



NATIONAL ASSISTANCE SYSTEM FOR VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

SEMIANNUAL REVIEW

1 January – 30 June 2018

Statistics for the first half of 2018

The ihmiskauppa.fi site has been updated

Featured: Forcing into criminal activity as a form of human trafficking



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INTRODUCTION



It is clear that there is human trafficking related to sexual exploitation in Finland. However, the victims are not referred to assistance as often as victims of labour exploitation, for instance, several of whom are identified in Finland every year.

This changed in early 2018, however. In the early part of the year, 12 people who had become victims of sexual exploitation in Finland became customers in the assistance system. The number remains low, but it is still significantly higher than in previous years. This is one fact revealed by

recent statistics on the assistance system.

In this semiannual review, we also talk about projects and campaigns of the assistance system, through which we aim to further improve the identification of victims and their referral to assistance.

In particular, we focus on forced criminal activity, a surprisingly common form of human trafficking that is difficult to identify.

UPDATED IHMISKAUPPA.FI SITE

How can you help?

You may have
a part to play

In order to help a victim of human trafficking, we must first notice and identify them. You may have a role in identifying a potential victim of human trafficking and in guiding them to seek help.

Information for people helping
victims

Spot the signs of human trafficking



The updated ihmiskauppa.fi website, maintained by the assistance system for victims of human trafficking, was opened in late June 2018.

The site now provides information more clearly on action against human trafficking and on identifying and meeting victims of human trafficking. It includes advice on how to refer a possible victim to the assistance system, and there are forms in the 'Information on helping victims section' for proposing people as clients of the assistance system.

The site also has a specific section for home municipalities that have a victim of human trafficking as a client.

Possible victims of human trafficking are offered several paths for receiving help from either the government or organisations. There are several contact methods: calling a hotline, a contact form, and a live chat service. The chat service will initially only be open from 1 to 3 p.m. on Tues-

days, but longer hours are being planned.

Through the 'Help for victims section', possible victims can identify their situation and seek help, either from the assistance system or an organisation of their choosing.

The assistance system was contacted via the website on the very same day that the updated site was opened. The person who made contact had been forced into conditions indicative of human trafficking and asked for help.

Development of the site received funds from the EU.



INTERNAL SECURITY FUND (ISF-P)

- POLICE COOPERATION, PREVENTING AND
COMBATTING CRIME, AND CRISIS MANAGE-
MENT

Supported by the European Union

The assistance system is preparing a training package intended for pre-trial investigation authorities and a survey of the status of child trafficking in Finland.

The training package aimed at pre-trial investigation authorities includes two separate online training modules, focusing on human trafficking and its special characteristics during pre-trial investigations. It is an extensive training package that can be used by both new pre-trial investigation authorities and veterans in the field. The modules have been created in cooperation with the National Police Board, the Headquarters of the Finnish Border Guard, the Police University College and the Border and Coast Guard Academy, and they will be implemented in autumn 2018 when actual contact training on the modules begin.

Contact training events will be organised all around Finland, in all 11 police districts and in the administrative units of the Finnish Border Guard. These events could provide around 200 –300 pre-trial investigation authorities with tools to fight human trafficking.

The purpose of the child trafficking survey is to assess the child trafficking situation in Finland. Key questions for the survey include the following: What kinds of forms does human trafficking of children take in Finland? What types of cases have authorities, organisations and other parties become aware of? How have they acted in the cases referred to them? How can the human trafficking of children be identified and prevented in Finland?

The survey will be conducted in cooperation with the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control (HEUNI) of the United Nations (UN) in 2018. The report will be published in early 2019. *Both the pre-trial investigation authority training modules and child trafficking survey are part of the IHME project coordinated by the assistance system. The IHME project receives funding from the EU.*



INTERNAL SECURITY FUND (ISF-P)
- POLICE COOPERATION, PREVENTING AND COMBATting CRIME, AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

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SEE THE INVISIBLE CAMPAIGN



Notice a victim of human trafficking and tell them about the help they are entitled to

How can victims of human trafficking be identified, and how can they be referred to sources of help? These questions will be answered by the new campaign of the assistance system for victims of human trafficking. The campaign, which will be launched in autumn 2018, is directed at authorities, organisations and other operators who may meet victims of human trafficking in their work.

The campaign posters will urge people to see the invisible, i.e. to identify victims of human trafficking, which is known as a hidden crime, in our midst. The posters advise people to seek more information on the ihmiskauppa.fi website. Besides the posters, the campaign includes a brochure with brief and concise instructions on meeting victims of human trafficking and referring them for help.

