



**NATIONAL ASSISTANCE SYSTEM FOR
VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING**
2015 statistical overview



INTERNAL SECURITY FUND (ISF-P)
- POLICE COOPERATION, PREVENTING AND
COMBATTING CRIME, AND CRISIS MANAGE-
MENT

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1. ABOUT THE ASSISTANCE SYSTEM FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING

Victims of human trafficking are entitled to receive assistance and protection. In Finland, victims of human trafficking can receive assistance from the National assistance system for victims of trafficking coordinated by the Joutseno reception centre, which in turn operates under the Ministry of the Interior. The functions of the assistance system are regulated by law.

The assistance system is able to help men, women, children, families, and groups of people regardless of nationality, race, sexual orientation, religion or residence status. Assistance to victims includes safe residential arrangements, social and health care services, legal advice and assistance, security arrangements and a living allowance.

The threshold for acceptance into the assistance system is low. A potential victim can receive assistance even before there is a criminal investigation to his/her case, or even if the exploitation occurred outside Finland. The assistance system can also provide assistance to persons acting as witnesses in a criminal process concerning human trafficking. Children accompanying victims and witnesses can receive assistance together with their parent or guardian.



The assistance system can produce services for the victim itself or purchase the services from an external producer, for example a municipality or an NGO. Victims with a municipality of residence in Finland receive the necessary basic services from their home municipality. Even in this case, the national assistance system for victims of trafficking can advise and guide the victim and coordinate assisting efforts by different actors.

The assistance system's priority is victim assistance and the victim is at the center of its functions. As a secondary goal, the assistance system supports criminal investigations into human trafficking by taking care of the victims and witnesses. The assistance system also provides expert advice to other governmental and non-governmental bodies, including the police and border guard, and is involved in training the afore mentioned actors.

The assistance system does not investigate crimes. It also does not issue residence permits other than reflection periods (see below). In Finland a victim of trafficking can apply for a specific trafficking victim's residence permit. These permits are issued by the Finnish Immigration Service. The assistance system can help its customers apply for a suitable residence permit, where one is required.



The law concerning victim assistance changed in July 2015. Since the law change, the assistance system has been granted a right to issue reflection periods (a residence permit ranging from 30 days to 6 months). Other actors authorized to issue reflection periods in Finland are the police and border guard.

Furthermore, the law change meant that the assistance system can now act as one of the official bodies capable of formally identifying a victim of trafficking. Being a customer of the assistance system does not, however, automatically mean that the customer is a formally identified victim of trafficking. The assistance system can only formally identify victims who have been exploited outside Finland; or in cases where no charges can be brought against the suspect(s) due to death or disappearance of the suspect(s).

The assistance system publishes statistics about its customers and referrals to the assistance system. Statistics are published bi-annually, with the second publication covering the entire year. This overview of the assistance system's statistics covers the year 2015.

Please notice, that the assistance system's statistics only indicate the numbers of potential victims referred to the assistance system. The assistance system does not do outreach work, and is as such dependent on other actors referring potential victims to the assistance system.

More information about the assistance system can be found at www.ihmiskauppa.fi and www.humantrafficking.fi.

2. ALL CUSTOMERS IN THE ASSISTANCE SYSTEM ON 31.12.2015

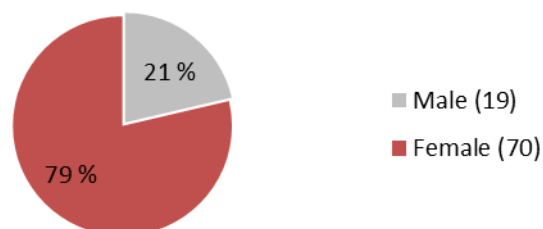
At the end of the year 2015 the assistance system was assisting 89 persons. Some of these customers had been referred to the assistance system in 2015, but some customers have received assistance for several years - some since 2010. Throughout the year the amount of customers in the assistance system remained between 85 and 95. Out of the 89 customers, only two were minors .

The customers represented 26 different nationalities, with Nigeria and Finland the two top countries of origin.

