they were measures designed to protect and promote human rights (O'Connell Davidson 2005).

Human trafficking and prostitution

Since trafficking in persons has traditionally been associated with prostitution, the debate around it is closely related to the debate about prostitution in general (Derks 2000). It is possible to distinguish between three main fronts or positions on prostitution and its relationship to trafficking in persons.[5]

The abolitionist position opposes prostitution in all forms, on the grounds that all prostitution is violence against women. This view is supported by the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW). The second position argues that it is possible to distinguish between "free" prostitution and trafficking/forced prostitution.

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[5] We acknowledge that within each group, there can be significant differences. The following presentation is meant to give a general introduction to some of these perspectives; however, the interested reader may find more information in publications referred to in the text as well as on the following web sites:

The Coalition Against Traffic in women: www.catwinternational.org

Global Alliance against Trafficking in Women: www.gaatw.org

Network of Sex Work Projects www.nswp.org

Anti-Slavery International: www.antislavery.org

The Foundation against Trafficking in Women: www.bayswan.org/FoundTraf.html;

COYOTE: www.walnet.org/csis/groups/coyote.html www.bayswan.org/COYOTE.html

This position is now prominent in international human rights discourse, and is endorsed by the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women (GAATW) and the Dutch Foundation Against Trafficking in Women (STV), among others. The third position views debates on trafficking in women as diverting attention from the issues of the human rights of sex workers. This view is supported by, among others, the Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP) (Corrin 2000).

The disagreement between the first and second perspective mainly concerns our understanding of exploitation in prostitution as discussed above: can prostitution in itself be said to be exploitation of women, or if it is meaningful to distinguish between exploitative prostitution and other forms of prostitution? Abolitionists consider prostitution as inherently exploitative; consequently, migrant women in the sex industry are automatically regarded as victims of trafficking. They argue that decisions to enter prostitution are made under conditions where there are few, if any, alternatives – a situation that has been termed a "forced/coerced willingness" (CVME in Kelly 2002). Accordingly, abolitionists contend, women's entry into sex trade cannot be seen as a matter of choice. Donna Hughes (2000, 2002b, 2002c, 2003) accuses actors that distinguish between exploitative and non-exploitative prostitution of supporting the suppression of victims of trafficking. She argues that, by implicitly accepting and working within the framework of the sex industry, these actors are accepting the exploitation that takes place in this arena. Thus, by working to improve the conditions of the sex industry – for example, by offering health services or distributing condoms – rather than abolishing prostitution as such, they signal to traffickers, victims, and the society at large that the exploitation that takes place is acceptable.

The opposite side of the debate may be represented by Jo Doezema (2000, 2002), who argues that the current focus on trafficking for sexual exploitation diverts attention away from the real problems of sex workers. Doezema claims that the focus on trafficking for prostitution, like the focus on "white slavery" in the beginning of the 20th century, is highly exaggerated compared to the very small number of actual victims, and that much of the anti-trafficking campaign is driven by actors wanting to abolish prostitution as such. She argues that trafficking for sexual exploitation should not be treated differently than trafficking in other industries (i.e. as forced labour and slavery), and that prostitution needs to be legalised in order to empower sex workers and improve their working conditions. According to this perspective, the stigmatisation and criminalisation of prostitution marginalises sex workers and makes them more vulnerable to exploitation: thus, prostitution is not exploitative in itself, but it is the conditions under which it is performed that make it exploitative. Doezema claims that the abolitionists, by construing all prostitutes as victims, remove the justification for regulations. The consequence is the promotion

of international and national laws that ultimately serve to impede the free movement of sex workers, and as such violates their rights.

In some kind of middle ground are those that argue the need to improve the conditions in the sex industry in order to fight human trafficking. This group sees trafficking for sexual exploitation as a severe problem, but argues that women who knowingly migrate to earn money in prostitution should not be considered "trafficked" so long as no means of coercion are used (Latin American Coalition to End Violence Against Women and Children 2002).

Use and misuse of the trafficking concept

Since 2000, most publications on trafficking in persons claim to use the definition put forth in the Palermo protocol. In spite of this claim, however, there are still large discrepancies in how the concept is used and understood. The problem is twofold. First, the "politics of trafficking" (O'Connell Davidson 2005) induces different actors to purposely interpret and use the definition differently. Secondly, the trafficking concept is seldom explicitly operationalised so as to clarify how the author interprets the protocol, or to enable unambiguous identification of trafficking cases.

There is today an overarching consensus between most agencies, organisations, and states that trafficking in persons is a serious problem. Beyond this, however, there is little agreement. Different groups see trafficking in persons as a problem for different reasons, and often have very different political agendas with regards to the issue. Attempts to produce a precise definition of "trafficking in persons" and to identify appropriate policy responses to it have provoked, and continue to provoke, much controversy (O'Connell Davidson 2005). As we have seen in this chapter, trafficking in persons is intimately connected with two heavily politicised issues: immigration and prostitution. Because of this, the distinctions tend to be blurred between trafficking, migration, and smuggling on the one hand, and trafficking and prostitution on the other – both analytically and in policy responses.

Although a general consensus on what constitutes trafficking would have great analytical impact, there is little indication that such a consensus will be reached in the near future (Kelly 2004). However, we believe it is reasonable to expect authors publishing on the topic to make it explicit how *they* use the concept. As illustrated in the discussion above, there are several ambiguities in the Palermo definition. We would recommend that authors acknowledge that different interpretations exist, and then place their position in relation to these interpretations; they should not leave it up to the reader to guess what forms of exploitation or prostitution are being subject to analysis. Moreover, as we will discuss below, the way one defines "traf-

ficking in persons" has great implications for the development of policies for the prevention of trafficking, identification of victims, and targeting of assistance and reintegration programmes. It also influences discussions of causality – that is, how it is that women get trafficked in the first place.

Finally, it is important to note that, empirical studies, whether quantitative or qualitative, will in most cases require a proper operationalisation of the trafficking concept beyond the definition of the Palermo protocol. The Palermo protocol, rather than describing a single, unitary act leading to one specific outcome, can be seen as an umbrella to cover a process (recruitment, transportation, and control) that can be organised in a variety of ways and involve a range of different actions and outcomes. This flexibility of the protocol's definition makes it difficult, perhaps impossible, to operationalise in a uniform way. Yet as pointed out by Julia O'Connell Davidson, human trafficking cannot be globally monitored, measured, mapped and evaluated as long as the phenomenon is vague and ill-defined (O'Connell Davidson 2005). Proper operationalisation is therefore necessary to enable unambiguous identification of cases that entail trafficking, and cases that do not. This may imply that, in some cases, the Palermo protocol is not the definition best suited for effective operationalisation and identification. We should therefore be open to the possibility that, for research purposes, we might need to develop and use alternative definitions to the Palermo protocol.

3 Types of research and data sources

In recent years, the amount of attention paid to human trafficking has escalated: a simple Google search of "human trafficking", "trafficking in persons", or "trafficking in human beings" produces 312,000, 138,000 and 115,000 hits, respectively (January 2005). However, the share of academic publications is marginal – in January 2005, a search on the academic database "ISI Web of Science" gives reference to seven articles in refereed journals on "human trafficking", ten on "trafficking in human beings", and five on "trafficking in persons".[6] Academic publications on the subject are, in other words, still rare, in spite of the vast amount of material available.

In existing studies of human trafficking, we may distinguish between publications based on secondary data sources and those that collect and analyse primary data. Although the latter approach remains less common, the number of studies based on some form of primary data has increased over the last couple of years, in response to a strong demand for the improvement of data and indicators (see for instance Kelly 2002, Lazko & Gramegna 2003, EC 2004). In this chapter, we will first briefly discuss some of the challenges to secondary data analysis, then examine the methods used for collecting and analysing primary data on human trafficking.

Analysis of secondary data

The vast majority of current reports and publications on human trafficking are based mainly on secondary data sources. With the large number of publications in this and related fields, thorough reviews and analysis of existing literature can be extremely useful, both to give an overview of the current knowledge base and to point out priorities for future studies. Systematic comparative analysis may also point to interesting patterns or contradictions in current research and, as such, contribute to developing our understanding of the trafficking mechanisms and our theoretical base for trafficking research. However, such comparative studies are still relatively rare,

[6] For comparison, a search on "ISI Web of Science" for academic research on "prostitution" (published after 1987) gives 1,514 references, while "immigration" results in more than 8,000 publications.

and most publications based on secondary data seldom move beyond static descriptions of the various stages in the trafficking process.

A substantial part of the trafficking literature is based on interviews with key respondents, where information is collected from i.e. outreach organisations or researchers, and used for describing the population of trafficking victims or even arriving at estimates of the number of victims (see for instance UNICEF 2004; IOM 1996a). This approach is, however, associated with several sources of bias (Heckathorn, 1997; Tyldum and Brunovskis 2005). First, the descriptions, or numbers and estimates arrived at by expert opinions or involved nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) cannot be subject to methodological scrutiny or evaluations of external actors; thus, the data are given weight not based on the methods used to arrive at them (i.e. registration methods, update frequency, or coverage), but based on the authority of the person or organisation that provided the information. Secondly, key informants do not interact with a random group of potential clients, and cannot be expected to have an overview of the total population. Few outreach organisations or community workers have adequate systems for keeping registers and, where methodologically trained researchers fail in producing estimates, it should not be expected that community workers do better – even if they have excellent knowledge of the arenas in which they work. Even if several independent key respondents present similar numbers to estimate the number of trafficking victims, this does not entail that the number is correct, as actors in the same field may be influenced by each other or by the same sources of information, media coverage, and general perception in the society.

Many of the existing publications on human trafficking are overview studies, aiming to give an introduction to the human trafficking situation in a country, region, or even the world at large (see for instance IOM 2001a, Okolski 2001b, IOM 2003c). Typically these studies try to explain a large number of aspects related to human trafficking, from legal frameworks and prosecution to organised crime and trafficking routes, vulnerability and root causes, and rehabilitation and return. Trafficking in human beings is a complex phenomenon, and the task of writing such general overviews – including critical assessments and analysis of each sub-field – can be challenging, especially when attempts are made to compare the development in several countries or regions within a country. The result is too often a summary of assumptions and myths percolating the field of human trafficking. One of the areas where this is most visible is in the use of numbers and statistics.

The magic numbers

Much of the literature on human trafficking refers to at least some type of quantification or number to illustrate their findings, and these numbers are often quoted with no critical assessment of how they were produced. In recent publications, arguments on the limitations in current data sources are more likely to be presented; however, estimates and numbers that the authors themselves claim they do not believe in are still used. We will caution against this kind of random use of numbers, as the only thing worse than no data is wrong or misleading data. As Mike Dottridge writes:

> Some human rights activists argue that exaggeration is not a major problem, as long as an attention ends up being given to whatever abuses are occurring. This seems to be a rather idealistic, not to say naive approach, which ignores the damage that can be done by misrepresenting the scale of a problem. Others point out that an inaccurate estimate of the problem is likely to result in a remedy being proposed that is equally inappropriate (2003: 82).

Simply put, there is a great difference in dealing with human trafficking from a country if the annual number of victims trafficked is 200 compared to 10,000. By uncritically using or constructing estimates that are not based on sound methodological techniques and hard data, we may assist in misleading more than informing, and hinder the creation of relevant policies

UNESCO has collected estimates of trafficking victims worldwide and produced graphics making it possible to trace and compare various estimates.[7] Interestingly, between 1998 and 2002, there are four different estimates of victims of trafficking that are primarily referred to by the listed organisations: 600,000; 800,000; 2 million; and 4 million. Moreover, all the estimates are used with reference to different target populations: for example, according to UNESCO the number of victims of trafficking in 2001 was said to be two million children (Terre des Hommes), two million women *and* children (UNICEF), and two million persons overall (U.S. Government). The recurrence of the same numbers in reference to different populations may be pure coincidence; however, we believe it more likely that the numbers originate from the same source, but that inaccurate reporting and quoting have taken a toll on its quality. Given this situation, it is worth interrogating the efficacy and relevance of current worldwide estimates.

Perhaps the most quoted estimate of victims of trafficking comes from the U.S. Department of State's annual "Trafficking in Persons" report. Based on estimates

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[7] See graph at: http://www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user_upload/culture/Trafficking/project/ Graph_Worldwide_Sept_2004.pdf

of numbers of victims of trafficking for each country, an aggregate global total is computed. For 2004, the total number of victims of severe forms of trafficking was estimated to be between 600,000 and 800,000 people. It is worth noting that the estimates are based on the number of victims of "severe forms of trafficking", as defined in the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (see definition in previous chapter) (U.S. Department of State 2004). The report has been criticised because it does not list the country estimates on which the aggregate numbers are based: only a few, if any, countries in the world today are believed to have accurate or even approximate estimates of the actual number of trafficking victims, and it is unclear upon which sources the "Trafficking in Persons" report bases its numbers. Needless to say, inaccurate numbers are not improved through collation.

So long as there is so little data available on trafficking in persons at the level of states, it is not meaningful to make or quote regional or worldwide estimates. Until the current body of data improves, we should not mislead our readers or ourselves by quoting "guesstimates". Rather, we should admit that the extent of human trafficking in the world today is not known.

That said, the lack of hard data on trafficking worldwide does not mean that we should not attempt quantifications. Several sources of information can be used to develop estimates, monitor changes, distinguish vulnerable groups, and evaluate and develop counter-trafficking policies. However, both in developing and referring to estimates, it is important to make explicit the limitations of the data, the population it refers to, and the assumptions that calculations are based on. Only through thorough discussions and careful evaluation of existing information can methods and estimates be improved.

Developing estimates

Determining who to count

The question of numbers of victims of trafficking is in many ways fundamental. This is not because of quantitative idolatry, but because counting something presupposes two basic operations of key concern for researchers and policymakers alike: conceptual identification and practical identification, or being able to say, "this is a victim of trafficking". From that information much else flows: targeting, identifying characteristics, and rights and protection under international law (Pedersen and Sommerfelt 2001).