Posters and brochures can be ordered from the address ihmiskauppa.auttamisjarjestelma@migri.fi, or by calling the assistance system information hotline +358 2954 63 177.

FORCED CRIMINAL ACTIVITY IS A FORM OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

DURING THE COLLECTION OF DRUG-RELATED DEBTS, A DEBTOR MAY HAVE TO COMMIT CRIMES AGAINST HIS OR HER WILL. SOME CASES MAY INVOLVE HUMAN TRAFFICKING. A VICTIM OF FORCED CRIMINAL ACTIVITY MAY BE A CHILD USED BY THE GUARDIAN AS PART OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES. IF A VICTIM IS UNABLE TO SEEK HELP OR DESCRIBE THEIR SITUATION, THEY MAY BE SENTENCED FOR CRIMES THEY WERE FORCED TO COMMIT.

‘Drug debts are being collected in increasingly brutal ways. People with drug debts are being forced to commit crimes because of their debts.’ This is what an officer at the Oulu police department said in an interview with the Kaleva newspaper already in 2007. He continued by saying that it is easy to get the indebted person to commit various crimes. According to the police, violence or the threat of violence is directed at family members and other close relatives as well as the debtors themselves.

This is not a new phenomenon

Forced criminal activity and benefitting from it is a form of human trafficking. It can mean pressuring a person to pick pockets, steal items from shops, traffic narcotics illegally, or commit violent crimes or other punishable acts.

The victim is unable to refuse involvement in criminal activity or simply walk away. Nor is the victim allowed to keep the financial gain from such crimes; the proceeds must be handed over to the exploiter, in full or in part.

This is not a new phenomenon, but it is very difficult to identify. In Finland, only a handful of people, who are believed to have been victims of human trafficking related to forced criminal activity, have been referred to the assistance system for victims of human trafficking during its 12-year existence. However, it is likely that there are many more victims.

Source: Kaleva, 4 December 2007



Victims fear punishment from two sides

Victims of forced criminal activity are in an extremely difficult position. If they are caught for their crimes, they cannot tell the authorities about their exploiters due to the pressure and threats they are under. This means that the victims are punished for the offences. Victims believe that revealing their exploiters would lead to much severer consequences, possibly directed at people close to the victim.

Victims arrested for crimes are easily branded as ‘common petty criminals’ who have caused their own problems. If a victim also suffers from substance abuse, for example, they may not be regarded as a very credible victim of human trafficking.

In cases where parents or other guardians force a minor, who is dependent

on them, to pick pockets, the child may experience this as normal and not want or dare to defy the guardians. An adult who is dependent on a close-knit community and vulnerable may end up in a similar position.

Victims should not be sentenced for crimes

According to international treaties regulating human trafficking, a victim of human trafficking may not be punished for crimes they have been forced to commit. However, these provisions cannot be realised in practice if victims do not dare to tell about their experiences and if the authorities cannot otherwise identify them as victims of human trafficking.

Find out more about forced criminality and other forms of human trafficking on www.ihmiskauppa.fi.

VICTIMS IN FINLAND ARE MOST OFTEN SUBJECT TO SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

SINCE EARLY 2018, A RECORD NUMBER OF NEW CLIENTS HAVE BEEN REFERRED TO THE ASSISTANCE SYSTEM. ALMOST 40 PERCENT OF THE NEW CLIENTS HAVE ENDED UP IN CIRCUMSTANCES INDICATIVE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN FINLAND, OR THEIR EXPLOITATION BEGAN ABROAD BUT CONTINUED IN FINLAND. MOST PEOPLE EXPLOITED IN FINLAND WERE VICTIMS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION RELATED TRAFFICKING.

Year after year, a growing number of possible victims of human trafficking have been referred to the assistance system. It is no longer news that, each year, the number of customers in the system breaks the previous year's record.

It is however worth noting that, in early 2018, more people than usual were identified as victims of sex trafficking that had occurred in Finland. A total of 12 such persons were identified and referred for official assistance in the early part of the year.

The Finnish authorities have traditionally identified people who are victims of labour trafficking. In almost all other EU states, the situation has been the opposite, and Finland has often been criticised for not identifying victims of sex trafficking in its own cities.

Of course, the number of victims identified in early 2018 is still low compared to the volume of possible sex trafficking in

Finland. Victims who did not want to seek help from the authorities may have received assistance from organisations providing help to victims of human trafficking. Such victims are not visible in the assistance system's statistics.