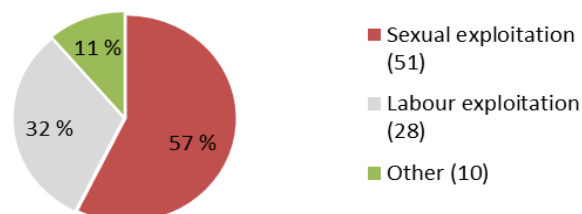
Nigerian victims of trafficking have typically been forced into prostitution in another EU country. This kind of exploitation can, however, also take place in Finland.

Most customers in the assistance system were potential victims of sexual exploitation. The group "other" refers to forced marriage, forced criminality and to forcing a person into conditions degrading to human dignity. So far no cases of illegal organ trade have been identified in Finland.

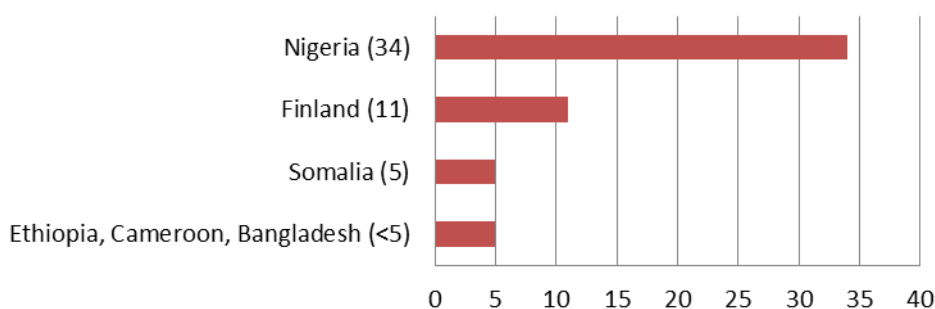
Gender: all customers (89)



Type of THB: all customers (89)



Top nationalities: all customers (89)



2.1 ASSISTANCE ENDED FOR 44 VICTIMS

In 2015 victim assistance ended for 44 people. How and when assistance finishes is regulated by law, and decisions on ceasing assistance are done after a careful and comprehensive consideration of the victim's circumstances. In 23 cases assistance ended when the police/border guard, prosecution or a court had concluded that the person is not a victim of human trafficking. In 12 cases the victim was no longer considered to be in need of assistance.

Three customers have expressed that they no longer wish to receive assistance.

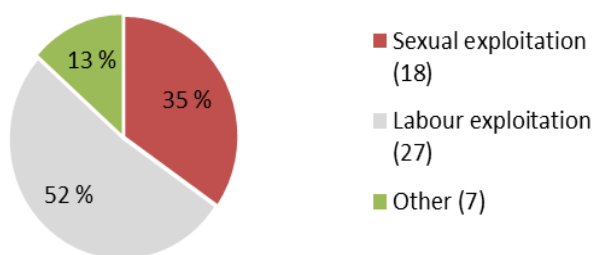
Assistance to victims ceases also where the victim permanently leaves Finland. Four victims' customership ended when they moved back to their countries of origin. Three of the afore mentioned customers returned through an assisted voluntary return program. Two customers were deported from Finland.

3. NEW CUSTOMERS IN THE ASSISTANCE SYSTEM IN 2015

The assistance system admitted 52 new customers in 2015. All new customers were adults - no minors were referred to the assistance system in 2015. The majority of new customers were potential victims of labour exploitation. These customers were typically victimized in Finland, in the restaurant industry or in agriculture. In seven cases a person had been forced into domestic servitude.

Most cases of forced domestic servitude took place outside Finland, with East African women working in Middle-Eastern nations especially at risk. However, not all cases took place abroad.

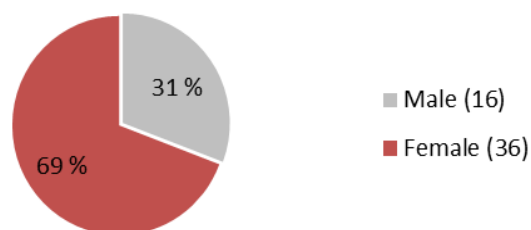
Type of THB: new customers (52)



Out of the 27 victims of labour exploitation, 14 were men and 13 women, whereas all victims of sexual exploitation were women. The group "other" refers to forced marriage, forced criminality and to forcing a person into conditions degrading to human dignity.