Uses and interpretations of the trafficking concept were discussed in the previous chapter, and as these discussions illustrate, operationalisation of the trafficking concept and practical identification of cases is tricky. Even if the Palermo protocol

is used, aspects such as exploitation of the prostitution of others and exploitation of a position of vulnerability demand clarification.

Although most publications on human trafficking begin with a discussion on definitions, the preferred definition is often not carried through to the data collection and analysis sections. Instead, "victims of trafficking" are identified and sampled based not on definitional attributes, but rather identification by law enforcement or NGO personnel working in shelters. Identification is thereby contingent on the identifiers' understanding of trafficking.

Determining whether a person has been manipulated or lured, and the extent to which she has been exploited, depends on information that the person must give herself. Consequently, unambiguous classifications of victims of trafficking are most easily obtained through survey data.

Time period

If we wish to estimate the number of men and women that are victims of trafficking, it is necessary to specify what time period the estimation is valid for. The number of persons living, at any specific time, under conditions that can be classified as trafficking may be significantly different from the number of persons trafficked to or recruited for labour exploitation, organ removal, or prostitution every year. We need to know how long people in various groups stay in a particular category, and how and when people move between categories, in order to understand and correctly interpret any number stating the total amount of victims of trafficking.

For example, in the prostitution arena in Oslo, Brunovskis and Tyldum (2004) have established that about 600 women worked in prostitution during the month of October 2003. Of these, one-third were of Norwegian origin. Based on survey information about the length of stay and number of months worked in prostitution each year, they estimate that a total of 1,100 different women work in prostitution in Oslo every year, and that among these, about 20 percent are of Norwegian origin (Brunovskis & Tyldum 2004). This demonstrates that both the total number and distribution of characteristics are likely to change according to the time period being measured.

Estimation methods

In other fields where necessary statistics have been difficult to obtain, methods have been developed to formulate "process indicators" of various phenomena based on more easily available data. For instance, Garfield (2000) estimates child mortality in Iraq from measures of adult literacy, immunisation coverage, percentage of households with potable water, etc. This estimate was made possible by decades of

thorough research on child mortality conducted in regions where data are more readily available. Because the main causes of child mortality are known and tend to be consistent across regions and cultures, process indicators could be used to estimate the extent of child mortality in Iraq.

Is it possible to develop process indicators on the extent and forms of trafficking? Perhaps, but the current knowledge base is still short of the point where this can be done, as proper production and analysis of statistical data on human trafficking is still rare. Process indicators can be used to estimate numbers of victims of trafficking only after the subject has been systematically researched, to the extent that causes and related phenomena are well established, and the effects of these phenomena can be calculated and used across regions and political systems.

Although compiling data about rare and elusive populations such as victims of trafficking is both technically challenging and potentially costly, a number of methods have been developed by survey statisticians to study such populations. One estimation method that has been getting increased attention in recent studies is the capture-recapture methodology. Based on systematic observations and relatively simple calculations, the size and basic characteristics of a population can be estimated. The method is still most commonly used within the fields of biology and epidemiology; however, there have been an increasing number of studies making use of capture-recapture methodology within the social sciences on subjects such as the homeless, drug misuse prevalence, street children, and women in street prostitution (Jensen and Pearson, 2002; Brunovskis and Tyldum, 2004).

Other data collection methods that are commonly used on elusive and difficult-to-reach populations are various types of network approaches. In a study produced by IOM in Azerbaijan, victims of trafficking, and persons assumed to be potential victims, were recruited through "snowball recruitment" in seven regions with high international migration (IOM 2002b). It is interesting to note, that this study presents findings with victim profiles that sometimes differ significantly from findings presented in other studies, which are based on interviews with women recruited from rehabilitation centres.

One network approach that has received increased attention for studies of hidden populations is Respondent-Driven Sampling (RDS), developed by Douglas Heckathorn (1997). Through a double incentive system in recruitment, and estimation methods that take into account the size and characteristics of the individual's networks (based on Markovchain theory and the theory of biased networks), RDS is argued to reduce the biases associated with other network approaches.[8]

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[8] For more information on sampling methods for hidden and rare populations, see Heckathorn (1997), Thompson (1992), Jensen and Pearson (2002), Levy and Lemenshow (1999), and Pedersen and Sommerfelt (2001).

Target populations

When making inferences from a sample to a population at large, it is necessary to specify for whom the inferences or general conclusions are assumed to be valid. To our knowledge, there are no studies as yet that claim to be representative of *all* victims of trafficking within a region or arena. The majority of studies and numerical estimates are based on data collected about victims of trafficking that are identified by NGOs, social services, or law enforcement bodies. Another group of studies focuses on the arenas where systematic exploitation of migrants are known to take place – for example, the prostitution arena. The final group of estimates are based on data on migrants, usually women and children that move across international borders with the assistance of others. As illustrated in Figure 1, these are populations in which victims of trafficking make up a sub-population (e.g. persons migrating), or populations that are in themselves sub-populations of victims of trafficking (e.g. victims of trafficking registered by law enforcement agencies) (Tyldum and Brunovskis 2005).

Data on trafficking cases registered by law enforcement or organisations administering rehabilitation programmes in the countries of origin are commonly presented in analyses on human trafficking. While some studies mainly use these data to represent minimum estimates of numbers of victims, and do not attempt to infer the overall population of victims of trafficking (see for instance Kelly and Regan 2000; IOM 1996b, Regional Clearing Point 2003), such data are too often referred to as describing victims of trafficking as such, or used to indicate differences

Figure 1 Targeting victims of trafficking. Sub-populations and populations in which victims of trafficking make up sub-populations*
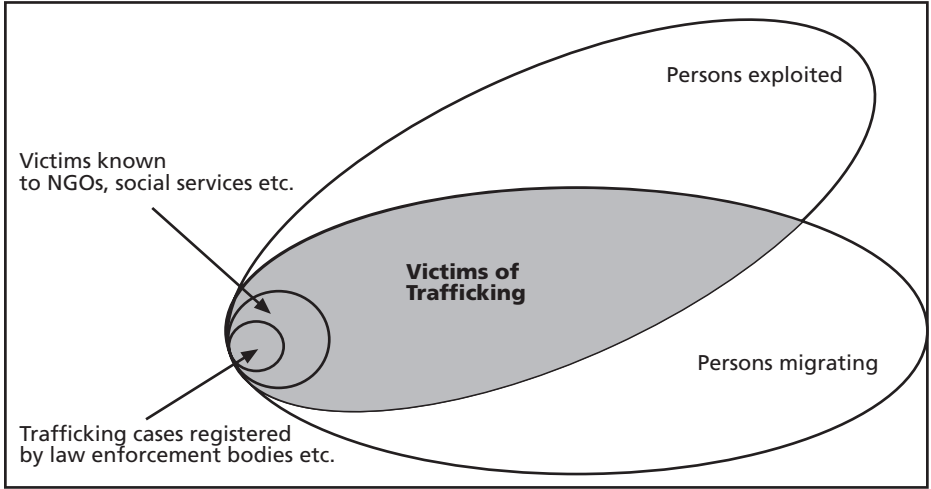
* Relative sizes of populations are hypothetical, and likely to vary between regions and arenas.

between countries or regions (IOM 2001; IOM Armenia 2001; IOM Kosovo 2002). Data on these sub-populations have the advantage that they refer to a concrete population, and are based on positive identification of victims. However, several problems associated with these data require more attention if they are to be used for other purposes, such as developing victim profiles, conducting cross-national comparisons, or even analysing trends.

The number of cases registered by law enforcement, for example, might indicate the effectiveness of the law enforcement apparatus in a given country, but is probably not a good basis for estimating the number of victims of trafficking. Recent developments in official trafficking statistics in Norway are illustrative. Human trafficking was, until recently, believed to be a minor problem in Norway, and until 2004 only a handful of cases with suspicion of trafficking had been registered by law enforcement bodies. However, with the introduction of the "Plan of Action for Combating Trafficking in Women and Children" in 2003, law enforcement bodies were instructed to give higher priority to trafficking for sexual exploitation, and increased resources were given to this field. Subsequently, there was a strong increase in the number of cases identified: although only a few cases were identified in 2003, the police became involved in 42 cases where trafficking for sexual exploitation was suspected in the first ten months of 2004 (statements made by the Minister of Justice and the Police, Stortingets Spørretime, October 2004). There is little to indicate that these numbers reflect an strong increase in trafficking in persons, as such, from 2003 to 2004; rather, the upsurge is generally attributed to law enforcement's increased prioritisation of and resources to the problem. Thus, these numbers clearly cannot be used to illustrate any trend in the development of trafficking in Norway over the last few years. Similarly, comparisons with other countries based on these numbers will be misleading, unless it can be assumed that similar approaches, amounts of resources, and legal frameworks are used for the given year(s) of comparison.

Our intention is not to dismiss the value of studies of trafficking victims that have been in contact with law enforcement bodies, only to raise awareness of the limitations inherent in these data: focusing our understanding of trafficking victims solely on this group is likely to give a strong bias to our findings, as this sub-population of victims of trafficking is likely to be systematically different from other victims of trafficking. In an important and concrete way, of course, cases that are registered by law enforcement are different from other cases of trafficking, in that they were actually discovered and taken seriously by the police. Since we do not have systematic knowledge about the cases that are *not* discovered by the police, we cannot know whether victims registered by law enforcement were just lucky, or whether they were discovered and assisted because they were somehow substantively different from other cases. What we do know is that victims of trafficking in some cases

go to great lengths to avoid contact with the police – even those that have been subjected to severe physical and mental abuse often do not ask for help when they have the chance (Brunovskis & Tyldum 2004).

The problem of selection bias is also arguably valid for the sub-population of victims that come into contact with the rehabilitation apparatus. It is generally believed that this group, like those that come into contact with law enforcement, also make up only a small proportion of those that fall victim to trafficking. According to IOM Ukraine, the majority of the women that come into contact with its rehabilitation apparatus do so on their own initiative, often many months or even years after they have returned to their home country (personal communication, October 2003). It is reasonable to assume that having access to resources like education and social networks makes it easier to contact rehabilitation services and ask for help. We can thus expect that the victims that contact NGOs for assistance and rehabilitation are systematically different from those that do not. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, only those that have an active organisation in their community, and who know about this organisation, are in a position to seek help. Consequently, areas with many NGOs (or where information about rehabilitation services is well known) are more likely to register more victims of trafficking. It follows from this that, when studying victims of trafficking that are in contact with rehabilitation services, we need to be aware that the population is incomplete and probably biased with regards to basic characteristics.

A possible solution to the selection biases discussed above would be to conduct studies of all returned migrants in known countries of origin, as former victims of trafficking make up a sub-population of this group. Furthermore, such data would enable us to better understand who is at risk of becoming a victim of trafficking. The majority of known victims of trafficking seem to have purposely travelled abroad, either to find a job, a husband, seek asylum, or even to earn money in prostitution (Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004, O'Connell Davidson 2005). And while many migrants do fall victim to trafficking, it is probable that the majority of migrants that cross borders are not manipulated and exploited to an extent that can be classified as trafficking. Obtaining a broader picture of the experiences of returned migrants would thus help us to better understand what constitutes successful migration, as well as the factors that increase one's vulnerability to traffickers. Most importantly, it could give information on the share of migrants that are exposed to exploitation that can be classified as trafficking. This information could serve to evaluate the quality of data obtained through other sources, and possibly give guidelines as to how these data could be used for monitoring purposes.

Migrant women and men working in prostitution are another population that can be targeted in order to monitor trafficking for sexual exploitation. As victims of trafficking in most countries will only make up a sub-population of all prostitutes,

the total number of foreign prostitutes can obviously not be taken as a direct proxy for victims of trafficking. Still, knowledge about the workings of and changes in the prostitution arenas can provide valuable information. Women operating in known arenas for prostitution can be relatively easily observed and counted; and even women in situations of serious exploitation and abuse can never be totally invisible in the prostitution arena, as their organisers need to sell the women to clients. These contact arenas used by organisers and pimps can also be used for monitoring purposes.

Several good studies of prostitution arenas in Western European countries have been produced. In "Stopping Traffic: Exploring the extent of, and responses to, trafficking in women for sexual exploitation in the UK", Kelly and Regan (2000) present a thorough analysis of existing data and available information on trafficking for sexual exploitation in the United Kingdom. Based on the data available, they develop a minimum and maximum estimate of the number of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation to the UK.[9] In Italy, meanwhile, the IOM has developed a thorough analysis of the prostitution arenas, and the extent to which trafficking takes place within them (IOM 1996a). In addition to structured interviews with 50 victims of trafficking (recruited through health and social workers), the report estimates the number of women in prostitution and victims of trafficking based on figures provided by local community and health workers, expert opinions, and media reports.

While it is possible to obtain information about general background characteristics and behaviour of migrants in prostitution, we do not believe it is possible to collect reliable information about forms of exploitation and abuse among victims that are *currently* experiencing this abuse. In other words, it is difficult to develop reliable, direct measures that can enable us to distinguish victims of trafficking from other women in prostitution. This is partly because women and men in the most serious forms of slavery and exploitation may be less likely to be reached; and also because the respondents will be reluctant to give out information that may put them in jeopardy (either due to fear of organisers or fear of being sent out of the country). Still, indirect indicators of social integration, freedom of movement, or even coercion may be obtained – for example, through information about contact with and knowledge of health care or legal institutions in the country where they work, language proficiency, or even the number of respondents that were stopped from participating in interviews by a third party.