Many victims never dare, can or want to leave their situation and seek help. They and people close to them can be subject to extortion, pressure and threats that prevent them from trying to find help. Some, on the other hand, are never identified and do not receive information about the help available to them.

30 people exploited in Finland

In the early part of the year, the assistance system accepted 76 possible victims of human trafficking as clients. For 30 of these, the exploitation had occurred either partially or completely in Finland. It is estimated that 10 people were victims of human trafficking related to labour exploitation or a related offence in Finland.

Four individuals are believed to have been forced into marriage. Another four people are thought to have been subject to other kind of exploitation related to human trafficking, such as forced criminal activity.

Approximately one third of the individuals exploited in Finland were in the country without a lawful right of residence during their exploitation. However, the reason for unlawful residence was rarely a negative asylum decision received by the person.

Likewise, a third of the people exploited in Finland were asylum seekers. For many of them, the asylum process was already in the appeal phase. One third of the victims in Finland either had a residence permit in Finland, usually on the basis of work or family ties, or were citizens of Finland or another EU country.

76 NEW CLIENTS OF WHOM SIX WERE UNDERAGE

The figures are higher than in previous years

In early 2018, a total of 115 people were proposed for the assistance system, and 76 of them were accepted as clients of the assistance system. Five proposals are still awaiting a decision. In the preceding year, 88 proposals were received and 55 new client relationships were created. Throughout the entire year. Similarly, in 2016, 74 proposals were submitted and 45 people were taken on as new clients.

The new clients of early 2018 represen-

ted 29 different nationalities. Six of the new clients are minors.

Migration and foreign nationality are risk factors

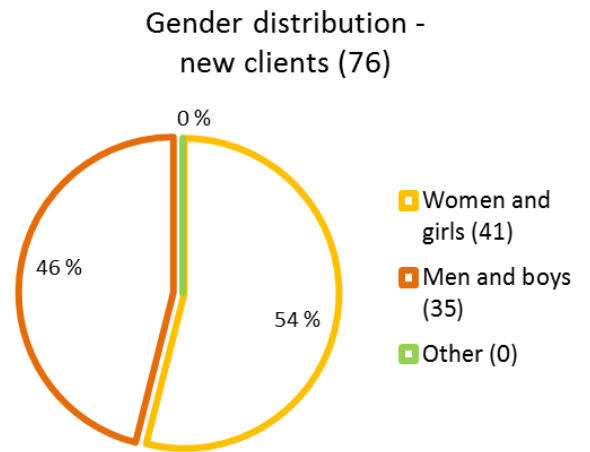
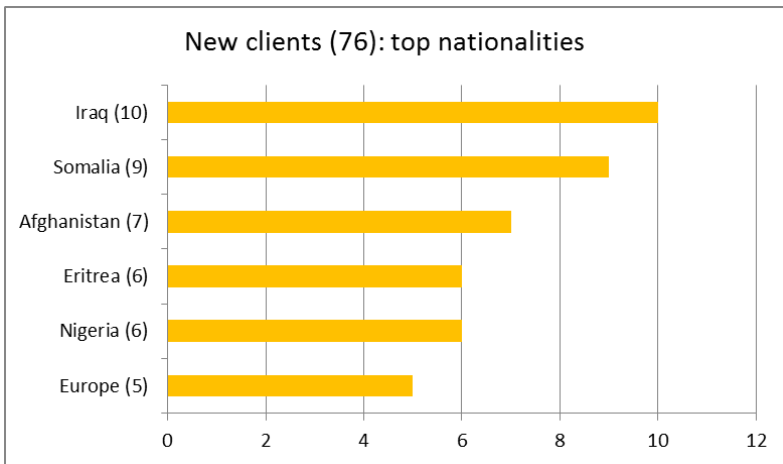
Only less than one fourth of the new clients were exploited in their home country, although for some of them the exploitation may have begun in their home country and continued abroad. Almost all of those who were victims in Finland were citizens of a country other than Finland. In all, 76 percent of the new clients had been victims of human

trafficking outside their home country.