The 52 new customers represent 19 different nationalities, with Nigeria and Finland the two top countries of origin.

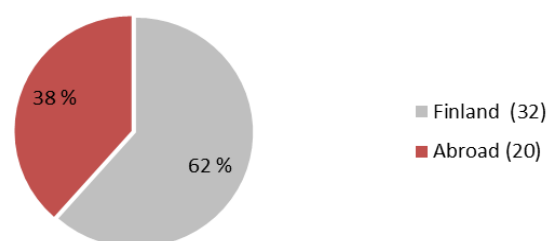
Gender: new customers (52)



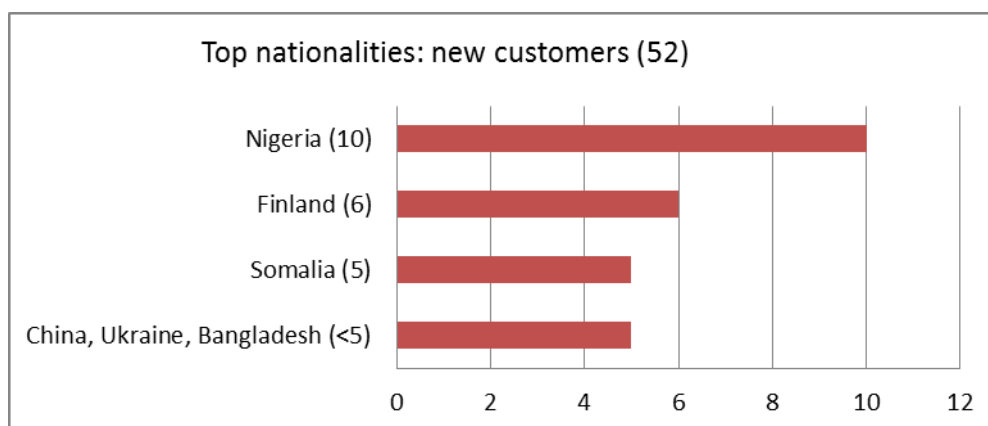
Out of the new customers, 62 % had been trafficked in Finland, or their case was strongly linked to Finland meaning, that the crime had either started or continued in Finland. This category includes victims who were lured to leave Finland and exploited abroad.

Victims exploited in Finland have most commonly been victims of labour exploitation (20 persons). Seven customers reported to have been victims of sexual exploitation either in Finland, or in circumstances with strong links to Finland. Six customers exploited in Finland fell under the category "other".

Place of victimization: new customers (52)



Top nationalities: new customers (52)



New customers (52) in 2015: type and place of THB



Victims of trafficking who have been exploited outside Finland in another EU member state, or in a third country, can also be admitted into the assistance system. 20 such victims were admitted in 2015. The majority of the 20 had been victims of sexual exploitation, typically Nigerian women exploited in another EU country. Another prominent group amongst the 20 persons exploited abroad were East African women exploited as domestic servants in the Middle East.

Towards the end of 2015 the assistance system began receiving growing numbers of reports and referrals concerning asylum seekers who had been exploited during their journey from their country of origin to Europe.



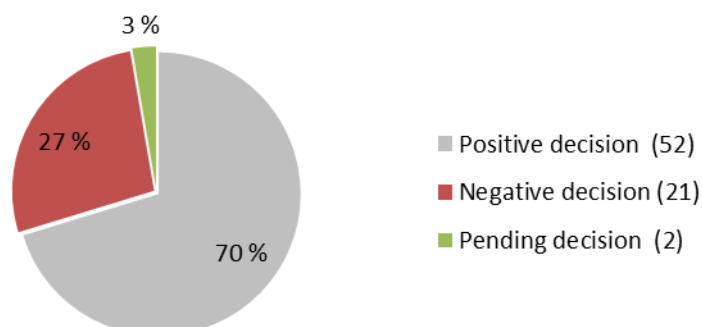
4. VICTIMS REFERRED TO THE ASSISTANCE SYSTEM IN 2015

75 people were referred to the assistance system in 2015. Out of the 75, the assistance system gave a positive decision on acceptance to 52 people. A negative decision was given to 21 people. Two referrals were still pending at the turn of the year. The most common reason for being granted a negative decision was, that the referred person was not considered to be a victim of human trafficking.