Monitoring prostitution arenas and other arenas for migrant workers is important not just to obtain reliable figures on victims of trafficking, but to increase our un-

[9] Based on cases known to police forces in all regions of the United Kingdom, they have developed a minimum estimate of the number of women trafficked to the country; and through a rigorous discussion of other available information, they estimate the maximum number of trafficking victims, arguing that between 1995 and 2000 somewhere between 142 and 1,420 women were trafficked to the UK.

derstanding of the mechanisms that enable trafficking to occur. This relates to other aspects of the role of destination countries, such as the issues of demand of migrant labour/prostitution, the effect of regulation or deregulation of use of migrant labour/prostitution, and the general framework that may discourage trafficking or make it profitable. Stories of recruitment and exit of women and men in less serious situations of force and exploitation may also serve to enhance our understanding of how trafficking takes place. By supplementing research that takes, as a starting point, persons detected by law enforcement or NGOs with data on persons that have experienced less severe forms of exploitation, one could obtain a wider description of the field and counteract probable biases in the current body of research.

Ethical considerations

Research on trafficking in human beings is particularly difficult to conduct for several reasons. In addition to the methodological challenges mentioned above, there are also ethical issues that must be considered before one engages in interviews with victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking. In general, it is important to consider that the subjects of these interviews may be traumatic for the respondent to talk about, and that one could risk provoking reactions that may not become visible until after the interview. At the same time, some former victims of trafficking may wish to talk about their experiences and tell their stories. If an interview is conducted properly, being heard and taken seriously may be perceived as a positive experience for former victims. The World Health Organisation (2003) has developed the publication, "WHO ethical and safety recommendations for interviewing trafficked women", which raises and discusses central ethical and security considerations and issues recommendations for working with trafficking victims. The recommendations are summarised in "ten guiding principles for the ethical and safe conduct of interviews with women who have been trafficked":

1 Do no harm
2 Know your subject and assess the risk
3 Prepare referral information: don't offer advice or make promises that you cannot fulfil
4 Adequately select and prepare interpreters and co-workers
5 Ensure anonymity and confidentiality
6 Get informed consent
7 Listen to and respect each woman's assessment of her situation and risks to her safety

8 Do not re-traumatise a woman
9 Be prepared for emergency intervention
10 Put information collected to good use

Each point is further elaborated in the publication, which is strongly recommended for any actor engaging in the field. It is available at www.who.int.

Actors and objectivity in knowledge production

Among the most important actors in the current production of knowledge on trafficking for sexual exploitation are the numerous nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) engaged in the field. Without a doubt, the many active NGOs do an indispensable job, particularly on projects of prevention and rehabilitation. However, their role as producers of knowledge can be a bit problematic.

As is the case with human rights NGOs in general, both accuracy and impartiality are sometimes sacrificed by NGOs, either for reasons of expediency or out of their support for a particular cause (Dottridge 2003). Furthermore, when NGOs are in a position to gather data that nobody else can (e.g. data on returned victims) and may argue their standpoints based on hard data, it is difficult for external actors to evaluate the validity of inferences or methods of analysis. This problem becomes particularly relevant when centrally placed NGOs have vested interests in the field.

Wim Vandekerckhove (2003) points to the problems of objectivity in data production that may apply to some of the NGOs in this field. The majority of the NGOs engaged in assisting former victims of trafficking get their finances from a local, national, or international governmental body. The danger is that governments financing NGO activities may, directly or indirectly, pressure the NGO to come up with the desired conclusions and recommendations – for example, by signalling what kind of victim profiles they are interested in or types of organisations they wish to support. For instance, if a donor government does not wish to support assistance to victims of trafficking with prostitution experience prior to being trafficked, some NGOs may be more reluctant to register prior prostitution experience among the victims they are in contact with, so as to safeguard future funding. If such priorities are expressed by numerous or important donors, we may expect that the direct or indirect pressures will take a toll on the data that are available and, as such, the knowledge base built on these data.

At some level, the problem can be said to be a lack of transparency in data collection and presentation of data. However, we cannot help but note that data

production may be compromised when the same actors are involved in developing recommendations for policies, implementing these policies, and producing the data used to evaluate the effect of these policies.

4 Explanations of trafficking

Trafficking in persons can be seen as both a violation of human rights, and a consequence of human rights violations (UNHCR 2002). Most explanations of trafficking in persons focus on problems of limited rights and opportunities for economic development and migration, and illustrate how such limitations put people at risk of being trafficked. Factors that contribute to risk can include: conditions that intrinsically reduce the security of individuals or groups (war, discrimination against certain groups, presence of criminal networks); conditions that make people more prone to risky behaviour (economic constraints leading to migration through informal/illegal channels, entering prostitution); and conditions that limit people's ability to assess risk (lack of information or networks).

The literature on human trafficking presents a vast range of explanations on why trafficking occurs, taking as starting points a multitude of different perspectives, geographical regions, and levels of explanations (global, national, or individual). These perspectives and explanations do not necessarily compete with one another, but rather serve to broaden the understanding of this complex phenomenon.

Before examining the various explanations on offer, a note of warning is warranted: the problem of varying definitions and uses of the trafficking concept (as discussed above) is particularly pronounced when looking at explanations of human trafficking. Some writers tend to focus on explanations of prostitution in general, with no distinction between "free" and "coerced" activity; others focus only on the most violent and coerced forms. A relatively large group fails to explain which perspective or aspects of human trafficking they relate to – thus leaving the reader to evaluate the extent to which their explanations are valid for all forms of trafficking versus specific sectors (prostitution or labour exploitation) or specific groups (women or children). When we in the following sections examine the various explanations of trafficking, we will consider the perspectives of the writers in question. Consequently, some explanations will relate to prostitution in general, others will mainly focus on organised or coerced prostitution, and yet others will relate to the wider use of the trafficking concept, encompassing forced labour and slavery.

Poverty and lack of opportunities

One of the most common explanations for human trafficking is pervasive poverty and lack of opportunities for the (potential) victims in the countries of origin.

Because trafficking flows go, to a large extent, from poorer to richer countries – and the main motivation for people to migrate or enter prostitution is usually economic – the poverty argument is generally difficult to contest. Poverty is claimed to place women (and men) in a vulnerable position vis-à-vis traffickers, because their wish for money and economic security makes them willing to accept increased risk:

> The understandable desire for a better life, […], create contexts in which many women and girls are willing to take risks, especially where recruiters present a picture of the west that plays into ideas that suggest it is possible to earn large amounts of money in a short period of time. Their situations are ones where some kind of possible future is preferred to a hostile and hopeless present reality (Kelly 2004:35).

Vocks and Nijboer (2000) find that economic motives are decisive to victims' decisions to place themselves in the hands of traffickers. They further argue that trafficking victims' decision to migrate is often based on unrealistic, optimistic expectations of the possibilities in Western societies. On the issue of heightened vulnerability due to poverty, IOM Kosovo (2002c) has found that almost four out of every five victims of trafficking they assist claim to be poor or very poor prior to falling prey to their traffickers. Similar findings are presented in a number of other publications (see for instance IOM 2001a, IOM 2002d).

The centrality of economic motives for many people that decide to migrate, enter prostitution, or engage in other activities that put them at risk of being trafficked seems to be clearly established. However, several studies indicate that it is not necessarily the poorest segments of society that are most at risk for trafficking.

In their study on vulnerability among women and girls in Romania, Alexandru and Lazaroiu (2003: 36) find that there is no relationship between household income and vulnerability for trafficking. They argue that it is an aspiration for higher incomes that makes the girls vulnerable, not poverty as such. Brunovskis and Tyldum (2004:50) argue that a sudden fall in income, or an acute economic crisis, seems to increase vulnerability. Moreover, while it is clear that populations in the world's richest countries do not run a risk of being trafficked, there does not seem to be an automatic link between the level of economic development in a country and the extent to which trafficking takes place. Some have pointed to economic differences within a country, rather than between countries, as a possible explanation for variations in human trafficking (Finelli 2004). Thus, while lack of economic security does seem to have some impact on vulnerability to traffickers, it does not seem that

poverty alone can explain variations in exposure to trafficking for sexual exploitation between various countries and social groups.

Family disintegration and a wish to get away

Alexandru & Lazaroiu (2003) have constructed an interesting profile of women vulnerable to traffickers on the basis of a survey of young women and girls in Romania. They use the responses to different types of survey questions – such as whether the respondent would break certain rules in order to get what they want most, or whether they think they would accept an offer of a well-paid job abroad if proffered by a trustworthy person – in order to determine what kind of girls are most vulnerable to traffickers. They find that vulnerable girls are more independent, tend to have a risk-taking personality, and are more likely to have dropped out of school before taking secondary education. Furthermore, these girls do not feel close to their families, and are likely to come from an abusive family environment featuring domestic violence and neglect.

The most obvious difference between this and other studies is that the girls referred to by Alexandru and Lazaroiu are portrayed as driven more by the *wish* to go abroad than the *need* for work or money. Theirs might seem to be a more "sensation-seeking" or opportunistic act than that of other girls or women that go abroad to support their families.

Based on data on child victims of trafficking to the United States, Julian Duncan (2004) finds three major factors that make children vulnerable to trafficking, all of them tied to the relationship with the family: lack of attachment; lack of ability to care for the child; and lack of safety net. Lack of attachment is displayed when the child is in some way marginal to the family of origin, or exposed to abuse or neglect: for example, the child might be the only one of the family's children to be kept home to do domestic work instead of sent to school (indicating a lack of investment in the child's future); or the child could be an orphan taken in by relatives that are not committed to the child's care. Lack of ability to care for the child refers to situations in which the birth family cannot provide for the child and care is passed to others, who either traffic the child or allow the child to be trafficked: this is seen, for example, if a child and her mother leave an abusive father but the mother cannot provide for the child, or if a distant relative takes the child in for money and places her in domestic servitude. The last category, lack of a safety net, refers to situations in which the family is the only or main social safety net available, and the family is absent or fails the child. In these situations, there is often no alternative protection and nowhere for a child to turn, making them easy prey for traffickers.

Moreover, once a child has ended up in prostitution, families sometimes reject the child's plea for help and the child has nowhere else to turn for assistance (Duncan 2004).

Gender

In order to understand the reasons for trafficking in women for sexual exploitation, we must also consider gender discrimination and structural disadvantages faced by women.

As mentioned in chapter 2, some researchers and activists view the mere existence of prostitution as a primary reason for trafficking in women (see among others Barry 1995, Strandberg 1999, Hughes 2002b). In this view, prostitution embodies the disadvantaged position of women worldwide, with the "selling and buying of women" being said to reduce women to second-class citizens. As Donna Hughes argues:

> Prostitution is an extreme form of gender discrimination. Legalisation of this violence to women restricts women's freedom and citizenship rights. If women are allowed to become a legitimate commodity, they are consigned to a second-class citizenship (Hughes 1999:57).

That trafficking for prostitution would not exist were there no sex industry is difficult to dispute. However, the feasibility and desirability of the abolishment of prostitution is widely contested. We will not go into this discussion here, beyond the overview given in chapter 2 above; in the following section, we will instead examine how gender discrimination may increase women's vulnerability to traffickers and create conditions favourable for trafficking. Some of the most important aspects in this regard are the lack of recognition of women's rights in the labour market (and with regard to human rights in general), violence against women, and the "feminisation" of poverty and migration.

Feminisation of poverty

The feminisation of poverty is commonly argued to be one of reasons for trafficking for sexual exploitation in the world today (see among others Lisborg 1998b, IOM 2002d, BIM 1999). The term "feminisation of poverty" was first coined in 1978 to describe trends in the United States, where it was argued that two-thirds of poor people over the age of 16 were women. Similar claims over the years have drawn on data from regions as diverse as Africa and Europe (Williams and Lee-Smith 2000).

The 1995 UNDP Human Development Report, which focused on the problem of gender inequality, claimed that 70 percent of the 1.3 billion people living in poverty are women (UNDP 1995:4). Other assessments claim that the majority of the 1.5 billion people living on one dollar a day or less are women, and that the gap between women and men living in poverty has continued to widen in the past decade (Women Watch 2000).

Commentators have, however, argued that there is no scientific study to document these percentages, and that "…the idea of a predominance of females among those in poverty does not achieve complete consensus among scholars, and some recent assessments argue that women are not generally over-represented in poor households (Lipton and Ravallion in Marcoux 1998)". Based on an analysis of available data from 1995, Alain Marcoux (1998) finds that women are only slightly over-represented among the poor: 55 percent of the poor were women, in a population where women comprise 53.5 percent. In many societies, female-headed households are poorer than male-headed households; however, there are examples of areas where male-headed households are over-represented among the poor, as in some areas of Latin America (Marcoux 1998).

It is arguable that these findings are undermined by the fact that poverty is generally measured on the household level, and most poverty measures implicitly assume that money is shared equally among members of a family – an assumption that might be incorrect, as the head of household or breadwinner might a) control the money and its use, and b) systematically discriminate against women in the household (McLanahan and Kelly 1999). However, if we use non-monetary measures of poverty, such as life expectancy, women are not necessarily worse off than men: in the former Soviet Union, for example, life expectancy for men is significantly lower than for women (Tyldum et al 2003:9).

Although the extent to which women in the world are really poorer than men (in terms of household income) may be questionable, it is probably unquestionable that women have less opportunities than men in terms of making a living on their own.

According to Anders Lisborg (1998), prostitution-related migration among women in Thailand may be explained with reference to the sudden increase in female unemployment in modern times. Thailand has a very high female labour force participation rate compared to other Asian countries: 46 percent of the work force in Thailand are women, compared to 25 percent in Malaysia and 36 percent in Singapore (Lisborg 1998:158). Traditionally, women's work in the agricultural sector was regarded as equal to men's work; however, concomitant to the modernisation of agriculture, women's contributions were devalued. Because women were not taught to use new machines and techniques to the same extent as men, they are today left with more limited work options that do not generate comparable income, thus

also limiting status and possibilities. In some parts of the industrial sector, such as electronics, textile and clothing production, the share of female workers is as high as 80-90 percent. These industrial jobs are characterised by low salaries, bad working conditions, and few opportunities for advancement. Prior to industrialisation and the introduction of contract work, the status of women and men in Thai society had been more equal. As a traditionally matriarchal society, the women had access to control of resources such as property, children, and money; after marriage, men would move to their wives' houses. Yet when modernisation and urbanisation brought along a demand for "making money, not babies", a breakdown in the matriarchal system occurred, and women's status and independence were significantly reduced (Lisborg 1998:159-162).