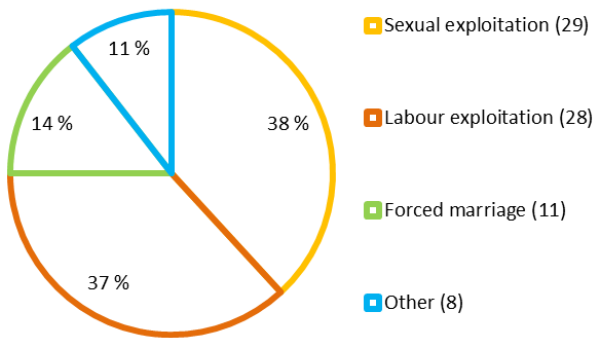
The statistics of the assistance system suggest that individuals who flee their home country due to difficult circumstances are at a high risk of being subjected to human trafficking.

Furthermore, many of the new clients were subjected to exploitation after going abroad due to employment or promises of work. A small number moved abroad to engage in prostitution, but ended up in a situation indicative of human trafficking.

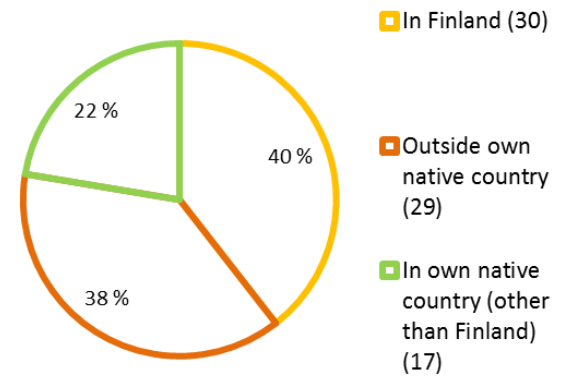
NEW CLIENTS AS STATISTICS ON 01/01—30/06/2018



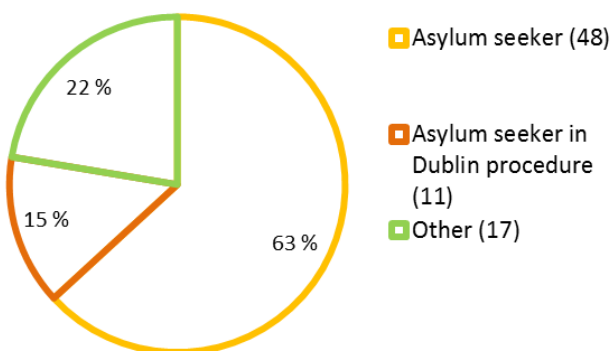
Form of exploitation (76)



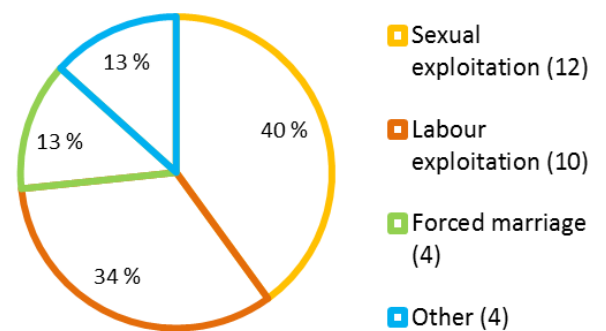
Scene of exploitation (76)



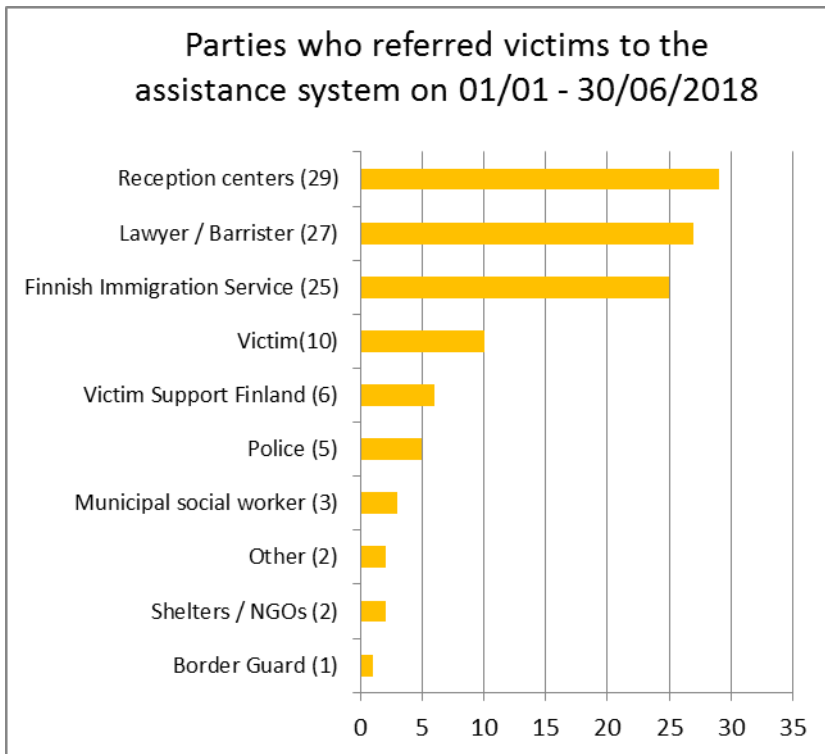
Residence status (76)