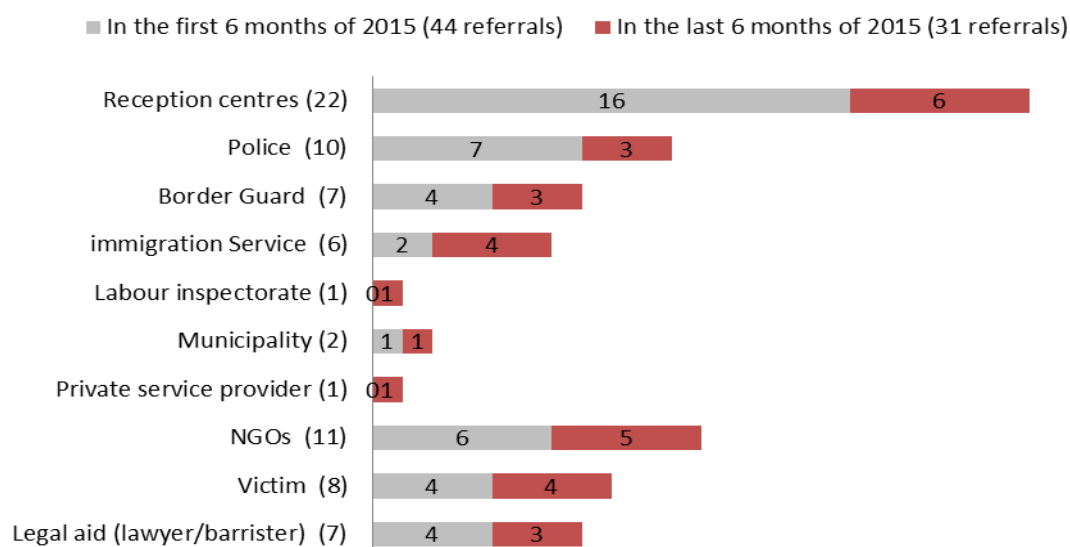
In Finland, a public or private service producer, a government or municipality officer, or an NGO can refer a suspected victim of trafficking to the assistance system. The referral can also be made by the victim him-/herself.



Persons referred to the assistance system (75)



Who referred victims to the assistance system (75 referrals)



During the first six months of 2015, the assistance system received 44 referrals, which was slightly more than the amount normally received during a 6-month period. Reception centres were active in making referrals. Several referrals were also received from the police as well as from some key NGOs.

During the latter part of the year, the assistance system recorded a 31 % decrease in referrals. Especially referrals from police and reception centres decreased dramatically. A likely cause for the slump had to do with the mass influx of asylum seekers, which began in Finland during the Summer months. During the latter part of the year, reception centres as well as the police were working on very tight resources to facilitate the new situation, thus allowing little or no time for victim identification.

Furthermore, the amount of reception centres in Finland multiplied meaning, that several centres operated without having received training on anti-trafficking issues. The assistance system works closely together with the Immigration Service in order to organize anti-trafficking training to new and old reception centres. As knowledge about trafficking increases, more potential victims will be identified.

» Did you have a dream but feel you were betrayed!
 » Has someone forced you to do something you did not want to do?
 » Have you been threatened - for example with violence?
 » Do you fear for your safety or for the safety of your loved ones?
 Are you worried about your children?
 » Do you owe someone money but cannot pay them!
 » Has someone demanded a large sum of money from you so that you can get work?
 » Have you not been paid but cannot do anything about it?
 » Have you been threatened with deportation!
 » Has someone told you not to talk about this or told you not to get help?
 » Does it feel like there is no way out!

THIS CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE
 BUT YOU DO NOT HAVE TO ACCEPT IT.
www.ihmiskauppa.fi

The assistance system assists, guides and educates.



Contact the assistance system for victims of trafficking at

www.ihmiskauppa.fi

ihmiskauppa.auttamisjarjestelma@intermin.fi

tel. +358 2954 63 177 (24/7 info line)