In many societies, women lack the right to inherit or own land, to use land as collateral to access credit, or to own and operate a business (Williams and Lee-Smith 2000). Often women are dependent on their husbands or parents to secure their living, and have little or no opportunities to establish themselves independently. Worldwide, women earn on average slightly more than 50 percent of what men earn (Women Watch 2000). Women's dependence on others consequently creates vulnerability to poverty should they be forced to, or wish to, establish themselves on their own: if a formerly dependent woman has to secure her own living – either because she decides to leave an abusive family environment or because her family has disintegrated due to conflict, disease, substance abuse, or any other reason – she has a limited number of alternatives, particularly if she wishes to maintain the economic standard of her former life. In other words, the limited economic opportunities for women make them into dependents. This dependence typically reduces women's abilities to leave abusive family environments, at the same time that it increases the risk of poverty if she does leave or is forced to manage on her own. The lack of and search for economic opportunities, in a world of limited options, puts women at risk of trafficking.

Feminisation of migration

Previously, migrants worldwide consisted almost exclusively of men that migrated and performed physically demanding work in the industrial sectors (Martin 2003). Today, however, a steadily increasing number of migrants, both within and between countries, are women: for the last decade, the number of women in migration has been equal to men. Moreover, although many women migrate to accompany or join family members, increasing numbers of female migrants migrate on their own (Martin 2003, Lisborg 1998b).

International labour markets arguably reinforce the traditional gendered divisions of labour. The growing participation of native-born women in the labour force

of many Western societies has led to an increased dependence on foreign workers to undertake childcare, elder care, housekeeping, and other services traditionally performed by housewives (Martin 2003). In general, migrant women have less access to the formal sector and depend on work in the informal and unregulated labour sectors, such as domestic work, small trade, entertainment, and prostitution. An increasing number of migrant women end up in the so-called "3D jobs" (dirty, dangerous, and degrading), exposing them to considerable risk of economic exploitation and sexual abuse (Lisborg 1998b).

Domestic violence

The prevalence of domestic violence and other forms of violence against women is another structural disadvantage seen to create conditions that put women at an increased risk of trafficking (Kelly 2002, Hughes 2002:11; MAHR 2000:7). It is argued that violence against women, in both the public and private spheres, makes many women desperate to escape the conditions at home. Yet with the limited employment opportunities for women in many parts of the world, leaving a marriage may entail increased risk of trafficking, by reducing a woman's economic security and prompting her to engage in risky behaviour such as irregular labour migration and prostitution. Thus, domestic violence, together with the stigmas that may be associated with divorce in some parts of the world, can make women more vulnerable to trafficking.

Children are also more vulnerable to trafficking in cases of domestic violence, which may lead to family disintegration or induce children to run away from home. It has further been argued that constant exposure to physical and psychological abuse of women without intervention from police or authorities will, over time, reinforce an image of women as inferior beings that men can use and abuse as they please (Hughes 2002:12).

Demand

Within the trafficking discourse today, an important discussion relates to whether the demand for women creates trafficking, or whether the increase in trafficking to the sex industry leads to more demand through easier access, better supply, and a normalisation of using prostitutes (Hughes 2002; Hughes & Denisova 2002; Anderson & Davidson 2003). It would obviously not be profitable to traffic women for sexual exploitation if there were no clients willing to pay for sex. This does not necessarily mean, however, that the demand for women and children in the

prostitution arenas around the world is what is driving the increase in trafficking and sexual exploitation.

Although most studies mention the demand for cheap and exploitable labour in destination countries as important factors for trafficking, until recently many of the studies on the root causes of trafficking for sexual exploitation have primarily focused on factors in the countries of origin (see for instance IOM 2001b, IOM 2001a, International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights 2000). This is gradually changing. According to Hughes and Denisova (2002:22), most trafficked women end up in countries or cities with large sex industries and with legalised and widely tolerated prostitution. They claim that trafficking exists primarily to meet the demand for women by the sex industry; that the number of women who voluntarily enter prostitution could never meet this demand alone; and that, if prostitution was such a desirable and lucrative job, then traffickers would not have to deceive and coerce women to get them into the sex industry.

Carolina Wennerholm (2002) also gives a demand-driven explanation of trafficking for sexual exploitation based on examples from Asia. She argues that the economic growth in many Asian countries has created an expanding middle class that enhances the capacity, and even motivation, for men to buy sexual services, which in turn leads to an expansion in the sex industry. She claims that this has not only increased demand in numerical terms, but also in terms of "quality" – where characteristics like age, ethnicity, race, virginity, sexual health, and others are considered (Wennerholm 2002:10). Similarly, Adepoju (2004) argues that child trafficking in sub-Saharan Africa is a demand-driven phenomenon, in which the constant demand for children in the labour market and sex trade is coupled with an abundant supply of children from poor families (Adepoju 2004:6). Finally, according to IOM-Armenia, demand for young girls and virgins has increased due to fears of HIV/AIDS. For example, traffickers reportedly gain large profits by supplying young virgins for a night to wealthy clients in the Gulf States (IOM 2001:32).

Anderson and O'Connell Davidson challenge these arguments. In a thorough, cross-national study of demand in the sex industry, Anderson and O'Connell Davidson (2003) explore to what extent there seems to be a demand for forced prostitutes or children in the sex markets, and make several interesting findings. Based on structured and semi-structured interviews with clients of prostitution in Italy, India, Thailand, Sweden, and Japan, they argue that, although most clients attach sexual value to youthful bodies, the vast majority do not wish to buy sex from prostitutes they perceive as too young to consent to the sexual encounter. This does not mean that these clients will not buy sex from children – a category that, according to the UN, encompasses anyone aged 18 or below. Indeed, several respondents expressed a preference for prostitutes aged 18 or below, and claimed to seek out younger prostitutes in order to avoid HIV and other STDs. However, the clients generally

argued that they did not buy girls so young that they were unable to consent to the transaction. It should be noted that, because the sexual use of young children is illegal and stigmatised in all the countries studied, the authors expected that sexual interest in younger children would be under-reported. However, the study does suggest that demand for commercial sex with young children is outside the norms of the sex industry.

A significant share of the clients interviewed by Anderson and O'Connell Davidson claimed that they avoided prostitutes from groups that are most likely to be subject to abusive and slave-like employment practices. However, many still preferred migrant prostitutes, mainly because they are often cheaper than native-born prostitutes, and secondarily because they are believed to offer a wider range of sexual services. Some clients also emphasised that they appreciated buying women that are easy to "control" – and non-local women were generally perceived as being easier in this respect. Two Indian clients who particularly valued a semblance of warmth, care, and intimacy in their encounters with prostitutes also saw unfree and/or trafficked workers as offering certain advantages over formally free and/or local prostitutes, because the former are so isolated and unhappy that they sometimes look to clients for support and care. One interviewee stated: "Actually, they have no one to turn to except their clients. So many women who come from other countries get their human warmth from clients (Andersen and O'Connell Davidson 2003:24)".

It is also worth noting that some clients who reported feeling either morally outraged or sexually "turned off" (or both) by the idea of using an unfree prostitute had nonetheless bought sex from women who may have been unfree or trafficked. This was usually either because the client was drunk; could not afford to buy the services of more expensive women; or because the prostitute concerned happened to be the most immediately available (Anderson and O'Connell Davidson 2003:25).

Based on Anderson and O'Connell Davidson's findings, it is possible to conclude that there are clients that seek out children and unfree prostitutes, but that they make up a very small part of the overall market. However, the share of clients willing to buy unfree prostitutes, or prostitutes that belong to a group they perceive of being at high risk of being unfree, is significantly larger if these women are easily available or cheaper.

Anderson and O'Connell Davidson (2003) conclude that demand for trafficked women in prostitution and domestic work, like demand in all markets, is very much a socially, culturally, and historically determined matter. They argue that demand is intimately connected to questions of supply or availability: that supply generates demand, rather than the other way around. As an example, they use the case of lap dancers. Anderson and Davidson claim that there is no absolute or given level of demand for the services of lap dancers in any society: before the lap dancers turned up at the nightclubs, no one bemoaned their absence. Hence, they claim that demand

is a socially constructed phenomenon, in the sense that people must *be made to feel* that they need a certain product or service (Anderson & O'Connell Davidson 2003:41).

It is worth noting in this regard that some of the countries that have the largest trafficking problems, as countries of origin, are also significant destination countries for victims of trafficking; the Russian Federation and Thailand are but two examples (U.S. Department of State 2004). A study conducted by UNICEF Innocenti (2004) in Africa found 12 cases with observed child trafficking in both directions across a common border between neighbouring countries, a phenomenon that UNICEF Innocenti called "symmetry in trafficking flows (UNICEF Innocenti 2004: 18)". This illustrates that the demand for children or women cannot in itself fully explain trafficking in human beings.

Finally, it may be worth exploring to what extent the presence of criminal organisations with international networks creates a demand for trafficked women and children, such that the traffickers themselves can be perceived as the "demand side of trafficking" because they wish to maximise their potential profit through maximising control in the prostitution or other arenas. There exists remarkably little research and literature on some of the main actors in this regard, namely the traffickers.

Conflict and transition

Poverty, unemployment, and lack of opportunities alone cannot explain trafficking in persons: profit-seeking agents must also be present to exploit the latent vulnerabilities that these social conditions create. Traffickers can more easily operate in states with widespread corruption or those undergoing periods of political transition or armed conflict, when the state's willingness and ability to protect certain groups (or the population at large) is reduced.

Corruption
Corruption can be understood as "the abuse of public power for private benefit (Richards 2004)". With regard to human trafficking, corruption in countries of origin and destination makes it easier for traffickers to undermine efforts to prevent trafficking, transport victims of trafficking, negotiate transactions, control the trafficked person, and escape prosecution and punishment (Richards 2004).

Corrupt practises are widespread in certain areas in connection with securing documentation for migrants and facilitating illegal border crossings (Richards 2004).

This issue relates to human smuggling generally, which may or may not lead to trafficking (see discussion in chapter 2 on trafficking and smuggling). Given the amount of crossover that occurs between smuggling and trafficking, however, corruption in connection with transportation of migrants arguably facilitates or leads to trafficking (see discussion in migration section below).

Widespread corruption in countries of origin doesn't just ease the way for recruiters and smugglers; it also influences the mentality of the victims, by shaping their expectations of law enforcement and other government agencies in the country of destination. Victims' experiences with corrupt law enforcement and other governmental institutions in their home countries lead many to expect the same in the destination country. As a result, some victims go to great lengths to avoid contact with institutions or government agencies that could in fact provide assistance (Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004).

Corrupt practices that occur in the criminal justice systems of destination countries also help sustain and inhibit the fight against trafficking (Richards 2004). Such corrupt practices can include the bribing of law enforcement actors or witnesses: traffickers may pay bribes to have charges dropped, at the same time that trafficking victims without resources are frequently abused and deported (Richards 2004). The ability of traffickers to bribe their way out of trouble also has a chilling effect on victims. The belief, not unreasonable, that traffickers operate with impunity can discourage women from testifying against their traffickers, because they perceive giving testimony as high-risk but low-reward endeavour.

When the state fails

A considerable body of literature is devoted to the problems of "failing", "weak", "fragile", or "receding" states, and how illicit trade and trafficking takes place within these settings. While there is no room for an in-depth account of that literature here, we will in this section give a brief introduction to some of arguments relevant to our understanding of trafficking.

In line with Max Weber (1918), the "state" can be defined as a human community with a monopoly on the legitimate use of force in a given territory. States in which this monopoly on force is broken, or where power mainly resides outside the state's formal institutions, are sometimes referred to as "failed states". Once the state loses its monopoly on force, the law also ceases to exist as governing principle, giving way to privatised violence and private profit (Cooper 2003:68). In areas of armed conflict, or where state control for other reasons is reduced (as for instance in the post-Soviet states following transition), an upsurge in human trafficking has often taken place. There are several reasons for this; trafficking in persons may increase because reduced economic and/or physical security lead to coping strategies that entail

increased risk of trafficking. Moreover weakened states may no longer be able or willing to protect their citizens, and finally – because "failing states" may develop structures that encourage trafficking and illicit trade.

State failure to protect its citizens is not just a function of loss of state capacity (through war, etc.); it may also be a function of preference, where the state (or agents of the state) creates inequalities and vulnerabilities through privilege and oppression. An analytical distinction can therefore be made: between problems arising from the absence of the state, and problems arising from the state (institutions, agents, and norms) itself. In reality, the two usually co-exist in varying degrees and manifestations (Taylor 2004; 2005).

"Failed" or "receding" (Taylor 2005) states are often characterised by a lack of economic security for citizens, or at least for specific groups of non-favoured citizens; as discussed above, economic insecurity may lead people to engage in high risk coping strategies. State failure to ensure citizens' physical security may also lead to coping strategies that entail increased risk of trafficking. According to Jørgen Carling (2005), this has been the case in Nigeria, where the high level of violence and social conflict has led to a strong desire to emigrate among large population groups. This, in combination with a high level of corruption, has lead to favourable conditions for traffickers, as state failure may make it easier for criminal organisation to operate, and enables them to exploit the inherent vulnerabilities created by reduced economic and physical security.