Exploited in Finland (30)



THEY REFERRED VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING TO THE ASSISTANCE SYSTEM



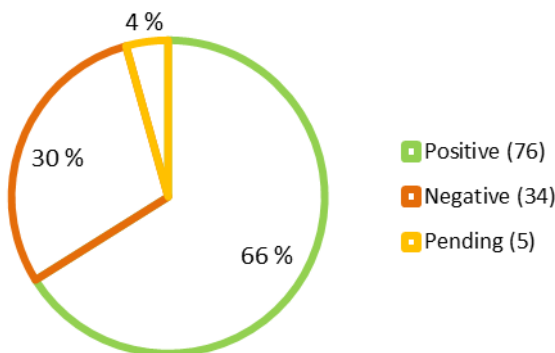
Lawyers play a significant role in identification

Attorneys and lawyers have become a significant group in identifying possible victims of human trafficking and referring them to assistance. In many cases, a victim may have sought legal assistance with problems in Finland, where a lawyer/attorney has identified the person as a possible victim of human trafficking. Legal aid counsels also identify many signs of exploitation occurring outside Finland.

The Finnish Immigration Service and reception centres have continued to submit numerous proposals for accepting a person as a client of the assistance system. Proposals made by the Finnish Immigration Service usually pertain to persons exploited outside Finland. Reception centres identify both individuals who have been exploited in Finland and those who have been exploited abroad.

It is also worth noting that 10 possible victims of human trafficking sought help by themselves. People working for the assistance system hope that the updated ihmiskauppa.fi website helps to raise this figure in the future.

Decisions on proposals (115)



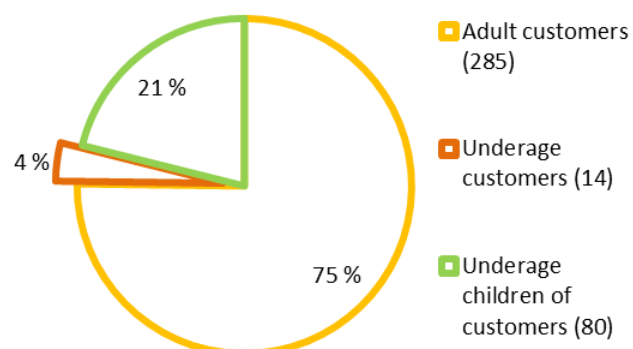
ALL CLIENTS OF THE ASSISTANCE SYSTEM ON 30 JUNE 2018 – A RECORD NUMBER

Records were broken again this year

The total number of clients in the assistance system is higher than ever before. There are 299 clients in the system. The system also assists 80 underage children of clients, bringing the total number of people covered by the services to 379. That figure continued has to grow up to the publication of this overview. - and beyond.

Of all the clients, 119 are men or boys and 180 women or girls. The system has 14 underage clients, although 40 of the current clients were accepted into the system as minors. The largest single nationality group were Nigerian citizens.

People within the scope of the assistance system's services on 30 June 2018 (A total of 379 persons)



PERSONNEL OF THE ASSISTANCE SYSTEM

Three social work professionals and four Senior Advisers work in the assistance system. The offices of the assistance system's social instructors are located at the Joutseno Reception Centre and at the Oulu Reception Centre. A new social worker began working for the assistance system on 1 June 2018. This person's office is located in Helsinki. The social worker works with clients in the assistance system, together with the social instructors. Senior Advisers work both in Helsinki and Joutseno.

In summer 2018, the assistance system also has a university trainee working in administrative services.

Both Senior Advisers and social work professionals do mobile work and travel all over Finland on client-related matters, training people, speaking at various networks and events,

and discussing phenomena and topics related to human trafficking.

The director of the Joutseno Reception Centre and the nurse who takes care of the assistance system's clients issues and provides consultation assistance for the system also make an important contribution to the operation of the assistance system. The Project Manager of the IHME project also acts as part of the assistance system's team.

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