Indeed, in the particular dynamics of economies in war zones, coercion (the threat or use of force) can become integral to the production and marketing of commodities (Taylor 2005). In particular, once a state loses its monopoly on the use of force (and thereby the rule of law), informal or parallel structures can develop to exploit the situation of lawlessness and take advantage of potential profitability, that encourage the traffic in illicit goods, such as weapons, drugs, natural resources, and people (Cooper 2003). Such "failed" or "pre-modern" (Cooper 2003) states are often too poor to provide good revenue for the involved actors, making it necessary to market the available resources abroad. Involved actors will trade in whatever resources are available, be it natural resources such as oil, gemstones, or drugs - or human beings. To be profitable, these networks or structures must necessarily cross borders; the richer countries of the West thereby become destination countries for traffic in illicit or conflict commodities, including human beings (Cooper 2003:68-69). The ability to move commodities and funds between illicit sources and legal markets is crucial to the profitability of conflict zone economies, both as a survival strategy for certain groups, and as a source of income that can maintain the conflict (Taylor 2005).

In the Balkans, the arrival of foreign troops, international organisations, and foreign investment has led to an influx of money that that have favoured certain

segments of the local population. In addition to causing further social stratification, the influx of money arguably leads to increased crime, as people tried to find new, creative, and not necessarily legal ways to get their share of the sudden wealth (IOM 2001a: 34). There is also growing concern about the relationship between international personnel (military, humanitarian, and diplomatic) in conflict or post-conflict zones and local sex industries. International presence has been argued to create a rise in demand for sexual services (UNHCR 2002, Skrobanek et al 1997), as well as a rise in incidences of sexual abuse.[10]

In short, therefore, "failed" or "receding" states create favourable conditions for trafficking because the state loses its ability or willingness to protect certain groups (or the population at large), forcing many of its citizens to engage in high-risk coping strategies that profit-seeking agents will attempt to exploit. In this setting, human beings become commodities in conflict or transitional economies.

Globalisation and migration

The processes of globalisation are often claimed have contributed to the increase in trafficking in persons. "Globalisation" is commonly used to refer to processes by which the global exchange of commodities, services, capital and people both extensifies by connecting still more distant areas, and intensifies because the possibilities for connection are becoming increasingly manifold, quick, and efficient (Lisborg 1998b). Globalisation can be argued to contribute to or facilitate trafficking in persons for several reasons: it has made migration more easily available; it has increased the perceived relative deprivation of the poor, through more exposure to information about the wealthy; and it has led to an increase in organised trans-national crime.

During the past decades, both internal migration and movements across borders have increased. Economic globalisation and integration – which link the economies of source and destination countries together – have played a key role in the upsurge in migration, as has the transportation revolution – which has made migration affordable to millions of would-be migrants – and the communications revolution (internet, cellular phones), which enables would-be migrants to be informed of opportunities outside of their home countries and allows them to keep in touch with families and communities left behind. Additionally, of course, many countries over the past 1.5 decades – especially those ending years of Communist rule and

[10] For more on the issue of peacekeeping, gender, and sexual abuse, see the website of the PeaceWomen project: http://www.peacewomen.org/.

restrictive emigration policies – have torn down barriers to the movement of their nationals abroad (Martin 2003). At present, more than 2.5 percent of the world's population is migrant, according to official statistics. In addition there are millions of undocumented or irregular migrants (Sanghera in O'Connell Davidson 2005).

Economic inequalities have always been a trigger for migration, as people from rural areas seek to escape poverty and unemployment by moving to more prosperous cities or countries. Through television, movies, billboard advertisements, and tourism, poor people are increasingly exposed to information about the situation of the wealthy . In their study of victims of trafficking from Eastern Europe to the Netherlands, Vocks and Nijboer (2000) found that a significant share of the victims that were deceived and lured into prostitution, had strongly unrealistic and optimistic expectation of what life in the West would be like. Such mediated impressions influence and strengthen the wish and will to seek a better life across borders (MAHR 2000:17).

In some places, economic decline and political and social destabilisation has occurred so rapidly and so completely that a majority of the population wish to migrate, and an extremely high percentage manage to do so. For example, out of a total population of 4.3 million, between 600,000 and one million people are estimated to have left Moldova since national independence in 1991 (UNICEF in O'Connell Davidson 2005). During the same period, some 600,000 Albanians, out of a population of 3 million, migrated (Naegele in O'Connell Davidson 2005).

Three factors must be present for migration to occur: demand/pull from receiving communities or countries; supply/push from source communities or countries; and networks to link the supply with the demand (Martin 2003). These networks explain why certain migrants move to certain locations; they also explain why the same set of "push" or "pull" factors in different countries lead to very different migration experiences. Such networks are often family- or community-based, as migrants tend to go to places in which their relatives, friends, and community members are already located. However, recruiters and employment agencies can also function as networks to link supply and demand (Martin 2003).

The risk and costs associated with migration are reduced as social and transnational social networks expand and intensify. Migration may thus have a self-reinforcing effect within a community or social group. The first migrants do not have any networks, social relationships, or accumulated knowledge to base their actions on; for them, migrating may be perceived as high-cost and high-risk. For subsequent migrants, however, the perceived risk and costs are gradually reduced: each migrant gains access to an expanded network in the receiving country. Family and friends in the sending country may exploit this network, increasing the incentive to migrate. Every time migration is chosen, the number of experiences and the size of the net-

work is expanded, which further decreases the cost and risk for the next generation of migrants (Lisborg 1998a).

Importantly, however, while the *perceived* risk associated with migration is reduced with increased migration in a person's community or social network, this does not automatically entail that the *actual* risk is reduced – especially when migration takes place with the assistance of recruiters and smugglers. Moreover, because many victims of trafficking are ashamed of what has happened to them, they often choose to keep their experiences to themselves: only success stories of migration are told to others, while stories of exploitation and abuse are kept secret. The influence of these distortive stories increases the incentives for people to migrate, and reduces the perceived risk associated with it. Yet because recruiters may seek out areas with extensive migration, on the grounds that women in those communities may be more easily recruited, it is likely that the risk of abuse and trafficking actually will increase with increased migration (Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004).

As Katie Richards (2004) notes, there is a need for a better understanding of the social structures and mechanisms on the community level that enable trafficking to occur:

> The migrant worker who is preparing to embark on a trans-border journey seeking work, through irregular migration or otherwise, is no doubt influenced by the familial or recognised returning worker. Embellishment of working conditions and remuneration perhaps portray a more amenable working environment than either party is willing to admit. How these relations influence choices made by the newly departing worker, whether these decisions to migrate are informed by the misinformation regarding the reality of the situation in the destination country, and how this affects the soon-to-depart worker's vulnerability to labour trafficking has yet to be adequately researched (Richards 2004: 160).

Although the above-mentioned processes ("push" and "pull" factors and networks) have created a greater demand for migration, the process of migration – particularly cross-border movement – has not become easier. In stark contrast to the deregulation of trade and finance, migration processes, especially to Western countries, are increasingly restrictive. Measures aimed at controlling migration, however, seem to have unintended and dangerous effects: rather than reducing labour migration in absolute terms, they have instead placed additional pressures on migrant workers to turn to irregular forms of migration and smugglers (Richards 2004: 151). As discussed above, the vulnerabilities created in this migration/smuggling process may lead to trafficking, whereby the smugglers not only bring migrants across borders but also exploit and abuse their labour in the process. The greater the individual's dependence on smugglers, middle agents, and "employers", the more power these third parties have to choose between harming and helping. We should, however, keep

in mind that not every smuggler, middle agent, or employer who enjoys this power will choose to harm (O'Connell Davidson 2005).

It must also be understood that victims of trafficking may "accept" exploitative work environments in order to earn money. The reasons for such tolerance are numerous: some may not be aware that the situation is exploitative; others may believe that the situation, exploitative though it may be, is the only way to escape economic or family problems at home. For these and other reasons, trafficked persons may not try to escape a situation of exploitation, in spite of inhumane working conditions (Richards 2004).

5 Designing counter-trafficking measures

Much of the literature available on trafficking in human beings is aimed at developing counter-trafficking policies and recommendations. In this chapter, we will summarise some of the findings and recommendations most relevant to the development of future counter-trafficking policies. We will start by discussing the problem of stereotypical conceptions of what constitutes trafficking, and examine the extent to which it can be fruitful to distinguish between different types of trafficking victims or processes. We will then analyse preventive measures with respect to trafficking, focusing particularly on vulnerable groups, recruitment methods, and migration patterns. In the third section, we look at problems around the identification of victims, while the final section focuses on issues of rehabilitation and prevention of re-trafficking.

Emphasising diversity

Trafficking in human beings is a multifaceted and diverse phenomenon. Patterns of trafficking vary greatly between regions and countries, as does the trafficking experience of individual victims. To deal with this complexity, many authors attempt to simplify matters by presenting the plight of a prototypical trafficking victim. However, too often this "typical victim" represents the more brutal, slave-like trafficking experience, leading to what Donna Hughes (2002) describes as the "exotic bias" in the public understanding of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

As noted by Julia O'Connell Davidson, attempting to squeeze the diverse experiences of migrant prostitutes into one of two categories (e.g. forced or voluntary migration, forced or free prostitution, adult or child) obscures the complex interplay between structure and human agency. In reality, these categories do not describe temporarily separated, hermetically sealed, and permanently fixed groups, nor can they capture the continuum that exists between the various poles (O'Connell Davidson 2005).

In their study on trafficking in women from Central and Eastern Europe to the Netherlands, Vocks and Nijboer (2000) discuss the variations in background and recruitment methods found among women trafficked for sexual exploitation. They argue that, "the simple explanation of naïve, passive victims, and the corresponding archetypal image of ´'the poor defenceless virgin', does not hold water, nor does it give credit to these women as reasoning actors (Vocks and Nijboer 2000:380)". They claim that trafficking for sexual exploitation usually involves some explicit decisions by the women themselves. Potential victims of trafficking, like other rational actors, will act in response to the alternatives they feel are available to them, and make choices based on their perception of risk and their trust in the other involved actors. Two separate phenomena will influence women's likelihood to act in a way that entails risk of trafficking. One is a strong pressure to reach culturally defined goals such as monetary success, which may influence women from more disadvantaged groups to use new and/or deviant and socially less acceptable means, such as prostitution or accepting a job offer abroad, in order to reach those goals. The other is a person's social bonds, particularly the relation to the family: families that function as supportive economic, social, and emotional networks can inhibit high-risk behaviour.

Based on interviews with victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in the Netherlands, and with these two dimensions as their starting point, Vocks and Nijboer (2000) have developed three categories of victims.

1) *Kidnapped or sold women,* who never had a chance to make decisions on their own. All of these women were eventually sold to other pimps, either after having worked as a prostitute in their home country, or after having been kidnapped by a partner or friend. In most cases, these victims had no pre-existing financial problems, but could be taken away without the risk of relatives making inquiries because of weak family ties.

2) *Deceived women*, who are lied to about the nature of their employment before leaving home. These women are generally motivated by a difficult economic situation or a desire to make more out of their lives. The latter group consists mainly of educated East European women working in poorly paid and unsatisfactory jobs, who are prepared to take risks to achieve their goal. Both groups' perceptions of Western societies are strongly coloured by unrealistic and optimistic expectations, making them an easy target for traffickers. Deceived women were usually not acquainted with the trafficker(s).

3) *Exploited women*, who agreed to work in Western Europe in the sex industry, but did not know the circumstances under which they would have to work. Most of the women in this group come from dysfunctional families with no strong

family ties, and have practically no education. Most have previous experience in prostitution. They mainly choose to work abroad out of economic necessity, having an income equal to or lower than the minimum for existence. Exploited women were prepared to take risks because they were living under poor conditions and felt they had little to lose.

Vocks and Nijboer's three categories may prove useful in the development of anti-trafficking measures and policies, as they underline the need to develop different measures to fight human trafficking according to the forms of exploitation and the backgrounds of victims involved. We would, however, call for a fourth category – or potentially an expansion of the third category – to include women who knew both the nature of the work, and the circumstances under which they were going to work, but were willing to accept a high degree of exploitation because of lack of viable alternatives. This is in line with the Palermo protocol, which states that the consent of the victims is not relevant if the listed methods of coercion, including exploitation of a vulnerable position, are used.[11]

The "willing" and the "innocent" victim

It is interesting to note that Vocks and Nijboer's categories do not distinguish between "forced" and "voluntary" prostitution, and even emphasise that in their first (and most forced) category of kidnapped and sold women, women with prior prostitution experience make up a significant risk group. Indeed, in their data, women with prior prostitution experience made up the majority – a phenomenon that is not always reflected in other publications on human trafficking,

Donna Hughes (2002:33) criticises the tendency to distinguish between "innocent" and "willing/guilty" victims of trafficking. This is most often seen in media depictions of the topic and among the general public, but is also an issue for involved actors in law enforcement, government, and even some NGOs. The "innocent" victims are the "deceived women", such as those that apply for a job as a waitress, model, or nanny, but are deceived and coerced into prostitution upon arriving at the destination. The "willing" victims are the ones that knew they would be working in the sex industry when they left home, and/or do not seem to have been coerced in any way to enter prostitution. Irrespective of the coercion and abuse that women are subject to during their prostitution experience, there is often no sympathy

[11] It should be noted that this article was written before the establishment in of the UN protocol, and is consequently based on the European Commission's definition of trafficking from 1998, in which trafficking is defined as "transport of women from third countries into the EU for the purpose of sexual exploitation".

for the "willing" victims because they "knew what they were getting themselves into" and "chose it themselves".

Julia O'Connell Davidson points out that, although some adults and children that seek to migrate are in fact deceived and forced into prostitution, it is also possible to openly recruit women and girls into prostitution, as the potential earnings can be much higher than for other forms of employment open to them. Moreover, if the situation at home is sufficiently awful, it may not even be necessary for traffickers to lie about the working conditions the women will face in prostitution abroad: unhappy and desperate women may be willing to accept a high level of exploitation in order to escape their current situation (O'Connell Davidson 2005).

National and regional studies on trafficking for sexual exploitation treat the phenomenon of prior prostitution experience among trafficking victims in different ways. It is worth noting that, among the publications that attempt to address this phenomenon, there are large discrepancies in the findings. Among the former victims of trafficking registered in IOM Pristina's database, one-third of the women claim that they were aware, at least to some extent, that they would be engaged in sex-related work (IOM 2001a:52). Similarly, Okolski (2001b:95) argues that, among victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in the Baltic States, women that know the true nature of the work they will be doing greatly outnumber those that do not. In the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), on the other hand, 90 percent of the victims of trafficking registered by IOM argued that they were unaware of what they would really be doing (IOM 2001a:52). Similarly, in 1999 the German police reported that nearly 80 percent of the 801 victims of trafficking found in investigations in Germany did not know that they would be involved in prostitution when they left their home country (Hughes 2002:43). Finally, some sources claim that, in recent years, it has become more common to recruit women directly to prostitution, and that women decide to accept the job despite being aware of the conditions under which they are going to work (IOM 2002a:13; Hughes & Denisova 2002:22).

We recommend that caution be used when interpreting the numbers and analyses about this phenomenon. Both police and NGOs are likely to have an operational definition of what they perceive as a victim of trafficking, and the "innocence" of a victim is likely to influence the criteria for detection and assistance (either consciously or subconsciously). We should also be open to the possibility that some NGOs, working in countries with little public acceptance of women that have entered prostitution by choice, may underreport this phenomenon in order to secure funding and acceptance of their activities within the local community (see discussion on the role of NGOs in data production in chapter 3). The victims themselves may also have internalised society's perception of what constitutes a "worthy" trafficking victim, and may be more reluctant to seek assistance from both police and

NGOs if they went into prostitution by choice. If they do come in contact with the law enforcement or rehabilitation apparatus, they may choose to redefine their story of entry in order to be perceived as "innocent" and, consequently, worthy of assistance.

Attitudes toward, and treatment of, the "innocent" and "guilty" victims are likely to vary greatly between countries and even organisations, which may explain at least part of the great variation in the detection of these two groups. The above-mentioned numbers consequently give little information on the share of women that have chosen prostitution among trafficking victims overall. However, the basic numbers do indicate that both groups exist in all countries with trafficking, and that women with prior prostitution experience at times comprise a considerable amount of the victims detected. Yet this is not always reflected in the policies and anti-trafficking measures developed; and the lack of focus on, or willingness to prioritise, the "guilty" victims may lead to the exclusion of a significant vulnerable group in preventive work and reintegration approaches. As Vocks and Nijboers argue, information campaigns targeting vulnerable groups should not only target young women in schools, but also women in prostitution in known countries of origin (Vocks and Nijboers 2000 p. 386).

Prevention

The main aim of anti-trafficking policies should be to prevent trafficking in persons from taking place at all. Currently, preventive policy measures consist of targeting vulnerable groups (through information and creation of alternatives to risky behaviour), stopping recruitment, and controlling migration flows. Thus, well-designed policies depend on a correct understanding of who constitutes vulnerable groups, how recruitment takes place, and finally, how victims of trafficking are transported across borders. In this section, we will first present some of the research done on these issues, before discussing some challenges in designing preventive measures without increasing the vulnerability of certain groups or reducing their dignity and human rights.

Reducing vulnerability

As discussed in chapter 3, reliable statistics on victims of trafficking are difficult to come by, and data on assisted victims in particular should be interpreted with great care. Nevertheless, we will still refer to some of the data available on returned and

assisted victims, as they are used by many of the available studies and may, with cautious interpretation, provide some indication of the characteristics of the victims.

Data from rehabilitation centres in the Balkans indicate that women trafficked from or through the countries of the former Yugoslavia are generally quite young (the majority are between 18-24 years) and unmarried. The information on educational level varies. According to some recent reports, the education level of the victims is relatively high in some parts of the region – NGOs in Albania and FYROM report that about 40 percent of the victims have a high school or university degree (Meese et Al. 2002:6; IOM 2001a:50) – but in other areas, it is low: in Kosovo less than 20 percent appear to have attended high school (IOM 2002:c). We should however note that most reports fail to compare the educational level of the identified victims with the educational levels of the general population in their countries of origin.

Balkan NGOs further report that the majority of the trafficked women are single, with a smaller percentage of divorced or separated victims (IOM 2001a:50; IOM 2002c:4; Meese et. al. 2002:7). About one-third of the trafficked women registered by NGOs in the Balkans claim to have children (IOM 2001:50; IOM 2002c:4; Meese et. Al 2002:6).

The majority of the women registered by IOM in the Balkan countries said they come from a nuclear family, and that they lived with their family at the time of departure. Significantly, however, between roughly 15-25 percent of the victims report having difficult to bad relationships with their families, with incidences of rape or physically abuse reported (IOM 2001a:50; IOM 2002c:4).

Reports from Estonia suggest that the identified victims are mainly young girls from the countryside and smaller cities, predominantly of Russian origin (Kalikov 2002:31). Similarly, reports from Latvia note that the rural population, young women, and Russian minorities are the most vulnerable groups (Okolski 2001a).

A Lithuanian study from 2001 (Nurmi 2002:34) also ascribes distinct characteristics to trafficked women: they often have a troubled personal history, which may include sexual abuse, early initiation to alcohol, problems of substance abuse, poor motivation with respect to education, bad performance at school or at work, bad family relations, and acute poverty. It should be noted that these characteristics would make a person extremely vulnerable in most circumstances, not only with respect to trafficking.

A Latvian NGO asserts that some of the problems with human trafficking may be caused by Baltic citizens' fundamental naïveté. They argue that – in spite of the roughening experiences of high unemployment, poor economy, high criminality, corruption, and lack of highly developed judicial and administrative systems – Latvians still tend to believe that claims made by employment, travel, and marriage or model agencies are legal and honest (Kurova 2002:39).

The victim profiles from sub-Saharan Africa seem to differ somewhat from East European countries of origin, particularly with regards to the apparently larger number of trafficked minors in/from Africa (Adepoju 2004:5). It is customary in many parts of Africa to send at least one child away from the parents, either to create a better future for the child or to generate income for the family. Reports indicate that parents often prefer to send girls away into domestic service, using the money to finance the boys' education. These girls may be at risk of being sold or traded further, and end up as victims of trafficking. Additionally, parents may themselves place their children in the hands of traffickers in response to offers of education and employment in Europe (Adepoju 2004:5). It is worth noting, however, that the practice of sending children away from their parents does not automatically entail trafficking; it also includes systems of fosterage and sponsorship that, when working properly, improve the child's living conditions, and may as such have a preventive effect on trafficking (Riisøen, Hatløy & Bjerkan 2004, Dottridge 2004).

Forms of recruitment

The most common method of recruitment cited in the literature is the use of false job offers. The victims are often offered jobs as babysitters, cleaners, waitresses, caregivers for the elderly, or as dancers or singers in nightclubs –jobs that do not require a high level of education or language skills (IOM 2002c:6). Recruitment through organisations that promise assistance in finding a husband abroad is also reported for several countries, particularly Thailand (Lisborg 1998), Albania (IOM 2001), and Russia (Hughes 2002). Kidnapping is another means of recruitment: according to numbers from CIS and the Balkans, between 8-15 percent of the victims that have been in contact with rehabilitation and return programmes report having been kidnapped. This is often reported to have happened when travelling abroad, visiting relatives, or on holidays in neighbouring countries. Direct kidnappings are more often reported for Albania than other countries (IOM 2001a:51).

Regardless of why they want to migrate, the women that end up being trafficked for sexual exploitation seldom decide to leave initially without the influence of a recruiter. A recruiter is someone who, either in person or through agencies and advertisements, offers a job (or help in finding a job), or assistance in getting established in the prostitution arena in a foreign country (Brunovskis & Tyldum 2004:57). We may distinguish between two main types of recruiters reported in the literature:

1   The well-meaning friend or relative, who recommends an organisation that will assist the victim in her travel. It is often difficult to establish to what extent these recruiters profit from establishing this contact, and to what extent they are aware of the situation the victim will end up in.

2   The professional recruiter, who systematically seeks out women or girls in night-clubs or other public areas and sells them on to the exploiters. Some are reported to offer an opportunity to travel (i.e. through work, prostitution, or marriage) immediately, while others invest time to establish trust with the victims (for example, by pretending to be her boyfriend) before making the offer. The victim is then sold to the organisation that exploits her, either in her home country or abroad. Often the recruiter travels abroad with the victim, and makes the transaction in a country of transit or destination. It is often difficult to establish to what extent the recruiter has formal links to the organisation that buys the woman.

A considerable number of the victims from the Baltics, Russia, Moldova, Ukraine, and Romania are reported to have travelled abroad in response to an advertisement. These women contacted an agency in connection with the advertised job, and the agency subsequently made arrangements to provide the necessary documents. Such agencies are often claimed to be part of a larger international trafficking network. In Moldova, it has been reported that some tourist or travel agencies function as recruiters, by providing services in preparing travel arrangements and documents for women that wish to travel abroad (MAHR 2000:23).

Recruitment through advertisements has been given much attention in recent years, and attempts have been made in some places to raise awareness and monitor media sources in order to pre-empt this recruitment tactic. In these areas, recruiters are believed to have adjusted to the preventive measures by turning to new recruitment methods.

The journey

There are still few systematic attempts to analyse and present the flows and numbers of victims from countries of origin and destination. The most comprehensive available source is probably the U.S. State Department's "Trafficking in Persons" report (U.S. Department of State 2004), which gives an overview of all nations, their status as countries of destination, origin or transit, as well as the main countries and regions to which the victims are sent (for countries of origin) or from which they come (for countries of destination). In this section, we will comment on some general trends in trafficking flows and routes.

The trends and flows of trafficking often change suddenly. Localised expansion of sex markets or changed law enforcement activities and political circumstances may cause trafficking flows to find new routes overnight (Kelly 2002:17). Traffickers easily re-define routes, whether to respond to the intensification of controls, or to take advantage of international events – such as the football World Cup – that involve a significant increase in air traffic and, therefore, transfers of people (Prina 2003:32).

The trafficking flows often seem to reflect the geographical proximity of source and destination countries; for example, Scandinavian countries are the foci for traffic from Baltic countries, while Greece and Italy receive trafficked women from the Balkans (Kelly 2002:17). Traffickers may also select routes that are already used for the traffic and smuggling of other goods; thus, the traffickers can use established networks in transit areas. It is further argued that traffickers often choose areas with porous borders due to recent conflicts, or areas where the legal and political systems are weak and corruption endemic (IOM 2001a:33) (see discussion on conflict and corruption in Chapter 4).

Many victims travel through several countries before reaching the country of destination. This may be done primarily for practical reasons (evasion of law enforcement, transport alternatives), with the added effect that it becomes more difficult to trace the women: many relatives lose the trail when the women pass through transit countries (Hughes & Denisova 2002:38). Franco Prina's (2003) report on trafficking of Nigerian women to Italy illustrates how trafficking routes develop and change. Prina defines three basic types of journeys from Nigeria to Europe, with different routes and organisational means. The oldest route is the air journey direct to Western Europe, where women travel directly to the capital or other major cities in the country of destination; the direct destinations of Italy, for example, used to be the airports of Rome and Milan, and later also Turin in the north, either as a final destination or as a stopover on the way to a destination in the south or northeast. When increased control at these airports made these routes more difficult to use, traffickers started transporting the women by air with transit in Eastern Europe (Moscow, Warsaw, Prague, or Budapest), often followed by another flight to the former Yugoslavia or Turkey, and an overland continuation from there. Finally, there has, in recent years, been an upsurge in the number of women arriving in Europe after a journey taken completely over land and sea. The journey through Africa may last several months, and usually ends with the crossing of the Straits of Gibraltar. The trafficked victims arrive in Spain, from where they proceed to Italy in car or by train (Prina 2003:32-35).

As we discussed above, victims of trafficking may not be aware of their situation at the time they cross the border – they may still believe they are going to work in job conditions without exploitation. Consequently, the travel out of the country usually takes place according to a mutual agreement, with the victim's consent as a premise. Thus, the victims have little opportunity to extricate themselves from the situation before they are in the country of destination and under the control of their exploiters. The fewest trafficking-related human rights abuses occur at the woman's place of habitual residence; it is not until arrival at transit locations that abuses usually commence, and they become more prevalent at the final destination (MAHR 2000:2).

Border crossings basically take place in four ways: using legal passports and visas; using fake passports and visas; bribing frontier services; or evading frontier control (IOM 2002a:15). Among 59 women assisted by IOM Armenia, almost all had valid visas for the country of destination (IOM 2001b:25). Some also claimed that local authorities received bribes to alter information in identification papers and documents. For example, in the United Arab Emirates, the immigration law stipulates that foreign women under 30 years-old who are not accompanied by their husband or father may be refused a visa. Because of this stipulation, documents are falsified and the women are provided with a false parent or husband (IOM 2001b:25).

The trafficking literature contains numerous references to officials being bribed – it reportedly costs USD 500-1,000 to illegally cross the Romanian-Yugoslavian border. However, according to IOM Moldova, not everybody can bribe the border officials: in order to reduce risks, the "rights" are said to belong only to certain traffickers of approved networks (IOM 2002a:16). For example, according to IOM Armenia, one local pimp had an arrangement with an official at the Yerevan Zvartnots airport in Armenia, to facilitate departure of minors: the pimp would inform the official about the number and age of the girls flying from Yerevan to Dubai, and the official was paid according to the complexity of the case (IOM 2001b:26). Women trafficked from Nigeria report similar patterns on the African borders. Victims often report a friendly attitude between the person escorting them and the officials at the checkpoints. In some cases, they have also witnessed exchanges of money (Prina 2003:32).

Franco Prina (2003:36) claims that, regardless of how the journey is undertaken, Nigerian women never arrive at the final destination in a group. Travelling into Europe is carried out so as to be as unnoticeable as possible, implying that not more than one or two women are moved at a time. A male almost always accompanies the women while travelling; however, that person is rarely the same throughout the whole journey. Nigerian women report that their "passer-on" often changes at each border.

It is commonly reported that victims are not allowed to keep their travel documents during the journey, except while they are at immigration control. In this way, traffickers gain control over victims almost immediately. Various reports illustrate how victims are told that they owe the organisers a large sum of money for the journey and for assistance in obtaining documents – money that they will have to pay back through work when they arrive at the destination (Okolski 2001a:35; Brunovksis & Tyldum 2004; IOM 2002b). A study based on interviews with 32 victims of trafficking from Azerbaijan shows that the fees charged by traffickers do not appear to depend upon the length or complexity of the journey, with the researchers concluding that the fees charged are mainly used to "keep the women on the hook for as long as possible (IOM 2002b:22)".

The moment when women realise that they are trafficked differs. Sometimes they are unaware of the situation until they arrive in the country of destination and are told that they have to sell sex to repay what they owe the trafficker, or realise that the conditions under which they must work are not as they were promised. In other cases, the realisation comes when they are sold at the first border (Meese et Al. 2002:8; Hughes & Denisova 2002:16). Of course, we should also keep in mind that, as discussed above, some women may be aware of the exploitative conditions even before leaving their home country.

In the Balkans, there are reportedly trading houses in some key cities where women are paraded in front of potential buyers before being sold. During these sessions, they are closely inspected and often forced to strip (Meese et Al. 2002:7). Similar incidents are known to have taken place in Italy. In 1997, for example, the police in Milan reportedly uncovered a gang holding auctions of trafficked women from the former Soviet Union. The women were stripped and sold for an average price of USD 1,000. (Hughes & Denisova 2002:16)

Policy challenges

The main challenge for developing policies to prevent trafficking is to identify ways to protect vulnerable groups without limiting their rights, or making their situation even more difficult. As stated in UNHCR's "Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking":

> Anti-trafficking measures should not adversely affect the human rights and dignity of persons and, in particular, the rights of those who have been trafficked, migrants, internally displaced persons, refugees and asylum-seekers (2002: 5).

According to Mike Dottridge (2004), there are many examples of counter-trafficking initiatives that harm, rather than help, the supposed beneficiaries. One such practice is the attempt to limit migration in the name of preventing trafficking. Children, and to a lesser extent women, have been particularly vulnerable to such policies. For example, in several countries of origin there have been information campaigns telling parents and local communities that children under 18 should not be allowed to migrate because of the danger of trafficking. However, in some parts of the world, child and teen migration (as a function of education, fostering, or pure labour migration) is widespread, and the vast majority of these migrants are probably not subject to exploitation. Indeed, in many cases, young people may improve their general living conditions through migrating, through better access to education and medical treatment, or simply by escaping poverty (Dottridge 2004).

Dottridge argues that, although the intentions of many counter-trafficking polices are good, they may be undermined by unintended side effects or poor

implementation. He refers to an example from Mali, where policymakers in the late 1990s introduced a requirement that all children under 18 travelling abroad should have a formal travel document (signed by parents and specifying the child's destination), in response to reports that some Malian youngsters were being seriously ill-treated in Cote d'Ivoire. Additionally, counter-trafficking surveillance committees were set up at village level in areas from which children were thought to have been trafficked. Two years after its implementation, two independent researchers evaluated the impact of these policies and found that, far from making their journeys safer, the new measures were causing the migrant children more hardships. The travel documents, which were supposed to be available locally, were often impossible to get, and more than a year after they were formally introduced, community leaders and parents were still not aware that they were needed. Moreover, regardless of whether the young migrants had correct documentation, border police would demand relatively large amounts in bribes in order to let the children cross international borders. In the community surveillance committees, meanwhile, the local members generally did not understand the trafficking concept properly: they seemed to want to stop any young person from migrating, such that local leaders basically hunted down and "arrested" children if they attempted to leave (Dottridge 2004). Ratna Kapur (2004) gives a different example of limitations placed on adult female migration. She describes an incident on the border between Nepal and India, in which a busload of 23 women recruited through registered labour recruitment organisations for jobs in the United Arab Emirates were suspected of being victims of trafficking[12] and, consequently, prevented from leaving the country. They were subsequently sent to an anti-trafficking shelter that had been set up at the border. As a result of the mistake, the women lost the money they had spent on the journey as well as the jobs awaiting them in UAE, and were forced to return to their home communities – even worse off than when they left.

The problem is that many people – especially those in vulnerable groups – will attempt to migrate regardless of the restrictions they face; and that making migration yet more difficult will only force these vulnerable people to resort to even more clandestine methods. Consequently, Kapur (2004) and Dottridge (2004) both argue that, if the goal is to combat trafficking in women and children, little can be accomplished by discouraging them from migrating. Instead, Dottridge (2004: 29) recommends that organisations focus on giving advice to young people planning to migrate, not on trying to prohibit them from doing so. This will facilitate safer migration and empower people to avoid the standard traps that traffickers use. Organisations can teach people how to ascertain the legitimacy of an employment

[12] Anti-trafficking interventions, in the form of border interception posts, have been developed by local NGOs and the state and have been set up at the border between Nepal and India (Kapur 2004)

agency, instruct them to leave a copy of their passport with friends or relatives, and tell them what to do if the worst should happen.

Like anti-migration policies, some anti-prostitution policies are also under attack for having unintended negative consequences (see for instance Doezema 2000, 2002). Anti-prostitution police raids, for example, may have dire consequences. The situation in Dhaka is illustrative. In 1999, all prostitutes in a brothel area in Dhaka were evicted as part of the Bangladeshi government's anti-trafficking initiative. As a result, the community was dispersed and women began to work in the streets, as they had been provided no alternative means of livelihood. During the three-month monsoon period in Dhaka, their situations worsened, as they remained vulnerable to the elements and in many instances were rendered destitute – worse off than before the raids were conducted (Kapur 2004).

Identification

When trafficking for sexual exploitation cannot be prevented, the most important policy response becomes to detect victims of trafficking in prostitution arenas and assist victims in breaking away from their traffickers. Because the forms of captivity and coercion tend to vary greatly between trafficking experiences, it is necessary to vary the efforts required to identify and assist victims.

Forms of coercion and control

Although the forms of abuse and exploitation that victims of trafficking for prostitution are exposed to are well documented, few systematic studies distinguish between different forms or categories of abuse and coercion, and the consequences these may have for the identification and rehabilitation of victims. Unfortunately, some studies seem like little more than an inventory of forms of abuse and exploitation, with little differentiation between experiences. Brunovskis and Tyldum (2004) distinguish between four main categories of coercion that traffickers exploit in order to control and exploit women in prostitution. These are: "force and violence"; "captive behind open doors"; "internalised oppression"; and "the need to earn money" (Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004).

Force and violence

The stereotype of a victim of trafficking is that of a woman brutally beaten, raped, and forced to prostitute herself against her will. In several reports, it is suggested that a major element of trafficking is breaking women down so as to force them to

consent to their role as prostitutes (Meese et Al. 2002:10; Hughes & Denisova 2002: 17; IOM 2002c:9).

In the 1999 "Trafficking in Human Beings Situation Report" from Germany, over 50 percent of the 801 victims surveyed said that violence had been used against them to force them into or keep them in prostitution (Hughes 2002:44). According to Hughes and Denisova, the traffickers and pimps in Italy use extreme violence to control their women and territory, with an average of one woman in prostitution being murdered every month (Hughes & Denisova 2002: 17). Women are reportedly occasionally murdered as warnings to competing traffickers and pimps, and as punishment for refusing to engage in prostitution. According to the same report, this practice is also known to have taken place in Turkey and Serbia. In a study based on 77 victims that had been trafficked to Albania, almost the entire group experienced some sort of abuse during their transit to Albania or in Albania itself. One-third were raped and beaten and many suffered threats and segregation. (Meese et Al. 2002:10).

The victims described in the IOM country studies for Albania and Kosovo report physical abuse to a much greater degree than the victims described in, for example, the IOM country study for Azerbaijan. Noticeably, the victims in the former reports were found in rehabilitation centres. Conversely, none of the women in the Azerbaijan report had been in contact with any such institutions, but were instead recruited through snowball-sampling. Because none of the studies used probability sampling, inferences to the overall population are not possible. However, we find it plausible that the recruitment method of respondents to these studies may in some way influence the results.

Captive behind open doors
"Captive behind open doors (Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004)" refers to a more subtle and indirect form of coercion. These are situations in which victims enter into or stay in prostitution against their will, even though they could potentially escape if they tried. Such women might be unguarded most of the time, and free to go out on the streets or use the phone. Yet they are manipulated to stay through threats and psychological coercion, and therefore do not flee.

The withholding of identity papers and travel documents is commonly reported as a method for controlling trafficked women (Kelly 2002). This seems to have a psychological element as well as a practical one: many victims feel incapacitated and helpless without their documents. Some women explain how much effort they put into getting their passports back before running; some argue that you cannot go to the police without a passport, others that you need the passport in order to avoid the police in case you are stopped. For some women, lack of access to travel documents, combined with the belief that the police do not care about them, may

be enough to forestall any effort to escape (Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004). The women's lack of trust in the police may not be unfounded. According to Hughes and Denisova (2002), in many destination countries, women in prostitution are treated as criminals by both the police and social services. Thus, for example, if women are found in police raids, they will be arrested or jailed pending deportation, regardless of the exploitation they have been subjected to (Hughes & Denisova 2002:17).

Moreover, because the women often know little about their country of destination, their perception and behaviour is guided by experiences from their home countries. As noted above, many therefore expect the police in the destination country to be corrupt and untrustworthy. This fear of the police is often encouraged by traffickers in order to control trafficked women (Brunovskis & Tyldum 2004:73; Vocks and Nijboer 2000: 386).

Brunovskis and Tyldum (2004) report that, among the former victims of trafficking they interviewed in Albania, Ukraine, and Lithuania, only a small minority asked any clients for help. The women believed the clients were either aware of the situation, or would not be able to help them; they also found it difficult to trust people they did not know. Many had experienced abuse earlier, either in childhood or by a former husband (Brunovskis &Tyldum 2004:70).

Several reports have claimed that women from some African countries can be threatened by witchcraft to prevent them from escaping. Threat of sorcery is reported to be more powerful than the theft of passport in many cases (UNICEF 2003:8; Prina 2003; Carling 2005). According to Prina (2003), the pimp – usually a woman referred to as "Madam" – keeps a wrapping with pieces of underwear, hair, and nails from each of the trafficked women. If a woman does not obey the "Madam" and pay the contracted debt, she can become a victim of evil, turn mad, or die. Victims may be told that their families will also suffer if they refuse to fulfil their "obligations" (Prina 2003:25).

Internalised oppression

Sometimes the victims may not be forced, coerced, or threatened in any way, but rather lured into entering or staying in prostitution by the feeling that they have no other choice. They may feel an underlying (but not explicitly stated) threat of violence, if they do not pay unreasonable debts. Some may voluntarily consent to exploitation because it seems to them that it is their only chance to stay in the country of destination and their only possibility to earn money. Others may accept exploitation in prostitution because they have come to accept that this is the way the prostitution arena is run and, due to a lack of a sense of self-worth, believe that they are not worthy of better treatment.

Brunovskis and Tyldum conceptualise this state as "internalised" or "self-imposed oppression", because the victims come to accept that others have control over them: they accept that they have to pay off unreasonable debts, or may feel that it is "natural" that pimps and traffickers can control what they do. In many Eastern and Central European countries where prostitution is highly organised and closely tied to crime, prostitutes need protection from both violent clients and the legal system. Thus, many women from these countries do not question the role of the pimp when they enter prostitution (Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004:77).

Hughes and Denisova (2002) argue that, upon leaving home, many trafficked women do not understand how little control they will have or how small a percentage of the money they will keep. By the time they realise this, it is too late – they have already agreed to work in prostitution and submitted themselves to the control of traffickers. In the case of Nigerian women, moreover, it has been argued that many women do not understand the consequences of the debt they are taking upon themselves by travelling, as they are not familiar with European currencies (Carling 2005:14).

In many cases, the boundaries of what the women are willing to do may be gradually eroded. Several reports describe women who were initially dancers, but inevitably ended up in prostitution. Some even describe feelings of loyalty towards, or some sort of friendly relationship with, their traffickers. Relatedly, there are also stories about victims being pimped by their husbands or boyfriends (MAHR 2000:22; IOM 2002c:14; Hughes and Denisova 2002:15; Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004).

Earning money

One factor often ignored in studies on trafficking is that victims of trafficking may be paid. In some cases, the need for money – either to pay down debt or support dependents – prompts women to choose to stay in conditions with high levels of exploitation and degrading treatment.

Giving a trafficked woman a portion of the money she earns may be the easiest way to make her cooperative. The fact that a woman gets money from prostitution, even if it is trivial compared to the pimp's takings, may make her interpret her situation as one of free choice, independent of the exploitation she has been exposed to (Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004). Others, for example in law enforcement, may be similarly swayed.

This issue is in many ways related to the problem of the "innocent" and "willing" victims discussed above. Just as women that have chosen to enter prostitution may be under-reported and almost ignored in the trafficking literature, so women that earn money from prostitution, but are exploited in other ways, are also given little attention. In studies of returned victims, the extent to which the women have

earned money is often unclear. In a study by IOM Azerbaijan, some of the interviewed victims of trafficking for prostitution in the United Arab Emirates claim that that the pimps rarely let them keep their earnings. Paradoxically, of the nineteen victims who returned with less than USD 300 (or no money at all), half of them thought that their living conditions had improved compared with the situation before their trafficking experience (IOM 2002b:24). Brunovskis and Tyldum (2004) also found that some victims of trafficking seem to under-report the extent to which they were given money, in order to be perceived as "worthy" of assistance. Obviously, if a woman is forced, lured, or physically or mentally exploited, giving her money does not make this treatment acceptable.

Challenges in identifying victims of trafficking

While a number of studies on trafficking for sexual exploitation deal with the causes of trafficking, relatively little attention has been given to degrees of coercion and violence, or mechanisms and conditions for leaving a situation of exploitation. Little is known about how long women stay in the trafficking situation, and what they do after they break out.

A major problem in identifying victims of trafficking is that many do not want to be identified. Women may be afraid of repercussions from their traffickers; may fear stigmatisation; may fear being sent out of the country without having earned the money they came for; and may not trust in the ability of agencies or institutions to protect them or improve their quality of life (UNHCR 2002; Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004). Others do not wish to be identified because they do not feel they have something to return to; for example, NGOs in Cambodia report that migrant children are not always happy to be rescued, repatriated, or reinserted back into their communities, as the children claim to make more money on the streets than on the farms back home (Cochrane in O'Connell Davidson 2005). The hugely negative stigma attached to prostitution in some societies is also problematic (Psimmenos in O'Connell Davidson 2005).

Because of these factors, identifying victims of trafficking not only entails tracking down traffickers but, perhaps more importantly, convincing the victim that she should ask for help and admit the abuses she has been exposed to.

In many cases the only way to identify a situation of serious exploitation, is if the women want to volunteer this information herself. Women will not provide information if they have no trust in those they relate to. In order to encourage women to report situations of exploitation and coercion, it is necessary to establish trust – trust in an institution they can contact, and trust that reporting their exploiter will actually lead to an improvement of the conditions under

which they live. Furthermore, trust in the police, and the legal system in general, is of outmost importance in order to make women testify against their traffickers (Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004:119).

Some studies argue that trafficking can be better understood as a process – such that, for example, some women may enter a coerced situation gradually, whereas others may progress from a period of indenture or slavery-like conditions to an employment relationship from which they can freely withdraw. Indeed, some women proceed from being an "employee" to eventually take a managerial role and/or become middle agents or brothel owners (O'Connell Davidson 2005; Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004).

Reintegration

After breaking away from their exploiters, victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation face a number of obstacles to continuing their lives in non-exploitative conditions. Some dread returning to their home communities because they fear either repercussions from their traffickers or the social stigma associated with prostitution. Many also struggle with physical and psychological problems because of their trafficking experience. Last but not least, for many women the conditions that made them vulnerable to traffickers in the first place are not likely to have disappeared, and may even have gotten worse (Bjerkan and Dyrlid 2005, Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004). In order to reintegrate former victims of trafficking into society, significant efforts are necessary to help the victim heal from the traumas suffered during the trafficking experience, reduce her vulnerability to traffickers, and prevent her from being re-trafficked. In order to determine how these tasks can best be implemented, more knowledge is needed about the challenges faced by former victims of trafficking, as well as how the policies and practices developed by law enforcement, NGOs, and governments affect the conditions under which these former victims live.

In a number of countries of origin for victims of trafficking, there are limited public services to which the victims can apply to get necessary assistance. However, there is an increasing number of NGOs that work exclusively or secondarily on rehabilitating trafficking victims. These women often suffer from acute stress reactions, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, adjustment disorders and dissociation, and acts of deliberate self-harm, and need long-term psychological assistance (IOM 2002c:16, Nikolic-Ristanovic 2005:96). Some victims need extensive medical attention to treat STDs, substance abuse, pregnancy, multiple or botched abor-

tions, or to repair injuries from rape, beatings, or other physical abuse. In many countries of origin, public healthcare is limited or non-existent, yet many victims are unable to afford the cost of private healthcare. Alternatively, the victim may be reluctant to contact local doctors due to the stigma associated with these diseases or injuries, and the context in which they were contracted. Many victims also need legal assistance and counselling, particularly in connection with the prosecution of traffickers. Finally, the rehabilitation apparatus should assist the women in their reintegration into society, for example by offering various forms of training or work practice.

Particularly in terms of reintegration, it must be considered that the family relationships of trafficked women often change for the worse. According to the Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, victims of trafficking that return to their husbands appear to be at an increased risk for domestic violence and divorce. Similarly, a psychologist in Moldova states that many women that come into contact with her due to domestic violence can trace their problems back to a trafficking experience. For example, one woman was unable to tell her husband what had happened to her; however, her husband thought she was not acting like a "normal" wife, and also found it strange that she returned from Greece without money (as she did not get any money from her traffickers). Gradually, problems developed in their marriage, and the husband became increasingly violent (MAHR 2000:28).

Lise Bjerkan and Linda Dyrlid (2005) claim that victims of trafficking adopt diverging strategies in their later relations with men, depending to some extent on their marital status and/or age:

> […] whereas women who were married at the time of trafficking often seemed to find it difficult to re-establish a physical, sexual relationship with their husbands, some of the younger, unmarried women tended to adopt a seductive behaviour towards men – sometimes both finding it difficult to commit themselves to one particular partner, and perceiving the purpose of having emotional relations with men as solely one of "use" (Bjerkan and Dyrlid 2005:142).

In spite of the often strong need for social, medical, psychological, and legal assistance, many victims of trafficking do not get in contact with the rehabilitation apparatus. This may be primarily because they do not know that such assistance is available, either because there is no such service in their community, because they are unaware that such services exist, or because they do not see themselves as a trafficking victim worthy of assistance. Furthermore, several studies indicate that a growing proportion of the victims of trafficking identified by law enforcement and international organisations do not wish to enter a rehabilitation programme. In Albania, the "Inter Agency Referral System Project for Assistance to Third Country National Victims of Trafficking" is working on developing an organised shelter

and return system for trafficked third-country nationals in Albania. In 2001, they reported that 13 out of 77 identified victims rejected assistance (Meese et Al. 2002:13).

An unknown proportion of the victims of trafficking are never identified by any organisation or governmental organisation. As discussed in chapter 3, there is at present no valid estimate of how large a share of the total number of trafficking victims these women comprise, and very little is known about their characteristics. Consequently, we also do not know if they remain unidentified because they do not want to enter rehabilitation, because they fear their traffickers, or because they do not know that they are entitled to assistance.

The issue of why many victims are reluctant to get assistance from NGOs is not sufficiently explored, but it is probably a combination of several factors. Some victims have claimed that they feel pushed by the NGOs to participate in activities that threaten their anonymity, for example when NGOs want to use returned victims as speakers in informational and training campaigns. Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights has reported instances of women that do not want to speak openly about their experiences being pressured, if not coerced, into participating in media events that are not confidential (MAHR 2000:29). There are also reports of rehabilitation programmes that directly or indirectly push women to testify against their traffickers, in this way jeopardizing the women's anonymity. While there is no doubt that NGOs are extremely important in the rehabilitation of former victims of trafficking, it should also be recognised that the qualifications of these NGOs are not always what they should be; and moreover that, like any other organisation, NGOs have their own agendas. Routines, experiences, and directives may vary significantly between both areas and organisations. For example, some NGOs that run shelters are reported to implement relatively strict rules for the women staying there (Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004:103). This may keep some victims from staying at the shelters, as they might feel that one type of control and entrapment is simply replaced by another.

Re-trafficking

Sadly, several of the country reports indicate that, assisted or not, former victims of trafficking often end up being trafficked again, or choose to go back to prostitution. As the Azerbaijan report notes, "most women or girls who were trafficked once see no escape from the vicious cycle in which they are trapped – they often wind up either being reportedly trafficked or engaged in prostitution, or even being traffickers themselves (IOM 2002b:64)". A report by International Social Service Italy, based on analyses of 256 Albanian children repatriated from Italy to Albania between 1998 and 2000, found that by 2001, only 98 of the repatriated children were still in

Albania, while 155 had emigrated again. Of the 256 children, only six found a job in Albania (Rozzi in O'Connell Davidson 2005). Similarly, in interviews with 60 Moldovan adolescents that had returned to Moldova, researchers found that almost all of them wished to leave again. This was true even among some that had been trafficked more than twice before (Institute for Public Policy Moldova in O'Connell Davidson 2005).

When victims of trafficking are returned to their home country, the situation that made them vulnerable in the first place has usually not changed – or may even have deteriorated (Bjerkan and Dyrlid 2005, Bruovskis and Tyldum 2004). According to a Moldovan psychologist quoted by the Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights (2002:28), many victims feel that they have no alternative but to work as prostitutes when they return, even though most did not work as prostitutes before. For these women, it appears that their perception of the stigma of prostitution is so intense that, whether or not they were initially forced, they see little chance of an alternative lifestyle once they have entered prostitution.

According to IOM Moldova, the risk of re-trafficking is further increased when victims are returned home before they pay off their debt to the trafficker, or when the woman is afraid to return home because the traffickers know her address (IOM 2002a:18).

Inevitably, the fact that stories about trafficking, abuse, and coercion rarely reach the communities in which potential victims live helps preserve a favourable environment for trafficking. If a woman has never heard of any cases of trafficking in her environment, the dangers lectured about in campaigns are not necessarily identified with the job offer she may receive (Brunovskis and Tyldum 2004). As argued by Bjerkan and Dyrlid (2005), another reason why stories of trafficking remain unknown to local communities is because the majority of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation choose not to share their experiences with anyone – not even with their closest family members:

> …many of the women struggle on their own in dealing with the memories of their experiences. The fear of stigma and prejudices forces women to develop cover stories and to produce lies and fake stories that they often will have to live with for the rest of their lives. These lies, or cover stories, may be seen as a way of coping with an environment that is not prepared to accept the women's true experiences, but its consequences may also be seen as yet another form of revictimisation, such that the woman's own lie turns her into a victim of secrecy and silence. This may not be a healthy strategy in the long run, but, from the women's perspectives, their future social and cultural contexts may not offer any true alternatives (Bjerkan and Dyrlid 2005:-150).

Perhaps the most tragic aspect of women caught in trafficking networks is their potential later involvement in the recruitment and luring of other women into cycles of abuse and trafficking. According to Katie Richards (2004:160-161), a significant share of victims of trafficking become embroiled in a trafficking network as recruiters. For example, Human Rights Watch has reported that, in order to secure their release from sexually exploitative conditions in India, Nepalese women have returned to their home villages to recruit a replacement for their place in the brothel. There is also evidence that workers caught in trafficking networks receive payment from trafficking organisers if they are able to supply (or lure) more migrants to be exploited (Richards 2004: 160-161).

6 Where do we go from here?

The last few years have seen a number of important contributions to the research on trafficking in human beings. Compared to just a few years ago, research and publications of high academic standard are no longer difficult to come by. The evolution and maturation of the trafficking literature is perhaps best displayed in analyses of the trafficking discourse, uses of the trafficking concept, and the consequences and implications of this use (see among others Derk 2000; Kelly 2004; O'Connell Davidson 2005; Berman 2003; Doezema 2002). As of yet, however, these analyses seem to have had limited effect on the remaining body of literature in the field, particularly with regard to empirically based analyses. The research on trafficking for sexual exploitation would be well served by greater clarity and better operationalisation of the trafficking concept.

There have been many calls to improve methods of data collection within the field of human trafficking. High quality data that are representative of the total population of victims of trafficking are rare; and because such data are difficult and costly to produce, they will probably continue to be rare in the future. However, the current research base could be significantly improved through minor adjustments to the systematic collection of data – for example, by using probability sampling – and by making potential and known biases to the data explicit in the analysis.

Although the production of reliable statistics and estimates of numbers and characteristics of victims is important to the further development of policies and research on trafficking, the importance of other approaches should not be ignored. There is still a need to improve our understanding of the processes by which men and women experience trafficking. This calls for methods in a more anthropological vein.

A significant share of the current publications on trafficking comprises general overviews that aim to describe and explain all aspects of trafficking for sexual exploitation (or human trafficking overall) for a country, a region, or even the world at large. The complexity of the task does not often allow for in-depth analyses of each of the related topics. Too often, the result is a simplistic presentation of main trends or patterns. The time has come to go beyond re-statements of what has already been confirmed many other times, and move to more thorough analyses that will contribute to more efficient targeting of efforts to fight human trafficking.

Research on trafficking is still in its early stages, and the potential gains from systematic empirical research are large. Researchers should aim to move beyond static descriptions of "typical" or "extreme" cases of trafficking, and seek instead to understand the great variations that exist – for example, in forms of exploitation, forms of coercion, and processes of recruitment and rehabilitation. Systematic comparisons of individuals, social groups, nations, or regions can enhance our understanding of trafficking and the mechanisms through which it occurs.

We should also recognise that trafficking for sexual exploitation cannot be understood in isolation of other social phenomena and processes. There are examples of trafficking research in which empirical data are presented in light of theories developed in other fields of the social sciences (e.g. theories on social action, networks, agency, migration, or prostitution), and these studies constitute important contributions to our understanding of trafficking for sexual exploitation (see among others O'Connell Davidson 2005, Vocks and Nijboer 2000, Lisborg 1998a). However, such publications are still rare. To the extent that empirical data are presented, it is too often with no analytic frameworks or attempts to systematise and analyse the noted trends.

Finally, there is now a need for more systematic evaluation of the current policies and programmes intended to prevent trafficking or assist victims. After several years of prevention and rehabilitation programmes in countries of origin, as well as large variations in national policies and approaches to fighting trafficking in both countries of origin and destination, there is now a strong need for systematic knowledge of how desired effects in the fight against trafficking are best obtained. Substantial funds go to the anti-trafficking work and the return and rehabilitation of victims; yet despite anecdotal accounts of successes or failures (often from organisations themselves involved in implementation of programmes), there is little systematic evidence of the effect of information campaigns, advisory telephone hotlines, or other anti-trafficking measures. Before more resources are spent, we should know whether these programmes have the expected outcomes, or if adjustments and new approaches are required.

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Taking Stock

'Taking Stock' reviews the current knowledgebase on trafficking for sexual exploitation to and within Europe, giving an overview of and insight into the main trends in research in this field. Each chapter presents and discusses a primary theme in the trafficking research: the definition and use of the trafficking concept; methods for data-collection and analysis; perspectives on and explanations of human trafficking; and challenges and knowledge needs in designing counter-trafficking measures.

The report offers a comprehensive introduction to, and critical assessment of, the knowledge base within the field of human trafficking, and is aimed at policymakers, students, researchers, and other engaged actors in this field.